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No. I.

ART. I.—*The relations of Religion to what are called Diseases of the Mind.*

Our attention has been particularly directed to this subject by an elaborate and somewhat ingenious article in a foreign periodical of great respectability.* In a cursory examination of the article upon its first appearance we were disposed to question some of its positions, but, in hope that it would be better and more quickly done elsewhere, the purpose was dismissed, and casually revived by a reference to some of the cases which it records in support or illustration of the author's views. A more particular examination reveals to us a vein of error running through the body of the argument, and tinging all the doctrines and inferences which it sets forth.

No one can contemplate the present provision for the comfort and cure of the insane without gratitude to God, nor without admiration of the philanthropy and science which have together

* Winslow's Journal of Psychological Medicine and Mental Pathology. April, 1848. London.

IV. To neglect or delay such an encouragement of the religious sentiment, from any apprehension of developing a tendency to "cerebral disease," is as unphilosophical and fatal, as it would be to withhold all food from a child through fear of strangling it or destroying its digestive organs.

V. The due apprehension and influence of religious truth, as revealed in the scriptures, constitutes the best preservative against mental aberrations, especially such as originate in moral causes.

VI. The earlier the mind is brought under the supreme influence of religious truth, the more likely it is to retain its integrity, when the exciting occasions of derangement occur.

ART. II—1. *The Freemason's Monitor.*

2. *Encyclopedia Britannica.* Ed. 7th. Art. *Mysteries.*

3. *The Secret Societies of the Middle Ages.* London: Charles Knight. 1837.

4. *Opinions on Speculative Free Masonry, relative to its origin, nature, and tendency, &c.* By James C. Osborne. Boston. 1836.

5. *Secret Societies.* A discourse by J. Blanchard. Cincinnati. 1845.

6. *I. O. O. F., Constitutions, Bye Laws, and Rules of Order; to which is added a Digest of the Laws of the Order.* Charleston, S. C. 1847.

7. *An Oration Delivered before the Independent Order of Odd Fellows.* By W. D. Porter, N. G., Charleston, 1844.

8. *M. W. Grand Sire's Report.* 1847.

9. *Resolutions and Reports of the Consociation of Fairfield, West Connecticut;—The Presbytery of New York;—Salem Presbytery, Mi.;—Presbytery of Ithica;—Synod of Cincinnati, &c., against Secret Societies.*

IN a former article we have considered the principles of secrecy in its relation to man's moral and religious obligations, and have endeavored to prove, that the use made of it by the various Secret Societies, now multiplying among us, can be justi-

fied neither upon the ground of philosophy nor religion, but is on the contrary, repudiated and condemned by both.

We now proceed, according to promise, to confirm our general argument against Secret Societies, by an examination into their history and results, by an exhibition of their contrariety to all the precepts, practices, and teachings of true religion,—and by a faithful exposure of their fatally dangerous character, considered as substitutes for practical Christianity.

We allude not to any recently established order. We are debating principles, and we appeal to all experience. Let us trace, then, the history of secret societies.

Secret Societies originated in the corruptions of the human heart, and through it of true religion. The religion of the Bible is essentially simple, intelligible, and free from all secrecy. It is designed for all, adapted to all, addressed to all, level to the capacities of all, and open to the examination, the experiment and the enjoyment of all. Like the atmosphere, it is in its nature, and in the nature of its mysterious and incomprehensible objects, beyond our reach of knowledge. But in all its revelations about these infinite realities; in all its operations consequent upon them, and in all its requirements and prescribed rules, it is plain, perspicuous and comprehensible. It was so in its original promulgation. The promise of a Redeemer—salvation through Him—faith in his name—the worship of God by sacrifice and prayer—these were the few and simple elements of antedeluvian religion. Man's corruption then manifested itself in infidelity and not in idolatry, and we read therefore of nothing like an attempt to mystify or secrete the dogmas or the duties of religion.

This state of things continued till after the dispersion, and men began to establish empires. The priesthood was then in the hands of the patriarch, prince, or king, and was thus identified with the power of the state. Avarice and ambition, therefore, soon suggested the introduction of articles, rites, and usages which might make religion more powerful as an engine of state, and a means of overawing, prostrating, and taxing the people. Hence came the secret societies of Egypt, in which the primitive traditions were gradually incrustated over with pageantry and form, and rendered more imposing by darkness, by secrecy, by

forms of initiation, and by the most terrible sanctions.* From Egypt these secret societies, or mysteries, were carried to Greece where they were universally adopted, under the patronage and control of the great, and became wonderfully powerful. Similar societies were established, for similar purposes, in Chaldea, Phœnicia, Persia, and in the Roman Empire.

