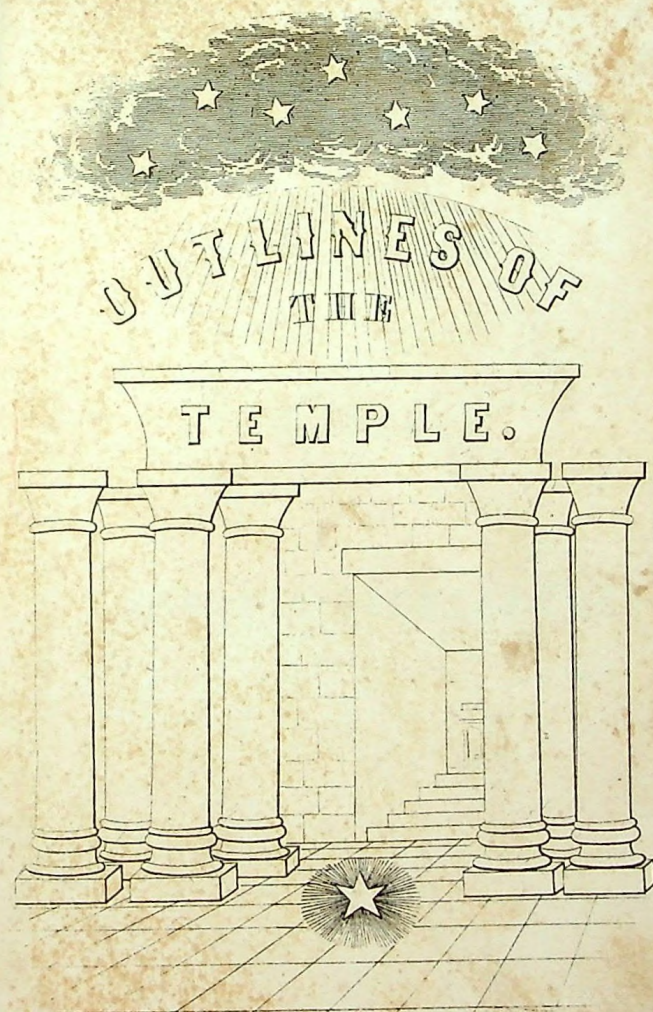






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MASONIC INSTITUTE

OUTLINES

OF THE

TEMPLE,

OR

MASONRY IN ITS MORAL ASPECTS

BY CORNELIUS MOORE,

EDITOR OF THE MASONIC REVIEW, AUTHOR OF THE CRAFTSMAN,
AND TEMPLAR'S TEXT BOOK.

WITH

AN INTRODUCTION,

BY WILLIAM B. THRALL,

PAST GRAND MASTER OF THE GRAND LODGE OF OHIO.

CINCINNATI.

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TO
THE MEMBERS OF
THE CRAFT IN INDIANA,
THE EARLY AND STEADFAST
FRIENDS OF THE AUTHOR,
WHOSE FAVOR AND INCREASING PATRONAGE
HAVE ENCOURAGED HIM
IN HIS LABORS,
This Volume
IS MOST AFFECTIONATELY
AND FRATEERNALLY
DEDICATED.

THE HISTORY OF
THE REIGN OF
KING CHARLES THE FIRST
BY
JOHN BURNET
IN TWO VOLUMES
THE SECOND VOLUME
LONDON
PRINTED BY J. STURMANT
IN THE YEAR 1724

P R E F A C E .

THE following work is the product of leisure hours, or rather of hours that *should* have been appropriated to rest and recreation from the incessant toils of editorial life. Two or three chapters have appeared in the "Masonic Review," but in an abbreviated form. In the present work those chapters are enlarged, and the arguments amplified, as the nature of the subject seemed to demand.

The author has long believed that the *moral aspects* of Freemasonry were not as clearly perceived, nor as highly appreciated by the Craft in general as they should be; and if this surmise be correct, the fact is greatly to be regretted. Every thing in Masonry that is truly excellent or valuable is dependent upon the moral principles which lie at the foundation of the whole system. If these be not clearly recognized, the structure reared thereon cannot be estimated according to its real worth. Whatever of vitality there is in Masonry must be derived from its connexion with revelation; and if that connexion be denied, the system cannot long survive. Hence the importance of placing these moral features of the Order prominently before its members, that all may clearly perceive and duly appreciate them.

The author has seen with some alarm of late years, a tendency in certain quarters to crush the moral barriers that the Fathers threw around our venerable Institution, and to intro-

duce therein a kind of semi-infidelity, where there *should* be a lively appreciation of sacred truth, and a humble acknowledgment of the Deity it reveals. He has aimed, in the following work, to stay, if possible, this tide of moral desolation in an Order he has long been a member of, whose principles he regards with reverence, and among whose members he hopes to live—and die. If he shall succeed in this effort, he will feel that he is amply compensated.

The work makes no pretensions to literary merit. It is written with plainness and simplicity. To *improve*, rather than to *please*, those who will most likely read it, was the end and aim of the author.

C. MOORE.

CINCINNATI, October, 1853.

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INTRODUCTION.

FREEMASONRY is a progressive science—not in the popular, flippant acceptance of the phrase, which implies mere frequent and agile change; but in that better sense, by which we understand that its pure lessons and profound teachings are communicated *by degrees*.

A man may in some sense be said to be a Mason, so soon as he has passed through the initiative formalities of *Apprenticeship*; though he can then have imbibed but inadequate and very imperfect conceptions of the full splendor of that LIGHT which has as yet but dawned upon his vision from the effulgent *East*.

Again, he may have passed from the Mosaic ground-floor, through the middle chamber, to the most holy place; may have advanced to honorable position, and marked well the rewards of faithful industry; he may have passed the chair of Oriental royalty, impelled by laudable ambition to secure the recognition of his claim to superior excellence; and reviewing the wonders at Horeb, and encountering the obstructions of a rough and rugged journey through unexplored primeval wastes, he may have attained to that most exalted position, "*the summit of ancient Freemasonry*;" and after all, have made but a mere RECONNOISSANCE of the "*royal art*"—taken but a cursory glance at the "*Outlines of the Temple*."

A geological survey of a country indicates to the student of that science the localities where mineral wealth is deposited. So, a passage through the formalities of the several degrees of Freemasonry, intimates to the attentive enquirer the repositories where the wise men of old, who laid its foundations, have stored inexhaustible supplies of mental and moral refreshment. But in either case, to make the benefits practically useful, he who would avail himself of them, must furnish himself with proper implements, put on the appropriate costume, and *work*.

The mere rituals of the lodge are but forms and ceremonies. They are important indeed for the ends for which they were designed, and should be understood by all who would thoroughly acquaint themselves with the mystic art. Yet, be it remembered, they constitute only the outward apparel of FREEMASONRY. She is a vital principle—a living, active reality. That principle, being an emanation from the ineffable Divinity, is “from the beginning.” Immortal in its nature, it survived the loss of Paradise; and through long ages of gross darkness has been the constant companion and friend of man. Assuming to itself specific form and organization at the building of the first Temple at Jerusalem, and taking to itself fashion at the hand of the wisest of men and most discreet of princes, it has descended through a chosen succession, to impart pleasure—(by inciting to deeds of charity and beneficence)—among its votaries of the present time. It has at successive periods aroused regal jealousy, pontifical envy, and popular clamor. With characteristic meekness it has encountered them all, and in unostentatious triumph, “still survives”—challenging all human institutions to produce her ante-date, and defying the pen of history to fix upon her escutcheon the stigma of crime.

To be well understood, Freemasonry must be thoroughly pondered in her details. Her ceremonials may be observed, and her rituals conned by rote, with but slight knowledge of her true worth, and with but a faint approach towards acquaintance with her real excellence. To arrive at her essential qualities we must descend into the arcana of her treasured wealth; remembering that every hieroglyphic mark of her pencil—whether angular, horizontal, or vertical—conveys a lesson worthy of our indefatigable research, and was left for our instruction. We should therefore be ever mindful of our duty to observe and preserve whatsoever way-mark we may find in our journeyings, thus dropped to guide us in our pursuit.

From the middle chamber of his mystic temple the contemplative Freemason looks abroad with admiration upon the "cunning workmanship" of his fellow man, displayed in useful invention and scientific attainments. He views with delight the successive orders of architecture—the spacious portico—the winding stair-case—and those "famous brazen pillars." And he curiously traces the origin, history, and purpose of them all. He is prompted to a cultivation of those faculties with which God has endowed him; and is especially observant of what he hears, and sees, and feels. Habit and observation bring him to a more perfect knowledge of language—that precious, fascinating gift which distinguishes man from the brutes that perish—and *that* knowledge prepares the way for investigating the powers and properties of numbers. And this in its turn leads to the study of GEOMETRY, "the first and noblest of sciences," the original synonym of MASONRY, that seems to occupy the space that separates

mortality from divinity. In the light of this science he contemplates the spheres, celestial and terrestrial. The comprehensive panorama displayed before him, and the magnitude and sublimity of the objects crowding upon his attention, excite within his very heart of hearts, a reverent admiration of the *Wisdom, Power, and Goodness*, of the SUPREME ARCHITECT whose fiat called them into being—the “*three great pillars*” by which the moral edifice of Masonry is supported.

Reversing the horoscope, he looks back upon himself—a minute infinitesimal atom in the vast universe of God. His pride of manhood shrinks abashed; and he is lost in an overwhelming sense of the littleness of humanity in its best estate. Again he remembers that he—inconsiderable by comparison as he has seen himself—even he, is the workmanship of that same divine Artificer, whose constant care is over all his works, so that even a sparrow doth not fall without his notice. The thought stirs within him latent emotions of conscious manhood. Humble adoration possesses his soul, and with unerring index

“points out an hereafter,
And intimates eternity to man.”

With such a preceptor, and such facilities for acquiring wisdom, what excuse shall the Freemason plead, in extenuation of opportunities unimproved?

It is the appropriate mission of Freemasonry, when the mind and affections are brought to a frame like this, to “take up her parable,” and in tones of compassionate fraternity peculiarly her own, *strike home* her momentous truths upon the hearts and lives of her votaries. *That* Freemasonry (if such there be) which comes short of making its possessors wiser

and better men—which contents itself with any thing short of bringing forth from its lodges the fruits of righteousness, charity, and peace—which fails to bring its members better acquainted with their duty to God, their country, their neighbor, and themselves;—*such* Masonry may well question the genuineness of its own teachings, and may be advantageously dispensed with. The “great Light” has not shed its rays upon such a lodge; and the sooner the taper which throws its sickly and delusive glimmer around its altar is extinguished, the better will it be for all concerned, and especially for those who love our Old Institution in sincerity and truth.

There are doubtless within the pale of the Masonic fraternity, many worthy brethren, ready and anxious to devote their leisure hours to the acquisition and dissemination of the essential truths of Freemasonry. To animate such, and encourage them to a patient perseverance in their laudable aspirations—to aid them in these labors by laying before them as on a chart, the prominent and fundamental doctrines as they exist “in the body of Masonry”—and to guide them in their enterprize by ingenious and timely counsel—are the primary objects of this little volume. A secondary incentive to its publication may be found in the hope, that while it may tend to those useful ends, it may at the same time serve to answer the demands of a very natural curiosity of a candid public, to be informed in the spirit of truth and soberness, of the object, aim and tendency of a society existing in their midst, and which throws its influence for weal or for wo, broadcast among them, and embraces, mayhap, members of their own households.

If these “*Outlines*” shall be found in some good degree to answer these ends, the design of the author will have been

compassed ; and the consciousness of having contributed to such a consummation, will prove his most ample reward. While general and precise accuracy has been his aim, he has not the assurance to suppose the book will be found entirely free from error. It goes forth upon its mission with no other panoply than *Truth*—no aspiration other than the welfare of the Craft. What is craved in its behalf, is the favorable consideration of the Fraternity, and the candor of an enlightened public.

WILLIAM B. THRALL.

OCTOBER 1, 1853.

OUTLINES OF THE TEMPLE.

CHAPTER I

THE TASK BEFORE US.

“It is the glory of God to conceal a thing ; but the honor of kings is to search out a matter.” SOLOMON.

To trace things to their origin is equally as important as to describe their nature and use.

BEFORE I commence the outlines of that mystic Temple which has stood so long the wonder of every land, and the admiration of those who worship at its venerable altars, it will be well to understand something of the nature of the task. There is a strange and mysterious association that has existed in almost, if not quite, every civilized nation under heaven, and so long that “the memory of man runneth not to the contrary.” United together by bonds as sacred as they are enduring ; possessing a language well understood and universally recognized ; presenting the same general aspects, and embodying essentially the same principles and objects, this association challenges the investigation of all,—its friends and foes. From the uninitiated it seeks to conceal nothing, save that which is essential to its existence ; and it only

asks of them to judge it, not by what curious ignorance and bigoted fanaticism may say of it, but by its own acknowledged principles, its declared objects, and its legitimate influence. That association is FREEMASONRY. To its own members it throws open the avenues to all its secret apartments and mystic rites. It asks from them the closest scrutiny and severest investigation. Nay, it urges them to this task by motives involving their own well-being, and that of their associates ;—by considerations that reach from the moment of their reception into the Order to their last foot-print on the shore of departing time. And those considerations do not stop there ; for thoughts are evolved, and principles are imbibed, and habits are formed, whose results and influences will only be fully developed when the “ freed spirit ” shall have put on its immortality. It is not only, then, the interest of the Freemason to engage in this work, but it is his imperious duty. The pleasures arising from accumulated knowledge invite him to it ; and the dearest interests of both worlds at once press it upon his attention.

What is Freemasonry? By this word I do not mean the *work*, or *rituals*, as practiced in our lodges, for this is a separate and distinct undertaking, and one which has been already well accomplished. Not of her language, her arms, her livery, or her ornaments would we ask ; but of herself,—the active, living, deathless principle which constitutes the vitality and soul of Masonry. Before we commence

the work of studying it, it will be important to understand, to some extent, at least, the nature and magnitude of the labor we are about to undertake. Before a man starts on a journey to a distant land, he not only endeavors to ascertain, first, the distance he may have to travel in order to reach his destination, but, in his mind's eye, traces out the way by which he is to go; how many mountains he may have to climb, and what kind of a road leads over them: whether there are rivers, lakes, or seas to cross; and, if so, whether there are any means by which he can pass them in safety, and what those means are; the whole map of his tour is spread out before him, and he knows *what* he will have to accomplish, and what facilities he will have to enable him to reach the end—how long it will probably require, and the amount of labor necessary to overcome the obstacles which he knows lie in his way. So in the attempt to study and fully understand Freemasonry. We should first ascertain what it is; we should fix its boundaries, define its outlines, understand its forms and proportions, and learn its nature. We should determine whether it consists in the ideal or the real, whether it be theory or practice, or both. Whether it is made up only of ceremonies and rites and forms; or whether *within* all these there be a living principle, something on which the human intellect may fasten and employ its powers of investigation, and by that investigation, as gems are taken from the rock and rubbish of the earth, bring forth something of *real*

value,—something by which the moral and intellectual faculties of man may be cultivated and improved, his heart made better, and his life adorned.

Freemasonry has a *soul* as well as a *body*. It is not a magnificent temple, beautiful in proportions, rich in architectural skill, and lovely in all its outward adornments, but empty, desolate, and dark within! If it is comely and beautiful without, its inner courts and secret halls and private chambers, are immeasurably more so. If its outward splendors bespeak the habitation of a divinity, go with me over its tessellated ground-floor, through its middle chamber, and into its "holy of holies," and there you will see the altar and the fire and the divinity itself. The great mistake of the day is, that what we technically call the *work* of Masonry is Masonry itself. This is a serious error and should be corrected, for it is lowering the dignity and importance of Masonry, and degrading as well her character as her mission. The work and rituals of the Order are only the defences cast up around the Institution to preserve it from unhallowed hands, and guard it from the approach of the impostor and the unworthy.

If the rituals and ceremonials of the lodge-room constitute the whole of Masonry, there is a phenomenon connected with its history, its reception, and its progress among men, which cannot be explained by any known laws of human action. That men of all creeds and professions, of all stations and conditions in society—the prince of noble birth and exalted

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position, and the peasant of humble pretensions;—that the men of every land and language and nation under heaven should all be pleased and gratified with Masonry;—nay, should esteem it a distinguished honor to be associated with the Craft, and be permitted to meet in our lodges, share a part in our labors, and be considered brothers among us; and yet that Masonry is nothing but rituals and ceremonies—an empty show—is certainly one of the most singular events in the recorded history of man! And then, that all these various classes of men should sustain, encourage, and patronize for centuries, an institution consisting of mere shadows, and love it the better the more they know of it, is something that human reason cannot account for, and credulity itself will not believe. Why, look at it! Masonry is not of obscure parentage, or private growth. It has not been kept concealed in some dark corner of the earth, secluded from the gaze of the critical and curious. Nor is Masonry a thing of yesterday. It has not been the creation of an age in which human genius has burst its fetters and gone out into the field of fancy, and created images, and erected structures, and painted fairy scenes, as if to exhibit the strength of its own powers and destroy the preconceptions of the sober and reflecting. You may go back a century, and live with the plain practical men of other days—with Warren and Washington, and Lafayette and Franklin, and their illustrious compeers—men whose distinguishing characteristics were strong sense

and stern virtue ; and among them, and in that age, Masonry was in its manhood and ready for the severest test of investigation. You may go back five hundred years farther in the history of the world, and then Masonry was in the pride of its strength. Go back, indeed, through the lapse of ages, until the lights of recorded history shall gradually fade into the mere glimmerings of tradition, and still the genius of Masonry will accompany you in your pilgrimage. And when authentic history is lost in tradition, and tradition itself becomes fabulous, and you can no longer see the venerable form that travels by your side, yet even then you can see her *mark* upon the physical world,—for she has left the impress of her labor in the remains of mighty temples, and graven it upon the enduring monuments of ancient skill that have resisted the wear of centuries, and still stand as the mementos of art in ages forgotten in the returnless past. There was Masonry, *in* the world, and *with* the world, and *for* the world. Her friends have admired her beautiful proportions without, and they have traced the windings of her interior and most secret departments ; and the more they have known of her the more they have admired her. Her enemies, too, have not been idle. They have examined her exterior developments with a critic's eye and a critic's envy. They have broken down the legal barriers, and tried in her secret chambers to discover the "mysteries of iniquity : " but after passing the fiery ordeal of friends and foes ; the

investigations of the curious and skilful ; and enduring all this in every land, and embracing a period of centuries, she still retains the affection of her friends, and commands homage even from her enemies. And yet is Masonry only a ceremony, the mere performance of prescribed rituals !

It cannot be. If the mere ceremonial of the Order be all of it, then, to say the least, it dwindles into very diminutive proportions—it is little more than a shadow. And how the most acute and philosophical minds, embracing a Locke, a Wren, a Franklin, a Washington, a Warren, a Clinton, and a thousand others like them, could, for successive centuries, be enamored by the beauties and bound by the attractions of a—*shadow*, though permitted freely to examine it in every light and aspect, I confess I am at a loss to conjecture.

But Masonry is a *reality*: it has a body and a soul as well as a shadow. When her enemies aim their blows at her they do not strike into empty air,—though their blows are harmless: and when her friends gather around her, they feel that the object of their affections is a divinity in substance as well as in form: a being that is substantial and tangible; lovely as it is real, and beautiful as it is useful.

Freemasonry is an organization of principles drawn from the highest sources of human reason and divine revelation: of principles in their nature profoundly philosophical, and, in their practical exhibition and influence, of untold value to the family of man. It

is true they are often represented by tangible and material objects ; but the right angles, the squares, the circles, and the triangles, are only the visible caskets that conceal the living gems within ; the robes which cover the vital principles—the barrier that protects the unquenched fires that burn forever upon its altars. The old warrior-chieftain, when, with his heathen cohorts, he encamped about Jerusalem, could see the walls and pillars, the gates and porticos, the tower and dome of that mighty Temple in which dwelt the symbol of the Divine presence—the visible manifestation of the God of Israel ; but the altar, the ark, and the cherubim, and the glorious Shekinah were invisible to him. But the chosen people were permitted to pass the barriers, to unlock the secret apartments, and press their way into the “holy of holies,” though it were with fear and dread, and bearing offerings and incense in their hands. So may we search the mystic apartments of our glorious structure, and from its most secret recesses bring forth jewelry of costliest kind, and adorn ourselves with robes of richest dye, and most enduring texture.

Masonry must be well understood in order to be properly appreciated ; and it must be *well* studied before it can be fully understood. It is not a specimen of machinery so simple in its construction as at once to reveal to a casual observer the power which impels it. Like man, it is compound in its nature, assuming body and shape ; and like man,

too, it is the habitation of a principle of untold value—mysterious, magnificent, and immortal. Its construction is complex and curious ; it is a wheel within a wheel ; principle within principle. And far within the ingenious structure, concealed in the brightness of its own emanations, there sits a divinity invested with the attributes of power and perpetuity, imparting life and motion and activity to the whole machine. Looking from its throne of brightness upon man in his natural ignorance and accumulated depravity, it regards him in the light of a glorious future ; not only as a social being, connected by nature and sympathy with his fellow man, but also as an immortal being, linked by the inheritance of a common hope and a glorious destiny with beings of a higher race and a life that knows no ending. It puts into motion the machinery that can dispel the gloom which envelopes his natural perceptions, and from its deep resources evolves a ray of light which gradually increases in intensity, until, in its burning focus, man sees God and angels : and following in the pathway brightened by its effulgence, he completes his pilgrimage to the tomb, and then goes beyond it and takes his position among ranks of intelligences pure and happy and deathless.

To gaze upon such a form, invested with attributes of a glorious origin, and, in the plenitude of inherent power, tearing down the bulwarks of ignorance, and waking up in the human heart new thoughts, new hopes, and new desires, and telling man, not only

how he may be happy himself, but how he may make others happy, is a vision and enjoyment worthy the toil necessary to their acquisition. To see that form, thus engaged, is to love it. But it will require effort to win the sight. The laggard who is content with merely knowing how to work his way into a lodge-room, and whose knowledge goes no farther than the mere *language* of Masonry ; who is content when he gets inside of the outer courts, and looks upon the swelling grandeur revealed in the noble proportions of our mystic temple, will never be permitted to gaze with rapture on the goddess who sits enthroned in its secret chambers. We should remember that these outward adornments are but the shadows of important truths revealed within. And we must not expect the doors which lead to the interior to open of themselves, nor the obstructions which lie in our path to be removed by an unseen hand. Pleasure is robbed of half its attractions if won without effort. We must perseveringly knock at every door that successively rises before us ; we must patiently toil on, removing particle after particle of the rubbish that obstructs the way ; submitting every jewel we find to the test of fire, and examining every inscription we meet with in the light of human reason and divine revelation, until its teaching is made plain, and we are able fully to fathom all its deep mysteries. And thus we should persevere, step by step, and day by day, until we come into the holy place, and comprehend the secret meaning of all our speaking em-

blems, and converse, as it were, face to face with the divinity that presides within. Like all other acquisitions, this knowledge and privilege is the reward of labor. Toil, think, delve ; search, compare, investigate. Perseverance will secure success, and ample wages will reward the toil. "*Labor omnia vincet.*"

“Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate ;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.”

CHAPTER II.

ORIGIN AND MISSION OF MASONRY.

The Temple! The Temple! How proudly it stands
On grey old Moriah, the joy of all lands;
Untouched by the spoiler—untarnished by sin,
With light streaming round it, and glory within!

THE work before us we shall find to be one of great magnitude, for Masonry is not confined to a single point of investigation. In the subjects which it presents for thought and reflection, it furnishes a rich and ample variety. The most pleasing and interesting, as well as the most sublime, solemn, and important matters on which the human mind can employ its powers, are here presented for consideration. The character and claims of the Deity, his perfections and his law, demand our consideration. The light in which we should regard our fellow man; the estimate we should place upon him in our associated relations, as heirs of a common heritage and a common destiny; the manner in which we should treat him, and the rules that should govern our intercourse with him, are matters here clearly set forth and expressively taught. Our duty to each other as brethren, both in the lodge and out of it, and our conduct towards each other, both in spirit and language, are here distinctly laid down. Our public

duties, either as citizens or sojourners, whether we live in a free country or under a despotism, may all be learned from Masonry. The rules which she prescribes for human conduct are full of a wisdom rarely found in a human code, and I trust I shall be pardoned if I here remark, that if we were more familiar with what Masonry has made our duty in these respects, and recognized more fully the binding force of her laws, we should have more of a oneness of spirit and feeling; our behaviour towards each other would be more courteous and kind, and we should hear less of jarring interests and discordant feelings. We should then realize the full meaning of "that cement which unites us into one sacred band, or society of friends and brothers, among whom no contention should ever exist but that noble contention, or rather emulation, of *who can best work and best agree.*"

Masonry not only provides for propriety of conduct in our intercourse with man, and especially with each other as Masons, but in the wide range of its teachings it lays hold of matters of infinitely greater magnitude. Our social and relative duties are the mere filling up,—the pencilings that ornament, or the drapery that hangs around and beautifies the majestic frame-work of this gorgeous Temple of three thousand years ago. Higher and holier and inconceivably more important truths, are here most bountifully revealed, and impressively taught.

Reader, go with me in imagination to the land of

Palestine, and the holy city, and the glorious Temple that once crowned the summit of Moriah—"the joy of the whole earth." Supposing our traditions to be substantially correct, let me draw aside the curtain and reveal to your wondering eyes a scene that was exhibited there, and describe a transaction which, once imprinted upon the memory, will be forgotten no more.

The period was in the year of the world, 3000 ;—previous to the Advent of Him of Bethlehem, 1000 ; before the present time, 2853 years. There was a gala-day in Jerusalem. Gladness and rejoicing filled not only this, the central city, but the whole land over which waved the banner of Israel. Solomon, the chosen of God, the wisest and wealthiest of earth's sceptered monarchs, was in his capital, and that capital itself was the most renowned of cities,—the wonder of every mind and the theme of every tongue,—the central point on which was concentrated the attention and the gaze of surrounding nations. Some writer of modern days has beautifully said, that, "in the whole universe, there are only two cities interesting alike to every citizen of the civilized world, whatever may be his tribe or nation—ROME and JERUSALEM. The former calls up every classic recollection, the latter awakens every sentiment of devotion: the one brings before our eyes all the splendors of the present world, the other all the glories of the world to come."

