

ceremonies contain abundant references to, and explanations of, the most prominent types of the Messiah, and the person and character of the great Anti-type are frequently presented to us, veiled in symbol and allegory. The Grand Architect of the Universe can be no other than He "who declared the Law unto Moses," viz.—that "Eternal Word," by whom, as St. John tells us, "all things were made," and the God to whom the fervent and beautiful prayers are offered up, must be the God of the *Old Testament*, the God of the People of Israel, the God of the Holy Trinity. No Lodge is ever completely furnished without an open Bible, and faith in that blessed book is constantly inculcated. The Lord's Prayer, given us by our Saviour himself, contains no direct mention of his name; it is addressed to "Our Father," and so the Masonic prayers commence with the Name of "the Almighty Father." Let me repeat one:—"Vouchsafe thine aid, O Almighty Father of the Universe, to this our present convention; and grant that this candidate for Masonry may dedicate and devote his life to thy service, and become a true and faithful Brother amongst us. Endue him with a competency of the *Divine Wisdom*, that by the secrets of our Art he may be better enabled to display the beauties of Holiness to the Glory of thy Holy Name. So mote it be." Who can doubt that such a prayer as this, when offered up in a christian country, by a christian Lodge, is addressed to the christian's God in the name of the christian's Saviour? That such was the opinion of those who were instrumental in the revival of Masonry we may learn from the following prayer, which was used by them, and had come down to them from a still earlier date—of Saxon history:—"The Almighty Father of Heaven, *with the wisdom of the glorious Son*, through the goodness of the Holy Ghost, Three Persons in one Godhead, be with our beginning, and give us Grace so to govern our lives that we may come to His bliss, which shall never have an end." A perusal of many of our Manuals and Handbooks may lead the uninitiated to the inference that the practice of morality is our chief aim; but the intelligent Mason knows that under it all lies a rich vein of Messianic truth. Freemasonry is in fact a system of traditionary teaching veiled in symbol and allegory, and handed down through successive generations of initiated Masons from the earliest ages of Biblical history. And as we compare it with our Bibles now, their agreement is to the Freemason an additional evidence of the truth of the Holy Book, and also a proof that his own system is founded on Truth.

And here let me pause for a moment to deprecate that species of criticism, that manner of passing judgment, which can thus stigmatize Masonry as unchristian. Those who so judge us confess that they know nothing of the real character and objects of Masonry, and only ground their opinion upon what they can see of its outward workings. In basing upon so slight a foundation a sentence of condemnation so harsh and comprehensive, they surely fail to exhibit the great virtue of charity, enjoined both by masonry and christianity. We enroll in our ranks multitudes of the great and good and pious of every grade and profession in every country, whose names and testimony in favour of Masonry should, certainly, carry with them some weight. And any one may well hesitate, and carefully assure himself of the correctness of his judg-

ment, before he ventures to pronounce it upon such a Body.

Having now, my brethren, endeavoured, with what success I know not, to confute the two objections to Freemasonry so prevalent at the present day, permit me, in conclusion, briefly to urge upon you, as christians and as Masons, the precept contained in my text:—"If ye fulfil the royal law, according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thyself, ye do well."

Charity, that is to say, Love of God and man, is the fundamental principle of masonry and of christianity. It is the great characteristic of our Order, and that which recommends it most strongly to the sympathies and affections of men. No man can be a christian, or a mason, without this love in his heart. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart" is the Scriptural rule; and again, "This commandment have we from Him, that he who loveth God love his brother also." And so in masonry, we are taught to look up to, obey, and love that great Being, whose *Eye* is ever on us to guard and protect us, from whom we have our life and all the blessings we enjoy; and are told also by the exercise of brotherly love to regard the whole human race as one family; the high and low, the rich and poor, who, as created by one almighty parent, are to aid support and protect each other. On this principle masonry unites men of every country, sect and opinion, and conciliates true friendship among those who might otherwise have remained at a perpetual distance. To relieve the distressed is a duty incumbent on all men, but particularly on masons, who are linked together by an indissoluble chain of sincere affection. To soothe the unhappy; to sympathize with their misfortunes; to compassionate their miseries; to restore peace to their troubled minds; to seek and to save the erring and the lost; to lead them back to the path of rectitude, and by our example and exhortations to keep them in the way of Eternal life, is the labour of speculative masonry. And to do this faithfully we must be active, not only in our love of the brethren, not only in our relief of the distressed, not only in our gentle and conciliatory behavior, but also active in the leading of a pure and pious life, so that we may set a good example to all with whom we may be brought in contact. To his family, his friends, his community, the true mason should be a "burning and a shining light," preaching unto them with the silent eloquence of a good example, and diffusing around him the holy influences of good words and good deeds. In no books in the world, save in the Holy Book of Inspiration, are all the moral virtues more forcibly and beautifully inculcated than in those of Freemasonry. See then that ye are all Masons, not only in name but in deed, obeying in your lives the precepts of morality, believing in your hearts the doctrines of the Gospel, and following as far as in you lies, the steps of that Blessed Saviour, who left us an example to be perfect, even as He was perfect. Be kind, loving and charitable, to the Brethren, and to all men. Be ready to assist them in every way in your power with advice, with example, and with the good gifts God has placed in your reach. Avoid all occasion of dispute, ill-will, envious feelings and angry and malicious words, all selfish and dishonest conduct. "Live peaceably with all men." "Do unto all men as ye would they should do unto you." "forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's