All these associations, however otherwise peculiar, were alike in professing to inculcate true religion and pure morality;—in professedly requiring good character and good family as qualifications for admission;—in having initiatory rites of discipleship, which were often of the most severe and terrible character; in holding up to special reverence some God or Gods; in excluding, by necessity, multitudes around them; in having their oaths of secrecy, and in performing their religious rites in secret places, and by night or in darkness; in having progressive stages of initiation and advancement; in requiring fees of admission and of frequent assessment; and in promising amply remunerative benefits. These benefits, as Dr. Anthon states them, were “security against the vicissitudes of fortune, and protection from danger both in this life and in the life to come.”† All these associations had also the same political effect—the concentration of power, the subjugation and enslavement of the people, whose respect, admiration, reverence, and awe they every where secured by means of superstition and terror. All offences against the mysteries were under the jurisdiction of the chief magistrate, and a court consisting only of the initiated. Even in the ordinary courts this was the case, and none but the initiated were permitted to come within hearing of any cases involving their interests.‡

It is finally true of all these institutions, that whatever may have been their original character, they became gradually corrupted in membership, in motives, in manners, and in morals. With wealth and power, came pride, carnality, riot, and indulgence, until at length they pandered to the vilest licentiousness, and catered to the most beastly appetites, so that even women carried in procession the *pudenda* of both sexes; heard in the presence of all, lectures upon their nature and use; and,

* Encycp. Brit. p. 658. Vol. xv.

† Dictionary of Antiquities, p. 652.

‡ See Anthon as above.

phrenzied with intoxication, were ready to tear to pieces the daring man who would interfere with their enormities and attempt their reformation, even though he was the son or nephew of the murderers.*

Judaism had no mysteries, in the proper and present meaning of the term. The term mystery does not properly signify that which by its very nature is above our comprehension, but that which is purposely hidden and kept back from the understanding and knowledge of man. The plain and simple truths of religion however were taught to all and not to a few, and that all might learn them, all were required to participate in the ceremonies and sacrifices by which these truths were more impressively enforced, and to submit to the clearer instruction of Levites, of prophets, of the written word, and of the synagogue services. Its holy places, and things and persons, were not secret but sacred, not unknown but revered, not concealed from knowledge but from profanation. Character and fitness—by preparation and knowledge—were the only limits to men of all nations enjoying the amplest privileges in the Jewish church. "The Jews were therefore positively forbidden," says Milnor, "to be initiated into the mysteries." In the Greek text of the Septuagint in Deut. xxiii. 17, a passage was either interpolated or so translated as to condemn all secret associations as peculiar to paganism, and forbidden to the followers of the true God and the true religion.†

Notwithstanding all this, however, an attempt has been made to sustain the principle of secret societies by an appeal to the scriptures. But this appearance of support is only secured by confounding what the Bible says of perfidiousness and falsehood, and against talebearing, and treachery, with the inculcation of secrecy as in itself a motive or a duty.‡ The Bible, assuredly, inculcates foresight, prudence, and discretion. It undoubtedly requires us to conceal what by its publication can only do injury and no good. It most surely enjoins honour and truth and sincerity between man and man. It does unquestionably represent the Deity as being incomprehensible in His nature and His ways. But it reveals God to us just to the

* Encycp. Brit. Vol. xv. p. 666. Milman's Hist. Christianity, Vol. i. p. 33.

† See this urged by Pritchard in his *Analysis of Egyptian Mythology*, p. 415.

‡ See *Freemason's Monitor*, p. 59, and *The Covenant*, p. 97.

utmost extent we require in order to know and to do our duty to Him, and it reveals this not in secrecy or reserve, but on the pages of inspiration and in the pulpits of the church, to all men. The Bible, therefore, nowhere authorizes secrecy except where the benefit of society demands it. As it regards the privileges and doctrines of the Bible, it condemns and anathematizes their concealment, and commands and requires their free and universal inculcation at all times and to all nations. As it regards Christianity, it is pre-eminently the dispensation of light—of free open and universal privileges. Its author is Himself a revelation of the inscrutable Deity—"God manifest in the flesh"—and disrobed of his darkness. Its doctrines are propounded to all. Its duties are enjoined upon all. Its blessings are offered to all. Its worship is open to all. Its privileges are conferred on all recipients. And even its ecclesiastical government is openly and fully submitted to the examination, inspection and judgment of all, and limited, in any case, only by the good of all.

Christ "went about" on his errand of mercy, and in secret, as He testifies, He said and did nothing. All barriers of age and sex and of condition were removed. Forms and ceremonies were almost entirely abolished. Instruction took the place of pagantry, and light of darkness. Christianity is therefore to be proclaimed to all, even to children. There was nothing covered but what Christ revealed, nothing hidden that he has not made known. What he told in darkness suited to the parabolic taste of the times, "That, says he, speak ye in light, and what ye hear in the ear that preach ye upon the house tops." (Matt. x. 27, and Luke xii. 3). Christians are light, not concealment, the children of the day and not of the night. They are to have nothing to do with the unfruitful works of darkness, and are expressly warned against what is believed to have been the secret and voluntary associations of the Essenes and others, in the Epistles to the Collossians. (ii. 4-18).