Solomon, I have said, was in the capital of his dominions. Hiram of Tyre, one of his kingly neigh-

bors, the friend of his father, and his chief assistant in the erection of the Temple, was there, also, by invitation. Tyre, it will be remembered, was a city on the sea-coast of Judea, celebrated for its maritime strength and commercial enterprise. And though the Tyrians were heathens and idolaters, and their monarch had erected temples and consecrated them to the worship of heathen deities, yet, by his intercourse with David and his illustrious son, his mind had been enlightened by new and startling truths, and he now did homage to the God of Israel. On the day of which I am writing, these two distinguished men had met by appointment—two of the renowned triumvirate—to complete their labors and dedicate the Temple to the only true God. The Craft, who, for seven years had wrought in harmony and hope, and among whom there existed sentiments of strictest amity and the warmest friendship, were gathered there from the quarries and the forests—from Lebanon and Zeredatha and from Joppa—to meet and mingle together for the last time. Their long and hallowed labors were now ended. The glorious structure, reared by God's own command, and strictly after the outlines and patterns exhibited by Himself, and for His own dwelling-place and sublime worship, was now completed. The last timber had been placed in its proper position, and the cap-stone "brought forth with shoutings." They had now assembled to receive the reward of all their toils, to take the last embrace, and speak the regretted and lengthened farewell;

and then separate to meet no more—or meet in heaven. Now, if ever, the genuine Freemasonry was to be perfected, and, robed as an angel on mercy's errand, she was to go forth into all lands, wherever art and enterprise and mechanic skill could carry her. The object so long coveted by the associated workmen, in part the object and reward of their toil, was now to be obtained ; the genius of the Order was now to be invested with the attribute of perpetuity, and, granted ample passports for her journey, she was to wend her way over the earth, a pilgrim of the world to the latest posterity.

But, the question arises in the minds of those whose prerogative it is to decide, what shall the illustrious traveler bear with her in her pilgrimage? Nothing save that knowledge of the arts and sciences which her children possessed, together with the means of recognizing each other in foreign lands? Or shall she go as a messenger of infinite good, bearing in her hands the treasures of both worlds at once, and brightening the dreary wastes of this by inspiring hopes of a better? This was a question of no ordinary magnitude, and demanded, as it received, the deepest consideration. It was a moment of most absorbing interest. There were one hundred and fifty thousand Craftsmen assembled to claim—to receive and have—the honors and rewards of seven years of labor. Through wintry storm and summer's heat they had patiently endured the toil, assured that at the *proper time* they should receive the long

sought and much coveted treasure. No wonder their hearts swelled with expanding hopes, when they thought of the glorious recompense which they had won, and had now to wear. And what a gathering was that! See the mighty multitude that throng the middle chamber, and cover the ground floor, and fill the outer courts, backed and encircled by uncounted thousands of the congregation of Israel, stretching away down the streets to the very walls of the city! In their midst, crowning the summit of Moriah as a central point in the wonderful panorama, and to which every eye is turned, stands the TEMPLE, with its lofty columns and swelling dome and gilded roof flashing back the sunlight from above—the dwelling-place of Jehovah, and the type and likeness of a “building not made with hands,” away—away in heaven. There, on the throne of Israel, is Solomon; and at his side sits his illustrious coadjutor. The moment is big with absorbing interest, for the most important results depend upon the decision about to be pronounced. Now let us leave that panting crowd for a little season, with their struggling thoughts and sublime contemplations, and look with me upon another scene.

Let us go out into the desert, and ascend that lofty mountain whose rocky and riven peak looms away up above its surrounding compeers. We have reached the spot; the clear bright heavens are above us, and the earth lies like an outspread plain at our feet. Now look around with a prophet's eye, and with a

prophet's wisdom describe the scene before you. A universal night has settled down upon the world. A cold, gloomy night, freezing up the spiritual vitality of man, has gone abroad until the whole earth is wrapt in one dread pall of intellectual and moral gloom. The nations of the earth have forgotten—nay, have abjured their Creator, and in the madness of their folly and their rage for worship, have instituted false deities, and placed on the throne of the universe an object of their own creation. The idol-gods of the heathen are worshipped upon every hill top, and perfumes smoke before them in every valley. The incense of the idolater fills the groves, and horrid rites are performed, and gods of wood and stone—the likeness of beasts and birds and scaly reptiles, receive the homage of immortal men, and

“Jupiter usurps Jehovah's shrine.”

“God is not in all their thoughts,” nor in *any* of their thoughts, for they have no conception of Him ; or, if any, a disordered and degraded one. The natural and inevitable consequence of this state of ignorance, degradation, and crime, is universal wretchedness ; and misery, embodied, sits enthroned in a world once the Eden of God and vocal with the harmony of angel-harps. On one little spot only, in the vast desert of woe and frenzy, does a ray of redeeming light beam from the “upper sanctuary.” That spot is Judea. There, alone, is a knowledge of the true God retained. There are the oracles, the

altar, and the covenant ; and there His attributes are known, and the glorious origin and lofty destiny of man are properly understood. The residue of earth is, in truth, "a howling wilderness" of intellectual and moral desolation. Man curses his fellow, disowns his God, and ruins himself. Human life is a pilgrimage of woe over which broods a storm-cloud too dark and terrible for pen or pencil to describe. The pathway of life is traced in blood ; and man's brightest hopes and highest aspirations reach no farther than the cold, damp chambers of the grave. The future, to him, is a sea of storms, over which is outspread a moonless and starless night,—

"A long, dark, dark night,
That has no morn beyond it."

Do I venture too far when I say, that angels look upon the scene, and lay aside their harps and weep ; and God is moved with pity at the sight !

Solomon and his distinguished associates in the erection of the Temple, looked upon this picture in the light of a sound philosophy and divine Revelation, and with hearts swelling with benevolence and good will to their fellow men. The Holy Scriptures, so far as they were then written, were unknown beyond the limits of Palestine ; and so far as I am aware, but a single copy then existed, and that was laid up in the Ark of the Covenant. Unfinished as it was, it contained the MORAL LAW in its great leading outlines and essential features. It was the only true "LIGHT" in the midnight of the world, capable

of scattering the darkness and showing men the means of recovery and the pathway back to God. It was the great moral panacea that could heal the wounds and woes of bleeding humanity, and send a tide of new life through the desolated earth. Here, then, was the means of redemption from a bondage deeper and darker than the grave.

The worthies of Israel knew the value of the treasure they held by the gift of heaven ; that it was of the last importance to the world that the "*Sacred Code*" should be sent abroad ; that its light and instruction, its truths and revealments should be within the reach of all ! They knew the infinite value of the deposite in their hands ; but how to place its benefits and blessings within the reach of the nations was a question not so easily solved. Suddenly, (it *may* have been from heaven,) the idea had birth that the association of artizans and workmen, by whose skill and labors the famous fabric before them had been reared, might be made a *depository* of those great truths which Israel held in trust for the benefit of men ; and that through their instrumentality those truths might go out among the people and dispel the incumbent gloom ; and thus light, and life, and gladness be carried to the dark and wasted world around them. It was a noble conception, worthy the wisdom of the renowned monarch of Israel, and pregnant with everlasting blessings to humanity everywhere.

The thought was no sooner conceived than the purpose was formed and the plan adopted. The glo-

rious design was instantly put into execution, and Freemasonry was commissioned as a messenger of light and knowledge, and sent out on a mission of love to the whole family of man. And this was the duty with which she was charged—to carry to remotest lands, and latest ages, a copy of the MORAL LAW, a knowledge of the God of Israel, the accountability of man, and the immortality of the soul. I appeal to every well instructed Mason if this was not the burden of her mission; and whether the traditions, history, genius, rituals, and spirit of the Order do not justify me in this assumption. It is not pretended that the very facts and transactions occurred as I have described them; the picture is an ideal one. But every brother who has thoroughly studied Masonry in all its aspects knows that the assumption is a reasonable one. Her business was as above described, and nobly and faithfully has she labored in her vocation! A full description of the instruments she used, or the manner in which she wrought, cannot be committed to paper. Nor does history furnish resources from which to trace her devious wanderings, and describe her checkered history in the world for three thousand years. But she went forth to commence the labors of a world's life time, bearing upon her brow the mysterious and unspoken NAME, in her casket a jewel of living radiance, and in her bosom a hope swelling with the grandeurs of eternity. In her hand was a key with which she unlocked the doors of the grave, and let in a ray of sunlight that scat-

tered its darkness ; and from its farthest recess there opened a vista that, gradually expanding, revealed a world of being and of bliss beyond the conception of the loftiest intellect of man. She went forth teaching the *name* and the *attributes* and the *providence* of God ; telling man that he was made for a nobler destiny than his miserable systems of idolatry had revealed. She told him of a being bright as the stars, blissful as angels, and endless as the years of eternity. She made known to him the requirements of God's unchangeable word, by *means of that Word* ; she instructed him in his duty to his Maker, to himself, and to man :—she gave him directions how to live, with what hopes to die, and where he should live again.

The above, I assert, are the great distinctive original features of Freemasonry. They are written upon her escutcheon ; they are interwoven with every fibre of her nature ; they enter into the very elements of her being. And *wherever Masonry goes, these vital and important truths*, on which is suspended the welfare of humanity, *must go with her*.

I will not say that Jehovah has not devised means independently of these to make known the same truths to man. It is admitted that he has. Nay, his Revelation has been perfected, his plans completed, and the gates of the heavenly city are thrown open to the four quarters of the world. But this does not militate against the facts asserted, nor detract from the usefulness of an inferior agency in nations and

ages where the broad daylight of Revelation has not yet shed its rays. Nor will the usefulness of this inferior agency pass away until the light of truth shall have spread through *every* nation ; until society resumes its original condition, and *every* man becomes an obedient subject of the spiritual and perfected government of God.

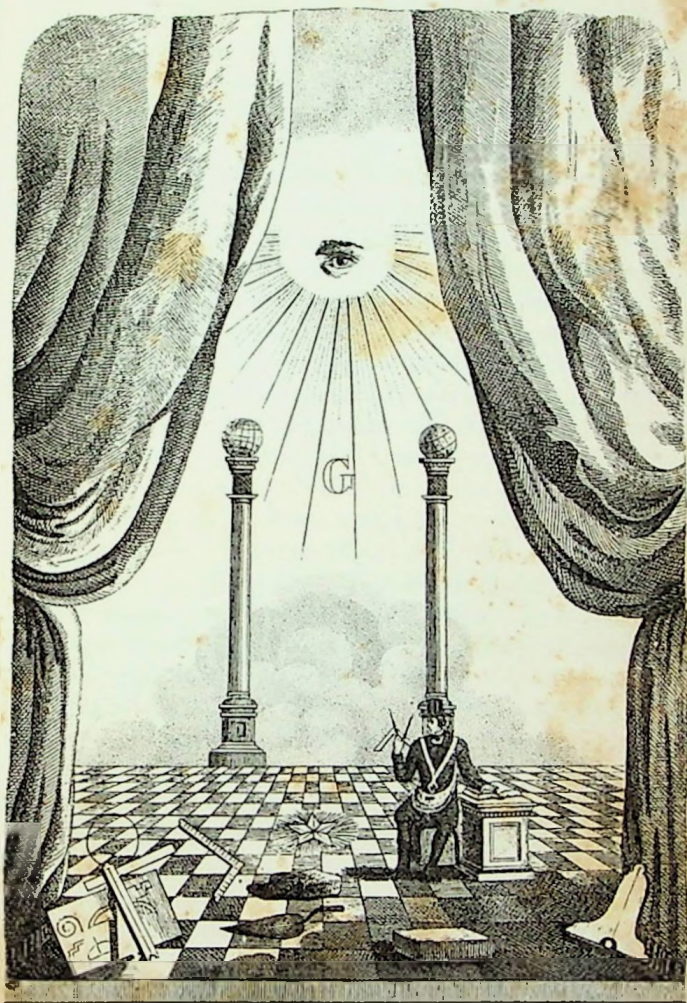
CHAPTER III.

IMPORTANCE OF STUDYING MASONRY.

“ Read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest.”

“ Prompt us to labor, as Thou hast directed,
On the foundation laid sure in the past ;
And may “ the Stone which the builders rejected,”
Crown our endeavors with glory at last.
Then at the eventide
Laying the Square aside,
May we look calmly on life's setting sun ;
And at the Mercy Seat,
Where ransomed spirits meet,
Hear from the Master the plaudit, “ well done.”

HAVING briefly described the nature and mission of Masonry, I come now to give some reasons why it should be studied. If it be what I have described it ; if its great original purpose be of such a lofty nature,—so full of benevolence and blessings, there would hardly seem a necessity to urge its friends to investigate it carefully. But it is to be regretted that so many, even of its friends, stand at a distance and see only the general outlines and beautiful proportions of the noble edifice. They forget that its opened doors invite them to explore its internal mysteries, and fathom all their profound instructions. Too many see nothing but hilarity and friendship, where they might read truths that startle angels with





surprise. They have applied for admission, and gained it; and then sit down to glory over the achievement as though their labor was ended and their purpose accomplished. Perhaps their *purpose* is accomplished; for it *may* be that *mere admission* comprehended the whole of it! Others, again, pleased with the aspect of things around them, make an effort at improvement. They learn the art of drawing a right line, or parallels; perhaps of right angles and triangles, levels, horizontals, and perpendiculars; but here their efforts cease. They have learned, in common phrase, the use of tools, but not the principles of construction nor the practical details of the art. They can possibly prepare and put together the framework of the edifice, but cannot complete and ornament it, much less place within it a living soul. To stop at such acquisitions is to fail in the great object and design of the Order. There are heights and depths and lengths and breadths to explore, which will furnish toil for years of labor, and from which a glorious harvest may be reaped.

Is it asked why Masonry should be studied, and what subjects she offers for investigation? I answer that she *carries with her the Bible*. And why does she do it, and what is her purpose? That book, it must be remembered, is no ordinary book. It came down from heaven, and treats of subjects and interests of the last and highest importance. It reveals great truths, which affect the interests of more worlds than one, and give birth to thoughts and hopes to

which man, in the darkness of idolatry, is a total stranger. While it has much to do with the future, it is not neglectful of the present. Who can tell what influence that book has had in modifying the condition of man as a denizen of earth. The world is more largely indebted, both politically and socially, as well as morally, to that than to any other book, or to all other books. To Masons it is emphatically *the* book. A lodge can neither be opened nor organized without it. Its divine teachings are heard at every meeting. Place it beyond the reach of the fraternity, and you "extinguish the luminary of our associated existence." Rob us of this treasure and our lights will go out, the sound of the gavel will cease, and not another candidate can be admitted among us. We live because the Bible is with us; drive that from this dark world, and Masonry will spread her wings and follow it to a brighter one. That good old book is intimately connected with the original organization of the Craft, and has traveled with it down the tide of years through a pilgrimage of centuries. In the desert, the dungeon, and the mine, amid the fierce conflicts we have had with the Pope and his Jesuits, along the dark years of the middle ages, when priestcraft was in its glory, and persecution went forth as the herald of its power, and ignorance and superstition settled like the banner of midnight upon the mind, that book and Masonry breasted the storm side by side. I cannot, in this way, reveal the peculiar nature of the connection;

how the influence of one discovered the other when lost—and preserved and sheltered it when found. It is enough to say that we have it, and that we have long had it when *few else had*; that it constitutes, as it should, the life-blood—the vitality of the Order. In the providence of God we have been linked together in existence during our past history; and should that moral luminary ever go out, we shall lay us down and die beside it: in life we have been united, and the funeral chant of the one must be the requiem of the other.

How deeply interesting, not to say how vastly important it is, then, for Masons to investigate, with the light of history to guide them, the relations and connections existing between the lodge and the Bible. The earlier portions of this book were lost at the time of the conflict of the heathen with the Jew; and during the seventy years of captivity, as if in sympathy with the crushed and scattered nation to whom it was first sent, the sacred volume sought a hiding place from the storm that swept over the beloved city and the holy place. But our traditions tell us, and recorded circumstances, as well as the writings of the Jewish Rabbins, confirm these traditions, that the genius of Masonic art and enterprise and labor restored the Holy Writings to herself and the world; and then, binding them nearer to her heart than ever, she went forth to bear them in triumph to the end of time.

But Masonry should be studied because it yields

a social, as well as a moral, influence of no ordinary character. It modifies feelings, subdues passions, binds heart to heart, and creates friendships that end only at the grave. It sees and appreciates excellencies in others, and knows how to lay self upon the altar when our kind or country demands it. The world has not awarded to Masonry, in this behalf, the meed of praise she so richly merits. I know not how extensively the influence of Masonry was felt during the struggle for American Independence ; but it must have made a strong impression upon the minds of those old worthies who battled so bravely for human freedom. It will be recollected that many of the prominent men of that day were Masons, and felt a two-fold interest in the success of their common efforts ; for they were not only interested in securing the success of a common cause, but also in the final triumph and security of each other personally. They loved one another—*they were brethren.*

For an illustration of the warm feeling of personal interest which they had in each other's welfare, I will cite a single case. Dr. Warren was Grand Master of the Craft in Massachusetts at the breaking out of the war,—a war waged especially against that principle which claims for wealth and station the right to rule—which sacrifices moral worth and intellectual qualities to the tinsel and show of birth and fortune. On the 17th of June, 1775, while both armies were preparing for the battle on Bunker Hill, and the distant multitudes were hushed in breathless

expectation, and eagerly awaiting the signal for the conflict, a solitary horseman was seen advancing from Charlestown Neck at full speed towards the American entrenchments. It was Dr. Joseph Warren, who had but a few days before been appointed a Major General in the American army. He was a man of great moral worth, of superior mental attainments, a graduate of a distinguished University in New England, and widely known for his decision of character and determined adherence to the American cause. No man in the colonies had taken a more prompt and decided stand in defence of the principles at issue than Warren. He had learned to venerate the doctrine of natural equality at the altar of Masonry, and regarded every man in the light of his own intrinsic excellence. General Putnam, a Mason long *tried* and always *true*, was in command on Bunker Hill. He was a rough old man, without education, refinement, or wealth; but a patriot, possessing a warrior's skill and a hero's courage. He was but a Brigadier General, and of course inferior in rank to Warren. As that adventurous horseman rode up to the American lines, Putnam rode out to meet him. As they drew near to each other Putnam exclaimed, "General Warren, is it you! I rejoice, and yet I regret to see you." The question might be asked here, *why* Putnam regretted to see his friend on the field of battle. Was it because Warren, by right of rank, would assume the command, and thus deprive Putnam of his laurels in case of victory? No, no; hear

his reason from his own lips : “ *Your* life is too precious to be exposed in this battle ; but since you *are* here, I will take and obey your orders !” Noble man ! He had met that young hero, heart to heart, in the temple of Masonry,—he knew his worth—he loved him. He cared not for his own life,—that had not a feather’s weight in the scale ; but he wished if possible to shield Warren from the impending storm, and preserve him for future usefulness and higher renown. But the Grand Master was his equal in true nobility of soul as well as in chivalry ; and what, think you, was his answer to his junior officer—he who had planned the battle and labored to secure the victory ? “ General Putnam, I have no orders to give. You have made your arrangements. I come to aid you as a volunteer. Tell me where I can be most useful.” Putnam, still keeping in view the *value* of Warren, and the importance of preserving so valuable a man for future emergencies which might arise in the great cause in which they were engaged, and forgetful of his rank, exclaimed, “ Go, then, to the redoubt ; you will there be covered.” “ I came not to be covered,” replied the noble Grand Master, “ tell me where I shall be most in danger—tell me where the action will be the hottest.” “ The redoubt,” said Putnam, “ will be the enemy’s object ; if that can be defended the day is ours.” And to the redoubt he went, and there he fought—and fell. And for what ? For the very principle which Masonry, and the Bible she carries with her, had taught

him ; that the natural rights of man are equal, that his *internal qualifications* are alone to be regarded, and that moral and intellectual worth should be the only passports to station and power. And though *he* had the right to command on Bunker Hill on that day, yet he knew that his subordinate officer possessed qualifications for the emergency superior to his own ; and the lessons he had learned in the lodge-room induced him to yield the post of honor to one better qualified by experience for the fearful ordeal, and then retired to the redoubt, as he said, “ to take a lesson in the art of war,” musket in hand, from Col. Prescott. I know not where else Warren had been taught the great principle there so nobly illustrated, and for which he died, but I *know* that Masonry teaches it. And I have no doubt that if we could fathom all the secret springs that impel human action, we should find that in the great transactions of life, and the improvements in the social state of the world during past ages, this one principle in the instructions of Masonry has had a vast and controlling influence. In the reflections of the mighty minds that have been among us, *our* teachings have had their weight, and conclusions have been reached by their aid that would not have been reached without them—or not so readily. And how interesting and instructive it would be to trace out the source of mental impressions, and the motives that moved to great actions ; and how far, and in what respects, the instructions of the lodge-room have affected the prominent transactions of life,

and been productive of social and political benefits to man.

Masonry, if her foot-prints could be properly traced, would be found to have wielded an influence on the social relations of the world that no other mere human institution ever has. Avoiding a conflict with governments and laws, and laying down a few simple and vastly important doctrines, free from sectarianism, and of universal application; making morality her motto, and exacting perpetual friendship and brotherly love among her followers, she has traveled over the world with the Bible in her hand, as a messenger of good, and the friend of man. The Jew, her earliest adopted child, clings to her in every land where, in his wanderings, he finds her. The follower of Christ worships at her shrine, for she comes fresh from the company of patriarchs and prophets, and clothed with the credentials of gray antiquity. Prefiguring by symbol and allegory the great truths of christianity, the soldiers of the cross have worn her emblems in their banner, and made the possession of her honors an essential passport to the privileges of the Templar. Around her altar the Jew forgets his exclusiveness and the Christian his bigotry, and their orisons go up together to the God and Father of both. Wherever her influence has been felt, the area of disinterested friendship has been enlarged, and Jew, Gentile, and Christian have met, and embraced each other. National hatred, religious intolerance, and political enmity have vanished before the march of the square, the level, and the plumb.

That the social condition of men has been greatly improved by Masonry, every unprejudiced man who has carefully examined the subject, and is capable of judging, will candidly admit. There is something in her laws, or her rituals, or her instructions, or in all of them together, that generates feelings of fraternal friendship and devoted kindness between men who would otherwise remain entire strangers to each other. I can scarcely tell *what* it is in Masonry that produces these social results, but that there *is* something I have often experienced, when a stranger among strangers. It is mysterious and silent in its operations, but powerful and practical in its results. It breaks down the barrier of cold and formal etiquette; it clasps hand in hand and brings heart to heart, as though friendship had been formed and affection strengthened by an acquaintance of years. I repeat, I know not *what* it is, but I recommend every one to examine and ascertain if he can.

But Masonry has laid her hand upon the physical, as well as the moral and social world. And especially upon the mountains and plains of the elder continent are to be seen the mementos of her lofty labors. The knowledge of architecture possessed by the ancients was the legitimate fruits of Masonic study and teaching. We may no longer look upon some of the earliest and best identified labors of the Craft, for the Temple that once stood upon the consecrated mount has passed away. The hand of the idolater—heathen Babylon in the exercise of its Van-

dal power—"the unsparring ravages of barbarous force"—has laid her lofty pillars in the dust. But there are still a few remains of operative Masonry in the days of its youth and vigor. We see them on the plains of Assyria and Egypt, as they were produced before Masonry was elevated and consecrated by an alliance with truth and holiness at Jerusalem. And the ruins of the city of Baalbec in Syria, on the way from Tyre to Palmyra, are still to be seen—the wonder of every traveler. These existing evidences of ancient *operative* Masonry, though now mostly fallen and in fragments, show a knowledge of the arts and sciences existing at the time of their erection which is now an enigma to the world. By what means, or skill, or power, the workmen of those days conveyed from the quarries some of the gigantic stones yet found in those ruins, and elevated them to the places they still occupy in the walls, none can tell. It is said by travelers that some of those stones are thirty feet in length, twelve feet square, and have been placed in the walls at an elevation of twenty feet from the ground! How did they get there—by what machinery or accumulated power—and who were the architects? They are covered with the dust of three thousand years. Master and workmen are lost in the oblivion of ages; but the monuments of their skill are still there, mocking the inquiries of the antiquarian, and blushing into shame the puny efforts of modern enterprize. There can be no doubt, however, but that the mighty structure at

Baalbec was erected by the same class of operatives, if not by the very same workmen, who built the Temple at Jerusalem. Tradition ascribes the work to Solomon; and some of the Jewish writers quote, in confirmation of the tradition, from the second book of Chronicles, where it is said that Solomon "built Beth-horen the upper, and Beth-horen the nether, fenced cities with walls and gates and bars; and Baal-ath;" and they aver that by the latter word is meant what is now known as Baalbec. They also assert that this city is intended when Solomon speaks of "the tower of Lebanon that looketh toward Damascus." The Arabs, also, ascribe the work to Solomon; and Sir William Ousley quotes from the Persians a tradition to the same effect. If Solomon built it he must have employed the same workmen who constructed the Temple; and there we have still an existing monument of their labors. From that period they have been scattered over the world, the architects of city, and temple, and palace. But here is not the place to track the labors of operative Masonry through its centuries of toil, until it ceased to be operative and assumed exclusively a speculative character. But it retained the feature long enough to give character and stability to the architecture of the old world; and then confined its efforts to the erection of spiritual temples that should survive the ravages of time, and remain as monuments of its labors when "the stars shall grow dim with age," and heaven and earth shall pass away.

