

its present form, dates back to its restoration at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Then it received from the hands of the "builders" a distinctive moral and religious character; and we shall show that the two are naturally inseparable, and inseparably connected with Freemasonry.

Religion, in its widest acceptance, is any system of faith and worship; as, for example, the religion of the Turks, the Hindoos, the Christians. Worship is religious honor, reverence and adoration paid to God, or a being viewed as God. History shows that man is a religious being, and that, even in his lowest estate, he will worship something, "if happily he he might feel and after find" the true God, "though he be not far from every one of us," as St. Paul said, when he found the Athenians "paying their devotions 'To the Unknown God.' " There are, therefore, religions many and gods many. The Pagan religions are corrupt, debasing and destructive to the noblest aspirations of the human heart.

All the old heathen deities were defective in moral character. Venus and the Roman Jupiter may be cited as examples. The Egyptians, notwithstanding their refinement in the arts and sciences, were brute worshippers, and were beastly in moral character. The Northmen that came down upon the Roman Empire with such fury were worshippers of heronings, bloodthirsty and cruel. Men are naturally assimilated to the moral likeness of the objects they love, admire and worship. In this epitome of Pagan idolatry, we have the problem of the world's corruption solved. It is of the greatest consequence that man should have, for an object of worship, a God who is pure and holy, loving and kind to his children.

But in the midst of the moral darkness of the Pagan world there are some scintillations of light. It must be conceded that some ancient philosophers, particularly Confucius

and Cicero, did—doubtless from an innate consciousness of right and wrong—annunciate some sound moral principles, but a false religion rendered them inoperative upon the great mass of the people. It goes to show that they who are "without the law," as St. Paul says, are not without the light of conscience, for the "Gentiles that do by nature the things contained in the law are a law unto themselves, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts, the meanwhile, accusing or else excusing one another." It further teaches us that the heathen are not left to be damned because they have not the written law, but rather, if they act up to the light they have, our Heavenly Father will not condemn them. If those old philosophers had been aided by the knowledge and worship of the true God, Christian civilization ere this would have encircled the entire globe.

From time immemorial, Freemasons have been taught, in all their rites and ceremonies, to recognize God as the only proper object of supreme adoration, love and obedience. Hence, Freemasonry is not merely a "Moral Order," as defined by a distinguished author, but a moral and religious fraternity, founded upon the belief in God as the Supreme Architect and Ruler of the Universe, faith in natural and revealed religion, hope in immortality, brotherly love, and charity to all mankind. Morality and religion are so perfectly interwoven in this creed, that it completely covers the duties we owe to God and our fellow-men.

Morality and religion may have separate roots in the human mind, but they belong to the same trunk; they may be made rivals, but they are natural allies. A morality that simply extends to dealing justly with our fellow-men, is too frigid for a fraternity founded upon love to God and man. Morality, in its true acceptance, is inseparable from religion. This statement is based upon Christian ethics.