There was nothing in apostolic Christianity approximating to secrecy.* On the contrary, it denounced and deprecated the coming of this spirit which it foretold as the "the mystery of iniquity," the "Mystic Babylon" whose secrecy, and vows, and

* See Coleman's *Christian Antiquities*, p. 35.

orders, and lying wonders, and delusions, should corrupt and heathenize Christianity.

And we may go still further, and affirm that there were no secrets, no mysteries, no hidden rites or associations known to Christianity for generations after the time of the apostles. This fact is proved by Bingham, the learned High-church Antiquarian, who supports his conclusions by the testimony even of learned Romanists.* About the time of Tertullian—that is early in the third century,† when the pagan mysteries “the last hopes of the ancient religion,” as Milman calls them,‡ were losing ground, Christians endeavoured to hasten their destruction by adopting their principles and adapting Christianity to the tastes, habits and opinions of the times. The sacraments, ordinations, and other services were therefore for this purpose administered in private, and as in every other case where worldly wisdom has accommodated truth to human predilections, corruptions and degeneracy fast progressed until as secrecy prevailed and the darkness settled down, Christendom became as full of secret associations, both religious and secular, lay and priestly, as ever Paganism was.§ Christianity could then boast mysteries as great, ceremonies as gorgeous, superstition as gross, terrors as profound, ignorance as universal, and immorality as extensive as Paganism itself. It had become thoroughly contagionized, and the leprosy had eaten into the very vitals of society.

During this era the secret principle developed itself in the assassins of the east,—the Knights Templars, the Secret Tribunals of Westphalia,|| the masonic order, the Inquisition, the order of the Jesuits, in those Anti-papal societies of which Dante, Petrarch and others were the exponents, and in numerous other societies.

In regard to all secret societies relating to social and civil matters, the author of the work on the secret societies of the Middle Ages, says: “It is an important advance in civilization

* See Bingham's *Antiquities*, vol. iii. p. 98, and *Oxford Tracts*, vol. v. Tr. 69. p. 11. † Bingham *do.* p. 99. ‡ *History of Christianity*, vol. i. p. 31.

§ Bingham *do.* p. 108–110.

* *Secret Societies of the Middle Ages*, Lond. 1846. p. 407, 408. See Rossetti on the Antipapal Spirit in Literature before the Reformation, vol. i. p. 149, 150, 155, and vol. ii. p. 111, 113, 117, 143.

and a great social gain, to have got rid, for all public purposes, of secret societies—both of their existence and of their use; for, that, like most of the other obsolete forms into which the arrangements of society have at one time or other resolved themselves, some of these mysterious and exclusive institutions, whether for preserving knowledge or dispensing justice, served, each in its day, purposes of the highest utility, which apparently could not have been accomplished by any other existing or available contrivance, has been sufficiently shown by the expositions that have been given, in the preceding pages of the mechanism and working of certain of the most remarkable of their number. But it has been made at least equally evident that the evils attendant upon their operation and inherent in their nature were also very great, and that considered even as the suitable remedies for a most disordered condition of human affairs, they were at best only not quite so bad as the disease. They were instituted for preserving knowledge, not by promoting, but by preventing that diffusion of it which, after all, both gives to it its chief value, and, in a natural state of things, most effectually insures its purification, as well as its increase; and for executing justice by trampling under foot the rights alike of the wrong doer and of his victim. Mankind may be said to have stepped out of night into day, in having thrown off the burden and bondage of this form of the social system, and having attained to the power of pursuing knowledge and justice in the spirit of justice. We have now escaped from that state of confusion and conflict in which one man's gain was necessarily another man's loss, and are fairly on our way towards that opposite state, in which, in every thing, as far as the constitution of this world will permit, the gain of one shall be the gain of all. This latter to whatever degree it may be actually attainable, is the proper hope and goal of all human civilization.”*

* Another illustration of the extent to which the principle had been carried and the evils to which it had led will be here given: “The importance of the change which substitutes the public and oral form of procedure for the secret sittings and written *acten* of the courts under the old German *Landrecht* cannot be too highly estimated. It is, in itself, a revolution. Under the old system the judge was also the prosecutor; all his ingenuity and legal knowledge were arrayed against the accused; all his skill was devoted to procuring a conviction, or driving the prisoner to a confession, often by the most cruel mental

Similar societies still, to some extent, exist.* The evil, corruption, tyranny, impiety and immorality which led to the suppression of others turned the tide of favour towards Masonry, which prevailed to a wonderful extent, until similar causes led to similar results, and the growing degeneracy of the system together with some evidences of unlawful and antisocial tendencies, led to its unpopularity, and to its open renunciation by a great number of its adherents. There are now therefore Masonic Clubs against which even the fraternity are openly warned.†