We should also study Masonry that we may become familiar with her laws. I do not mean so much the modern edicts and resolutions of Grand Lodges, (although every member should be familiar with these, so far as they affect the Craft in his own State,) as the original organic laws of Masonry. The existing code of the Order only dates back to about the year 1717: but *that* was only a compilation from manuscripts and charges—rules and usages, of a much earlier date. That, doubtless, embodies the essential laws of the Institution as they came down from remote antiquity; and it is both curious and interesting, as well as instructive, to ponder over these remnants of an earlier age. A general knowledge of the spirit and genius of the organization may be gathered from that venerable document, and *that* knowledge is essential to every Mason. Those laws are obligatory upon him, and he is required to pledge a strict obedience to them, and this makes it important for him to understand well their letter and spirit. Besides, the few and general principles embodied in that document, give tone and character to all the later legislation of the Craft. They are the *first* principles of Masonic law; the fountains from which flow the streams of government in every department of Masonry, giving strength and efficiency to the whole, and preserving and perpetuating in its original purity the inheritance of the faithful. Masonic laws, if well understood and properly appreciated, are well calculated to exert a beneficial

influence upon the members. They are well adapted to the preservation of order and harmony among the Craft; to secure the proper discharge of duty by every officer and member; to make Masons what they should be, not only peaceable, sober, and quiet citizens of human governments, but strictly moral and obedient subjects of the government of God. Masonic law does not profess to be the instrument of man's salvation, but it leads him to the fountain where he may be healed, and assures him of a path and place of safety. Masonry draws all its inspiration from the Bible. There, in that mine of moral truth, we dig for its jewels. But Masonry is not religion. It stands at the threshold of the temple of safety; and her laws point within to the altar and the fire and the sacrifice, and bid men go there and live again. If well understood, duly appreciated, and strictly obeyed, these laws would have a vast influence upon human character; an influence that would refine, improve, and elevate man, regarded either as a mortal or immortal being. And should they not be studied—closely, carefully, constantly? The highest motives that can move men to action, impel the Mason to this duty. Not motives arising from gold or fortune; but higher and holier ones,—his personal welfare, present and future. Besides, the present age is one of investigation. The day has gone by when the millions bowed to the *dicta* of the few. Man now claims the right to examine and think for himself. No creed, however old, no system how-

ever venerable, can secure the approval of the reflecting masses until they first examine it. Masonry courts such an examination. She has nothing which she seeks to conceal from her children.

The present is an era of bold, independent thought ; mind now asserts its supremacy and will be crushed to earth no longer. It has thrown off its shackles, and gone abroad with at least *some* of its native vigor. It has pressed the elements into its service, and from fire and water or air, a new power has been created, which sends the ship over the ocean, and drives the car over the land, with the strength and speed of the whirlwind. On the summit of yonder Observatory sits a man looking through a transparent substance created from some of the grosser particles of matter, but so arranged and modified by human genius that sight is enabled to travel out into the blue depths of heaven, and suns, and worlds, and systems reveal their mysteries to his gaze. Mind has laid hold of the mysterious fires that pervade the universe, has smoothed a pathway for their journey, and sent them forth as message-bearers through the world. Thank God, the human mind is, at last, comparatively free. It has asserted its god-like origin, claims its legitimate field for employment, and seeks to know the fulness of its glorious destiny. In this labor we, as Masons, must engage, or be left behind, an object of contempt to others.

Nothing, now, is received, unless it can be commended to enlightened reason. We must study Ma-

sonry, therefore, until we can give a reason for it. History, it is said, is philosophy teaching by example; and that philosophy should be carefully studied. The past should be known—and well known. The effort of the present seems to be the conquest of mind over matter. And as the mind breaks away from the ignorance that once bound it in fetters, it acquires new strength as it bursts the chains, and, gathering energy as it proceeds, mountains sink into molehills, and developments are made that are new and startling. The intellectual warrior, in the midst of his triumphs, and just as he has planted his banner upon the summit of some lofty eminence, may reach the goal of his earthly race and fall, but falls pointing to still higher achievements. Others that come after him are guided by the light that flames along his path; and, reaching the point where he had planted his standard, they seize it with hopes quickened by his acquirements, and carry it through untried paths to yet greater altitudes. And thus new and successive conquests are won; unheard of beauties in nature and art are revealed to man, and principles are evolved that give new energy to action, and cheer on the mental hosts in the struggle for intellectual attainments. Thus the great moral and social progress of the age is advanced; and thus, by one means or another, man is mounting upward, and approximating the station he was designed to fill in the ranks of being. Should Freemasons be idle when such a subject is before them, and means and

motives to aid them in the pursuit? Amidst this universal struggle after knowledge, when our whole race has entered the arena, are pushing their way through unknown regions and exploring untried depths after gems of truth and beauty to adorn immortal man: when the victor's crown is revealed in the sunlight of immortality, and the world is stripping for the race to win and wear it, should *they* not assert an equal claim? When the triumphs of the past, and the high incentives of a laudable ambition urge us forward; when the ranks of higher intelligences beckon us on towards the lofty eminences they occupy, shall we permit our energies to die, and ingloriously slumber with the beasts that perish? Every motive that can be placed before the mind to lure it on to glory, and to lead the way, is placed before us. In our rituals and symbols and degrees, is revealed a God; and hopes of immortality are born; and prospects all glowing in the sun-light of heaven, and perfumed with the aroma of the upper Eden, rise before us; and bright beings throw out their banner and wave us on to immortal triumphs! *Shall we rise and follow?*

CHAPTER IV.

THE LODGE.

“Here wisdom her standard displays,
Here nobly the sciences shine ;
Here the Temple's vast column we raise,
And finish a work that's divine.
Illum'd from the East with pure light,
Here arts do their blessings bestow,
And, all perfect, unfold to the sight
What none but a Mason may know.”

THE term LODGE, as it is used among Freemasons, has a three fold signification. The Ancient Constitutions of 1721, define the word as follows :

“A lodge is a place where Masons assemble and work. Hence that assembly, or duly organized society of Masons is called a lodge, and every brother ought to belong to one, and to be subject to its by-laws and the general regulations. It is either *particular* or *general*, and will be best understood by attending it, and by the regulations of the *General* or *Grand Lodge* hereunto annexed. In ancient times no *Master* or *Fellow* could be absent from it, especially when warned to appear at it, without incurring a severe censure, until it appear to the *Master* and *Wardens* that pure necessity hindered him.”

In its technical meaning, the word lodge is applied to an article made in the form, or designed to represent, the Tabernacle, or Ark of the Covenant, as

constructed by Bezaleel, by the command of God delivered to Moses ; which ark contained the table of the laws, and other articles for preservation. Among organized Craftsmen, it should contain the Book of Constitutions and the Charter or Warrant of constitution, issued by the Grand Lodge, authorizing them to assemble for work in a particular place as a legal lodge. The word is rarely used, however, in this sense, except in the constitution and consecration of new lodges, and the dedication of halls.

The next application of the word is to the collection, or body of Masons united together by virtue of a charter or warrant, and authorized to work ; in the same sense that the word "church" is used, when applied to an organized association of christians. Thus the term lodge may be defined—a certain number of Freemasons assembled together, with the Holy Bible, square and compasses, and a charter, or warrant, legally granted by competent authority, authorizing them to meet in that place for masonic labor. It must be a certain number ; not less than seven, and some modern Grand Lodges require eight. Indeed a less number than eight cannot well discharge the duties required, for in a well organized lodge, there are that number of offices that need to be filled. They must be assembled together, that they may work in concert ; for they could not perform the labor separately. They must be assembled in a particular place, such as a certain city or town. The place must be named in the charter or warrant, and the meetings can be held no where else.

They must have a charter from the Grand Lodge of the State in which they meet ; or, if there be none in the State, then from the Grand Lodge of some other State ; or a warrant of dispensation from the Grand Master or Deputy Grand Master, authorizing them to meet. Previous to 1717 it was considered a right inherent in Masons to engage in the labors of the Order, so far as to initiate proper persons into our mysteries, whenever the requisite number were collected together in a suitable place, and there was work to do. Officers were chosen for the occasion, who served only for that time. A general convention of the Craft was usually held twice a year to regulate its affairs, and this body had entire jurisdiction over all matters pertaining to the interests and welfare of Masonry. To this convention every Mason, even down to an Entered Apprentice, was expected to come, if within fifty miles, unless he could furnish a satisfactory excuse ; and at these meetings, only, the initiates were *crafted* and *raised*.

Since the year 1722, when the written Constitutions, compiled from the ancient records and immemorial usages, by Dr. Anderson, were adopted, no lodge has been permitted to assemble for work without a charter, or warrant of dispensation, authorising them to do so : and such is now the regulation in all parts of the world.

The third signification of the word lodge, refers to the place of meeting—the building, room, or hall in which the members assemble for work. In the

rituals and language of Masonry the word is used in each of the above named applications, but most frequently in the last two ; and when used, the connection of the word fixes its meaning.

A lodge, as a place of meeting, has various features and characteristics, which are readily understood by the well instructed Mason ; some of which characteristics are real, and some imaginary. For instance, it must have *situation, form and extent*. Its form, or shape, must be that of a regular oblong. A circular, triangular, or square form will not answer. The reason is that, in *that respect*, it is fashioned after the original Temple of Solomon, and of its predecessor the Tabernacle in the wilderness. The double cube was a figure "esteemed sacred throughout the world ; and the ark of the Covenant, and the altar of incense, were both double cubes." "The square," says Dr. Oliver, "is a symbol of the perfection and happiness arising out of morality and justice ;" and the word is frequently used to express the perfection both of objects and acts. A regular oblong, parallelogram, or double cube is, therefore, a perfect form. For these and other reasons that cannot be here explained, the form of a lodge should always be that of an oblong or double square.

Its situation must be East and West, partly for the same reason assigned for its form. Dr. Hemming, an English writer, says there are three reasons for it : " 1. The sun, the glory of the Lord, rises in the East and sets in the West ; 2. Learning originated in

the East, and from thence extended its benign influences to the West : 3. The third, last, and grand reason, refers to the situation of the Tabernacle in the wilderness." It was, doubtless, originally adopted to preserve in memory the deliverance of the Jews from their cruel bondage in Egypt, by preserving the situation of that Tabernacle which Moses erected in the wilderness, by divine command, as a place for religious worship. The Temple at Jerusalem was similarly situated, because it was built after the same pattern. The custom was followed, in succeeding ages, by the Craft in the situation of their lodges ; and is now a universal and well-established practice.

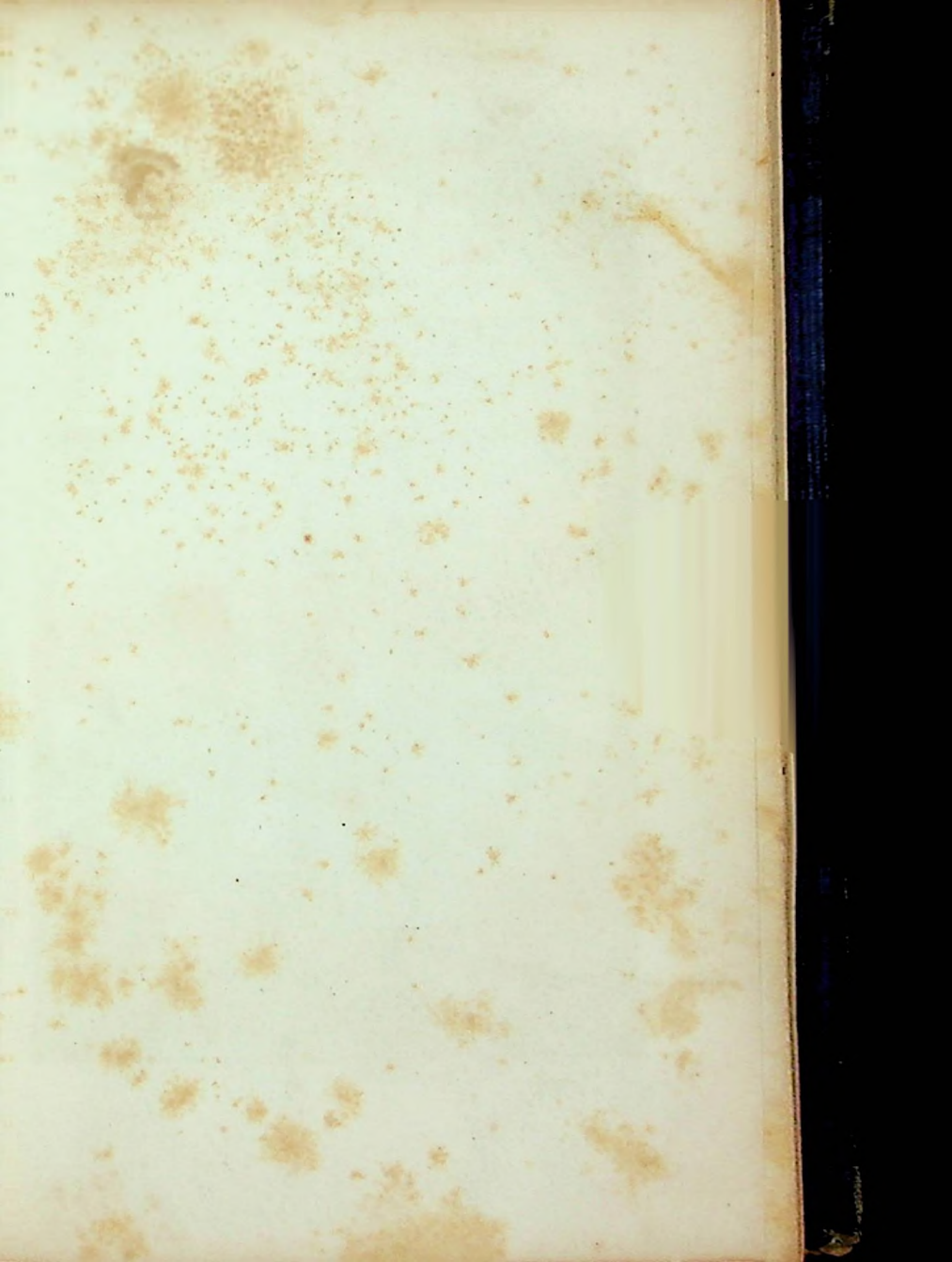
The extent of the lodge, is its last feature which I shall here consider. It is a miniature world, and its imaginary boundaries are co-extensive with the universe. It has length, breadth, and height, — the idea still of a perfect square, — but its outlines are immeasurable. From East to West is its length ; but who can measure that length ? Its breadth is between the North and the South ; but who shall mark the boundary of those limits ? Its height extends from the earth to the heavens ; an elevation beyond the measurement of man, or the grasp of the mightiest mind. Its depth is from the surface to the center of this terraqueous globe ; but what line of man or angel has ever sounded the vast abyss, or by searching, has found its corner stone ? The idea of illimitable extent is thus connected with a lodge, not only to show the universal spread of Masonry, but

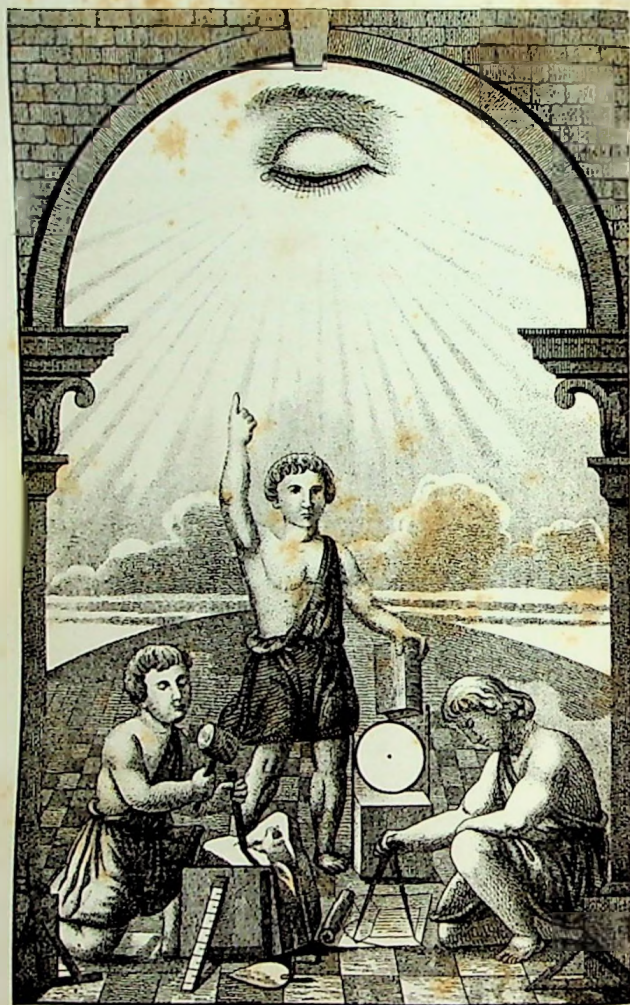
that a Mason's charity should reach and embrace the whole family of man. In the masonic instructions of a hundred years ago, the following language was used in reference to this very subject: "The universe is the temple of the Deity whom we serve; *wisdom, strength and beauty* are about his throne as the pillars of his work; for his wisdom is infinite, his strength is omnipotent, and beauty shines forth throughout all creation in symmetry and order. He hath stretched forth the heavens as a canopy, and the earth he planted as his footstool. The canopy of his temple is crowned with stars as with a diadem; the sun and moon are messengers of his will, and all his law is concord." Here the idea is clearly revealed that a lodge was then regarded as a symbol of the universe,—the glorious temple of Jehovah. The spot occupied is the center: but where is the circumference? None can tell; yet we know the wisdom of the Infinite comprehends, and his love and providential care embrace and provide for the whole.

This conception of the indefinite and unmeasured extent of a lodge, is a noble one. What emotions of grandeur fill the mind at the idea of such a dwelling place! How wide and far-reaching the good will that goes all over this vast extent, and comprehends in its fraternal embrace, the whole human family. It is in exact harmony with that injunction of the Scriptures—"Do good unto all men, especially to such as are of the household of faith." How sublime and thrilling are the sensations, while

bending in worship with immeasurable distances around, above, beneath you : while looking upward to Him who sits above, the creator and supporter of this vast fabric. And as great and small are only such by comparison, what humbling thoughts of self it must impart ; and how little, insignificant, and helpless one must feel while viewing his own proportions in comparison with the inconceivable magnitude of the temple in which he worships ! His person is a mere speck—an atom in the vast circumference ; and his mind, even, with all its immortal capacities, can scarcely grasp the almost infinite extent of his habitation. God is there, and His infinite and incomprehensible attributes are dimly shadowed forth to his wondering eye, around—above—beneath ! Above is the throne of the Supreme Sovereign. Over all is that ever existing, watchful, and superintending Providence, from whose eye no creature is hid, and whose knowledge reaches the unspoken thoughts and secret emotions of human hearts. What a hall in which to labor ! What a moral workshop is this ! Immortal mind the material ; man the architect ; and Jehovah the judge. The structure to be erected, a spiritual one ; the work to stand the inspection of infinite wisdom ; and its permanency to remain for everlasting ages ! Considerations and thoughts and figures like these are presented to the mind of the observant Mason. Motives that would swell an angel's heart are placed before him : earth and heaven ; infinity around, eternity in the future, and

God over all. Images like these impressively crowd upon the mind of him who bows in the temple of Masonry. Should he, then, pass the time allotted him in useless folly, or vain curiosity, or idle inactivity? Should he risk the fate of his workmanship, when the "Grand Overseer" sits in judgment on it? Let the Mason-reader beware: let him call into activity all the powers of soul and body both, and build, while he may, for eternal years.





CHAPTER V.

THE LOCATION OF THE LODGE.

“For the strength of the hills we bless thee,
Our God, our fathers' God.” Mrs. HEYMAN.

“Who first beholds those everlasting clouds,
Seed time and harvest, morning, noon and night,
Still where they were, steadfast, immovable :
Who first beholds the Alps—that mighty chain
Of mountains, stretching on from East to West.
So massive yet so shadowy, so ethereal,
As to belong rather to heaven than earth—
But instantly receives into his soul
A sense, a feeling that he loses not,
A something that informs him 'tis a moment
Whence he may date henceforward and forever.”

ROGERS' ITALY.

THE imaginary location of a lodge is either on the very highest summit of a hill or mountain, or in the deepest part of a valley. The reason for this is, that if a stranger or listener should appear, his approach might be discovered while yet at a distance, and the fact reported to the Master. Thus time would be allowed to suspend the business of the Craft, and inquire into the cause of his approach ; and, if need be, to put away the jewels, close the lodge, and allow the brethren to retire. This principle of exclusion was adopted by the Essenes, and other secret associations of an ancient date, for the practice of

their sacred rites. The early Christians, also, were frequently reduced to the alternative of abandoning their religious rites, or of celebrating them in secret crypts and caverns. The Freemasons of the middle ages were compelled to adopt the same usage, when population had become so dense that *hills* and *valleys* were no longer places of security. But the early place of meeting, according to our traditions, was as first above named. We have no *record* of this fact, but neither have we any to the contrary; and when tradition has come down uncontradicted by written evidence or collateral circumstances, we are authorized to give her credit for truth and veracity. And more especially when, as in this case, the state of society at large was of that rude and simple character as to justify the procedure of resorting to such places for such a purpose. The practice was in character with the state of the times. One has said

“The groves were God's first temples,”

and hence, before the erection of the “holy and beautiful house” on Mount Moriah, it was befitting that among the magnificent cedars that crowned the summits of Lebanon, or in the deep rocky glens, the mystic brotherhood should hold their solemn convocations.

The labors of the ancient Craft were usually in the forests and the quarries, procuring and preparing materials for the erection of mighty structures; and, consequently, their meetings, during such times,

must have been usually held out of doors. There were no buildings in the forests that grew on the mountain sides and crowned the summits of ancient Lebanon, in which the numerous workmen could assemble. The plains of Succoth and Zeredatha were equally destitute, for the inhabitants of the country dwelt mostly in tents. On the hills or in the valleys, then, were the only places where they could hold their meetings with any degree of security. The cities of the land were "few and far between," and could not conveniently be visited by the workmen for the purpose of holding their private assemblies; for these meetings were important and of frequent occurrence. They therefore had recourse to those silent and isolated places, easy of access, and every where found. In such spots an intruder might be discovered at a great distance, his approach made known in proper season, and the labors and secrets of the Craft preserved from the prying eyes of the uninitiated. Indeed there was more need in those days, when Masonry was an art almost exclusively operative in its character, of seclusion and entire secrecy, than at present; and greater care was accordingly taken to guard the mystic treasures from the knowledge of the stranger and the grasp of the unworthy.

But I apprehend there were other reasons, besides the above, for selecting those elevated places for the meetings of the Craft in ancient times. In the early ages of the world, hills were regarded as sacred. And this, probably, grew out of the fact, that many

of the most extraordinary events recorded in the Holy Scriptures occurred on the tops of mountains. It was on one of these that the ark of Noah rested after the flood ; and there the first altar was erected, and the first offering made to God after the waters had subsided. Thus, at the very beginning of the new world, the first portion of it which appeared in sight, was consecrated to the Great Jehovah by an act of solemn worship. What a scene that must have been when the old and devout patriarch,

“ Faithful among the faithless found,”

who had, with his family, been so strangely preserved from destruction, when all else had died, first came forth from the ark and offered his sacrifice upon Ararat ! It was a lone altar upon the surface of a solitary world. He who reared it was the father and monarch of an infant race, and a priest to present the oblations of that race to the Most High God. He was as devout in feeling and sentiment as he was dignified in position ; and his first act, after stepping foot upon the recovered earth, was to present his homage to Him who had so miraculously preserved him. He “ builded an altar unto the Lord,” and gathering around him his wife and sons and sons’ wives, the sole human survivors of a desolated world, “ he offered burnt-offerings upon the altar, of every clean beast and fowl.” There, on that mountain top, was the first altar ; there the first sacrifice was presented ; and from that lofty peak the first incense

went up "as a sweet savor" unto God! And Jehovah was well pleased with it, and accepted the offering. No wonder the place was considered holy; for those early worshippers, in the after years of their pilgrimage through distant lands, would turn with fondest recollection to the *time* and *place* of their first public act of worship after their wonderful deliverance.

But other events connected with the summits of mountains followed in succession, all impressing upon them the idea of sacredness. Who can ever forget Sinai, on whose burning top Jehovah stooped to grant an audience to Moses! Among all the great events of history none stands out with a loftier prominence than this. God called his servant up into the mountain, and there threw around him a cloud of awful glory that pavilioned him from the gaze of the multitudes in the plain below, as well as from his companion who went part of the way up with him. As good bishop Patrick says, "Joshua went with him till he entered into the cloud; and then he staid, as it were, at the door waiting his return,"—for no mortal eyes were permitted to gaze upon the wonderful interview.

Horeb, another mountain, had, years before been sanctified by the presence of the Deity, when he revealed himself to the same Moses in the burning bush. The Temple at Jerusalem was on the top of a mountain. It was on that same spot the angel of the Lord had appeared to the prophet in a previous

age ; and subsequently at the completion of the Temple, it was consecrated by a still more wonderful display of the great I AM. The high priest, Aaron, by God's command, went up into a mountain to die ; and there he was buried : and Mount Hor is, to this day, an object of interest to travelers from the remotest nations of the earth. The last sight that Israel had of their wonderful leader and lawgiver, Moses, was on the brow of Pisgah, where, at the command of his Master, he went up to take a distant view of the Canaan of his hopes, and thence pass to a better and happier land. The great prophet of Israel, Jesus Christ,—“ the Wonderful, the Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace,” was in the frequent habit of retiring to the solitudes of a mountain for purposes of prayer ; sometimes staying all night in his elevated and sacred retirement. It was on the top of Tabor where he was transfigured in the presence of the favored *three*, and two bright ones in their robes of heavenly whiteness. On a mountain top he was finally crucified ; and there, with his blood and life, offered a sacrifice for the sins of the world. And from the summit of another mountain he gave his disciples their divine commission, and communicated his last commands ; and then, from its hallowed brow, he went up to heaven. And his advice to his followers was, when they should see the predicted storm of indignation and wrath gathering about Jerusalem, to “ flee into the mountains,” as a place of *safety* and *secrecy*.

Who shall say that all these strange and glorious events of history have not made these spots sacred in the minds of men? Even the heathen world, of old, caught the general feeling of reverence for such places; and from time immemorial their solemn rites and sacred ceremonies were performed, either on the tops of the mountains, or in caverns deep within them. If, therefore, the Jewish, Christian, and heathen world combined to regard with profound reverence and awe such elevated spots, it need not be wondered at that *our* "ancient brethren" should select the tops of the highest hills for their imposing ceremonies and secret sessions.

