

CONSECRATION VS. THE WORLD AND ITS AFFAIRS.

A BROTHER, once very deep in Secretism, and who knows that the Editor has had no such experience, writes as follows: –

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: – Your remarks under caption of *Secret and Beneficial Societies* in TOWER, of June 15, '95, seem rather funny to me. You hit the nail very fairly considering that you were hammering so much in the dark. I am glad that you defend the principle of protection as afforded by legitimate or old line companies, life, fire and accident. With you, however, I think their days are numbered. No human business was ever organized with broader and more philanthropic intentions than Insurance, and no business has been so abused and diverted from its real purposes. When Insurance fails (as it has failed) from the effect of selfishness, we can not hope that any human work will succeed.

As to the secret societies, they use a ritual applicable to each different degree, which is fully as reasonable as that of many of the churches, and like those of the churches, it is usually of heathen origin. The worship of the Sun appears prominently in Masonry, and so it does in the service of the Catholic and Episcopal churches. The term "Worshipful," as used in masonry, is now practically obsolete, but was formerly and generally used as a term of respect. I occupied the station of "Worshipful Master" for three years, but I never received the adoration of my fellow mortals, and I certainly never gave it to others. Your suggestion, that it is done ignorantly, is a good suggestion, but it does not apply in that case. Perhaps no man in my state, during the twenty odd years I was a member of the fraternity, gave more careful study to the symbolism of Masonry, its moral teaching, and its jurisprudence.

While masonry does not inculcate the worship of its officers, it does what is worse; for in its essence the symbolism used in the ceremonies are derived from *devil worship*.

Although no longer unequally yoked with those unbelievers (2 Cor. 6:14-17), I do want to say for those who are still in the bondage that they have much excuse. Masonry consists very largely in a series of moral instructions, taught agreeably to ancient usage, by types, symbols and allegorical figures. It is a system, and a very beautiful system – as is very much of Satan's work – when seen from the worldly standpoint.

Your fellow-worker in the best (not the *worst*) of bonds.

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Another Brother writes: –

"Masonry is not Christianity; and he who is so deluded as to think it is, is led thereby into a labyrinth of grievous errors. I think I know what I am talking about, for I was for seven years 'Master' of a 'Lodge,' and conferred hundreds of degrees. Masonry will not take away sins, or save a soul from death; and it is a grave question whether or not a child of God has any business spending time and money in any worldly institution. There is nothing *pure* that is earthly, but purity comes down from above."

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[R1849 : page 182]

An interested Brother writes us as follows: –

I send in this letter a check for Five Dollars to be spent in the Lord's work.

May I offer a suggestion? I wish very much that the TOWER would contain an article on *entire consecration*. I know many of the articles in

the TOWER have that thought as their basis, but I feel that the Lord is testing us, and that an article of that kind would help us.

When we have consecrated our all to God, I believe our all comprises whatever we have – time, money, strength, *everything*. Now I think we (at least, some of us) fail to see what a great privilege we could have, in being permitted to help spread this blessed gospel of joy and hope in the Lord and the resurrection from the dead. We are poor in this world's goods, but we can give a little; and that mite I think should be used in the Master's service. One of the sisters, a dear, good woman, was speaking, a short time since, about an organization, known as the A.P.A., and declared her belief in its principles and her intention of contributing to its support. I was much surprised, as she had just symbolized her consecration by immersion. I tried to show her that, even if nothing could be said against the order from an earthly standpoint, *she* was running for the prize of the high calling; that her health, time, money and all the other blessings she enjoys come from and belong to the Lord, and should be used in his service; that we are dead to this world, its pursuits, enjoyments, hopes, organizations; and that if we give money or influence to support worldly things, we are not living up to our consecration.

I believe in the truth as revealed to us to-day, and am blessed in being permitted to see clearly the plan of God.

REPLY. – This letter itself is quite a good expression upon the subject of consecration. Other expressions on the subject will be found in MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. I., pp. 233-239, 346-349; VOL. III., pp. 208-210; and others in ZION'S WATCH TOWER, May 15, '93, p. 153; Feb. 1, '94, pp. 38-40; etc.

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A young Brother recently interested inquires: Do you think it is proper for the saints to use tobacco? We reply:

Tobacco is not specifically condemned in the Bible; [R1849 : page 183] though the principle of discarding every defiling, abominable thing is distinctly taught; and therefore every Christian is privileged to spend as much money for it and to eat and smoke as much of it as he sincerely believes will do him good, physically and spiritually, and result to the Lord's glory – "Whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do," it should be done with an eye single to the Lord's glory. – 1 Cor. 10:31; Col. 3:17; Matt. 6:22.

The Apostle says (2 Cor. 7:1), "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Speaking for myself, and I believe that this is also the judgment of all faithful Christians who have to any extent put in practice the Apostle's words, I would say that I cannot see how it would be to God's glory, or to his own profit, for any Christian to use tobacco in any form. He "that hath this hope in him *purifieth* himself, even as he is pure." (1 John 3:3.) We cannot imagine our Lord reeking with the fumes of tobacco or putting into his mouth anything defiling.
