

## THE ENGLISH REVIEW

love of vanity, of mystery, of display, of make-believe; but the average man in England becomes a Mason for as serious a reason as he becomes a Church member or a Theosophist; and the average man is usually most abominably disillusioned. (Of course, we must eliminate the political or politico-religious motives which are the rule in France and Italy, and their business correlatives in America, where the Christian elements of certain rituals have actually been removed so that Jews might become 33° Masons!)

But back to our average man! He may join the Craft with some idea of fellowship, because it is a tradition in his family to do so, or because he hopes to find in the Secret of the Mysteries something which he does not find in any of the exoteric forms of religion.

How is it that the same Order satisfies—more or less—aspirations so diverse?

We are brought at last face to face with the fundamental problem of the Masonic historian—the Origin of the whole business.

Without any hesitation at all, one may confess that on this critical question nothing is certainly known. It is true, indeed, that the Craft Lodges in England were originally Hanoverian Clubs, as the Scottish Lodges were Jacobite Clubs, and the Egyptian Lodges of Cagliostro revolutionary Clubs.

But that no more explains the Origin of Freemasonry than the fact "Many Spaniards are Roman Catholics" explains why the priest says and does certain things rather than others in the Mass.

Now here is the tremendous question: we can admit all Mr. Yarker's contentions, and more, as to the connection of Masonic and quasi-Masonic Rites with the old customs of initiating people into the Trade Guilds; but why should such a matter be hedged about with so severe a wardenship, and why should the Central Sacrament partake of so awful and so unearthly a character?

As Freemasonry has been "exposed" every few minutes for the last century or so, and as any layman can walk into a Masonic shop and buy the complete Rituals for a few pence, the only omissions being of no importance to our present point, it would be imbecile to pretend that the