But there is, in my mind, still another reason for selecting the mountain top as a place of meeting. Reader, were you ever on a mountain? I do not mean merely an elevated table land, or even a hill; but on a *mountain*—on its *summit*—on it, where the vastness of infinite space was around you, and the world at your feet, and above you the bright blue heavens? If so, you have not yet to learn that such is a *holy place*; that it *seems*, at least, to be nearer the threshold of the spiritual and unseen world than does any other spot on this earth. Stand up there alone for a little while, and give freedom to thought, and range to your vision, and then tell me the result. The active and busy world appears at an immeasurable distance below you; so far, indeed, that the echo of its bustle and confusion dies upon the air half way up the mountain. You hear it not; you

heed it not ; you scarcely see it. You are far, far above it, I was going to say, half way up to heaven. So far as quiet and solitude go, that busy world, with all its carking cares and throbbing anxieties, is to you as the grave of created things. The pail of enduring silence rests upon it, and no sound of man, or bird, or beast comes up to disturb your reflections, or break the silence of your solitude. You hear nothing but the voice of nature, hymning soft murmurs of praise to its acknowledged Sovereign ! And then look abroad and about you ; peer out into the immeasurable distances all around ; bid your eyes try their strength and let sight do its utmost, and what do you see ? *Nothing !* Vision tires and fails in its efforts to reach the boundary. It seems but endless space—eternity on every hand. How appropriate that spot for a lodge ! From earth to heaven ; from east to west, between north and south ; no lines nor limits, nor walls nor barriers ! The universe is the lodge ; and this to indicate the presence of the Master of all, and to teach us that a Mason's charity and good will should be co-extensive with the limits of his lodge. But what shall I say of the "covering" that is spread out over this glorious Hall ?—"A clouded canopy, or star-decked heaven !" The deep profound abyss is over head ; and there, away in that unfathomed blue, with its stars and suns and systems, but above them all, and beyond them all, and brighter than all, is the eternally sleepless EYE OF JEHOVAH ! And it looks right down on you, and right down into you—

into your very heart! Each act, each word, each thought that forms and nestles there, though yet unspoken—*all* are open to his inspection. As though *you* were alone in the vast universe, and no other object or being existing to divert from you the searching and concentrated gaze of that *Living Eye*. You stand right in its burning focus; and each emotion, volition and action that is awakened, or hides away in your heart, is seen and read as though magnified by infinity. What a place for a lodge! its impressive rituals, its vows of perpetual friendship and fidelity, its professions of confidence in God's protection, and its earnest invocations for his blessings! And yet such was the place selected by our "ancient brethren" for their private assemblies: and such is yet the *supposed* place of meeting for every lodge on earth. Is it not proper and appropriate? Could a man be other than "good and true" when placed in such a position, with emotions of grandeur swelling the heart, and God and eternity occupying the thoughts?

I cannot help but think that there is an impress of wisdom on all that pertains to the essentials of Masonry, almost above man. What a conception it was to make the mountain top the place of meeting. Solitude, Infinity, and God are there. There is nothing to screen or shelter you from the eye that "neither slumbers nor sleeps." It is true, that eye can see every where, just as well as on the mountain peak, but it does not *seem* so to shrinking and half-

bewildered humanity. And then, from its rugged brow, there is a "ladder" that reaches heaven. You *know* it, for you see "angels ascending and descending upon it;" and above it—"THE LORD STOOD ABOVE IT." What a place for a lodge! What an aroma of goodness should fill the atmosphere; and how pure and full of "holiness to the Lord" should be the hearts of those who assemble there! And what place or position more suitable for moral improvement than this? It was said that the face of Moses, when he came down from Sinai, shone with such resplendence that the people could not for a time look upon him, and he was compelled to veil his face while he talked with them! His face was but the index of the spirit within. That spirit had been holding communion with the Infinite on the mountain, for forty days, until, "changed from glory to glory," it reflected a portion of the same heavenly image. So should it be with Masons when convened in their elevated place of meeting. God is not there visibly, as he was with Moses; but his Word and Law are there, and they should study that as their spiritual trestle-board,—they should commune with it until they could catch the spirit and then reflect the glories of the world to which it points. They should look into it, until their own faces beam with the purity and truthfulness and blessedness that shine on every page of the heavenly volume.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SUPPORTS OF THE LODGE.

“Our institution is said to be supported by *Wisdom*, *Strength* and *Beauty*; because it is necessary that there should be wisdom to contrive, strength to support, and beauty to adorn all great and important undertakings.” WEBB.

“Thy *Wisdom* inspired the great institution,
Thy *Strength* shall support it till nature expire :
And when the creation shall fall into ruin,
Its *Beauty* shall rise through the midst of the fire.”
M. E. M. SONG.

OVER every well-constructed and finished edifice there must be a roof or covering, and that roof must have supports. The covering of the mystical lodge, as we shall see hereafter, is nothing less than the canopy of heaven ; for, as its dimensions are unlimited, extending from east to west and between north and south, it requires the expansive arch of heaven for its vaulted roof. But if the covering of a building must have supports—something whereon to rest,—what kind of pillars shall be erected to sustain the dome of this magnificent edifice ? Where shall they be found ? What arm shall hew them out ? from what mighty quarries shall their rough and unshapely material be taken ? and by what power shall they be reared up under that swelling dome ? This inquiry is one of importance, for the building must

be completed and perfected, or our profession must forfeit its reputation. There must be no part or portion of it left unfinished; it must be complete, as a structure, in all its parts, and perfect in all its adaptations.

The supports of a lodge are *three*. This is one of the sacred numbers in Freemasonry, as it has been in the sacred rites and mysteries of all nations, whether Pagan, Hebrew, or Christian. In all the mystic ceremonies of the heathen world, "from Egypt to Scandinavia," this number was regarded as sacred. The bolt of Jove was three-forked; the scepter of Neptune was a trident; and the dog of Pluto, Cerberus, had three heads. The deity of Hindostan was a trinity—Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva. The ancient Pythagoreans, and other philosophers, had their Triad, and hence their sacred regard for the number three. It was the same in matters pertaining to the dispensation of the Hebrews, and particularly in reference to the Temple at Jerusalem. Its construction required the wisdom of Solomon, the strength of the king of Tyre, and the beautiful workmanship of the widow's son. In the whole arrangement there were three Grand Masters, three places from which the materials were procured, and "its dimensions were in exact proportion with the three concords in music." The length of the Temple was three times its breadth; it contained three courts, and the body of the Temple consisted of three parts—the sanctuary, the middle chamber, and the holy of holies. "The

golden candlestick had three branches on each side, and there were three stones in each row of the high priest's breastplate. The oxen which supported the molten sea were arranged in threes, each triad looking towards one of the cardinal points. To this holy place the Jews were commanded to assemble three times a year at the three grand festivals." In the social economy of the Jewish nation there were three cities of refuge on the east and three on the west side of the river Jordan; and in their judicial proceedings three witnesses were necessary to establish a fact where life or property was in question. When David had taken a census of his kingdom, and thus sinned against God, he was offered three alternatives as a punishment:—three years famine, three months at the mercy of his enemies, or three days of pestilence. This singular use of, and reference to, the number three, under the Jewish dispensation, might be multiplied to an almost unlimited extent; but enough has been referred to for our purpose.

Christianity contains frequent allusions to the same number; enough so to make it a marked peculiarity, and to indicate its sacred reference. At the transfiguration of the Savior three heavenly messengers appeared in earnest conversation; and he had selected three of his disciples to accompany him on that interesting occasion. After his crucifixion he lay in the grave three days. St. Paul was in total darkness for three days after the revelation of his mission was made known to him. In his writings he

makes prominent three graces—faith, hope and charity, and mentions three heavens and three states or conditions of the soul. The walls of the heavenly Jerusalem, as they were seen by our patron St. John, had three gates on each side. It is hardly necessary to mention, also, that the great mass of the Christian world recognize a triune Deity—three persons in one God.

In the system of genuine Freemasonry, as we have already stated, the number three is sacred. It is found every where in the mystic temple, and enters largely into all the arrangements of the work and the workmen. There are three degrees, three steps, three principal officers,—and these last, when at work are arranged in a triangle which is also a sacred emblem. There are three great and three lesser lights; the working tools of an entered apprentice are three in number. There are three steps to the ladder, three ornaments to the lodge, three articles of furniture, three movable and three immovable jewels. This singular use of the triad runs through all the system of Freemasonry, and evidently has an important reference. Dr. Oliver asserts “that the number three was venerated by all nations, and used in all the systems both of religion and Freemasonry, whether true or spurious. It emanated most probably from the trinity of the former, and the holy triad of the latter, which was accompanied by such striking marks of uniformity amongst tribes separated from each other by impassable barriers, as to render

it clear that the idea must have been derived from some remote tradition of a similar doctrine, which was prevalent and well understood when mankind dwelt together as one family. And this could be nothing but the doctrine of a trinity in unity. The notion of a triad resolving itself into a monad, how obscure soever it might be, was undoubtedly propagated; that being familiarized to the mind by the direction of an overruling Providence, mankind might be prepared to receive the true doctrine, when it should be propounded to them by authority in that glorious dispensation, which, in God's good time, will constitute the universal religion of the whole habitable globe." The oft repeated use of the number in Freemasonry *may* have the same reference. It seems to be the opinion of the very learned and justly celebrated writer we have just quoted; and, at any rate, is worthy the profound investigation of every one who would be well skilled in the royal art. Let each one examine and judge for himself.

Having set forth the number of supports which sustain a lodge, and referred to the singular frequency with which that number is used in Freemasonry, as well as its suggested reference, we come back to the supports themselves, denominated Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty.

There must be wisdom properly to contrive every grand undertaking or enterprise; for unless wisdom enlighten the mind and direct the hand the plan as a whole will lack efficiency, and the details will fail in

their points and application. In building an edifice a master mind must first conceive the whole plan and then arrange it in detail, so that every part may have its appropriate place, and all the parts when united conspire to form a perfect whole. Then it must be symmetrical in form, perfect in adaptation, and so fashioned as to give strength and durability; and when the structure is completed, it will be conclusive evidence of the wisdom and comprehensive-ness of the mind which conceived the plan, in its whole and in its parts. The cathedrals of St. Pauls in London, and St. Peters at Rome, are examples of this kind. One of our large ocean steam ships is another and most impressive example of wisdom in contrivance; especially the machinery by which the mighty structure is made to move over the water, regardless of adverse winds and opposing tides, with the speed of the race horse, and the certainty and accuracy of mathematical demonstration.

But the most perfect and glorious example is furnished in the creation around us,

“The work of an Almighty hand.”

There is wisdom in the plan, in the several parts, and in the economy which superintends and regulates the whole. If we look at the material heavens, the worlds on worlds that revolve through infinite space in innumerable orbits concentric to each other, crossed and recrossed by the immense tracks of comets embracing a thousand years in their revolu-

tions, yet never interfering the one with the other. If we take into consideration the inconceivable number of such worlds, their immense magnitude, and the almost infinite distances they travel in making the circle of their orbits, and yet that perfect order and harmony prevail all through this vast and intricate machinery, and that from age to age for thousands of years, we may be able to form some faint conception of the resources of that mind which planned and perfected the "grand design." No wonder the old Hebrew worthy, when gazing up at the glorious orbs and systems that were marshaled above and around him, exclaimed with rapture—"In wisdom hast thou made them all." Infinite wisdom is seen in the "spangled heavens," it is heard in the roaring tempest, and proclaimed in the solemn dirge of the ocean. Wisdom is written on earth and sky, on the green vale and towering mountain, on tree and forest, herb and flower, the running rivulet and rolling river. They are all His works, and all proclaim

"The hand that made us is divine."

There is wisdom, too, in the conception of our mystic order. It is a transcript of the arrangements entered into by Solomon, with his able and accomplished assistants, to build the house of God at Jerusalem. The plan of the building was the product of an infinite mind; but the arrangements to construct it after that plan, were made by the wise king of

Israel. It is true that God had given him extraordinary wisdom—the capacity to contrive these harmonious arrangements, was the gift of his Maker ; but he properly and prudently applied that gift. Among more than one hundred and fifty-three thousand workmen, of various grades, of different nations some in the forests of Lebanon, some in the quarries, and some on the plains of Jordan, preparing materials and conveying them by land and sea on their way to be laid up in the mighty structure at Jerusalem,—among all this vast multitude of discordant materials there was perfect order and complete harmony. The conception of the whole arrangement, and all the details of that arrangement exhibited the impress of a wisdom that does not ordinarily pertain to humanity. In that mighty enterprize was seen the model of which Freemasonry is the anti-type. There was wisdom unequalled since the world began ; and whoever will take the trouble to examine into the organization, the order, the arrangement, and the adaptation to the end proposed, of our venerable order, will find in it wisdom of a most superior and elevated character. “ Thy wisdom,” said our honored poet, “ inspired the great institution ;” and I will venture to add, with reverence, if the plan was not directly inspired, it is the anti-type of one that was. The poet Cumberland represents the chief of fallen angels as saying, in lamentation of his sad fate

“———— I have stood midst hurricanes,
The least of which let loose on this firm world,
Would winnow it to dust.”

And it may fearlessly be said, that Freemasonry has lived through persecutions that, if visited upon any other mere human association, would have scattered it in fragments to the winds of heaven. It has endured the prison and braved the flame; it has welcomed banishment and dared the inquisition; it has suffered the maledictions of the church, both from Rome and Geneva; it has stood firmly under the curses of crowned heads and democratic mobs, and yet *it has survived!* Bolts and bars could not imprison it; chains could not bind it; the fire could not burn it. Amid invective, reproach, and scorn, it has gone forward in its peaceful march, doing good to all, especially to the household of faith. Calm and serene amidst the bitterest imprecations of its maddened persecutors, it has survived their rage and lived to receive their homage. It was wisely constructed—wisely arranged, and from its corner to its key-stone gives evidence of a wisdom above that of man.

It should be added here that, in the symbolisms of the lodge, the Master represents the pillar of wisdom. It is his duty to see that all the machinery of the lodge is in its proper place, and each part adapted to perform its particular function; to direct the Craft in the performance of their duty, and to preside over their labors. It is his business, also, to give them the requisite instructions when needed; and to examine and try the work, and decide upon its fitness for a place in the building. If his own resources fail,

he can have recourse to that Great Light before him which is an infallible "rule and guide" in every emergency. He has heard the promise, "seek and ye shall find—if any man lack wisdom let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally." Encouraged by such assurances as these, he has only to proceed; and when his own resources of wisdom fail, apply at a fountain that is inexhaustable, and if such be the course of him who represents the pillar of wisdom, he will be enabled to do honor to his position, govern his lodge with discretion and prudence, and conduct the labors to a successful issue.

Strength is another, and an essential support of our venerable institution; and of this the Senior Warden is the representative. He must see that the laborer receives his hire when it is due, and that entire concord and harmony are preserved, inasmuch as the latter constitutes an essential element of strength in every association of men. No institution can long endure without inherent strength to sustain it. The wisdom of the Master to superintend the work would be of little avail, if the strength of the Senior Warden were not at hand to assist him in the performance of his duties, and to strengthen and sustain his authority.

The Junior Warden is the representative of beauty, the third and last support of our noble structure. His situation in the lodge enables him to observe the great luminary of day, in his progress from morn till eve, and at the proper hour to relieve the Craft from

their labors. He must also attend during the hours of relaxation and refreshment, and see that the first cardinal virtue of the profession is duly and strictly observed.

These three great pillars, says Dr, Oliver, "represent the three primitive orders in architecture, the Doric, the Ionic, and the Corinthian. By their antitypes they form the support of the lodge, and are denominated Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty; qualities which essentially prevailed at the building of king Solomon's Temple. The plan was the effect of wisdom, derived from above; an emblem of the Jewish nation in the practice of the true Freemasonry; the execution was the application of strength, derived from the maritime city of Tyre, the inhabitants of which practiced the spurious Freemasonry, and were the best operative architects in the world; and the art, by virtue of which their great designs were accomplished, was embodied and preserved in a secret society called the Mysteries of Dionysius; and the curious and rich workmanship which lent a charm to this extraordinary edifice, and excited the admiration of mankind, was effected by the application of beauty, derived from an union of the two countries in the person of an expert architect named Hiram. These pillars," he further observes, "bear a reference to an edifice of much greater sublimity and beauty, even, than the Temple of Solomon. They refer to the workmanship of the Great Architect of the Universe, in the construction, not only of our sun and

its attendant planets, but also of those innumerable systems that occupy infinite space. With such a vast impression on our minds, how beautifully does the masonic illustration of wisdom, strength, and beauty apply?"

"Wisdom," says Bro. Mackey, "is represented by the Ionic column, because that combines the strength without the massiveness of the Doric; and the grace without the exuberance of ornament, of the Corinthian. Strength is represented by the Doric column, because that is the strongest and most massy of the orders. Beauty is represented by the Corinthian column, because the Corinthian is the most beautiful and highly finished of the orders."

Such are the three grand pillars which support the beautiful temple of Freemasonry; and while *they* exist, the majestic building which they sustain shall be perpetuated. It will be seen that each support bears a moral aspect, and tends to improve, to strengthen, and to beautify the structure of which it constitutes a portion.

CHAPTER VII.

THE COVERING OF THE LODGE

"Its covering is no less than the canopy of heaven. To this object the Mason's mind is continually directed, and thither he hopes at last to arrive by the aid of the theological ladder which Jacob, in his vision, saw ascending from earth to heaven; the three principal rounds of which are denominated FAITH, HOPE, and CHARITY; and which admonish us to have faith in God, hope in immortality, and charity to all mankind."

WEBB.

"Let us be firm and true,
Forgetting never the All-seeing Eye
Of Him who sits upon the throne on high,
Beholding all we do." MASONIC SONG

THE language of Masonry, in speaking of itself, peculiar; it is the quaint language of antiquity, for it has been used by the Craft from time immemorial. It is beautiful and expressive, as well as venerable and antiquated, and frequently conveys a depth of meaning which none but the initiated are able to fathom. To carry out the idea of a building fully, a lodge, as a habitation, must have a covering or roof. In its form, a Lodge is perfect; in its extent, it is without limits; and this holds in its altitude as well as in its length and breadth. Those who dwell in it are regarded as probationers or travelers, passing from this temporary place of abode to one permanent as the pillars of heaven, and durable as eternity. His business, while occupying this temporary abode, is to qualify himself

for another and better residence in a temple of which this is but the type. And every moment that he occupies his present dwelling, he is reminded by surrounding objects of his transient stay therein, and the importance of acquiring a qualification for that to which he hastens. He can very properly sing, while he meditates upon his condition,

“I’m a pilgrim—I’m a stranger,
I can tarry but a night.”

It is the impulse of his nature to “look aloft,” to ascend; to struggle after a greater elevation, both in position and enjoyment. And, as if to point him out the way and aid him in his upward aspirations, and lure him on to “the better land,” there is spread out above him the blue heavens with its suns and stars, and each with a voice calling him to “come up higher.” It is said that the ladder, in the scene we are about to describe, is a “theological ladder,” but every thing pertaining to the picture is full of theology—the theology of nature perfected by that of the Bible. It is not the ladder alone that becomes a teacher of divinity; every round in that ladder utters its precepts, and every bright little star that shines with unearthly light in the canopy above has a voice; and the beautiful panorama of earth and heaven,—of traveling angels and the watchful Deity—all cry out in sweetest harmony, “*come up hither.*”

The occurrence which all these refer to, took place in the history of the patriarch Jacob, and is one of the finest scenic representations ever presented to the eye

of man, as well as one of the most impressive and instructive incidents recorded in the Old Testament Scriptures. It involves, and is intended to teach us, the doctrine of a watchful and overruling providence; and in its developments it reveals the religious creed of the Mason;—for Masons *have* a creed, and a religious one, too, whatever the enemies of the Order may assert to the contrary. Let us look at the whole occurrence in detail, and these important truths will appear. The doctrine of providence, both general and special, is one of great importance; and none cherish it with a heartier good will than intelligent Freemasons. The destiny of men is not left to blind chance, as the atheist would madly teach; but over this world—this lodge, of whose covering I am now writing, and in which we are apprentices for eternity—there is a providence which, by laws and modes of its own enactment, superintends and directs the affairs of all those *who have put their trust in God*. However we may be situated, in the crowded city or desert waste; amid friends at home, or alone and unrecognized in foreign lands; wherever or however we may be, God is still above and over all. The Eye that never “slumbers nor sleeps” is cognizant of every thought and action; and the arm that guides and governs the destiny of all things will protect and shelter those who, with unfaltering faith, confide in it. Let us examine the whole transaction carefully.

The wife of the aged patriarch Isaac, knowing that a blessing of priceless value had been promised, by God, to her husband “and his seed after him,” determined,

if possible, to obtain it as an inheritance for her favorite and youngest son Jacob. By the laws of primogeniture, then in force, it rightfully belonged to the eldest son; but to obtain it for Jacob she had recourse to stratagem, and by fraud and falsehood she succeeded in her design, and the younger child secured the blessing. The elder son and rightful heir, Esau, was greatly enraged at being thus defrauded out of his birthright, and Jacob was advised by his mother to fly to Padan-Aram, in Mesopotamia, to escape the vengeance of his outraged brother. In all this transaction Jacob was not so much to blame as his artful and designing mother. It is true that he was consenting to the unrighteous act, but he was young and inexperienced. She had age and knowledge on her side; and she took advantage of his youth and his affection for her, to induce him to commit the fraudulent act. She, however, received her reward. Her favorite son, to escape the punishment which his fraudulent act merited, was compelled to visit his mother's relatives at a distance, and she saw his face no more. His self-imposed banishment was prolonged to fourteen years; and when the wanderer returned, the mother was in her grave. Jacob, also, was taught that the "way of the transgressor is hard;" for he was compelled to leave the paternal roof and his native land, and toil for fourteen years—a *servant among strangers*. He found, too, that "with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again;" for, as he had defrauded his brother out of his birthright, he himself was defrauded by his uncle

out of seven years of labor—or rather, out of the long expected reward of seven years of labor, the object of his most cherished affections.

But notwithstanding all the untoward features of this whole transaction, the eye of God was upon Jacob for good. We can imagine his feelings, and the emotions that swelled his young heart, as the fond farewell lingered upon his lips, and he turned away in sadness and sorrow from the home and friends of his childhood. He was to go to a strange country—to the home of strangers, and he was going on that long and weary journey alone. There would be no friend with him for counsel or protection, and his path would be embittered by the recollection of the act that drove him hence. Besides, should his elder brother, whom he had so deeply wronged, overtake him on his way, alone and unprotected, what might be his fate! He knew, also, that he was guilty, and merited the severest chastisement. *That sense of guilt* added speed to his flight, and the dread of *approaching danger* hushed every emotion of regret at his departure. The lot of Jacob, and his probable destiny, was at this moment most unenviable. A youthful fugitive from justice; compelled by one act of folly to flee from his kindred and home, and seek a refuge among strangers—perhaps to return no more. What heart does not pity the youthful wanderer!

A consciousness of guilt, doubtless, produced in Jacob's heart its legitimate results—a hearty and sincere repentance. It was an hour and an occasion likely

to induce solemn reflection, and to impress upon the mind of the offender a deep sense of his error. There was an outraged brother who had been deliberately and deeply wronged; and there was a kind-hearted and grey-headed father who had been shamefully imposed upon; and the enormity of his offence increased in magnitude as his home receded from his sight, and the images of the injured ones became pictured upon his memory. Could we follow his footsteps across the plain, and through the rugged defile, and away among the mountain ranges towards Mesopotamia, until the outlines of home were lost in the distance, we should most probably witness the tear of sorrow fall for his misdoings, and hear the sigh escaping from his repentant heart. How desolate must have been that journey! How lonely and sad the weary hours while he toiled on, farther from home—and farther among strangers.

It was night. Darkness had overtaken the traveler in the neighborhood of Luz; but he was afraid to enter the city, lest his injured brother might have reached it before him. He therefore chose to spend the night "in a certain place;" that is, out of doors, and alone. The maternal hand did not prepare his resting place on that lonely night; he made a pillow of stones, and laid himself down to sleep. How different from his quiet and comfortable home! His mind, perhaps, wandered back to that Mecca of the heart; and, as tired nature sank away into slumber, he was once more beside his mother, and again worshipping at the shrine around which clung his young heart's affections!

But he dreamed; and the God of his fathers condescended to reveal himself to the lone wanderer in a "vision of the night." A "ladder was set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. And *the LORD STOOD ABOVE IT*!" What a wonderful vision was this! And then it was so real,—so life-like; it was not like a dream of the night, for it seemed to stand out before the eye of the future patriarch like a living reality. It *was* a reality—a well-defined and glorious reality, seen and heard by the sleeper, though the ordinary avenues to the senses were closed. The great Master of all—the Infinite Spirit—can communicate with his living offspring, the mind of man, by extraordinary means. Though deep sleep may have fallen upon him, yet when God reveals himself and speaks, the sleeper can both see and hear; and just as easily if he were wrapt in the ceremonies of the grave, as if asleep, or even wide awake at noon-day. Such was the case with Jacob; he not only saw the heavenly vision, but He who stood above the topmost round of the ladder spake—and Jacob heard: "I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father." Here was a "foundation stone," on which the sleeper, and the world with him, might rear a "hope of immortality." Abraham, the father of the faithful, had long slept in the vale of Mamre; but "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." Therefore, though Abraham had passed away from earth, yet he was not "dead, but sleeping;" his *body* was in the grave, but the man—the *spiritual*

man—could not die; *that* was immortal, for a voice from the skies had in effect declared it to be so, in proclaiming Jehovah still the “God of Abraham.” Here was the revelation of an important truth; the immortality of the soul was clearly taught by the lips of divine authority, and the tempted and troubled Jacob could no longer entertain a lingering doubt.

But this was not all; indeed, it was only the beginning of “good things yet to come,”—the forerunner of a promise that should be to the lonely dreamer a support and refuge in every future trial. The august speaker that stood above the ladder, whose top reached to heaven, declared that He would be with the sleeper in his future and farther wanderings, and would bring him “again into this land.” “I will not leave thee,” said this Almighty friend of the penitent wanderer, “until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.” Surely Jacob could believe what was thus spoken to him from heaven: God hath said it, and here was the foundation for faith—“Faith in God.” The Almighty had pledged his word to the repenting outcast; and there, on that mysterious ladder were the spiritual messengers of his power, ready to do his bidding in heaven or earth, and minister to the youthful wanderer in his exile from country and home.

This whole occurrence is full of interesting instruction. It was a wonderful and miraculous interposition on the part of Jehovah to comfort and sustain one who, because of his transgression, was sorrowing without hope; who expected his exile would be perpetual, and

his punishment terminate only with the grave. All hope had fled from his wretched heart, and the future was, to him, dark as the grave itself. In the history of the elder times I have seen but few pictures so desolate and gloomy, so *utterly* hopeless, as this of the fugitive patriarch, passing the long dark night alone on the earth, near the city of Luz. If he looked back to the past, there were the features of an angered brother and a deceived father; if he turned to the future, conscience spoke of a retribution still more fearful! The past and the future were alike to be dreaded; and he could look nowhere but to heaven—but *there* was hope and help, when both were least expected. The entire scene, embracing the midnight and the sleeper; the ladder and the angels; the promise of God and the new born faith and piety of Jacob, is most beautifully impressive, and full of the highest moral instruction. Immortality, providence, faith, hope, charity—important doctrines as the groundwork of faith; important promises as the foundation of hope, and unmerited pardon demanding the liveliest gratitude and most active charity,—are all grouped together in this wonderful picture.

