

ests, and not according to its moral merit; if such a man shall act consistently with his own principles, and is not sometimes influenced by the goodness of his heart, he can cultivate neither friendship, justice, nor generosity. It is impossible for the man to be brave, who shall pronounce pain the greatest evil; or temperate, who shall propose pleasure as the highest good.

The Fourth Great Truth in Masonry is this :

The moral truths are as absolute as the metaphysical truths. Even the Deity cannot make it that there should be effects without a cause, or phenomena without substance. As little could He make it to be sinful and evil to respect our pledged word, to love truth, to moderate our passions. The principles of morality are axioms, like the principles of geometry. The moral laws are the necessary relations that flow from the nature of things, and they are not created by, but have existed eternally in God. Then continued existence does not depend upon the exercise of His WILL. Truth and Justice are of His ESSENCE. Not because we are feeble and God omnipotent, is it our duty to obey His law. We may be forced, but are not under obligation to obey the stronger. God is the principle of Morality, but not by His mere will, which, abstracted from all other of His attributes, would be neither just nor unjust. Good is the expression of His will, in so far as that will is itself the expression of eternal, absolute, uncreated justice, which is in God, which His will did not create; but which it executes and promulgates, as our will proclaims and promulgates, and executes the idea of the good which is in us. He has given us the law of Truth and Justice; but He has not arbitrarily instituted that law. Justice is inherent in His will, because it is contained in His intelligence and wisdom, in His very nature and most intimate essence.

The Fifth Great Truth in Masonry is this :

There is an essential distinction between Good and Evil; what is just and what is unjust; and to this distinction is attached, for every intelligent and free creature, the absolute obligation of conforming to what is good and just. Man is an intelligent and free being—free, because he is conscious that it is his duty, and because it is made his duty, to obey the dictates of truth and justice, and therefore he must necessarily have the power of doing so, which involves the power of not doing so—capable of comprehending the distinction between good and evil, justice and injustice, and the obligation which accompanies it, and of naturally adhering to that obligation, independently of any contract or positive law; capable also of resisting the temptations which urge him towards evil and injustice, and of complying with the sacred law of eternal justice.

That man is not governed by a resistless fate or inexorable destiny, but is free to choose between the evil and the good; that Justice and Right, the Good and Beautiful, are of the essence of the Divinity, like His Immutability; and therefore they are laws to man; that we are conscious of our freedom to act, as we are conscious of our identity; and the continuance and connectedness of our existence; and have the same evidence of one as of the other; and if we can put one in doubt, we have no certainty of either, and everything is unreal; that we can deny our free will and free agency, only upon the ground that they are in the nature of things impossible; which would be to deny the Omnipotence of God.

The Sixth Great Truth in Masonry is this :

The necessity of practising the moral truths is, obligation. The moral truths, necessary in the eye of reason, are obligatory on the will. The moral obligation, like the moral truth that is its foundation, is absolute. As the necessary truths are not more or less necessary, so the obligation is not more or less obligatory. There are degrees of importance among different obligations; but none in the obligation itself. We are not nearly obliged, almost obliged. We are wholly so, or not at all. If there be any place of refuge to which we can escape from the obligation, it ceases to exist. If the obligation is absolute, it is immutable and

universal. For if that of to-day may not be that of to-morrow—if what is obligatory on me may not be obligatory on you—the obligation would differ from itself, and be variable and contingent. This fact is the principle of all morality. That every act contrary to right and justice, deserves to be repressed by force, and punished when committed, equally in the absence of any law or contract; that man naturally recognizes the distinction between the merit and demerit of actions, as he does that between justice and injustice, honesty and dishonesty; and feels, without being taught, and in the absence of law or contract, that it is wrong for vice to be rewarded, or go unpunished, and for virtue to be punished, or left unrewarded; and that the DEITY being infinitely just and good, it must follow, as a necessary and inflexible law, that punishment shall be the result of sin—its inevitable and natural effect and corollary, and not a mere arbitrary vengeance.

The Seventh Great Truth in Masonry is this :

The immutable law of God requires that, besides respecting the absolute rights of others, and being merely just, we should do good, be charitable, and obey the dictates of the generous and noble sentiments of the soul. Charity is a law, because our conscience is not satisfied nor at ease if we have not relieved the suffering, the distressed, and the destitute. It is to give that which he to whom you give has no right to take or demand. To be charitable is obligatory on us. We are the almoners of God's bounties. But the obligation is not so precise and inflexible as the obligation to be just. Charity knows neither rule nor limit. It goes beyond all obligation. Its beauty consists in its liberty. "He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is LOVE. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." To be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; to relieve the necessities of the needy, and be generous, liberal, and hospitable; to return to no man evil for evil; to rejoice at the good fortune of others, and sympathize with them in their sorrows and reverses; to live peaceably with all men, and repay injuries with benefits and kindness; these are the sublime dictates of the Moral Law taught, from the infancy of the world, by Masonry.