When the Odd Fellows began to exist history does not inform us, and its advocates cannot determine.‡ There is a variation between selecting the period of the Fall, the age of Christianity, and some recent period.¶ Be this as it may, the society had so far degenerated in 1813, that it became necessary to "revolutionize" in order to reform.§ "A Declaration of Independence," as Mr. Porter says it may very properly be called, was drawn up by a convention, and a new society formed, under the title of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows,¶ a society into which the spirit of secrecy has completely emptied itself.

torture. It might be difficult under such a system for a guilty man to escape; but the position of any one unjustly accused of a crime, even in Prussia, where the *Landrecht* had been modified, was a frightful one. A criminal inquiry that only lasted a year from the time of the arrest till the delivery of the sentence was to be considered a speedy one, the number of sittings and examinations within that period being unlimited. An illustration of this has just occurred. Within the last few days a man named Classen, a cabinet-maker or carpenter, has been condemned to imprisonment for life for the murder of his wife; the crime was committed during the Christmas holidays of 1847, and the trial has been going on ever since. In the case of the Catholic priest Rembauer, tried for murdering his maid-servant, whom he had seduced, the documents in four years swelled to 42 folio volumes, still extant, though there was but one direct witness as to the fact. At one of the hearings the judge suddenly uncovered the skull of the victim for the purpose of surprising the prisoner into some exclamation that might reveal his guilt. At the hundredth sitting the accused became conscience-stricken, and admitted he was guilty of the crime, but with some qualification, and from a technical difficulty in proving the exact cause of death after the lapse of years, he, in spite of the 42 volumes recorded against him, escaped the punishment he deserved. The trial of the Pastor Tinnins, for two murders, robbery, and embezzlement of church funds, all committed to indulge a mania for collecting books, lasted ten years.

* They exist in a form very analogous to these, in China. See the *Middle Kingdom*, vol. i. p. 391, vol. ii. 280, ends of 391, 395, intimated by and degeneracy of p. 284.

† *Freemason's Monitor*, p. 53, and *Odiorne's Opinions*. ‡ Porter, p. 13.

¶ *The Covenant*, p. 98, 100, and *Oration* p. 13. § Porter, p. 13. ¶ *Oration*, p. 15.

The object, aim, and end professed by this society, and to a most praiseworthy extent carried out, is of unquestionable goodness. It is free from all convivial habits, which open up an immediate entrance to corruption in such societies. And it guarantees much benefit to its members, by the number of pious and respectable members enrolled in the order.

Already, however, we perceive by the report of the M. W. Grand Sire, for 1847, that some discord, and some division and some independence, rather too independent even for Odd Fellows, has created fears for the permanence of that cordiality, subjection and love essential to the harmony of 120,000 members, and the expenditure of \$300,000 per annum. "The discussion, says the Grand Sire, of the internal affairs of our institution, by a portion of the public press, claiming to be organs of Odd Fellowship, will I fear be seriously detrimental to its best interests. Many erroneous constructions of law and usage have been by means of that press, scattered abroad throughout this jurisdiction. The domestic relation of the institution, as well as the laws by which it is governed, have been made the subject of controversy and comment; paper has warred against paper, each enlisting in its support a portion of the Order; and discord has been fostered, if not created, where peace and harmony previously existed."

In estimating the claims of the Odd Fellows, however, it is to be remembered that this society is in its virgin and primitive purity and simplicity. It is only laying its deep foundations and erecting its gorgeous superstructure. And with charity as its object, and purity and wisdom as its directors, it is a most invidious task for us to prognosticate future evil. We do not wish it, and if it were in our power we would not will it. But still we have our fears, founded upon human imperfection, and past invariable experience of the course of similar societies, which are closed against the sunshine and the atmosphere of a full, free and unobstructed public canvass, opinion and review. Our objection is not to the conduct, of which we know little, but to the principle of the society. We object to all similar societies, whether Sons of Temperance, Rechabites or what not, on the following grounds: They are secret; they are therefore, anti-social and anti-republican; they conflict with the claims of friendship, of love, and of society; they endanger

the spirit and principles of a pure and candid heart in which there is no guile, no deceit, no subterfuge, no pride, and no pharisaic love of distinction and superiority; they are, because secret, liable not only to corruption, but to perversion; they may become the engines of political power, the organs of disorganizing and demoralizing factions. We ask, therefore, as Philo did in the first century, since "nature makes all her most beautiful and splendid works, her heaven, and all her stars for the sight of all; her seas, fountains, and rivers, the annual temperature of the air, and the winds, the innumerable tribes and races of animals and fruits of the earth for the common use of man; why then are the mysteries confined to a few, and those not always the most wise and the most virtuous." This is the general sense of a long passage.