Let the Mason look upon that picture, and ponder it well. It is not guilt, alone, that severs the bonds of early friendship, and sends manhood in its morning from the parental roof to distant lands. Duty, business, pleasure, frequently separate the young Craftsman from his friends and early home, and lead

him in "a path he knew not." Alone, inexperienced, and unprotected, he may find himself among strangers, with no friend or brother to counsel or guide him. But he should never forget that He in whom he was taught confidently to trust, was the "GOD OF ABRAHAM;" and that wherever he may find himself on the wide earth, though it may be slumbering by the road side, with a stone for his pillow and darkness for his curtains, yet above him is an "*All-seeing eye*:"—that, however lonely and desolate the spot, there is still a pathway thence to heaven, for God has opened a way. Let him therefore stedfastly cling to his "faith in God"—the God of Abraham—the God of the Bible. On this faith as a basis let him build for eternity; and sustained and encouraged by that hope which rests on the promise of God—a *blessed* hope—in a "glorious immortality"—let him hold on to the end, assured of a crown of life hereafter.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FURNITURE OF THE LODGE.

"Every well governed lodge is furnished with the Holy Bible, the Square, and the Compasses." RITUAL.

"The Bible is the inestimable gift of God to man."
MASONIC CHARGE.

"There is a light, a brighter light,
Than sun or nature e'er could claim ;
'Tis given to cheer our moral night,
And bears a great and glorious name.

Then let us search for this Great Light,
Which shines so brightly all abroad ;
Its name is TRUTH ; and that alone
Can bring our wand'ring souls to God."
MASONIC SONG.

A BUILDING without furniture is not fitted for habitation. There should be in every tenement, whether it be a tangible or ideal one, those things which are necessary for the profit, convenience, and pleasure of its inmates ; otherwise it must remain tenantless. So, also, it is with regard to a lodge. Before it becomes an appropriate place for masonic work, it must be properly supplied with furniture and implements of labor. Masonry is simple in all her aspects, and moderate in all her desires ; hence but three articles of furniture are required as essential in each of her halls—the HOLY BIBLE, the SQUARE, and the COM-

PASSES. The Bible is the first named, as well as the most prominent article in a well furnished and well governed lodge. It is always there—it *must* be there. But why? The Bible must be of some importance, else why have it there? It must be of very great importance, or it would not be considered a *sine qua non* in the organization of a lodge. Every Mason has seen the Bible in the lodge room,—it was the first object that greeted his vision the first time he entered its walls; yet few ask, or care to know, why it is there. Every Mason knows, or should know, that a lodge cannot be organized, or even opened after it is organized, without the presence of that book; and yet how few, comparatively, have ever asked the reason, or demanded a why or wherefore! We have already urged some reasons why Masonry should be faithfully studied; the fact above stated presents another. We are too ready to take things as they are, without inquiry as to the reason why they are so, or their fitness and adaptation to the end designed. Masonry asks her children to take nothing upon trust that is deemed essential to her existence and usefulness; and every Mason should, in relation to this fact, be always prepared to give a reason for his faith as well as his acts.

There are two general questions that might properly be asked, in connexion with the Bible in the lodge: *First*. Why is it there? *Second*. In what light, or character, is it regarded by Masonry? We propose to answer both these questions, and shall begin with the first.

A *Master's* lodge, (and no other can be legally organized into a separate and distinct body, for those of Fellow Craft and Entered Apprentice are mere appendages, or preliminaries,) represents the *sanctum sanctorum*, or holy of holies, of the Temple of Solomon. It was in that sacred place, immediately above the ark of the covenant, and between the extended wings of the cherubim, that the *SHEKINAH*, the symbol, and visible manifestation of the presence of Jehovah, was revealed. From that holy place, and from the midst of the glory there appearing, God was wont to speak in answer to the prayers of his people. From that dread presence—

“Where clouds and darkness canopied our God,”

instructions were given to those who sought in conformity with the divine directions: Traditionally, the designs by which the Craft are to labor, are drawn only in a *Master's* lodge, which, representing the holy of holies, is in His immediate presence, and under the direct inspection of His “all-seeing eye.” The designs for the first Temple were drawn according to instructions given on the Mount, and the building was to be erected by the Craft in conformity to the directions received from Jehovah himself. Speculative Masonry is the anti-type of that operative Masonry which erected the first Temple. Those old workmen built, by divine command and direction, an earthly and temporal building: we, by command and direction of the same divine authority, are laboring

to build a spiritual temple that shall stand forever ; and the anti-type must, in all its essential characteristics, conform to the type.

The Temple of Solomon, with all its magnificence of architecture, its pillars and porches, its columns and corridors, its altars of sacrifice and smoking censers, its angel guardians and manifested glory, lies in ruins. The flame and the barbarian united in their mission of destruction, and that Temple of glory and renown has been scattered in fragments to the four winds of heaven. Its walls, the stones of which were of old prepared in the quarries by the skill of the ancient Craftsmen, and laid up without the sound of the hammer or other iron tool, have been razed to their foundations. The holy place, with the ark of the covenant, the winged cherubim, the cloud of glory, and the speaking presence of the God of Israel, are now no longer there. The rebellion and wickedness of the people to whose guardianship these holy treasures were committed, brought upon them a curse instead of a blessing. The worshippers, therefore, are now widely scattered ; the Temple is a vision of the past ; the workmen are driven again to the mountains and the vales, and only ruin and desolation are found where once stood " the joy of the whole earth." A temple is there, it is true, but it was erected by the false prophet, and is consecrated to superstition, ignorance, and crime. An altar is there, but it is sacred to Allah, whose hands are reeking with the blood of innocence and full of the spoils of virtue ;

and the follower of Mohammed lays his offerings upon it, and bigotry, superstition, and intolerance worship before it. The ark which enshrined the covenant has been crushed by unholy hands, and the cherubim no longer spread their wings over the mercy seat. The *visible* presence of Jehovah has been withdrawn, and the gloom of a moral midnight now rests upon the hoary summit of Moriah.

But the covenant is not destroyed, though the ark which enclosed it has crumbled to dust. The God who spake there yet lives, though the form and manner of revealing his presence is changed. He *still speaks* to those who wait on him; not in an audible voice, as he did then and there, but by his revealed Word, as made known to, and written by "holy men of old as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." That *written Word* has taken the place of the *visible presence*, and God is still there as the Grand Master of all, to preside over and direct the labors of the Craft. Masons are now *moral builders*, speculative workmen; building, not for earth, but heaven; not for time, but for immortality. The ignorance and perverseness of our fallen humanity is such, that an infallible superintending and guiding hand is essential to our successful labor. There must be a moral designer of infinite skill, and a Supreme Master to direct, encourage, and reward the workmen. Our speculative labors now are as much more important than ancient operative masonry, as the results of the former will be more enduring than those of the latter;

and the eye that is above all and sees through all—the end from the beginning—must superintend the work or it will be imperfectly done. The wisdom which is infinite must impart skill ; or the structure, when completed, will be as unsightly as the ignorance which constructed it. And that infinite Eye which overlooked the labors on Moriah, is over the Craft yet. That wisdom which designed the ancient work, is still active for this, a yet holier purpose ; and that superintending hand which directed all to a final completion, is still ready to lead the faithful in the path to a “glorious immortality.” Those unfailing sources of help are still at hand and accessible ; not as once they were it is true, but as positively and as plainly there in the *revealed word of God*—“the Book of the law and the testimony”—the HOLY SCRIPTURES. A lodge would be as unfinished and incomplete without that Book as its chief and essential article of furniture, as would have been the Temple at Jerusalem without the ark of the covenant, and the covenant itself, the mercy seat, the cherubim, and the glorious symbol of the divine presence. Without the presence of Jehovah, the Temple would have been but wood and stone, gold and silver and precious stones ; magnificent in its size and proportions, it is true ; but incomplete, dark, and desolate. The manifested presence of Jehovah was what made that Temple the “joy of the whole earth,” and fashioned that material structure into the likeness of one “not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”

The Bible is the "Great Light in Masonry;" so recognized by the landmarks of the Order in all countries, in all ages, and must forever be—for those landmarks cannot be removed. Other and lesser lights there are, but they shine only by reflection from this Great Light. Take that away, and all is in darkness; remove it from within our consecrated walls, and the gloom of a perpetual night settles upon the whole interior of our majestic building. The lesser lights, such as nature and reason, the Master and his adjuncts, can never shine but when the Great Light is present, and then only by reflecting the light they receive from it. A lodge without light would be as the chaos and darkness of creation before the omnific word was spoken; and *light*, such as is needed in the work of speculative Masonry, can only be derived from the "Book of the Law." It must be there, then, to give light and instruction to all; and without it a lodge is destitute of the first essential requisite of a legal organization. Nothing can atone for its absence or supply its place.

CHAPTER IX.

THE FURNITURE OF THE LODGE.

[CONTINUED.]

“——The great Book of Revelation; which is our spiritual, moral, and masonic trestle-board.” OLD CHARGE.

“On the trestle our Master draws angles and lines;
There with freedom and fervency forms his designs;
Not a picture on earth is so lovely to view,
All his lines are so perfect,—his angles so true.”

MASONIC SONG.

THERE is another reason why the Bible is essential to the completion of a lodge,—*we work by its designs*. An organic law of the Order—a landmark—makes it “the moral trestle-board” of speculative Masons. A trestle-board is that on which the master workman, or superintending architect, draws his designs, by which the inferior workman is guided in his labors. Builders must work agreeably to plans and designs furnished them; and without a trestle-board, and skilful and perfect designs drawn thereon, the projected edifice could not be erected, as the workmen would have nothing to guide them. If there were no trestle-board in the lodge room, there would be no design, no plan, no order; all would be done at random, and the result would be confusion among the Craft, and a building forever disjointed and unfinished. So in speculative Masonry: without the Bible—the “moral trestle-

board," on which are laid down the plans and purposes of the Supreme Architect,—on which He has drawn designs after which we may build with hope and confidence, we could make no progress whatever in the labor of erecting a perfect moral edifice. Each brother would work according to his own designs, (if he were even capable of producing *any* design,) and the result would exhibit neither form nor fitness nor adaptation. The work, if any were done, would not be square; and when brought from the quarries and the forests, the mountains and the valleys, to the "heavenly Jerusalem," the stones and timbers could not be placed in the spiritual building,—for they would fit no place,—they not having been prepared "as lively stones" for the Temple of God above.

The materials for Solomon's Temple were all prepared, in different places, and by different workmen. Some felled timbers on the mountains; others prepared those timbers for the building; some wrought in the quarries, and squared and numbered the huge stones. But all labored after designs drawn by the chief architect; and when the materials were brought up to Jerusalem from the places where they were prepared, each stone and timber exactly fitted its allotted place in the building; and "there was not heard" on that holy hill, says the sacred historian, "the sound of an axe, hammer, or any tool of iron," nor was there the slightest occasion for the use of those instruments. Why? Because each part was prepared under the superintendence of a master workman, and according

to designs furnished by the chief architect. Each part was perfect, for it was made after the pattern shown in the Mount, and it had been tried and tested by the application of unerring instruments. Hence, when they were placed together in the building, the several parts fitted each other and the places assigned for them; and the building rose in majesty, beauty, and grandeur, to completion, as though infinite skill had been the builder as well as the designer. But it would have been utterly impossible for the builders to have so completed their work if they had not had the designs for that work all laid down in full upon the trestle-board. But they had those designs, and worked accordingly; and the result was that each part perfectly fitted the place it was prepared for, and the Temple was completed, and God approved and accepted the work.

Just so it is with speculative Masons, as spiritual builders, preparing material for the heavenly city. We *must* have in the lodge a moral trestle-board, where the designs are fully and plainly laid down, and by which we may pursue our labors with a certain assurance, that if completed according to those designs, each man's work will be fitted for its allotted place in the building, and will be accepted by the Grand Master when the work is ended. The work of every moral builder is the faithful discharge of duty,—“to God, our neighbor, and ourselves;” and there is no other source from which we may obtain a knowledge of that duty, but from the Holy Scriptures. The preparatory

work of fitting the material for the heavenly Temple—the very first work performed upon that material—is “to invoke the aid and the blessing of the Deity.” We could not perform even that initiatory labor, for we should not know that there was such labor to be performed, much less *how* to perform it, if we did not find it in the designs upon our moral trestle board. So with all the rest of the work—the whole of our duty, whether to the Deity, our neighbors, or ourselves. Without the Holy Scriptures we should know nothing about our duty; without them we could not do it. There are designs it is true, faintly traced upon the face of nature; but there is a vagueness and uncertainty about them that would render it uncertain, if not perilous in the extreme to follow them in a work of so much magnitude and importance. But the Grand Master has not left us to vague chance or blind uncertainty. There, before every brother, are the unerring designs of the Supreme Architect, drawn in lines of living light. They are *always* there, always accessible, all are capable of understanding them, and they must ever remain there or the work must cease. The apprentice learns there his principles; the Craftsman works according to them; and the Master applies these principles—the square, level, plumb, &c., to the work, and tests its accuracy. If well done, agreeably to the designs, it is accepted and placed in its proper position in the moral edifice. As well, therefore, could an artificer build a magnificent temple, with its halls and porches, its parlors and corridors and chambers, with-

out a design, as could the moral architect build for heaven without the plans and designs and specifications which heaven has furnished in the Holy Scriptures. The trestle-board is as essential in the one case as the other ; and in neither could the work be accomplished without it.

It may be asked, cannot a candidate be initiated without a Bible in the hall ? I answer, no. Why ? Because a portion, and an *essential* portion of the work is derived from, or connected with, the Bible. The Master could not proceed in superintending and directing the work, because his designs are in that book, *and no where else*. There they are drawn in enduring lines by the hand of the Supreme Master, and by that alone must we be guided. The candidate could not even get into the room without first drawing from that fount of wisdom words of mystic import. After admission he could not proceed on his journey until he had obeyed its sacred behests ; and, until he knows and feels its presence, he cannot see that light

“ Which none but Craftsmen ever saw.”

Tell me, you who would discredit the divinity of our Great Light, how would you proceed in your masonic labors without its presence—its designs—its light and its hallowed influence ? Would you resort to nature ? She speaks in an “ unknown tongue,” and there are none to give us an infallible translation. Would you resort to reason ? She is blind and fallible ; her designs are imperfect, and uncertainty would mark your

labors. Nature and reason both present some beautiful aspects, and promise much ; but both have been tried, and *both have failed*. Nature might teach the ox to eat grass when he is hungry ; or the bird to build its nest upon the branches of trees, and feed upon the insects that fly in the air or creep on the ground. Reason might teach man to solve a problem in the science of numbers, or construct a piece of curious machinery, but both nature and reason are confined to their appropriate spheres, and, unless forced, do not presume to travel beyond them. Nature nor reason, of their own free will, ever attempted to teach the science of morals—a lesson over which angels ponder. They abstain and shrink from the vain attempt to guide man in the way to heaven, or qualify him as a “living stone” for the walls of the New Jerusalem. This is not their task ; God has not imposed it on them, and does not require it of them. Besides, they are utterly incapacitated for it ; and the attempt to erect a spiritual edifice by the aid which nature or reason, or both conjoined, could furnish, would be as futile as an attempt to pluck the sun from his sphere or measure the ocean in the hollow of the hand.

It may be as well to remark here, that work sent up to the Temple, not perfect, can find no place in the glorious structure. If not fully prepared in the forest or quarry, it can never be prepared afterwards ; for, when it reaches the building, there will be “neither ax nor hammer” to perfect the work with, and it must be cast aside *among the rubbish*. In spiritual or speculative

Masonry, there is neither *time* nor *means* for moral discipline in the heavenly Jerusalem. The work must be fitted for that Temple ere it reaches it, or it can never be, but must be *rejected* and thrown among the moral rubbish without the gates as utterly unworthy. There are not only no *means* (tools) of moral discipline there, but it is neither the *time* nor the *place* for the performance of such labor. There must be no *sound of the tools* there—no effort at moral preparation; there cannot be, for work already perfect needs none. Each portion must take its place as it comes up, bearing upon it the *mark* of a workman, fashioned according to the designs upon the moral trestle-board, and bearing upon it the approving stamp of the Supreme Overseer. It must be prepared, perfected and finished before it comes up to the celestial mount, or it can have no place in the heavenly Temple—the city of God.





CHAPTER X.

THE GREAT LIGHT IN MASONRY.

"The Bible has God for its author, truth without any mixture of error for its subject, and salvation for its end." LOCKE.

Hail to the Craft! whose light, broadly beaming,
Streams from the loveliest Star of the sky;
O'er sorrow's vale ever cheerfully gleaming,
Guiding to yonder bright temple on high.
Still may that holy ray,
Type of immortal day,
Light the lone path of the pilgrim along;
'Till the Grand Master's 'hest
Bid all his labors rest,
Attuning his harp to the mystical song."

GRAND LODGE ODE.

MASONIC readers, at least many of them, may consider that I have imposed upon myself a useless and unnecessary task in this and one or two of the following chapters; but were they as conversant with the lax opinions now floating in society, and even to some extent among Masons, as the writer is, they would not censure, but rather thank me for the effort to settle so important a question. It is not necessary to moot the question, nor shall I, as to what character and authority the christian world awards to the Bible; but *in what light does Masonry regard it?* The abstract question of its divine authenticity I shall not particularly enquire into; but leave that to

other and abler hands. But as the Bible is found in every lodge as an essential article of its furniture, and without which it cannot be organized or opened, it is well to understand in what aspect Masonry views it. Is it true? is it the word of God? Does Masonry bow in homage to its claims of divine inspiration,—conceding its divine authenticity and its heavenly sanctions? Its authority must be either human or divine,—its origin must be traced either to earth or heaven. If it be earth-born, the offspring of human genius, and claiming but the wisdom of man for its source, and the authority of man for its sanctions, then it has been *mis*-called “the Great Light in Masonry.” If its origin be divine, its truths unquestionable, its sanctions from heaven, and its authority bear the awful impress of Jehovah’s hand, then it may in deed and in truth be called the “Great Light.” In which of these characters do we, as Masons, receive and regard that Book? The writer of this has no hesitation in saying that Masonry regards the Bible as the *Word of God*—containing, in reference to the moral government of man, his *Law* and his *Will*:—that its moral teachings are divinely authentic, and its sanctions eternal. And this conclusion is reached, *First*, from the manner of our using it, and the authority of our early Craftsmen: *Second*, from the language of our rituals and charges: and, *Thirdly*, from the expressed opinions of the Craft in all ages and countries, so far as we have been able to ascertain them. And now let us examine the question in these three different aspects.

First : We use it as though its claims were of a higher character than any other book. Its instructions are referred to and enforced as of the highest authority and of the last importance. Whenever and wherever that book is spoken of in our ceremonies, it is called the "Holy Writings," the "Holy Scriptures," the "Great Light," &c. The moral duties enjoined upon the members are the moral duties taught in that book ; and they are enforced *because* that book teaches them. It may be said that other books teach the same doctrines, and enforce the same precepts. This is, in part, admitted. Men, moralists, philosophers, have taught moral duties. But what gave sanction and authority to those precepts ? Not because A, B, or C had taught them, nor because they were right in themselves, but because they were drawn from the instructions of the Bible, and went beyond the human lips that uttered them and rested for their authority and sanction upon the law of God as contained in the Bible. If the Holy Scriptures are regarded in no higher aspect than any other collection of moral precepts, then their presence in the lodge as an *essential* article of furniture, and our reference to them as authority for our moral teachings, is a mere mockery and a vile fraud upon every member who is admitted among us. Why not place a volume of Seneca upon our altar, and use it in furnishing the lodge ? Why not take the philosophy of Aristotle, Plato, or Socrates, and with it supersede the Scriptures ? Simply because those writings are

human and fallible. They may be right as far as they go ; or they may be full of errors, and of dangerous tendency. There must be an *unerring* standard of moral rectitude ; there must be an authoritative test to which all human conduct may be referred, and with which it may be tried as the Master tests the angles of a block by an application of the square. No collection of moral precepts, no standard for human conduct, no *perfect* moral designs have ever been produced but in the Bible. The law of God, as revealed in that book, is the only infallible and perfect criterion in the world, by which to judge of right and wrong—of truth and error, in moral conduct. Whatever others have taught that was excellent, are but rays from this fountain of light ; whatever moral truths there are floating through the world, they are but radiations from this great central sun. I know the same duties are taught in other books ; but where did the writers of those books acquire a knowledge of them, but from the Bible ? That is a book of first principles, supplying the material for all human productions on kindred subjects, and to which all the moral teachings of man are referred for approval or condemnation. It is a fountain of living waters, the streams from which flow out over all the earth, producing moral health and conscious happiness wherever they flow. Men may direct these streams into particular channels, or point to them as sources of moral health and beauty to man ; but this does not militate against, but rather confirms their claims to a

high and holy original. The doctrines and precepts of the Bible are not only more elevated in their character than any ever taught by uninspired man, but they were above and beyond his conception until they were revealed in the Bible; and they would never have been known in the world had not that book revealed them.

Other books, it is admitted, contain truths—moral truths, but they are only sparks emitted from the vestal fire that burns on the altar of the Temple. And then the moral instructions of the wisest men are limited in extent, and lack the sublimity and elevation and purity of Bible truths. Avowed unbelievers have acknowledged this. Even Rosseau, the most brilliant of modern infidels, as well as the bitterest enemy to the Scriptures, was compelled to make this concession to a friend:—"I confess to you that the majesty of the Scriptures strikes me with admiration. How mean, how contemptible are the works of our philosophers, compared with the Scriptures. What sublimity in his (Jesus') maxims; what profound wisdom in his discourses; what truth in his replies!" Such is the candid testimony of an infidel, yet a man of splendid genius, and one whom all France, and much of Europe, delighted to honor. The truths of the Bible, then, are higher, purer, holier truths,—more sublime in their conception and awful in their import, than those of the profoundest philosophers and the most learned and pious divines. Their revelations are of heaven and hell, of time and

eternity. They flow sweetly in poetry that might have come from an angel's lips, and would fill an angel's harp. They are announced in sublime language, startling as the sudden earthquake, and alarming as the falling thunder. They bear an aspect not of earth; the impression of infinite wisdom is about them, and they carry the seal of Jehovah's attributes. No, no! earth has never produced such a book; and human genius and human learning would utterly fail in an attempt to imitate it. The Book is divine; its origin, authority, sanctions and revelations are all from heaven, *and in this light Masonry regards it.* The writings of the ablest philosophers, in comparison with the "Book of the Law," are as the glimmering of the taper in comparison with the blaze of the noon-day sun; and what few rays they emit are but reflections from the "Great Light in Masonry." Those are but dim and uncertain at best; this shines on from unexhausted resources, lasting as eternity. No wonder it is regarded as essential in every lodge; the tribunal of last appeal on every question of moral architecture; the central sun that illuminates the whole body of the Craft, "wheresoever scattered over the face of the earth," and around which revolve the "lesser lights," imparting rays reflected from the "greater."

Either that book is divine, and so regarded by the Craft, or else they have been duping themselves, and are cheating others. It is said by some that Masonry is *merely* a social organization. This is emphatic-

ally denied; but, for the purpose of giving the assertion its weight, let it be admitted. Let us look at it in the aspect of a social organization. Its bonds of brotherhood are based upon moral principle; none will deny this. What follows? Why, those moral principles are streams that come gurgling from the fountain of inspiration. Throw the Bible out of the lodge if you please—or if you can, destroy all confidence in its divine origin; deny that it came from God, that it contains his law, and the principles of his moral government: Obliterate from the human mind, if you can, the universal impression of its divine authenticity, and the universal homage yielded to its claims. Call it a lie—a cheat—the work of priestcraft; write the bold assertion in blazing characters on the “cast” of every lodge that all may read it, and what then? The very act will record your folly, and publish to every looker-on that you have attempted a gross deception. The bond of union which now binds the Craft in every corner of earth into one united body, would be severed in an instant. If the Bible on your altar is the creation of fiction, its moral teachings are also fabulous, and the strength of masonic bonds is as flax before the fire. If the Bible be untrue, the “brotherly love and friendship” which is taught in the lodge—*from the Bible*—is a figment of the brain. If the Bible be not divine, all the principles of morality, truth, fidelity, temperance, fortitude, prudence and justice, which are cardinal virtues in Masonry, fall helpless

to the ground. They are based upon the instructions of the Bible ; they rest upon that book as a foundation ; their moral sanctions are drawn from it, and if the foundation be a lie, the superstructure must necessarily be false and worthless. If the Bible be not what it professes to be, give it shelter no longer, for by keeping it on your altars you become a *particeps criminis* in the deception practiced upon the world.

The Bible is either true or false ; heaven or earth must have given birth to its wonderful story, and supplied the material for its code of morals. If it be from earth, the product of human genius, and claiming no higher parentage than man, then there is connected with it an enigma as strange and inexplicable as would be the concession of its divine origin, and *infinitely more so*.

“ If not inspired, that pregnant page has stood,
Time's treasure, and the wonder of the wise.”

It were far easier to believe the bible to be the product of divine inspiration, than that it should be the conception of man. Its revelations are such as would never have entered into the mind of man ; the principles of morality which it teaches, are all antagonistic to the native passions of the human heart ; and its maledictions are all leveled against his crimes. To believe it the product of man, would be conceding that he made the record of his own moral obliquities where earth and heaven might read them ;— that he deliberately wrote his own condemnation, and

then laid the manuscript open for the gaze of men and angels. This would be an assertion that credulity itself would not believe. But the laws and principles and instructions of the Bible, are not only antagonistic to every natural feature of the human heart, but they are above and beyond the conception of the natural man. Those truths are so wonderful, so elevated, so strange, so pure, so unlike anything that man had ever seen, or any emotion he had ever felt, or any conception that had ever entered into his mind, that mere uninspired humanity could never have conceived or written them. Besides this, the authors of the several parts were men of different ages, dialects, and modes of thought and life; and they could not therefore, if they wished and had otherwise been capable, have woven together a continuous story, running through successive ages, and involving the conduct and history of different nations and people, and yet forming out of these elements a connected whole, as beautiful as it is perfect, and as sublime and massive as it is indestructible.

