

We cannot but thank God through all the cruelty and bloodshed that war has produced, there has existed an Institution which, overlooking these national disputes, has enjoined the duty of man helping his brother man, standing by him when persecuted, giving him a decent burial after death, and shielding his widow and orphans from privation.

Masonry is not a religion, and its gleams of heavenly truth were seen only through a fog of symbols and myths, but with rare fidelity it has preserved some things of the highest importance to religion—one is the right of each individual to his own religious belief. It has existed in Pagan, Jewish, Moslem and Papal countries, some of its members worship the Sun, and others the Shekinah; some fall before the Crescent and other before the Cross; but it has taught them all to respect and tolerate each other. Holding itself aloof from the separate creeds, it has held fast to the principles broader than any of them that man is sovereign over his own mind, and must deal in charity with the opinions and judgement of his fellow. As the Pope is now excommunicating the members of this Fraternity it is well to recall the fact that while Rome was singing *Te Deum* for the massacre of St. Bartholomew, Masonry was asserting the right of every man to think for himself, and when the Bastille and Inquisition were filled with the prisoners of the Church, and the papal Nuncio and Cardinal De La Roche were kneeling on either side the royal prostitute, Madame Du Barry, Masonic Lodges were prescribed by Louis XV. and by Clement XII., for maintaining the inviolability of private judgment.

As we glance back over the history of this institution, so old and yet so strong, so widely spread and yet so mysterious, we cannot but feel that God has been in it for the good of our race, and that even yet He may design to teach us, through it, some important lessons. If forgetting the history of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the pure teachings of Jesus, the Church shall ever get so low as to support its ministers in vice, there will still be an Order which will inculcate morality from the very principles of nature. If the Church shall ever desire to be united and shall look around for the means to attain it, it may learn something from an institution which, by practising charity and toleration, has preserved its integrity since the sands of Egypt were burdened with the pyramids.

We do not look upon this society as a rival of the Church. It has never opposed the Church. The Church can never be hurt by an Order which teaches natural religion, morality and brotherly love. As the Church has declined, Masonry has advanced; as true christian piety has increased, Masonry has receded. The two institutions have never collided. From the time the Knights Templars aided in the rescue of Jerusalem, the Church has never attempted to do any really noble thing without having the secret Order at its side. The time will come when Masonry will be superseded by the Church; but it will be only when the principles of Gospel holiness shall universally prevail. Till then we need not oppose it. Our opposition is useless. An Institution so venerable as to be hinted at in the prophecy of Ezekiel, and in the dark sayings of the Apocalypse—an Institution allowed by Divine Providence to send the first representatives to the God incarnate in Bethlehem, has, we may be sure, some mission to fulfil—some reason for existence which will be told in that day when the occult shall be manifest—when God shall justify his ways to man.—*Voice of Masonry.*

## THE SOCIAL ELEMENT IN MASONRY.

BY BRO. ALBERT G. MACKEY, M. D.

THERE are in every man two sentiments, or rather forces of action, which modern philosophy has called the *egoistic* and the *altruistic*. The former, is that by which man concentrates himself within himself. The latter, that by which he diffuses himself out of his own narrow sphere into that of his fellow-men. The egoist does everything for his own good, and for that alone. The altruist thinks of others and works for others. Egoism, is selfishness—altruism is philanthropy. All the instincts of the egoist are directed to his own preservation, and the advancement of his own interests. Those of the altruist are employed in promoting the well being of his friends, his neighbors, his acquaintances.

The egoistic sentiment is like the vegetable instinct which impels the tree to seek, by the extension of its roots, food from the adjacent soil, that it may add to its own growth. It exists alone and unmodified in all the lower races of animals. The oyster is, in this sense, an egoist, for it has but one instinct, that of growth—of its own increase. It predominates in the higher races of brutes, as the horse, the dog, the elephant, where it is ennobled by a purer altruistic sentiment that leads the animal sometimes to act for itself, and sometimes for the good of other animals. In man, as he advances by culture and refinement, into a higher sphere, the altruistic sentiment