Such societies claim to be what they are not. Charity and benevolence is the high and holy mission which they affirm to be their sole and entire object. The language of St. Paul is therefore, by a most gross perversion, taken as their motto: "And now abideth faith, hope, and charity, but the greatest of these is charity." But true charity "is no respecter of persons." Charity is kind to the unthankful as well as to the grateful, to the evil as well as to the good. Charity knows no distinctions, and in its eye there is neither male nor female, bond nor free, poor nor rich. Charity giveth to the poor that have nothing to return, and expecteth not again. The charity of these societies, however, is limited by sex, by character, and by obedience to their rules—by conformity to all their views—by paying an entrance fee varying from five dollars to thirty-five dollars according to age, that is, in proportion to men's need of it and inability to afford it, and by the payment of a yearly sum varying from seven dollars to an indefinite amount. "If even a brother," says the covenant, "be more than thirteen weeks in arrears to his lodge, he is not entitled to his benefits, nor can he get into any lodge in any part of the world." "THE SYSTEM," adds this organ, "IS FORMED AS IF THE PLAN HAD BEEN ARRANGED BY SUSPICION ITSELF."

While, therefore, these societies claim from God and man the merit of the holy mission of charity, and while they blow a trumpet before them to let all men know that they exist only to be charitable, their nature, after all, is only that of mutual

insurance societies and this their organ is obliged to admit.* "The two great objects," says the covenant, "are to foster a regard for each other's interest and welfare, and to provide a fund for life and health insurance to its members."† To this end it accumulates funds, erects buildings, and increases power, credit, and influence among men. For self-gratification and self-exaltation, therefore, while poverty abounds around them, they provide houses, expensive arrangements, and dresses without which no one can enter a lodge or parade: they multiply orders, honours, titles, forms, obsequious salutations, and marks of respect, and thus they feed the principle of pride, vanity, aristocracy, envy, jealousy, and selfishness. And by securing universal provision for sickness and for bereaved families, may they not in many cases foster indolence, and idleness, and unworthiness, and break down the spirit of a manly independence and industrious prudence?

But our greatest objection to these societies remains, and it is, that while they unnecessarily use the bond of secrecy, (which is in no way essential to maintain their own securities,) they lay claim to the high and holy character of religion and tamper with its sacred words, offices and spirit.

"What is Odd Fellowship," asks the *Talisman*? "We answer in a single word it is practical Christianity."‡ In their

* "An intelligent member of the Order in question stated to the writer recently, that it was a matter of regret that the claim had ever been set up that they were a 'charitable society,' for, said he, 'the principle of benevolence has no place in our code at all; we pay out to those who are by our rules entitled to funds, and to no others: we pay out so long as members pay in, and when they stop paying, their membership ceases, and our obligations to them cease; we are in fact an extensive insurance company; if I am abroad among strangers I have a right by my well-earned membership to receive the notice of brethren of the Order; and they in return know that if they come here they have a claim on my attention, and if I refuse it, they would report me to the Order, and I should be disciplined or expelled.'"

† Vol. i. p. 101.

‡ "WHAT IS ODD FELLOWSHIP?—The astonishing progress which the Independent Order of Odd Fellows is making, both in this country and in Europe, renders the above question one of no ordinary importance. If there is an institution in our very midst which has made the most gigantic onward strides, and which already numbers among its members many of the most influential and powerful citizens of this great republic, and is still increasing; the inquiry is both necessary and proper. What is Odd Fellowship? We answer in a single word; *it is practical Christianity*. It combines all that is excellent in religion, pure in morals, and benevolent in practice. Beneath its sweet and gentle influences the rugged nature of man becomes softened by sympathy; the finer feelings of the heart are developed and cultivated; the social principle is strengthened; the fra-

instructions, therefore, they associate with emblems, signs and symbols "lessons from the sacred scriptures,"* and distinctly recognise in their initiation office, the divine authority of the Bible and their obligation to be governed by its spirit.†

"The Bible," said one of their members to me, "is the basis of the whole order." It is therefore in every lodge room, and is carried about in every procession and is called that great "luminary of the craft."‡

These societies quote and appropriate many scriptural passages.¶ They have their prayers, their benedictions, their blessings, and their funeral services. "A good mason," or other brother can never therefore, it is said, "be a bad man."§ And "the triumphs of Odd Fellowship are those of peace and good will among men."¶

God, therefore, is the grand architect. Melchisedec, and all the prophets and apostles, not excluding the Saviour, were members of the fraternity,** and while (as they blasphemously pervert the words) the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him "here, and He will show them *his* (*their italics*) Covenant." "The faithful shall be welcomed to the grand lodge above."††

Now in reference to these allegations we remark, first, that they do not state what is the fact in the case. Christianity is in part doctrinal, and in part practical. It contains doctrines, worship, church officers, ordinances, duties, and many practical requirements. But these societies know nothing of any one of the doctrines which distinguish Christianity. They know nothing of the author, the founder, the very life and light of Christianity. They know nothing of the spiritual views, feelings, motives, and qualities, which enter into practical Christianity. They know nothing of the church, the worship, the ordinances, or the duties enjoined by Christianity. None of these things enter into the constitution of these societies. They know them not. They heed them not. Like Gallio they care for none of these things. The doctrines, the duties, the ordinances, the officers, the rules, and the government of Christ's

ternal relations cherished and invigorated. Before its onward progress, woe and crime flee away; the unhappy fiends of unholy passion shrink into their dens of shame."—*The Talisman*.

