

they have a perfect right to do. Every body of men have a right to decide who may and who may not join them, with whom they will and with whom they will not associate—that is their affair, and no one has any right to complain or to criticize. All men are born free and equal, but "equal" means "equal before the law"—and nothing more.

Masonry holds with the apostle that God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth. She holds that man is man and that no people are so superior to all others that they may interfere with the rights of any other, that they may undertake to compel any other to regard and follow their views of conduct. Masonry rightly abhors the thought that one man may force his will upon another, and that any man may be prevented from being, becoming and remaining a free agent.

The Prussian conception, too, necessarily involves the utter submission of the individual to the State, the destruction of individuality, of individual opinion and judgment in all that pertains to the state. There must in their system needs be a governing class which rules, whose business it is to rule, responsible not to the ruled but to the Supreme Lord, who also is a necessary part of such a system.

The Prussian cannot understand that theory of citizenship which calls upon the citizen to decide as the right or wrong, the wisdom or unwisdom of laws, rules, regulations. The private individual has nothing to do with the laws but to obey them (as an English prelate years ago said of the English common people). All laws and regulations are provided by those whose business it is, Die Obrigkeit, which has its heavy hand on every institution and every person in the whole Empire.

The Prussian king, the German Kaiser, repudiates, as he must repudiate, the thought that he is re-

sponsible to his people. His autocratic ancestor nearly seventy years ago refused the emperorship of Germany when it was offered to him in the name of the people of Germany. He would not accept from their hands a crown which he must needs wear as coming from them and therefore to be taken away by them at their will. The Kaiser was foreordained to be emperor, to God alone he owes his throne, to God alone is he responsible, his people have no political rights which he is bound to respect, the constitution is not the work of the people but the gift of the king. It is not alone *lèse majesté* but it is blasphemy to raise the voice against the Lord's anointed. It is not without significance that Krause, the greatest of the German writers on Freemasonry, teaches that it is for the state to work out the perfection of the individual and of society.

In our system the individual does not exist for the State and as an instrument for the advancement of the State—the State exists for the individual and as an instrument for the advancement of the individual. True it is that during the present colossal war, Britain is more and more learning that in war the individual must give way to the needs of the State, that the forces of the State must be mobilized, systematized, nationalized to an extent in her history wholly unheard of. Heretofore the ordinary Englishman has looked upon a war as something to be paid for, something which did not interfere with his daily life, occupation, amusement—or anything but his pocket. The individualism which runs through our whole thought and system induced him to say, "Let those fight who are willing to fight, I shall pay." Even in that war which was thought so terrible in its time, when it seemed almost as though the sun of the Empire would go down in blood, when hundreds of our gallant Canadians were fight-