

instances here, as the above are fully enough for one short article. It is manifest, on close examination, that these all have a common tap root, and are but branches of the same stem. They all may be said to spring from that form of dominion which attaches itself to the particular society or body corporate, and not so much to mere self. Jesuitism is a familiar and proper example of this spirit in a high state of development. But in its beginning it is not imbued with intent of craft and fraud, as it afterwards comes to be—it is content with acquiring dominion by legal stratagems and adroit management; but the domination it must have in some way; and it finally becomes impatient of any restraints based on the proper rights of others; and ends in being not only despotic but demoralizing and base, and so dangerous and destructive. Those who are animated with zeal for the cause, whatever it may be, often slide into zeal for the corporate institution which sustains it, and finally labor for the extension and dominion of the latter, to the hindrance and disparagement of the former, until the cause is lost and the institution remains to work the very evils it was designed to overthrow.

Now, as to the above-mentioned propositions or doctrines in Masonic jurisprudence, it is proper to say that they are upheld by Masons who are just and magnanimous—who are devoted to the highest principles of morality, and who would scorn an act infringing on the rights of others, or tending in any way to bring reproach upon Masonry. Some, therefore, will say, What is the harm? Good men will not do wrong, and what better is wanted than to let good men have their way? But the answer is, that harm is one of the very things which good men have been doing all over the world at all times. It is undeniable truth that many of the most reprehensible encroachments on liberty

and human rights, and especially on the rights of conscience, have grown to the proportions which made them impregnable, by means of the countenance and support of excellent and respected men. For this has been the misfortune of this world in all ages, that rulers, both temporal and spiritual, of the highest moral sentiments, have used their consequent great influence in favor of policies, laws and observances, which seemed on too little reflection well-grounded; yet which in truth were fraught with the germs of insidious evils. In thousands of instances what were taken for newly perceived and desirable forms or aspects of truths, have turned out to be revivals of ancient fallacies but partly disclosed.

Doubtless there are among worthy and intelligent brethren conflicting opinions concerning each of the three propositions above mentioned; and some who favor one or two hold the other or others in aversion; so that only a limited number agree in support of all of them. What is intended here is not to discredit or attack the intentions or conduct of any, but to invite attention to the departure from the prime law and order of Masonry, which is doubtless involved in each and all of them; for they each contain a germ of false philosophy and of false law, considered in the light of Masonry.

The first is contrary to a vital principle of proper Masonic government, which is, that although every organized body claiming to be a lawful lodge must be able to show that it is authorized by regular Masonic documents, emanating from a recognized grand body, capable of conferring proper capacity and authority; yet while its existence as a working lodge must originate in that manner; when it is once so clothed with the attributes of a regular lodge, it is and must be of necessity independent of the power of any other body of Masons, grand or subordinate, except its own Grand Lodge; so long as the