“Whence, but from heaven, could men unskill'd in arts,
In several ages born, in several parts,
Weave such agreeing truths? or how, or why,
Should all conspire to cheat us with a lie?
Unasked their pains, ungrateful their advice,
Starving their gain, and martyrdom their price.”

DRYDEN.

Is the Bible true? Can a *Freemason* ask the question? Does he believe the traditions of his Or-

der? I ask not whether he believes, nor would I require him to believe every item taught by the Craft and claiming *tradition* for its authority; but does he believe the general facts which have come down from antiquity interwoven with the arts of the Craft, and recorded in the history of their labors? If Masonry is not connected in its early deeds with temples built for the worship of God, and with that worship itself; and with extending and perpetuating the name and attributes and written law of Jehovah, then it is the best wrought fiction the world has ever seen or read. If the Bible be not true, why has it had a place upon our altars from remote antiquity? Why do you kneel in adoration before the God of the Bible, or bow at the mention of his name, or listen reverently to his word? Why do you profess a willingness to follow its injunctions, and obey its moral precepts; and why appeal to it as the highest and only standard of moral integrity? Why recognize the truths and laws and sanctions of Jehovah; his presence and his power and attributes, if you believe divine revelation but the dream of a disordered fancy? Can you give us any rational account for your own conduct, or excuse for your duplicity, if such be your opinions? What can be thought of the candor of one who, "in his heart," says there is no God, and yet bends in pretended homage before him;—who calls the Bible a cheat and a falsehood, and yet acknowledges the claims of its moral precepts, and professes to "square his actions by the

square of virtue"—*that* virtue which is born of the Bible !

It seems difficult to conceive of a course of conduct so utterly at variance with sound judgment, and so entirely destitute of a reason on which to be predicated. And yet such anomalies there are,—we fear too many. The Bible is true ; God is its author, and man the subject of the moral law which it reveals. His conduct on earth must be judged by that law, as an infallible standard ; and his future will be affected for weal or wo in proportion as he conforms to it. We may call this in question if we will, but by rejecting the hopes and promises of that Book we peril the interests of both worlds at once.

CHAPTER XI.
THE GREAT LIGHT IN MASONRY.

[CONTINUED,]

“ The priest-like father reads the sacred page,
How Abram was the friend of God on high ;
Or Moses bade eternal warfare wage
With Amaleek's ungracious progeny ;
Or how the Royal Bard did groaning lie
Beneath the stroke of Heaven's avenging ire ;
Or Job's pathetic plaint and wailing cry ;
Or rapt Isaiah's wild, seraphic fire ;
Or other holy seers that tune the sacred lyre.

Perhaps the Christian volume is the theme,
How guiltless blood for guilty man was shed ;
How He who bore in Heaven the second name,
Had not on earth whereon to lay his head ;
How his first followers and servants sped ;
The precepts sage they wrote to many a land ;
How he, who lone in Patmos banished,
Saw in the sun a mighty angel stand,
And heard great Babylon's doom pronounced by Heaven's command.”

BURNS.

HITHERTO I have urged that Masonry regards the Bible as a divine Revelation from heaven, from the fact of its presence in the Lodge being deemed essential, and also from the manner in which it is used—the reverence and respect paid to it. In the present chapter resort will be had, for further evidence in favor of this position, to the rituals and charges of the Craft ; how it is spoken of, and by what characteristics it is described.

Masonry claims that God is the author of the Bible, and *so teaches in express words*. Start not, timid brother, at this declaration, for it is certainly true. In describing the furniture of the lodge, the Master declares that it consists of the "Holy Bible, Square, and Compasses;" and then goes on to add that "the Holy Bible is dedicated to God, as being *the inestimable gift of God to man*." Is not this language plain and unequivocal,—as clear and explicit as it can possibly be made? And, remember, this language is not optional with the Master to use or neglect. It is the expression of our rituals; it is printed and published to the world in all our "Manuals," and "Monitors," and "Craftsman." It is the language of antiquity too, sanctioned and sanctified by the use of ages. It is not selected by him who speaks on the occasion; it is the genius of Masonry speaking through him, and pronouncing her decision in words definite and positive. It is the language of experience, for successive generations have sanctioned its use. These words are not the robes or the adornments of Masonry; the ornaments or jewels which the goddess wears upon her person;—they are a part of Masonry herself. From antiquity so remote that "the memory of man runneth not to the contrary," this language has been upon her lips; it is her *native* dialect,—she knows no other. To attempt to change or alter this form of expression, would be to attempt an "innovation upon the body of Masonry," from the thought of which

every well instructed Mason would instantly recoil. You cannot change or alter the venerable structure : you may deface it and disfigure it ; but the process will be a work of death, not of improvement. You may work a change ; but in the transmutation vitality will become extinct.

It is the "*inestimable gift of God to man.*" Is not that language sufficiently plain ? It is a gift—an inestimable gift : a gift to man, and God is the giver. Is such language ever used in reference to any other book ? or would it be at all appropriate to apply such a remark to any other book, however elevated in diction, pure in sentiment, or venerable in years ? What does every one admitted among us understand by this language when he first hears it ? He must certainly regard it as an assertion that the book referred to is of divine authenticity, for it is expressly declared that it came as a boon from the hand of God. Can he who uses the language pretend that it has any other meaning ? He certainly would not so far stultify himself, or insult the good sense of the initiate, as to claim that this book is the "gift of God" only as the problems of Euclid, or the philosophy of Paley, is the gift of God ! If he merely wished to be understood that this was a useful or good book ; that it was well written ; that it taught pure morals, or was of high antiquity, he would certainly use a different form of expression. The works of some of the ancient philosophers are beautifully and impressively written : the moral instructions of

Plato and Socrates are proverbial for their excellent character ; and these works are of very great antiquity. But if the Master of a lodge were to point his brethren to these works, reverently laid open on the altar, and publicly and gravely assert that they were "the inestimable gift of God to man," he would certainly be considered insane, if not in a much worse condition.

I am aware that there is occasionally found a Mason who says he does not believe *all* the Old Testament, and probably less of the New : others, again, who express their firm convictions of the truth of the Old Testament, but entirely, and with abhorrence, discard the New. I am glad to say there are but few such, though enough, I fear, to bring discredit upon the Craft in the minds of those who have not carefully investigated the tenets of the Order. But when Masonry tells us that "the Bible is the inestimable gift of God," it does not mean a portion of either the older or later revelation ; nor does it mean the Old, to the exclusion of the New, or the New alone. It means the *whole* of it ; just as it lays upon our altars, bearing the sanctions of the christian world for eighteen hundred years. It does not intend, by such language, to embrace a portion of the great work, and hand over the residue to the tender mercies of infidelity ; this would be compromising with the bitterest foe that Masonry ever faced or foiled. Her mission, as has elsewhere been said, is to carry the "moral law," as revealed in the "sacred code,"

through all lands to the end of time. If you despoil her of only a portion of her jewels, you defeat the object of her mission, and offer her a sacrifice upon the altar of a lifeless vagary. It is not alone the moral creed of the patriarchal or Jewish dispensations; the outlines and shadows of the elder world; the stones and timbers prepared to be put up in the grand spiritual Temple; but this glorious system of moral ethics matured and perfected by a later dispensation. The Temple, not alone in its outlines and framework, but with every adjunct and ornament complete, towering up in its finished grandeur, and accredited by the united testimony of the christian world. It is that,—the Old and the New Testament: the older and the later dispensations: the law and the prophets and the apostles, a trinity in one, harmonizing and uniting to complete and perfect a rule of moral action for fallen and suffering humanity. *That* is what Masonry means when she puts into the mouths of those ministering at her altars the words "Holy Bible," the "Holy Scriptures," &c. If the Old Testament, only, is intended, why has the New Testament been included for nearly two thousand years? If only a portion of one, or of both, is intended, why have not those portions been designated and the remainder excluded? Has Masonry for ages, Jesuit like, been saying one thing and meaning another? Has she stood before the world in angel garb, with love in her eye and candor on her tongue, but fraud and hypocrisy in her heart? Utter not

such a slander upon that venerable messenger of love and good will, who, for centuries, has been traveling the earth laden with blessings for mankind ; enduring the scorn of Rome and the blows of tyrants with an equal aspect ; smoothing the asperities of human life, planting roses where there were only thorns before, cheering the living in their despondency, and soothing the anxieties of the dying. No, no : she has candidly uttered her sentiments in the ears of the world ; she has said what she meant, and meant what she said : you may differ from her in opinion, but you must give her credit for candor and honesty.

This claim in behalf of the Bible is not a new dogma in the creed of Masonry, for it formed an article in her original constitution. The first Masons were believers in the divine authenticity of the Holy Scriptures ; and if we wish to know what Masonry teaches on this subject, we have only to ask our elder brethren. If it be desired to ascertain with certainty what were the leading doctrines of the christian church, I would go back and consult the founders of that church, and ascertain from their teachings what they believed. We would not take the crude and isolated expressions, the unsanctioned theories and new born dogmas that are found floating loose and unaccredited through the christian world ; but would go to the venerable fathers of the church ; those who laid its foundations, and reared its massive walls, and adorned it with the first trophies won from heathen altars ; we would ask Him who presided when its

corner stone was laid, and the chief builders in the work—Peter, and Paul, and John, and James, and Luke, and their glorious co-workers. This would be the most certain mode of obtaining the desired knowledge. So, in order to ascertain what Masonry teaches in reference to the Bible, we should not be governed by the crude and undigested opinions, hastily or previously formed, of modern tyros in the Royal Art; but go back to the early members,—if possible to the founders of the Institution.

It is admitted by all who have studied the history and characteristics of Masonry, that it originated, or assumed form and feature, among the Jews, in the palmy days of their nation. Now, in what light did *they* regard the sacred writings—the Pentateuch and the Prophets,—all of revelation that was then written? The question will admit of but one answer; they received them as bearing the sanctions of Jehovah. It would be doing violence to all history, and setting aside the united testimony of the Jewish and Christian world, together with every thing connected with the story of ancient Israel, to assert otherwise. Their great leader's ascent into Sinai; the thunder, and the fire, and the earthquake; the trembling mountain and the affrighted multitudes; the return of Moses, after his strange and wonderful interview with the Deity, bearing in his hands the tables of stone with the *law of God written thereon*, while an unearthly glory gleamed upon his brow, all conspired to fix their belief in the divine origin of these heavenly

teachings. The erection of the Tabernacle in the wilderness as a place of worship, and as a depository for the Law, so received from God amid the awful revelations of Sinai ; and the subsequent building of the Temple at Jerusalem by divine direction for the same purpose, and its peculiar construction for the preservation of that Law ; the profound reverence that ancient people entertained for those writings, and their reference to them for instruction in every emergency, all declare their unalterable belief in the divine authority of those teachings. Indeed, the whole history of the Jewish people, from their encampment at the foot of Sinai to their final overthrow and dispersion by the Romans, after the ascension of the Son of God, attests the fact that they regarded that Book as divine in its origin and authority, and containing essential and eternal truths. Then, let it be remembered, it was the Jews who built that Temple, and then and there gave to Masonry whatever of moral aspects it yet reveals, and sent it down through succeeding centuries to bless and benefit the world. *They* fixed the ark in our sanctum ; *they* erected the altar and placed those writings upon it ; *they* put into the mouths of the workmen the words, substantially, "the Bible is the inestimable gift of God to man." Did they not believe what they said? Are we not justified in giving credit to their professions, and especially when we remember that their actions through succeeding ages, attested their sincerity and truth.

Did not the Jews, with Solomon at their head, believe those writing to be divine? None, surely, will deny this; for had they not so believed, the Temple never would have been erected. It was by the command and direction of heaven, as contained in those very writings, that the great enterprise was undertaken; and it was for the establishment of a form of worship whose outlines and filling up were all recorded in that sacred book. They could not avoid believing it, for every stone, squared and marked and numbered in the quarries of Zercedatha, and every timber prepared in the forests of Lebanon, bore evidence of the truth. Go ask the old Craftsmen who toiled for seven years to accomplish the behest of Him who gave them that law; and the harmonious response of one hundred and fifty thousand voices will tell you they believed the book divine. Go climb to the dread summit of Moriah, approach with bared and bowing head the awful presence of the Shekinah in the holy place of that wonderful Temple, and there ask whether Israel believed that book to be from God, and every worshipper that brings his offering there and bends his knee before that shrine, will answer you in the affirmative. Go *now* and ask the Jew, as he lingers with undying attachments around the crumbling foundations of that ancient building, or wanders, cowering with fear, through down-trodden Europe, or peddles his wares on the islands of the sea, or stands erect in conscious freedom under the stars and stripes of our favored America, whether he believes in "the law and the prophets," and unhesitatingly he will tell you—YES.

This point, then, is settled beyond the reach of cavil or doubt, that the men among whom and by whom Masonry assumed a specific form and character, did receive the great platform of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures as a revelation from God; and regarded the law and the prophets as divinely inspired books. What follows? Why, that original Freemasonry received and acknowledged the Bible to be of divine authority; and this remains, and must forever remain, a fundamental article in the creed of Masonry. Put it into another form: If the founders of a society received the Bible as a revelation from God, and that faith was interwoven with the elements and organization of that society, those who would be orthodox members thereof must receive it in the same light. But the founders of the order of Freemasons received the Bible as a revelation from God, and interwove that faith into the elements of its organization; therefore all orthodox Masons must forever receive it in the same character.

There is another fact which tends to settle this question conclusively in favor of my assumption, and that is this: Whenever that book is alluded to in our rituals, or charges, or ceremonies, it is referred to as a book not only true in itself, but having an origin and authority far above man. In the charge to a Master at his installation, the following language is used:—"The *Holy Writings*, that great light in Masonry, will guide you to all truth; it will direct your paths to the temple of happiness, and point out to you the whole duty

of man." Now I ask any man of ordinary understanding, what is the import of this language, if it does not indicate the belief of Masonry in the divine character of the truths recorded in that book? How would it sound to speak thus of the writings of Plato, Bacon, Newton, Edwards, Calvin, Wesley or George Fox? Would not such teaching indicate, to say the least, a mental obliquity in the teacher? And, I ask, would the thousands of intelligent, moral, upright men, who are proud to belong to our venerable institution, permit such a mockery, or endure for a moment such a solemn perversion of language? Such an insult to common sense, and such an outrage upon the moral creed of the religious world, would never be tolerated for an instant in a lodge of Masons. Directions that will guide the footsteps of erring and bewildered man "into all truth," that will lead him "to the temple of happiness," and "point out to him the *whole* duty of man," must be more than earth-born in their origin, and come accredited by the broad seal of Jehovah. No man would have the temerity to utter such sentiments as these concerning a book that did not claim heaven for its authority; and if one could be found possessed of sufficient hardihood to do so, there are few in the world so destitute of prudence as to believe the dictum and obey the instructions. Men may write books of great moral worth, and wielding a happy moral influence upon the habits and character and destiny of man; books elucidating principles, explaining doctrines and enforcing practice; but yet not to be

relied on in every emergency, and for "all truth." They may exhibit characters which

"Point to heaven, and lead the way,"

but yet their authors are not infallible, and streams cannot rise higher than their source. They may direct to duty, and urge its performance, and may offer efficient aid and encouragement in the discharge of it; but it is only because, and in as far as these human productions harmonize with the "Holy Scriptures," that they are commended to the confidence of enquiring man. They *may* be right; but we can only satisfy ourselves of that fact of first importance by comparing them with the "Holy Scriptures." That, every well-informed mind concedes to be right. Above it or beyond it we cannot go, except to the tribunal where Infinite Wisdom sits as Judge, and Almighty power executes its decrees.

The instructions say, "it will point out to you the whole duty of man." Masonry, in another place, indicates what that duty is, and to whom it is owing. First: "to God, in never mentioning His name but with that reverential awe which is due from a creature to his creator; to implore His aid in all your laudable undertakings, and to esteem Him as your chief good." Second: "to your neighbor, in acting upon the square, and doing unto him as you would he should do unto you." Third: "to yourself, in avoiding all irregularity and intemperance, which might impair your faculties, or debase the dignity of your profession." In

another place the injunctions are more explicit, for they declare the Bible is "given" to us from God, as the "rule of our faith"—to teach us what it is essential for us to believe ; and " a guide for our practice," a sure guide which we may follow with unwavering confidence ; assured that if we do what *it* requires, we shall in no case go wrong. A safe counsellor and a sure guide ; all that is required in the pilgrimage of life is there furnished, with the promise of a reward in the life to come.

" There wilt thou learn what to thy ardent mind
Will make this world but as a thorny pass
To regions of delight ; man's natural life,
With all its varied turmoil of ambition,
But as the training of a wayward child
To manly exercise ; yea, death itself
But as a painful birth to life unending."

Such is the testimony borne by the rituals of Masonry to the divinity of the Bible. They everywhere, and in all their parts, bear the same evidence, harmonizing in sentiment, injunction, and precept ; and all declaring the divine authenticity of the Holy Scriptures to be an essential article in her creed. Men may call this in question, but if they will study Masonry as they ought to study it—if they will sit as children at the feet of this sage of antiquity, and listen to the words of wisdom with an unbiased mind—a mind honestly seeking after truth, they will come to the same conclusion, and be satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt of the truthfulness of our doctrine. Either this doc-

trine is true, or the language of our rituals is unmeaning sound ; either this doctrine is true, or our written charges and unwritten instructions are intended to deceive ; either this doctrine is true or Masonry bears a falsehood upon every feature. The alternative I leave for those who " cannot teach and will not learn."

I am aware that brethren indisposed to harmonize in this sentiment with the writer, will quote as they sometimes have, as a subterfuge for their unfledged skepticism, the following : that Masonry is not designed to interfere with the religious tenets of any one ; and then aver that to require a Mason to believe in the truth and divine authority of the Bible, is interfering in his religious opinions. This is a great mistake. There is no religion in infidelity, nor has it any religious opinions. The doctrine may interfere with their *ir*-religious opinions, but that is in part the design of the institution. It interferes with heathenism and atheism, idolatry and crime ; it allows a man to entertain his own peculiar form of religious belief, but gives no quarter and affords no shelter to a belief which has *no* religion in it. Whenever it can be shown that to discredit the Bible, and deny its God, and abrogate the moral law and turn society loose to be governed by the crude conceptions of corrupt human nature—whenever it can be shown that to be an infidel, an atheist or a heathen, is to be religious, and entertain religious tenets, then it will be time enough to reply to the flimsy charge. Until then we shall insist that to require a belief in the sanctions of the Bible, and obedience to its moral injunc-

and unmitigated hypocrisy should at once consign her to the grave of unforgotten infamy. But she is not guilty. This is not only not her faith, but she teaches, and insists on, a creed the very reverse of this. We have hitherto appealed to the "law" in support of what we have said,—the law as it is written upon our rituals and charges and ceremonies. We will now appeal to the "testimony." We will call up the Fathers from their dusty beds; we will evoke from the chambers of the grave the men of earlier times, and ask them the question. We will go back to the borders of the dark ages, and taking up the line of witnesses, follow it down to the present hour, and hear the united voices of the present and the past.

The first that we shall summon will be the "Charges" adopted about the year 926. The members of the Craft who are said to have met at York, England, in that year, at the summons of Prince Edwin, for the purpose of forming a Grand Lodge, brought together the old manuscripts in divers languages, containing the organic laws, charges, and usages of the Order. From those manuscripts the constitution and charges were systematized and put into form, and really constituted the basis of the printed constitution of 1723. From those charges we quote the following injunctions, as bearing directly upon the point in question :

"A mason is to study the *moral law* as contained in the *sacred code*; to consider it as the unerring stan-

dard of truth and justice ; and to regulate his life and actions by its divine precepts. He is strictly to observe his duty to God, by never mentioning his name but with that awe and reverence which is due from a creature to his Creator ; to esteem him as the chief good, and to implore his aid in all laudable undertakings."—"A Mason is obliged, by his tenure, to obey the moral law ; and if he rightly understands the art, he will neither be a stupid atheist nor an irreligious libertine."*

Here the "*sacred code*" is spoken of as containing the "moral law ;" and its precepts are called "divine precepts." If this quotation be legitimate, and we have the authority of a venerable and learned minister of the Church of England that it is, then we have the opinions of the Craft more than nine hundred years ago, as to the character which they affixed to the sacred code, or Holy Scriptures. The same learned divine, and experienced Mason, declares, unequivocally, that "the great pedestal of Masonry is religion"—the religion which is taught in the "*sacred code*."

The constitution first printed in 1723, contains, substantially, the same injunctions concerning obedience to the moral law, as that above quoted ; showing conclusively that no essential change has taken place in the teachings of Masonry, from a very early date ; and that the little change that appears is merely in the use of words. The same recognition

* Star in the East, p. 46.

of the moral law ; the same injunction to obey it, and the same warning against, not only atheism, but what they quaintly called "irreligious libertinism," or what would be called at this day, a "free thinker" or "liberal." To such, the language of Masonry in olden times, was, "*Procul, O Procul, este profani*;" in view of the above venerable instructions, and in conjunction with the solemn language of our rituals.

Towards the close of the last century, Freemasonry was violently assailed in England, as well as on the continent of Europe. The principles of atheism and infidelity, which had been gradually spreading since the days of Frederick the Great, and with which the French philosophy was now deeply impregnated, was attempted to be charged upon Freemasonry. Frederick had been a prominent member of the fraternity, as it then existed in his own dominions, as well as in many other portions of continental Europe. The Bible, it is true, was in the lodges, but it was there *pro forma*, and merely by sufferance ; while the God of the Bible, and His holy commandments, if not wholly disowned, were treated with entire neglect if not with sovereign contempt. The fact was, that continental Europe was practically infidel, and Frederick, the most renowned sovereign of his day, to a great extent gave tone and character to the moral aspect of society. And while he was the acknowledged head of the Craft in his own dominions, he was giving countenance and support to the infidel teachers of the times. This could not be otherwise than injurious to the hitherto stainless reputation of the

Royal Art; as well among the moral and religious portions of community, as the intelligent and consistent of the Order. No unprejudiced observer could help admitting that Freemasonry was suffering in consequence; she was bleeding at every pore, and from wounds inflicted by the hands of her pretended friends. The French revolution succeeded; religion was banished the realm; the altar was overthrown, and the priesthood annulled. Jehovah was disowned and discarded, and all the elements of society were broken up; and confusion, anarchy, bloodshed and death succeeded as the natural results. Human nature was appalled at the atrocities committed, and the world stood aghast at the scenes of blood and carnage. France was a dreadful whirlpool of civil commotion, while the basest dross of our nature and the worst and discarded refuse of society floated to the surface, and shocked humanity by their hellish aspects. Earth revolted at the sight, and heaven frowned a promise of fearful retribution.

An attempt was now made to charge all this upon Freemasonry. The horrid state of things was regarded by many as the legitimate fruits of that infidelity which had been spreading and deepening in society since the reign of the great Frederick, who had given those loose infidel principles strength and character by his countenance and approval—and Frederick was a Freemason; nay, he was chief of the Order. It was easy, therefore, to jump at a conclusion, and charge home upon the innocent victim of wickedness in high places, all

the demoralizing tendencies of a system from which she recoiled as much as others. It was attempted to identify Masonry with the society of the Illuminati, and make her a scape-goat for the crimes others had committed. As well might they have charged a pure and simple hearted christianity with treason and perjury, simply because a Judas was found in the train of her early followers.

But she did not lack for friends, even in this hour of her trial. She recoiled with shuddering from the embrace of continental atheism, and clung with a steadier grasp to that Book which had been the anchor of her hope for a thousand years; and the result, while it proved the purity of her character, demonstrated the wisdom of her choice. The best men of England stood forth in her defence, and met the shock of the onset with a firm reliance upon the Bible she sheltered and the Deity it revealed. Many of the nobility, and some even of the Royal family, gathered around her in the day of trial. The most learned and pious of the clergy plead her cause, and a voice rose up from all parts of England to testify for the slandered and down trodden. They knew her character and her worth. The genius of the Order had presided at the building of her cathedrals, her churches, and her halls of justice. Many of the proudest monuments of art were the productions of her hands, and the fruits of her toil. The best and bravest of England's sons, for generations, had boasted of their alliance with the Order; and now, in the day of her calamity, the purest and wisest of England were ready to give her shelter.

In calling upon the writers of that period for evidence in the case, we shall select a few both from the laity and clergy, who were also eminent in the Craft, and consequently able to decide understandingly. The first will be the celebrated William Hutchison, F. A. S. He was born in 1732, and died in 1814, at the advanced age of 82. He was an attorney, and had an extensive practice; yet he devoted much of his time to antiquarian investigations, and published several historical works of much celebrity. He also wrote "The Spirit of Masonry," which passed through many editions. He was a man of indefatigable industry and extensive literary acquirements, and was much respected for the goodness of his heart, his cultivated mind, and suavity of manners. His wife, three years younger than he, died three days before him, and they were buried together in the same grave. For many years he was a close student of Masonry, and none will doubt his ability or honesty.

Speaking of the fathers of Freemasonry, this eminent writer says: "They had experienced that by religion all civil ties and obligations were compacted, and that thence proceeded all the bonds which could unite mankind in social intercourse; thence it was that they laid the corner stone of the edifice on the bosom of religion. It is not to be presumed that we are a set of men professing religious principles *contrary to the revelations and doctrines of the Son of God*, reverencing a Deity by the denomination of the God of nature." Such is the testimony of the venerable William Hutch-

ison, after a close and careful investigation of the subject.

The Rev. James Hodgetts, an eminent English Mason, speaks as follows, in 1784: "But this is not all; the Sacred Writings confirm what I assert, the sublime part of our mystery being there to be found; nor can any brother (let me speak it distinctly,) be a good Mason, that does not make the word of God his first and principal study." Here he distinctly refers to the Sacred Writings for the "sublime part of our mysteries," and asserts that no one can be a good Mason, unless he diligently studies that book.

The Rev. James Watson, in 1794, another English brother, says: "Masonry has the Omnipotent Architect of the universe for the object of its adoration and imitation; his great and wonderful works for its pattern and prototype; and the wisest and best of men of all ages, nations and languages, for its patrons and professors. But though Masonry primarily inculcates morals and the religion of nature, it has caught an additional spark from the *light of revelation* and the *Sun of righteousness*."

The excellent Wm. Preston, author of "Preston's Illustrations of Masonry," uses the following language: "Speculative Masonry is so far interwoven with religion, as to lay us under the strongest obligations to pay that rational homage to the Deity, which at once constitutes our duty and our happiness." But where do we get the knowledge of that "duty," and the principles of that "religion," but from divine revelation?