* The Covenant, Vol. i. p. 103. † Do. ‡ Do. p. 102. *Fremason's Monitor*, p. 103. ¶ Do. p. 128. § *Monitor*, p. 120. ¶ Mr. Porter's Oration, p. 19.]

** *Monitor*.

†† *The Covenant*, Vol. i. pp. 193, 194.

kingdom—these things which constitute the very end and essence of the Bible, as a revelation of God's will and of man's duty, are set at nought. A man, therefore, may become a partaker of this "practical Christianity," and yet neither believe, nor obey any one of the characteristic and essential doctrines or duties of Christianity. He may be a Jew, or a Mahometan, or a Heathen, or an infidel, or an ungodly sinner, or an impenitent, unbelieving, and unregenerate man, under God's frown and condemnation, and exposed to everlasting damnation, and yet according to the teachings of these societies he may be a practical Christian. Membership in an Odd Fellows' lodge is thus made a substitute for that Christian piety, without which no man can see the Lord. While claiming to reverence the Bible, God, and Christianity, the Bible is first prostituted and then suborned; Christ is annihilated as a Prince and Saviour, and God is made the "Grand Patron" of error and delusion. Pride, passion, envy, jealousy, hatred, and opposition to all but their own order, lust and unbelief, may riot in the heart, and yet their guilty victims be guaranteed comfort upon earth and happiness in heaven.

It will not do to say, as some of the advocates, to escape from conviction of such deep and dangerous guilt, do say, that the forms and ceremonies of these orders are not religious. What then we would ask are they? They are placed in juxtaposition with the Bible. They are performed in the name of God. They imply homage to Him. They refer to the soul in life and in death. And are not these elements of religion?

When, therefore, good and Christian men unite with such societies, and give them their name, influence, and sanction, do they not become responsible for taking God's name and God's word in vain, and for erecting upon the foundation of eternal and unalterable truth, (unalterable either by way of addition or subtraction under the penalty of everlasting death) "the hay, wood and stubble" of man's inventions, and man's will-worship? Do they not lead others to regard this system as in all respects sufficient for them, and are they not involving themselves and their posterity in all the evils which must and will result from these societies, as they become gradually corrupt, unless they form a singular exception to all other secret societies that have ever existed in the world? Nay the evil is already working

and producing in many Christian minds the secret leaven of ultimate and thorough-going infidelity. We are not a little astonished that sentiments like the following should be cherished and expressed by one who boldly calls himself "a humble and sincere disciple of the Lord."!!! "Both my experience and observation demonstrate the truth that there is little of Christian love in the church, and that a man in a strange land can claim nothing as a Christian that he could not claim as a worldling." Where, in this wicked world, does this Christian brother live, that he should have imbibed as truth this stale calumny of infidelity. We know not where he lives nor who he is. But we know that such feelings are the natural result of the associations and working of these secret societies. They begin by making men Pharisees, and end by transforming them into Sadducees. "To suppose that Christ Jesus, for the purpose of benefiting or reforming men, would have joined a society like the Sons of Temperance or the Odd Fellows; pledged himself to keep its transactions secret from all the female, and most of the male disciples; to receive and call the members of such societies, whether Jews, universalists, atheists, deists, or Mahometans, his brethren; that he would have listened to unconverted men pronouncing a sort of blessing in the name of the great Patriarch above; to suppose that Christ would have devoted or advised his disciples to devote the time and expense called for by such societies to such ends: that he would have put on their regalia, and walked thus in processions: that he would have entered into their meetings by the outside and inside sentinels: sat with closed doors and shutters: addressed the presiding officer by the title of 'Most worthy Patriarch,' whether the person elected 'Patriarch' 'by ballot every three months,' happened to be old or young, worthy or unworthy of such a sounding title: to suppose the blessed Jesus would have met in such a secret conclave to devise measures and execute schemes of reform, which are kept secret from the persons to be reformed: to suppose this is to betray an utter ignorance of Christ, his character, doctrines and mission. Christ was open in all his proceedings, these societies are dark. He rejected pompous titles; these societies confer them. He was a pattern of severe simplicity in person and in speech; these employ garish regalia and cabalistic jargon.