The Eighth Great Truth in Masonry is this :

That the laws which control and regulate the Universe of God are those of motion and harmony. We see only the isolated incidents of things, and with our feeble and limited capacity and vision cannot discern their connection, nor the mighty chords that make the apparent discord perfect harmony. Evil is merely apparent, and all is in reality good and perfect. For pain and sorrow, persecution and hardships, affliction and destitution, sickness and death, are but the means by which alone the noblest virtues could be developed. Without them, and without sin and error, and wrong and outrage, as there can be no effect without an adequate cause, there could be neither patience under suffering and distress; nor prudence in difficulty; nor temperance to avoid excess; nor courage to meet danger; nor truth, when to speak the truth is hazardous; nor love, when it is met with ingratitude; nor charity for the needy and destitute; nor forbearance and forgiveness of injuries; nor toleration of erroneous opinions; nor charitable judgment and construction of men's motives and actions; nor patriotism, nor heroism, nor honour, nor self-denial, nor generosity. These and most other virtues and excellences would have no existence, and even their names be unknown; and the poor virtues that still existed, would scarce deserve the name, for life would be one flat, dead, low level, above which none of the lofty elements of human nature would emerge; and man would lie lapped in contented indolence and idleness, a mere worthless negative, instead of the brave, strong soldier against the grim legions of Evil and rude Difficulty.

The Ninth Great Truth in Masonry is this :

That the JUSTICE, the WISDOM, and the MERCY of God are alike infinite, alike perfect, and yet

do not in the least jar or conflict one with the other; but form a Great Perfect Trinity of Attributes, three and yet one; that, the principle of merit and demerit being absolute, and every good action deserving to be rewarded, and every bad one to be punished, and God being as just as He is good; and yet the cases constantly recurring in this world, in which crime and cruelty, oppression, tyranny, and injustice are prosperous, happy, fortunate, and self-contented, and rule and reign, and enjoy all the blessings of God's beneficence, while the virtuous and good are unfortunate, miserable, destitute, pining away in dungeons, perishing with cold, and famishing with hunger—slaves of oppression, and instruments and victims of the miscreants that govern; so that this world, if there were no existence beyond it, would be one great theatre of wrong and injustice, proving God wholly disregarding of His own necessary law of merit and demerit;—it follows that there must be another life, in which these apparent wrongs shall be repaired: that all the powers of man's soul tend to infinity, and his indomitable instinct of immortality, and the universal hope of another life, testified to by all creeds, all poetry, all traditions, establish its certainty; for man is not an orphan; but has a Father in heaven: and the day must come when Light and Truth, and the Just and Good shall be victorious, and Darkness, Error, Wrong, and Evil be annihilated, and known no more for ever; that the universe is one great Harmony, in which, according to the faith of all nations, deep-rooted in all hearts in the primitive ages, Light will ultimately prevail over Darkness, and the Good Principle over the Evil; and the myriad souls that have emanated from the Divinity, purified and ennobled by the struggle here below, will again return to perfect bliss in the bosom of God, to offend against whose laws will then be no longer possible.

The One Great Lesson taught to us as Masons is, therefore, this :

That to that state and realm of Light and Truth and Perfection, which is absolutely certain, all the good men on earth are tending; and if there is a law from whose operation none are exempt, which inevitably conveys their bodies to darkness and to dust, there is another not less certain, nor less powerful, which conducts their spirits to that state of Happiness and Splendour, and Perfection the bosom of their Father and their God. The wheels of nature are not made to roll backward. Everything presses on to Eternity. From the birth of Time an impetuous current has set in, which bears all the sons of men toward that interminable ocean. Meanwhile, Heaven is attracting to itself whatever is congenial to its nature, is enriching itself by the spoils of the Earth, and collecting within its capacious bosom whatever is pure, permanent, and divine, leaving nothing for the last fire to consume but the gross matter that creates concupiscence; while everything fit for that good fortune shall be gathered and selected from the ruins of the world, to adorn that Eternal City.

Let every Mason, then, obey the voice that calls him thither. Let us seek the things that are above, and be not content with a world that must shortly perish, and which we must speedily quit, while we neglect to prepare for that in which we are invited to dwell for ever. While everything within us and around us reminds us of the approach of death, and concurs to teach us that this is not our rest, let us hasten our preparations for another world, and earnestly implore that help and strength from our Father, which alone can put an end to that fatal war which our desires have too long waged with our destiny. When these move in the same direction, and that which God's will renders unavoidable shall become our choice, all things will be ours; life will be divested of its vanity, and death disarmed of its terrors.—A. P.

We hope to receive, ere our next issue, the particulars of the names, places, and time of meeting of most of the Lodges in Canada—and shall commence publishing them, and so continue until the whole have appeared.