The Rev. I. Inwood, 1799, wrote as follows : Speaking of Masonry, he says—" It has nothing in its institution but what both the law of Moses and of Christ will fully allow and universally sanction." Thus referring to the Holy Scriptures as a standard of all excellence, and so regarded by Masons.

We might go on and quote page after page on the same subject, from the writings of eminent brethren, and accumulate any amount of evidence, if it were needed, to establish the point beyond the reach of controversy. But it is not necessary. We will refer to one more witness and then leave the question,—that witness will be the Grand Lodge of Ohio, with the Grand Master at its head. At its session in 1844, the M. W. Grand Master, W. B. Thrall, Esq., brought this question to the notice of the Grand Lodge in his annual address, from which I quote :

" While it is true that Masonry is not sectarian in its character, and that the established rules and regulations of our Grand Lodge positively inhibit all religious tests, as a prerequisite to initiation, save only the acknowledgment of " a stedfast belief in the existence and perfections of Deity," it is equally true that were it possible to wrest from " the first great light in Masonry," its attribute of divine authenticity, the very act would overwhelm the Order with a visible and tangible *darkness*, equalled only by that which existed ere " the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." It is impossible to despoil our great moral and masonic trestle-board of its distinctive character-

istic, without, at the same time, rifting the work of our lodges, our charges, and our lectures, of every conservative and life-giving principle. If the Bible be not indeed an emanation from Deity, then is Freemasonry an empty cheat, and those who minister at her altars, accessories to fraud and vile delusion. True, we have among us no lodges exclusively christian; for the reason that Masonry dates anterior to the christian era, and because her charity is sufficiently expansive to embrace within its ample folds, in fraternal union, the good and true of whatever name or nation. While, therefore, all christian Masons dedicate their lodges to those two eminent and sainted christian patrons, who are always represented in every regular and well directed lodge by most attractive and peculiar hieroglyphics, our Jewish brethren may at the same time, without let or hindrance and without the most remote cause of offence to any, still commemorate in *their* lodges, him whose name is the synonym of wisdom, and whose virtues are embalmed alike in the hearts of all good Masons, whether christians or the lineal descendants of the tribes of Israel. But surely, it could not have been the purpose of those great and good men of old, in laying thus broad the foundations of our Order, to provide in it a covert for the deriding infidel, or an asylum for the dissembling hypocrite."

Such is the doctrine, as laid down in his annual communication to the Craft, by one of the most intelligent Grand Masters that ever presided over the Grand Lodge of Ohio. That portion of the address, referring

to this question, was referred to a select committee, consisting of Bros. Burr, Hubbard, and Root, three learned and experienced Masons. They made a brief but able report, which was adopted by the Grand Lodge, and thereby became the language and opinion of that body. We quote from it as follows :

“After looking at the foundations on which all our work is constructed, and contemplating the teachings of Masonry in her lectures, charges, &c., your committee can come to but one conclusion on the subject, viz : that the Holy Bible is the great standard of truth and duty in Masonry, and, consequently, that a humble and sincere acknowledgment of its divine origin is indispensable, in the very nature of the case, on the part of all who come to seek or dispense light among us.

“After the very clear views on this subject presented by our worthy Grand Master, in his annual communication, your committee deem it unnecessary to say much in addition, except in reiteration of the sentiments by him so ably and eloquently expressed.

“It is one of the oldest requisitions of the Fraternity, that no regular and well-governed lodge can be without its Bible. The Bible is held up to the candidate on his initiation as the first great light in Masonry. He is told that it is the inestimable gift of God to man. His onward pathway, in its entire extent, is lighted up by its blessed precepts. The Faith, the Hope, the Charity in which he is admonished to abound, is the Faith, the Hope, the Charity, of the Bible. The star which shines from the center of one of the three *orna-*

ments of the lodge, is the star which appeared to guide the wise men of the East to the place of the Savior's nativity. The two eminent patrons of the Order, to whom Christian Masons dedicate their lodges, are the St. Johns of the Bible, the precepts of which they present as a wall of defence round about every brother, within which he may walk securely and never materially err. No station in the lodge is too high for the reach of the duties which the Bible enjoins. The Worshipful Master in the East must humbly bow to its authority. On him, as he is about to enter upon his arduous labors, is laid the obligation, weighty above all others, of a *diligent observance of the Holy Scriptures*, which, he is instructed, is to be a rule and a guide to his faith. And, when sorrowing brethren gather around the final resting place of the departed, they mourn not as those who are without hope; the sprig of acacia tells of an ever verdant and bright land beyond the grave. The Lion of the tribe of Judah has vanquished the foe, and hope and consolation are imparted by the thoughts of that life and immortality which the Bible, and the Bible only, has brought to light.

“These are but a few of the many evidences that might be presented to show how essential is the Bible to the existence of Masonry. What then is Masonry without the Bible—the Bible acknowledged in the truth of its divine inspiration? It is the casket without the jewel. It is the body without the soul. It is the world without the sun; and what might be its

value despoiled of this, its richest and brightest ornament, would not be worth the trouble of a conjecture.

“Your committee in their search for grounds whereon to sustain an opposite opinion, have found nothing meriting that character, unless it be a single clause in Section 6, of your Rules and Regulations; the language of which is, ‘that no religious test shall be required of any applicant for the benefits of Masonry other than a stedfast belief in the existence and perfections of Deity.’ In regard to this provision, it is respectfully submitted whether a proper belief in the existence and perfections of Deity does not of necessity imply a belief in the divine authenticity of the Bible, since from that book we derive the only intelligent and satisfactory knowledge of Deity; and whether, therefore, said clause was not predicated upon this hypothesis. But, whatever interpretation may be given to this provision, and granting that it requires only such a belief in Deity as Natural Religion may afford, your committee are of opinion that it is entitled to no serious weight against the abundant and clear testimony furnished by the lectures and charges, the authority which no well informed Mason, it is thought, will be disposed to gainsay or resist.”

Such was the deliberate and clearly expressed opinion of the Grand Lodge of Ohio. It was the result of mature reflection, at a time when the question was being agitated, and when it was necessary to speak out promptly and decidedly. Since that, the question has been at rest in Ohio; and it is hoped

the decision will forever remain, not only as the settled belief of the Craft in this State on a question of vital importance, but also as a landmark to others who are earnestly seeking a safe anchorage.

Here we might rest the question, without any fear of hazard to a doctrine of such momentous importance. But we have thought it important to elicit an expression of the opinions of a few distinguished men on this vital question; men eminent alike for their intellectual capacity and their profound investigations into Masonry. In reply to the question—"in what light does Masonry regard the Bible?" we have answers from several distinguished individuals; two or three of which will be found below. The others are of like import.

The first is from Governor Brown of Florida, and is dated

TALLAHASSEE, April 20, 1853.

MY DEAR BROTHER MOORE,—Your letter of the 2d inst., was received a day or so ago, but official duties have not permitted me to attempt a reply sooner; and, indeed, I can now only give you my opinion, and refer to a few leading principles on which it is formed, without going into an argument which I do not feel myself prepared to undertake; and, I am the less disposed to do so, because I am sure that your superior opportunities for investigation, have furnished your mind with all the information to be obtained, bearing upon this important question; and that I could say nothing on the subject, that would be new to you.

The question you propose, is—“*Does Masonry teach the divine authenticity of the Holy Scriptures, including the Old and New Testaments?*”

I answer, I have always so believed.

I have been a Mason nearly half a century, and always in membership with some lodge, and all my teachings have been, that our Order is of divine authority, and that we work under the eye of the Supreme Architect of the Universe, whose aid and assistance we invoke in all our laudable undertakings. And the “Holy Writings, that great light in Masonry, which will lead us to all truth,” is the authority which we rely on for this belief. Masonry knows no other book, acknowledges no other authority, but the Bible, which we are informed is “the inestimable gift of God to man.” It is our charter of authority from the Supreme Grand Master, without which we can not work. If, therefore, we believe that we have received our authority as Masons from the Supreme Architect of the Universe, and that we derive the evidence of that authority from the Bible, “that great light in Masonry which will lead us to all truth,” and teach us to practice all the moral virtues, that we may be adorned with “the beauty of holiness,” we must claim that Masonry “teaches the divine authenticity of the Holy Scriptures.”

Masonry teaches a belief in ONE GOD, the Supreme Architect and Governor of the universe, and in the Bible as his inestimable gift to man. Therefore no atheist, polytheist or idolater, can be a mason. We

know from history, that in the degenerate ages of paganism, there were institutions and secret mysterious societies resembling Masonry, and no doubt some of them were corruptions of Masonry, dedicated to the worship of their heathen deities; but this only goes to prove the great antiquity of Masonry, and to justify the belief that there were a *chosen few* in all ages who preserved the true principles of the Order, and transmitted them to us pure and undefiled, for the true principles of Masonry never have been and never can be found in the words of profane history.

If Masonry teaches the *divine authenticity of the Old Testament*, it must necessarily *teach the divine authenticity of the New Testament*, to all christian nations, whose lodges are dedicated to the holy Saints John, who were two eminent christian patrons of Masonry. But the declaration of a belief in the christian religion is not required at the making of a Mason; because Masonry is not religion, and from the universality of its character and designs, has nothing to do with creeds, tenets and forms of worship.

If these disjointed views will be of any service to you, in your "proposed publication touching the moral aspect of Masonry," I shall be gratified, and only regret that I cannot now devote more attention to the subject. I am very truly,

Your friend and Bro.,

THOS. BROWN.

The next we shall offer is from that eminent jurist, Charles Scott, Esq. the present Chancellor of Missis-

issippi, and P. G. Master of the Grand Lodge of that State. It is dated

JACKSON, April 20th, 1853.

MY DEAR SIR AND BROTHER,—I have considered of the interesting question propounded in your note of the 2d inst., and am ready to give you a brief answer to it.

Freemasonry claims an ancient origin. It was perfected, perhaps, at the building of king Solomon's Temple. Its signs, words, emblems, ceremonies, and traditions, furnish evidence of the fact, while the chief design of its founders was to incorporate into the lectures the principles and doctrines of our Holy Religion. Its broad and triple foundations rest firmly on the truths revealed in the Old Testament; and the doctrines of the Old Testament are the doctrines of the New. The law and the gospel are but portions of one and the same grand scheme. The symbols of the older dispensation of God have been changed into realities; its prophecies into events; its types into occurrences.

Freemasonry commemorates many prominent events which are typical in their character, and direct the *christian* Mason to the contemplation of the greatest of all events—the sacrifice of our blessed Savior. The vision of Jacob, the offering of Isaac upon Mount Moriah—the miraculous deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage—the offering of David on the threshing-floor of Araunah, the Jebusite—and the building of the first Temple, are all typi-

cal events. Masonry has embodied in its rituals an authentic account of the creation of the world, and the fall of man from his primitive innocence. And whence did our illustrious Grand Masters obtain a knowledge of those great events—the rich materials which they have so nicely fitted and joined together? They were familiar with the doctrines revealed in the Old Testament: and the Bible is called our greater light. It is the necessary part of the furniture of a lodge, and without it no lodge can be justly and legally constituted. And the reason is obvious. If we would comprehend masonic truth, advance in light and knowledge, or discern the mysteries of the Order which lie concealed beneath the surface of the ritual, we must read and study the Holy Scriptures. Here, and here only, are the doctrines of Freemasonry fully taught and elaborated, and here only can we learn the nature of our symbolical instruction and the character of its morality.

I firmly believe that Masonry, in its principles and doctrines, contains all the essentials of christianity. A candidate for the degrees is always initiated in the name of God, while every step in Masonry has a significant reference to Him, as the God of mercy and salvation. The ceremonies of the Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft degrees, foreshadow the Master's degree. They seem to lead the mind of every reflecting brother to contemplate the great event which is so sublimely and solemnly illustrated. Each step is an advance towards the fullness of light

and knowledge. The secrets of Masonry are the secrets of the Almighty, and he who would rightly understand the principles of our Order must derive his knowledge from the "book of books." Tradition informs us that Christ died with his face to the west, and no Mason can ever travel from the west to the east without the light of his countenance shining upon him. The christian Mason must, in his pious journey in search of truth, look upon the Son of God in the time of His distress and agony, with His hands uplifted on the cross; and as he looks on that scene of woe, with its signs of bitterness and sorrow, he may well ponder upon those remarkable words, which the dying Savior uttered in the hour of extreme suffering—"My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me." When the Mighty Builder descended from the holy of holies where dwelt the immaculate presence of the Father, He came on a mission of infinite mercy, and *He came to die*. It was essential that he should encounter death ere the temple of His religion could be finished. He was the precious corner stone *which the builders rejected, and which became the head stone of the corner*. He came to his own and they received him not. Although a beautiful and finished specimen of work, he was cast into the rubbish of the grave, as unfit for the building. Little did they who conspired to take away his life know that the temple of God could not be completed without him, and that he must needs be raised from the tomb to give *wisdom and strength and beauty* to

his Church. When he was about to expire on the cross, (that instrument curiously made up of squares, right-angles, horizontals and perpendiculars,) *three* words of sublime import fell from his quivering lips, "*it is finished.*" His work was done. It was marked and numbered "with a new name written in it, which no man knoweth save him that receiveth it." He was smitten of God and afflicted. His visage was marred more than any man's. He had given the sign and uttered the words of distress, while he hung upon the tree, and yet none came to his relief. Even the Father forsook his only begotten Son. He was crucified. He died and was buried. On the brow of a hill his body was laid in a tomb, hewn out of a rock. The *third* day his body was raised and exalted in glorified humanity to the *right* hand of the Majesty of the throne. Then the Temple he was chosen to erect was a *finished* and goodly structure. Its foundation is Christ, and the incommunicable name of a thrice illustrious Deity is carved on every stone, and sculptured on every pillar.

Need I add anything more? There is a Temple in the heavenly city, and in its every apartment are glorious spirits studying the emblem of mercy within the great circle of eternity. Oh! may we all be raised through the merits of the Lion of the tribe of Judah, to the ineffable degree of intelligence and love, and receive beneath the living arches of eternity the mysteries of the Godhead.

Fraternally, CHAS. SCOTT.

We shall call one additional witness, that in the mouth of so many "every word may be established." The following extracts from a letter to the author, from William Fielding, M. D., Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Ohio, are to the point and entirely confirmatory of what has already been said.

"You kindly ask whether I have any suggestions to make on your 'Moral Aspects of Masonry.' My opinion is, that all else of Masonry is but the shadow. The *signs, symbols, ceremonies, and hieroglyphics*, are the *media* through which the soul of Masonry is manifested; and but for its moral teachings and moral influence, it were but a 'sounding brass and tinkling cymbal.' There is a soul-stirring pathos in the symbolic representations of masonic truth, that vibrates those filaments interwoven with the heart,—which commands a silent approbation of the judgment, more convincing and irreversible than the most logical and labored argument. Go on, then, dear brother, and shed abroad that great moral LIGHT which is to us a 'pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.' When that rests, we should rest; when it moves, we should move. Without it, how should we pass through the *wilderness* of this life to the Canaan of our rest. Beset on the right and on the left, before and behind, with the enemies through whose dominions we are journeying, we should certainly fall by the way, were it not that, with this ark of the covenant in the center of our camp, and the Lion of the tribe of Judah in the front, we are enabled to come out conquerors in every conflict.

“I should be happy to have an opportunity, ‘face to face,’ to point out to you some of those hidden beauties which have come in view even recently, although, as you well know, idleness in the work has never been charged against me. But there are a thousand points of remarkable moral coincidences in the application of masonic symbols to the sacred *truths, duties, and facts* of divine revelation, which *time, patience, and perseverance* alone can develop. Can it be that there is a single member of the fraternity who, for one moment, allows himself to doubt the divine authority of the Bible? If there is, he has sadly mistaken his way. The rays of light and truth are, to him, as the rays of the sun to the mole and the bat—*painful*. Darkness, even such as may be felt, is more congenial to such. What *concord*, therefore, can there be, between light and darkness—truth and error?

“This gross darkness prevailed once, even in Masonry, but it was in that which was spurious. Genuine, true, Freemasonry always did, and will forever, acknowledge as divinely true the ‘Book of the Law,’ as well as the perfections of its author. Infidelity has no abiding place in or near our sanctuary;—no, not even in the vestibule.”

Such is the opinion of an old and diligent Craftsman, who has carefully and critically examined our mystic temple from its foundation to its cap-stone; and with this record of his views we close the chapter.

CHAPTER XIII.

TRADITION AND SCRIPTURE.

“Tradition can only be relied upon as it is sustained by authentic history, for without such collateral evidence mere human tradition must be received with great caution.”

The facts and incidents embodied in the rituals and ceremonials of Freemasonry, are either true or false. If the latter, then the superstructure which has been built upon those facts and incidents, falls at once to the ground. If, in their essential features, they are not true, then Freemasonry, in its pretensions, its origin, and its teachings is a cheat—a vile imposture. But how shall we ascertain whether the facts referred to are true and not the fabrications of men? Hitherto we have referred to the Bible for evidence, as to an unquestioned witness. But if that must be laid aside, how then shall we know that we have truth for our basis? Perhaps the answer is, “our traditions declare them to be true.” Tradition tells us there was a David and a Solomon and a Hiram; that the former two were successively on the throne of Judea, and that the latter reigned over the neighboring kingdom of Tyre. Tradition affirms that there was an ancient city called Jerusalem; and that Solomon, during his reign, built in that city, by the aid of his Tyrian neighbors, a magnificent Temple, and dedicated it in a most imposing

manner to the solemn worship of Jehovah: That Hiram of Tyre entered into a compact with Solomon, and furnished him valuable assistance in the great undertaking; providing for him workmen of different kinds, and especially a chief and skilful architect, without whose knowledge and ability it would have been difficult if not impossible to accomplish the undertaking; that the workmen were divided into different parties and grades, and wrought at different portions of the work; that the Temple was, after seven years of toil, completed and dedicated, and the ark of the covenant with the book of the law deposited therein. These, and many other facts which may not be publicly named, are taught us by our traditions. But is tradition the only authority? If so, we should weep for the beautiful structure that has been reared by such long and arduous labors.

But it may be said that Josephus and other historians, speak of the same events as having transpired, and thus our traditions are confirmed by collateral history. But let me ask, how did Josephus, or how did those other writers know of those events which, according to their own showing, had occurred hundreds of years before they were born? Was not most, if not all, of their knowledge concerning these things gathered from tradition? If the Bible be untrue, then our only authority for believing there ever was a great and splendid city called Jerusalem; that there was a king in Judea by the name of Solomon, and that he erected a wonderful building in that city and consecrated it to

the worship of Almighty God, and every thing else connected with the strange transactions of three thousand years ago in Palestine, *is tradition!* Surely no Mason in Christendom will be willing to trust the stability of such important facts upon a vague tradition, whose dim outlines are seen through the mists of thirty centuries. However reckless infidelity may be in its character, and blinding in its influence, it could not certainly cause the faculties of an intelligent Freemason to lapse into such dotage as this.

Upon a careful investigation it will be found that whatever truths our traditions present, they are but reflections from the facts laid down as authentic in the Bible history. Like rivulets gushing from an elevated fountain, and descending to the plain below, in a thousand divergent streamlets, so has tradition branched off from the great original authenticated history of those transactions, and given a brief but general relation of the events of that earlier day. If the Bible history were false, there would have been no tradition on the subject; just as there would be no streamlets if there were not away back at their source in the mountain sides a fountain to supply them; or as there would be no rays of light scattered through space, if there were no great central luminary to emit those rays. If tradition is the only authority for the truths which Masonry reveals, then it must have been the only foundation for the history as written by Josephus. He did not witness the transactions he relates; and if he merely re-stated them from other writers, they were

in the same category with himself, for they did not see them. If any writers saw and heard the transactions of that day, they were the sacred writers; they are the only authors who pretend to speak from their own knowledge; all others rest their statements either on tradition or on the authority of the Bible historians. And thus, if statements are traced up to their sources, it will be found that the authority for the history of these ancient transactions is either tradition or the Bible. We all know that tradition is but the "oft told tale," passing from mouth to mouth, from nation to nation, and from generation to generation; and that it rests originally for its authenticity upon the recorded statements in the Bible. If those facts did not occur, then there could be no tradition to that effect; for tradition depends upon fact originally for its support. Tradition may vary and modify, cut off or add to, an originally true statement; as the story floats down through succeeding centuries it may grow with its progress, or lose a part of its original proportions, but it cannot originally spring from an airy nothing. Follow it up, and away back in remote antiquity, there will be found a starting point, where the original had body and shape, and was indeed a verity. The story, then, concerning the organization and labors of the ancient Craftsmen, as it is revealed in Masonry, dim and obscure though it may sometimes be, must have been substantially true originally, or there would have been no tradition to that effect. If it had not been true, the statement would not have come floating down through society for thirty centuries.

It may be said that the original was the conception of some fruitful imagination. This could not have been, for human fancies never reached such scenes of awful grandeur as are there depicted. A lively imagination may have conceived a Jupiter seated upon Olympus, dallying with the charms of his female compeers, and shaking "his ambrosial curls" in the ecstasy of his enjoyments; but human imagination never conceived the imposing, solemn, sacred services of the Temple-dedication,—the prayer of Solomon, the descending fire, and the awful revelation of the glory and the Shekinah. That would have required an effort beyond the powers of the human mind. Pure fiction soars not to a region so rare and elevated as this. It may reach the dwelling-place of heathen deities, and describe their passions and their conduct, for the original of these was found in the perverted nature of man. Fiction may roam over the battle-fields of Troy, and describe the deeds and daring of Greek and Trojan; but its wing would fail ere it reached the temple-crowned summit of Moriah; its effort would be vain to tell the wonders of that sacred spot. We are tempted here to illustrate our argument,—that human fancy could not reach the awful sublimity of divine reality,—by a comparison of the two. We will first give a specimen of fiction,—beautiful, pathetic, sublime, as fiction sometimes can be. It is from the Iliad of Homer, the most beautiful creation of mere human genius that the world has ever seen. Ajax, one of the cele-

brated warriors of antiquity, was smitten with blindness—a dark impenetrable cloud of gloom enshrouded and blinded him while in the midst of a dreadful hand-to-hand conflict with his foes before the walls of Troy, and just as they were beginning to fly from his conquering arm. In the agony of his soul at this terrible visitation at such a juncture, the poet represents him as offering up to Jupiter the following invocation :

“ Lord of earth and air,
Oh King, oh Father, hear my humble prayer ;
Remove this cloud, the light of heaven restore,
Grant me to see, and Ajax asks no more.
If Greece must perish, we thy will obey ;
But let us perish in the face of day.”

Perhaps no effort of the human mind, uninfluenced by the spirit of truth ; no stretch of fancy or flight of the imagination, ever conceived any thing equal to this in its elevated purity and beautiful conception. So earnest, so simple, so importunate, yet so apparently submissive ; so humble, so beseeching,—the words so pregnant with the deep emotions of the warrior’s soul ! Yet viewed in the light of divine revelation, and compared with the language of Him of Calvary, how it fades into twilight, and sinks into vapid insignificance.

Now turn to the Bible story of the Redeemer. Look at Him on the Mount of Olives, in the midst of his agony and conflict with “ the power of darkness.” He has retired to a garden, and left his disciples to

watch while he "went a little way off" to pray. The sacred historian has recorded that prayer, and we will place it side by side with that of Grecian story, and let the world compare,—let infidelity itself be the judge: "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." There they are, fresh from their sources. One is high-wrought beautiful fiction, the creation of one of earth's giant minds, a model for all succeeding ages in the department of uninspired poetry. The other is simple unadorned fact; the natural outgushing of a soul swelling with love to God and man, yet suffering with an agony that wrung "great drops of blood" from every pore of the body. For *true* sublimity; for humble, patient, meek submission; for earnest, importunate, beseeching, and yet calm and quiet submissiveness, there is no comparison between the prayer put into the mouth of Ajax, and that which came welling up from the deep fountains of a Savior's heart. I refer to these cases merely to show that the uninspired human mind, in the utmost stretch of its imagination, never could reach the sublime elevation of the truths of the Bible: and that therefore Masonry is not dependent upon the creations of fiction for the important truths she reveals, simply because the human mind could not have conceived them, nor fiction in its wildest flight described them.

It may be added that existing facts give color to the tradition: there is still a city called Jerusalem, in Judea, and though it be a mere wreck and shadow

of what our traditions describe it to have been, yet the remaining ruins give evidence of its former grandeur. The race of Israel still existing in the world, with the traditions and memories of that strange and mysterious people ; their present condition, their long delayed yet fondly cherished hopes,—all are facts still before us to strengthen confidence in the truth of our traditions. All this is very well, as far as it goes it confirms the masonic story. The Jews are still on the earth and among us ; Jerusalem—a Jerusalem is still there, but not *the* Jerusalem of masonic legend. There are yet the mountains, the geological features of the country, all Palestine ; but not as they were when Solomon was on the throne. Then Palestine was a land of corn and wine, of clustering vineyards and crowded flocks, a land in the figurative language of the Orient, “ flowing with milk and honey.” Now it is barren, desolate, cursed. Then its inhabitants were God’s own peculiar people ; the altar, the offering, and the incense were seen ; the song of praise, the harp and the timbrel filled the land with sacred harmony. Now the wandering Bedouin and the desert robber hold undisputed sway ; the crescent waves in triumph over the soil once reposing under the protection of the banners of Israel, and Mohammed has usurped the shrine of Jehovah. Then, Tyre was a commercial city of world-wide renown : her merchants were princes, her port was crowded with the commerce of the world, and her artizans were the depositories of all that was elevated and refined

in the arts or architecture. Now, Tyre is but a straggling village of huts on the desolate shore ; its remnants of former grandeur lie scattered on the sands, or are buried beneath the wave ; and the *name* of Hiram is scarce known in the language of her wretched and starving children. Save the miserable relics of that land of fame and wonders,—the mere skeleton of the once beautiful and favored protege of Heaven, there is nothing now left of Palestine. Take away the Bible history of its ancient greatness, and its traditional renown will be like the aerial structure revealed by the fleeting mirage.