“Christ explicitly declares, and we repeat the expression, that he resorted to no secret methods of reform: ‘IN SECRET HAVE I SAID NOTHING.’ All the ends which he proposed, and the means by which they were to be reached, were open, and the world’s scrutiny was constantly invited. This information is explicit, and it is to the point. There were no secret societies among Christ’s disciples. Cabals and conclaves there were in their days; Venus had her mysteries, and Bacchus his orgies, and Jupiter his games; and these all had their processions, their badges, their signs of initiation and degrees of progress. But these were not of Christ nor for Christ. Their pretended foundation was philosophy, and their professed end happiness and light. But their practical working was fraud and imposition, superstition and lust. Every idol temple was a lodge room, and every junto of pagan priests was a lodge, who amused the multitude by shows, pageants and processions; attracted the philosophic by pretensions to wisdom; awed the superstitious by their mystic rites; gained money from all classes; and, in the name of one God or another, gratified the appetites and ambition of cunning and corrupt leaders, while time bore generations to the tomb and to the judgment beyond.”

The origin of these societies is to be found, therefore, not in Christianity, but in Christianity paganized and corrupted by popery. And hence these societies find a remarkable parallel in many Romish societies,* and hence also the principles upon which they are founded constitute the basis of the Tractarian movement in England and America, and have formed the easy pathway for many of its followers “from Oxford to Rome.”†

It seems that Dr. Hook is a member of the Manchester Unity of Independent Odd Fellows, and that, influenced by his example, or “feeling confident that he could not go wrong while treading in the footsteps of the most eminent and practical parish priest of the age,” a Sussex clergyman (the Rev. H. Newland, Rector and Vicar of Westborne) was induced to join the Society and advise his people to do the same. He has since preached a sermon before the members of the order at Southampton, in which his well known “Church principles” are not indistinctly stated; but there is one passage so curious, and we must say, so

* See Hall on Purgatory, p. 320, 321.

† See Oxford Tracts for the Times, Vol. 5, p. 6 and Pt. 11, §5.

suspicious, that we cannot forbear adding it. It is as follows—

“The revival of the ancient institution which we are this day met to celebrate, is but another display of that feeling which God in his mercy has stirred up in our hearts, as a fresh bulwark to the Church he has promised always to be with; it is a reverence for, it is a desire to return to the institutions of our forefathers. The name indeed is modern, it was changed, for reasons that I shall afterwards mention; but the principle is ancient, and though perhaps thirty years ago the word *Odd Fellowship* was unknown, yet societies similar in all respects to that which we see revived in our own days, existed 1200 years ago, and in the times of the Saxon Heptarchy.

“In those days they were called *gilds*, from the Saxon word ‘*gildan*,’ which means ‘to pay,’ because the necessary constitution of societies so called together, was that the members should pay something towards the support of the brotherhood to which they belonged. ‘*Gilds*,’ says Dr. Lingard, ‘were an institution of great antiquity among the Anglo-Saxons, and in every populous neighborhood they existed in various ramifications.’ In those times (as is now the case in Germany), they generally consisted of particular trades; such as the *Gild of Weavers*, the *Gild of Masons*, the *Gild of Fishmongers*, the *Gild of Apothecaries*, and the like, who used, at stated times, to meet at their *Guildhall*; but in our days it has been considered more convenient to do away with the exclusiveness and party feeling, which so frequently arose from the conflicting interests of the different trades, and to join them all under the general title of *Odd* (that is unconnected) *Fellows*.

“‘The *Gild* was at all times essentially a Christian association or brotherhood, inasmuch as the ordinary members, over and above the special object for which they were associated, bind themselves to the performance of certain religious duties, with a view to their daily improvement in virtue.’”* Thus we—though associated for the purpose of providing relief in sickness and a payment at death, for ourselves—sanctify that object by raising a fund for the relief of widows and orphans generally, the first fruits of which we present at God’s Holy Table, and thus throw the authority and protection of religion around institutions of a character otherwise secular; acknowledging that

* Bishop Gillis.

human institutions will be for the most part vain, unless we bring religion in aid of earthly wisdom.

"To show you how little altered the principle of the society is now from what it was a thousand years ago, I will transcribe a translation of part of the laws belonging to the Gild of Abbotshurw.

" 'If any one belonging to our association chance to die, each member shall pay one penny for the good of the soul, before the body be laid in the grave; if he neglect it he shall be fined a triple sum; if any one of us fall sick within sixty miles, we engage to find fifteen men who shall bring him home; but if he die first, we will find thirty to convey him to the place where he desires to be buried, and the Steward shall summon as many members as he can to assemble and attend the corpse in an honourable manner, to carry it to the minister, and pray devoutly for his soul.' 'Let us act in this manner,' says the commentator, 'and we shall perform the duties of our confraternity; for we know not who among us may die first, but we believe, with the assistance of God, this agreement, if rightly observed, will profit us all.'

"These laws, modified in some slight degree to suit the times, are the laws of the present day, and the brotherhood, as we now see it, may be defined as a benefit society, bound by general laws, and sanctified by the exercise of a religious act,—Charity towards the fatherless and widows."

Let no man then be deluded by the supposition that secret societies whether Masonic, Temperance or Odd Fellows, are "Practical Christianity" or Christian at all. They are in their origin pagan, in their tendency popish, and in their spirit anti-christian. Hence they are regarded by Nolan and other writers, to form a part of the destined instrumentality by which the great predicted apostasy will effect its destructive purposes.*

Neither let any one look to these societies as the source of moral reformation. Reliance for promoting benevolence and goods morals generally, must be solely and wholly on the gospel and the grace of God. Torn from this living root, this evangelical basis, all experience shows that sound morality will quickly wither and expire. All other methods are empirical

* On the Millennium, p. 83.

and delusive. The bad tree cannot bear good fruit, and every plant which our Heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up.* In proportion as we vigorously ply the gospel means for making men better, we may expect success; in proportion as we forsake them to try other devices, nothing but defeat.

Would we see what the gospel and the church have done? Let us contrast Christian with heathen lands and Christian with heathen ages. Extinguish every institution found in the former and never known in the latter, for the poor, the aged, the sick, the blind, the deaf, the dumb, the destitute, the cold and perishing, the orphan and widow, the superannuated and imbecile, the ignorant and them that have no guide. The fact is that every thing that refines and elevates society, and that soothes its sorrows, and alleviates its calamities, is the fruit of Christianity. And would we see what Christianity could do? Let all among us become Christians and let Christians be what they should be, and then there would not remain a tear un wiped, a sorrow unrelieved, or a calamity unprovided for. Yes, if all the members of our churches would thus live and act and give to the church the energy, time, activity and zeal devoted to other objects, and if they would promote among themselves as far as need be, associations for the ends contemplated by these secret societies, how would our churches, instead of being languishing and faint, arise and shine, the glory of the Lord being arisen upon them, and how would they constrain all men to see and feel that "God is in them of a truth."†

* See Bloomfield on this passage.

† We would here call attention to the Christian Mutual Benefit Societies established in New York, of which the following is a notice: "The Third Anniversary of the Christian Mutual Benefit Society, No. 3, was held on Wednesday evening, 17th ult., in the Central Presbyterian Church in Broome street. The Rev. J. C. Hopkins, of the Bethesda Baptist Church, presided; the report of the Society was read by the Secretary, and addresses were delivered by the Rev. Geo. F. Kettell, of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Vestry street, and Rev. Mr. Armitage, of the Baptist Church in Norfolk street. As this Association is a practical illustration of Christian Union, we take much pleasure in calling the attention of our readers to their anniversary. It is composed entirely of church members, and the report states that the members are attached to twenty-six different churches in this city. Their principal object is to relieve the sick, and provide for the families of those who may be taken away; being similar, in most of the details of their organization, to the Odd Fellows and Sons of Temperance, without presenting those objections which exist in many minds to secret societies. This association is organized and conducted entirely on Christian principles, and in addi-

To every Christian man who had been led into these secret associations we would therefore with all earnestness say: "Brother, you have made a mistake in 'carrying out the principles of Christ,' as you call them. His principles require us to 'do good to all men as we have opportunity, especially to them who are of the household of faith;' but you have allied yourself to a society which requires you to aid and assist all men in distress, and especially those who understand the *secret grip*. Christ never acted upon or inculcated such a principle as that. He enjoins upon his followers that while they do good to all men, they should especially feel compassion, not for those who can give a secret sign, but for those who love and follow Him. Beware, then, my brother, how you transfer your sympathies from your brethren in the church to a society which makes religion no test of membership, and bind yourself by rules which to you are contrary to the inspired word."

ART. III.—*A Commentary on the Book of Joshua.* By Charles Frederick Keil, Doctor of Philosophy and Theology, Professor of Exegesis and Oriental Languages in the Imperial University at Dorpat, and Member of the German Oriental Society. Erlangen: 1847. Svo. pp. 411.*

THE book of Joshua contains one of the most interesting and important portions of Israelitish history. Treating of the period of their establishment as a nation, it contains the grand denouement of which Genesis was prophetic and the rest of the Pentateuch immediately preparatory. The books of Moses without Joshua would resemble an unfinished building; the plan, the dimensions all visible, much of the work accomplished, enough to lead one to anticipate precisely what is to follow, yet never

tion to its leading object must do much to do away denominational prejudices, and draw closer the bonds of Christian love and sympathy which exist in every Christian heart, but which are so often chilled for want of light and sunshine, that they wither and die, and cease to be known as distinguishing traits of Christian character."

* Commentar über das Buch Josua. Von Karl Friedrich Keil u. s. w.