The only direct and reliable authority, then, we have for the facts and incidents connected with the original organization of ancient Freemasonry, is to be found in the Bible. Profane history and existing traditions are well enough in themselves, and as far as they go ; but, like crippled heroes upon their crutches, they are dependent for support upon the Scriptural history. There is the original fountain, which has supplied all these streams for ages past, and imparted to them whatever of beauty or fertility they possess. To that fountain we must at last resort if we would imbibe a healthful vitality. To that Temple of truth we must flee if we would find an impregnable defence from the assailant. If Masonry lean not on that original depository of truth for its support, it will lean on

“ A broken reed at best,
But oft a spear, on whose sharp point
Peace bleeds and hope expires.”

But may not a man be a good Mason, and yet question the truths of divine revelation? We answer, no—*emphatically, no.* He cannot be, for he is either deceiving himself, or he is deceiving others. If he deny the truths of the Bible, how can he believe the revelations of Masonry? They are both substantially the same, and Masonry calls in the Bible to bear evidence of its truthfulness. If he does not believe the Bible story, he cannot believe the masonic legend; and if he does not believe that Masonry is a reality, that it rests on a substantial basis for its foundation, he must believe that it is a falsehood and a cheat. And in what kind of a position would this place him before the altar of Masonry? How would he appear appealing to the Bible and promising to be governed by its precepts, when he believed that book to be a falsehood? How would he look when bending in reverent adoration before the God of the Bible, while he believed the revelations of that book to be the creations of fancy? What kind of confidence could be placed in his integrity, while he is promising to be a “good man” and “strictly to observe the moral law,” while at the same time he declares that moral law to be only an ingenious fiction? No, no, the lodge is no place for an infidel. If the Bible be false, Masonry is false,—they must stand or fall together. And he that does not—*will* not believe the former, can never believe the latter.

We know we shall be told there are many honest, upright, excellent men who are infidel in their opinions. Granted, and what then? Does that “make void the

law"? By no means. They are kind hearted upright men, not because they disavow the moral law and precepts of the Bible,—not because they do not believe the Bible to be true, but *in spite of that belief*. The fact is, that while their lips declare their unbelief, their hearts and lives contradict their assertions; while they profess to think the Bible is false, the impression of its truth is so engraven upon their moral natures that it gives character and tone and direction to their moral conduct. *Professedly* they abjure the Bible; *practically* they bend in homage to its claims! But for the sake of their own consistency, and their own enjoyments; for the sake of the Craft, its prosperity, its usefulness, and its ultimate triumph over the prejudice and bigotry of man, they had better remain at a distance. In harmony there is pleasure and happiness; between antagonisms there can be no union. Infidelity and Freemasonry occupy opposite points in the moral hemisphere; and while their natures remain unchanged, they must continue to stand in antagonistic attitudes. They can never coalesce, for a union of the two, if it were possible, would be the destruction of both. Let infidelity, then, make its boast of superior freedom and discernment; let it chase its phantom and trust in its airy nothing; but let it not complain if the genius of that Order which wears the livery of the Bible, and reposes with unfaltering confidence upon divine revelation as its "chief corner stone," should decline its proffers of a closer union and spurn it promptly from its threshold.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE RESIDUE OF THE FURNITURE.

“The sound of her gavel roused Genius, her hand-maid,
Who instant came forth with the compass and square.”

In a former chapter I announced that there were three articles of furniture that were indispensable, and without which a lodge would not be suitably prepared for the labors of the Craft. They were the Holy Bible, the Square, and the Compasses. The first named article of furniture has claimed particular attention, and I trust I have succeeded in placing it before the Craft in its true character. The two remaining articles are the square and the compasses. These will now demand our attention.

The SQUARE is dedicated to the Master of the lodge, because it is the peculiar masonic emblem of his office, and should continually remind him of the duty that he owes to the lodge over which he is elected to preside. The square is an angle of ninety degrees, or the fourth part of a circle. As used in operative Masonry, it is a most important implement of the Craft; for by its use the workman is enabled to test the accuracy and perfection of the angles, sides, and edges of his work, and to detect any errors that may have escaped the eye. It would be utterly impossible, properly to prepare ma-

terial for a building, without the use of this invaluable instrument. But if, upon application of the square every angle is perfect, the several parts when brought together in the building will nicely fit each other, and the whole structure will go on to completion as a grand whole, and without the necessity of the ax or hammer to re-adjust the several parts. It is the standard of perfection in operative workmanship; and no single block or stone can pass from the hands of the workman until its finish has stood the test of the square.

In moral Masonry the square teaches morality; its angle representing truth and virtue. Our patron, the holy St. John, when describing the new or heavenly Jerusalem, in the book of Revelations, says—"The city lieth four square." Rev. 21st chap. 16th v. In commenting on this passage one of the most learned divines of England makes this remark: "The quadrangular form intimates its perfection and stability, for the *square* figure was a figure of perfection among the Greeks; the *square* or *cubical* man, was, with them, a man of *unsullied integrity, perfect in all things.*"

An intelligent European writer on Masonry says:—"In architecture not only are the corners of the building proved by the square, but all horizontal and perpendicular lines are drawn by it. Without accurate squaring, a building would be weak and tottering in its first stages of erection, and must continue unfinished. Without a well-defined and very clear code of the reciprocal laws and duties of the officers and members of any social, charitable, or scientific society, it is

impossible for it to avoid being completely overthrown in a very short time. Perfect legality is the only sure foundation for any society, and by it alone bodies of men are kept within their proper limits ; for, as soon as arbitrary power and physical force usurp the place of the laws of any society, it speedily becomes defunct ; with great propriety, therefore, is the square put into the hands of the Worshipful Master, in order that he may keep the brethren within the square of the ancient charges of Freemasonry. This symbol must at all times, and in all places, be regarded as a great light, and the genuine Freemason, is not only reminded by this light to do his duty to his brethren, but to all mankind." See *Dictionary of Symbolical Masonry*, p. 146.

In order to understand fully the purport of what is taught by this symbol in the furniture of a lodge, it should be borne in mind that the work of the operative Mason was submitted to the examination of an overseer. He examined it critically, and tested its accuracy in every possible way. If it were not *good* and *square* work, it was not only rejected as unfit for the building, but he who had failed in finishing and perfecting his work, went entirely unrewarded. It was necessary that the overseer should be exceedingly careful in trying and proving the work, when first presented by the operative ; for should it be received as worthy and taken to Jerusalem, and *then* and *there* found unfit for its allotted place, the Craft would not only be compelled to suspend its labors until workmen could be sent to

the quarries and another stone should be prepared, but that on which so much time and labor and means had been expended, must be cast aside as useless, or thrown among the rubbish. It could not be finished or perfected there, even if it were susceptible of improvement, for no sound of hammer or tool of iron must be heard on that sacred mountain. Hence the necessity of having an instrument that would accurately test the qualities and finish of every piece of work that was presented for the use of the building. And that instrument must be always at hand, and in the place where the work was being executed, in order that it might be had for use at any time and at all times when needed.

Freemasonry has now become a moral science. The material on which we work is immortal mind; and the design is to fit it for a place in the heavenly Jerusalem. It must be perfect in all its parts in order that it may be fitted for its allotted place in that spiritual temple; and that perfect adaptation must be acquired before it reaches the mount of God, or, when called to pass the scrutiny of the Supreme Grand Master, if it be found imperfect, instead of being placed in those walls of heavenly splendor which are to be as imperishable as eternity, it will be rejected and thrown among the rubbish without the city; "for without are dogs and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." *St. John.*

Now is it asked what that test shall be? We answer, "*truth*" and "*virtue*," which are represented by the square; not simply philosophical, or mechanical,

or scientific truth, but God's TRUTH,—God's moral truth, as revealed in the moral law. This is the moral square which must be applied to the workmanship; if it abide not that test, it is because it is not true, and will not answer for the heavenly temple. Hence the square is an indispensable article in the furniture of the lodge; it must be there at hand, where the labor is being performed, and always there. The work is not *good* work nor *square*, until it has been proven to be such by the application of this unchanging and eternal principle. With what trembling anxiety, then, should the Master, whose peculiar province it is to apply this instrument and sit in judgment on the work, assume his responsible trust. The human soul is the marble which is to be fitted and fashioned for a place

“In that Jerusalem above;”

and *he* is to examine and see that the work is *well* done and perfectly adapted to its glorious ends. Should there be a defect in it when presented to the “Grand Overseer,”—should inattention or want of skill on his part allow work to go up unfitted for any place in the temple, the responsibility, in part, at least, will be upon him. A plea that he knew it was not square, but had permitted it to pass his inspection because of any singular *form* or innate *beauties* which it possessed, will be of no avail. The requisition was for *square* work, and he had the means in his power of ascertaining whether it was square work. He

must not be blinded by the glitter of outside beauties, or the attractions of strange and peculiar forms ; the law demands that it be square, and that only ; and if it be not, it can have no place in the building, and the workman will fail of his glorious reward.

I cannot help recurring here, again, to the first or foundation principle—the Word of God. It is the first in the enumerated articles of furniture, as it is the great Light, in the lodge. From it is drawn all other instrumentalities. The square—truth—is furnished by it. And that truth is as certain and immutable as that “a square is an angle of ninety degrees, or the fourth part of a circle.” This is a truth in physical science that no seasons or circumstances, language or latitude can change. It is in Labrador and Lapland what it is in central India or on the gold coast of Africa ;—what it was when Solomon built his unequalled Temple, that it will be when the last earthly temple shall have been completed—and destroyed. So, too, the truth of God which governs moral action, and by which humanity will be tried and tested ere it is received into the mansions prepared for it. No change of idiom nor educational prejudice ; no assumption of priest or decree of synod ; no moral obliquity of the heart or conclusions from perverted reasoning, will be an excuse for unfinished or imperfect work. There is the moral square, a rule of eternal rectitude ; perfect in its nature and in its demands ; simple in itself, and easy of application. It is immutable. What it was

when "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy," it will be when those stars shall be veiled in eternal darkness, and "this mortal shall have put on immortality." And by that rule of moral action we shall be judged when it is too late for amendment. How much better to apply the square *now*: if the work is found not perfect, toil on, and then apply it again. The stake at issue is one involving eternal interests: and better repeat the effort until the work is square, even though it require years of toil to reach that point, than through idleness or ignorance to send up the work with uncertainty stampt upon it, and have it rejected when rejection will be ruin. The Master of a lodge occupies a position of fearful responsibility. Who is sufficient for the task?

The COMPASSES is the third and last article of furniture enumerated. It is also one of the lesser Lights, shining by reflection from the great Light, and is as indispensable in the lodge as the square. The latter instrument, we have seen, is set apart for the special use of the Worshipful Master, as an instrument with which to test and perfect the work: while the compasses is dedicated to the use of the Craft—the membership or brotherhood in general—and by "its use, they are taught to regulate their desires, and keep their passions within due bounds."

In mechanics this emblem is defined as "an instrument for describing circles, measuring figures, &c. consisting of two pointed legs or branches, made of

iron, steel or brass, joined at the top by a rivet on which they move." Hence, in operative Masonry, "the compasses being the chief implement used in the construction of all architectural plans and designs, are assigned to the Grand Master in particular, as emblems of his dignity, he being the chief head and ruler of the Craft." But in moral Masonry, though still used symbolically for the purpose of drawing designs and laying out the several parts and proportions of the building, yet they are more especially dedicated to the Craft for moral instruction. According to the old lectures of the last century, "the ungovernable passions and uncultivated nature of man, stand as much in need of the square and compasses to bring them into order, and to adorn us with the beauty of holiness, as those instruments of Masonry are necessary to bring rude matter into form, or to make a block of marble fit for the polished corners of the temple."

"The compasses ought to keep us within the bonds of union with all mankind, but, more especially, with our brother Masons. By the compasses the skilful architect is enabled accurately to determine the relative proportions of all parts of the building when he is laying it down upon the tracing-board for the use of the workmen. Without accurate measurement, and thereby acquired symmetry, or beautiful and skilful proportioning of all its parts unto the whole, architectural beauty is not attainable. Without cultivated and amiable conduct—without benevolent

feelings and charitable actions towards each other, no endearing bond amongst mankind is conceivable ; for so long as mankind confine themselves to acts of justice alone to each other, so long must they be kept asunder by cold civility. It is only the calm affection of pure philanthropy which can unite them in the closer bonds of fraternal affection. A circle or line drawn by the compasses is also an emblem of eternity, and commonly represented by a serpent in the form of a circle."—*Gadicke*.

From these extracts and definitions we learn the true use of the compasses. Primarily they were used by the chief architect to draw out his designs in proper proportion and with perfect accuracy. Secondly and morally they teach the Craft to circumscribe their actions and keep their passions within due bounds. While the "square of truth and virtue" is to test our moral preparations for a place in the spiritual temple, the compasses are to regulate our conduct towards all mankind, but especially towards our brethren of the Craft. We may hate the sin, the intemperance, the injustice, the ungodliness of the individual, but we may not hate the individual himself. The compasses prescribe the limits beyond which we may not "suffer our passions or prejudices to betray us." We may eat and drink ; we may indulge in society and dress and recreation ; but the circle of prudence, prescribed by this invaluable instrument, we may not cross,—they forbid it, and forbid it under the sanction, and by authority of that

Great Light, of which they are the associate in the lodge. These bounds we dare not cross because God, in the laws of nature, forbids, and forbids it under the penalty of ruined health and forfeited integrity, —of poverty, as the result of idleness, and of unhappiness arising from a condemning conscience. The law of God and personal interests combine to enforce these duties, and prevent us overstepping the boundaries marked out by the compasses.

In arranging these peculiar emblems of moral culture, our elder brethren seem to have had a clear understanding of human character, of its wretched condition by nature, and of the instrumentalities by which to teach, in a most impressive manner, the necessity and the means of moral culture. Man is compared to the tree in the forest, as nature has made it; or to the marble in its rough and unpolished condition when taken from the quarries. The fact is pointed out that he is destined for a loftier position in the scale of moral intelligence; and the means and instrumentalities by which he may attain that position are placed within his reach, and of such a character that he may easily comprehend their use and application. Thus he is led on from step to step—from the compasses to the square, and from the square to the Holy Scriptures, and to the assistance of One “who is able to save to the uttermost,” and the influence and co-operation of those higher spiritual instrumentalities, by means of which the work may be fully accomplished, and man *fully* fitted for the New Jerusalem.

And the fact that these instructive emblems are so interwoven into the system of speculative Masonry, as to make them indispensable,—that to omit them in the catalogue of instruments would destroy the harmony and vitality of the whole—proves beyond a doubt that moral culture was the object the Fathers had in view. It was not alone instruction in science and arts, nor yet the strengthening of social bonds and the bestowment of charity; but a much higher and holier aim—the knowledge and worship and love of God; the happiness of man as the result of this knowledge and the performance of these duties, and then the future and eternal blessedness of the soul when “raised” from the grave of sin and death, to the light and life and privileges of heaven. I need not say to the intelligent Freemason, how impressively these great truths and important lessons are taught by these articles of “furniture.” They speak to the eye, the mechanical sense, the understanding; and the heart is led to appreciate these dimly revealed truths. And then a greater and clearer “Light” dawns upon the mind, dispelling the darkness that lingers there, and leading the trembling footsteps of the enquirer into the pathway of immortality. While he learns to love, and do good unto all mankind, he learns obedience to his Maker’s laws, and the light which he sees and follows “shines more and more unto the perfect day.”

CHAPTER XV.

THE ORNAMENTS OF THE LODGE.

“The ornaments of a lodge are the *Mosaic Pavement*, *Incised Tessel*, and the *Blazing Star*.”—CRAFTSMAN.

A building, to be a pleasant and agreeable habitation, should not only be furnished, but adorned and ornamented. The lodge is a mystical building, and its furniture we have seen and described. But the building is not only furnished with that which is indispensable to make it a suitable habitation, but it is also ornamented to make it attractive and inviting. Yet even the ornaments are not mere superfluities—gilded baubles to gratify the eye or the pride of the inhabitant.—but each one is a speaking monitor, to which the dweller may listen at any time and hear words of wisdom and lessons of practical benefit. Nothing is there in vain, nothing useless; for even the ornaments are necessary to fill up the grand design and perfect the lessons so essential to be learned.

The first ornament that I shall notice is the “*Mosaic Pavement*,” which is supposed to constitute the ground floor of the lodge. “*Mosaic work* is an assemblage of little pieces of glass, marble, precious stones, &c., of various colors, cut square and cemented on a ground of stucco, in such a manner as to imitate the colors and

gradations of painting."—*Webster*. "This beautiful pavement," says Dr. Oliver, "was common to all nations, under the name of Mosaic work. The Romans left behind them many beautiful specimens, which have been discovered in modern times, distributed throughout this island, and are preserved with great care as invaluable relics of the state of the arts in the first ages of christianity. But we are furnished with records of this kind of work at periods much more remote. In the royal palace of Shushan, when Ahashuerus gave a royal feast to his nobles, the banqueting couches were of gold and silver, upon a tessellated pavement of different colored marbles.—(*Esther*, 1, 6.) The Egyptians used painted walls and ceilings, and rich Mosaic pavements. Cleopatra inlaid her pavements with precious stones. In India the floors of their temples were enriched with polished stones, disposed in small squares, which reflected the beams of the sun in a variety of splendid colors. Thus Philostratus tells us that Apollonius saw in India a most glorious temple of the sun, the walls of which were of real marble, resembling fire, interspersed with streaks of gold; while the floor exhibited to the view an infinite variety of pearls and precious stones, artfully disposed in a kind of checker work, which reflected the rays of the sun."—*Landmarks*, vol. 1, p. 445.

The ground floor of king Solomon's Temple was a model of Mosaic work, grand and beautiful beyond description. And as the learned and polished Athenians borrowed the form of their altar dedicated to the

"unknown God," from the altar in the Temple at Jerusalem, as well as the strange inscription which it bore, (to the God whom the Hebrews worshipped,) so did the surrounding nations of Persia, India, and Arabia, obtain from the Mosaic work of the Temple the pattern from which they constructed the floors of their temples and palaces, the gorgeous magnificence of which has come down to our own times. The precious stones which composed the floor, curiously wrought by Tyrian artists, were formed without any reference to a previous model, and the Tyrian bevel, represented in the tessellated work, became the model for future architects throughout the world.

Thus it will be seen that the floor of the lodge is designed as a representation of the ground-floor of the Temple of Solomon, which was of Mosaic work. In regard to the lodge and its appendages, it may truly be said "there is nothing in vain;" for even the adornments of the building teach lessons of value, and a moral lecture may be heard from each article on which the eye rests, whether it be an article of utility or ornament. The Mosaic or checker work of the floor is designed to impress upon the mind the changeability and uncertainty of human life, "checkered with good and evil." The alternate black and white denoting, the one sorrow, gloom, death; the other joy, innocence, life and happiness. A European writer has the following remarks in relation to this. "Among the Athenians *black* was the color of affliction, and *white* that of innocence, joy, and purity. Thus the expiatory ship

that every year sailed, first to Crete and then to Delos, hoisted black sails at departure, and white on its return; visible symbols of mental darkness and light, of grief and joy, which followed in its wake. Theseus, neglecting on his return to hoist the white signal, his father Egeus, in despair, cast himself into the sea. The Greeks wore black in mourning. Pericles congratulated himself in never having caused any one to wear it. The Arabs, and blazonry, give to black a signification evidently derived from traditions of initiation. It designates, among the Moors, grief, despair, obscurity, and constancy. Black, in blazonry named sable, signifies prudence, wisdom, and constancy in adversity and woe." And I apprehend that these colors are used alternately in the floor of a masonic lodge for the purpose of teaching the same general lessons.

Bro. Willoughby, a distinguished English Freemason, gives his views of the Mosaic pavement, in a letter to Dr. Oliver, as follows: "The Mosaic pavement I have never heard explained, except as referring to the checkered path of this life, of alternate prosperity and adversity; but, in my opinion, it has a far more sacred signification to the doctrine of man's redemption, which pervades the whole system of Masonry. We call it *Mosaic*, I presume, because it was used by Moses in the floor of the tabernacle; but for what reason did Moses adopt it? My opinion is, that it was in allusion to the redemption of the Israelites from their Egyptian bondage, by the pillar of fire on the one side, and a cloud on the other; or, in other words, light

and darkness. Light, and thereby salvation to the then true church of God ; and darkness and destruction to her enemies. A beautiful type of the gospel which, when it appeared as a light to lighten the Gentiles, was to the Jews a stumbling block, like the cloudy pillar; but to the believers, the now true church of Christ, the power of God unto salvation, as was the pillar of fire. It is but reasonable then to suppose that Moses adopted the checkered pavement in the tabernacle, with the same view that Solomon adopted the two pillars in the porch-way of the Temple, as a memorial to the children of Israel of the happy deliverance of their forefathers from Egyptian bondage by the memorable pillar of fire and cloud, or light and darkness, which was evidently a type of human redemption through that Being who had two natures, divine and human, as opposite as the light and darkness of the Mosaic pavement."

This is a beautiful theory, and beautifully expressed, but it seems to me rather far-fetched and of forced application. It is somewhat doubtful whether the instruction designed by this checker work reaches so high—it is more probably a remembrancer of our present condition than a symbol of our redemption. The Rev. Bro. Dr. Ashe, in his lecture on the Entered Apprentice degree, has more fully expressed our views of the application of the Mosaic pavement, and I will here copy it for the gratification of those who may peruse this work.

“As the steps of man are attended by various and

uncertain incidents of life—as our days are checkered with a strange contrariety of events, and our passage through this existence, though sometimes blessed with prosperous circumstances, yet often beset by a multitude of evils; hence our lodges are furnished with Mosaic work, to remind us of the precariousness of our state on earth. To-day our feet tread in prosperity; to-morrow we totter on the uneven paths of weakness, temptation and adversity. Whilst this emblem is before us, we are instructed to boast of nothing; to have compassion and give aid to those in adversity, to walk uprightly and with humility; for such is our existence that there is no station in which pride can be stably founded. All men are similar by nature; although some are born to more elevated stations than others; but, when in the grave, all are upon a level—death destroying all distinctions. Then, whilst we tread on the Mosaic work, let our ideas return to the original which it copies, and let every Mason act as the dictates of reason prompt him, and live in brotherly love, faith, hope and charity.”

The celebrated Dr. Oliver, the most voluminous writer on Freemasonry that we have ever had, allows a little greater latitude in his explanation of this ornament. He says—“the Mosaic pavement may well be termed the beautiful flooring of a Mason’s lodge, by reason of its being variegated and checkered, pointing out the diversity of objects which beautify and adorn the creation, the animate as well as the inanimate parts thereof.” He seems to have applied it rather to the

appearance of nature than the condition of man, and as emblematic of its checkered features rather than the vicissitudes of human life. Dr. Dalcho, the most celebrated of the early American writers on Freemasonry, gives it a more reasonable and truthful application. In one of his orations he says :

“ In a symbolical lodge of blue Masons, the first object which deserves attention is the Mosaic floor on which we tread ; it is intended to convey to our minds the vicissitudes of human affairs, checkered with a strange contrariety of events. To-day elated with the smiles of prosperity, to-morrow depressed by the frowns of misfortune. The precariousness of our situation in this world will teach us humility, to walk uprightly and firmly upon the broad basis of virtue and religion, and to give assistance to our unfortunate fellow creatures who are in distress ; lest, on some capricious turn of fortune’s wheel, we may become dependents of those who, before, looked up to us as their benefactors.”

Such are the instructions and admonitions of this beautiful ornament. Every thing pertaining to human life is uncertain and changing. Riches take to themselves wings and fly away. Friends whom we had treasured in our heart of hearts, suddenly sicken and die, and the insatiate archer bears them away to his dark and silent mansions. A sense of loneliness, desolate as the grave, comes over us, and neither the present nor the future offers a single ray of hope. Days and years pass by : the wound is mollified by

time, and perhaps finally healed. Bright spots again appear on the pathway and along the horizon of life; a star of hope struggles out through the pall of gloom and gives promise of a brighter day. Other friends are won and cherished, and fill the void created by the rude hand of the destroyer:

“The clouds disperse—the shadows flee.”

But ere long another change occurs. We have been deceived by the friend in whom we trusted. The heart we supposed to be “true and trusty”—a safe repository for our complaints and confidence—a sharer of our joys and sorrows—proves deceptive in the hour of trial and of need. Disappointment again spreads its dark wings over the soul, and brilliant hopes and cheering prospects are changed to harassing fears and gloomy apprehensions. It is a severe discipline; but by this process we are taught to turn our eyes to a future and better and brighter world.—on *that* to build our hopes and feel

“There’s nothing true but heaven.”

“Human life is checkered with good and evil;” these constitute its component parts; it must and will be so while the grave lies between us and eternal realities. To-day we are surrounded with a thousand blessings; enjoyments crowd upon us, and the future is radiant with light—a fairy scene of bliss on which rests no stain of sin and sorrow. But even while we are gazing on it with delight, the indications of a

change appear ; the distant thunder utters its voice, portentous of the coming storm ; and ere we are aware, the heavens are wrapt in gloom and the earth is trembling with affright ; visions of paradise are changed to prospects of gloom and despair, and the songs of a summer morning are hushed in the dirge of the pitiless storm !

In the lodge, the light and darkness of the Mosaic work is an ever present monitor, reminding us continually of this experience of life, and, in effect, bidding us expect nothing else below, but look to a future and higher spiritual world for a happiness unchanging as our immortal nature, and enduring as eternity. The writer once attended a Jewish wedding. At the close, and as the finishing part of the ceremonies, the bride-groom took a wine-glass which had been used in the solemn service, laid it on the floor, and with his foot stamped it into a thousand pieces. After the parties had retired from the synagogue, we took occasion to ask of the Rabbi an explanation of this singular act. He said it was used to remind them in all their festive scenes and pleasureable emotions, that they had sinned and suffered,—that the desolations of their holy and beautiful city, the dispersion of their people, and the wrongs and cruelties they had suffered, were not to be forgotten in their days of happiness and seasons of enjoyment. So in the lodge : though surrounded by so many elements of enjoyment, and in the possession of such unmixed pleasure, the dark shades of the Mosaic remind us

that these pleasures are transient and fading, and may ere long be succeeded by lamentation and wo.

The "beautifully tessellated border" which surrounds the checkered pavement, is to remind us of "the blessings and comforts" which surround us here. The one is a warning voice, admonishing us of change and decay and death,—of the transitory nature of all earthly enjoyments, and the certainty of approaching trial: the other is to remind us of the comforts we *now* enjoy, and that though there is much of evil in the world, it is not unmixed with good. It presents the healing balm, while the "cup of trembling" lingers on our lips. Like a ray of sunshine mingling in the tempest, it offers the cup of consolation while yet the tears are flowing, and bids us "trust in God" though the waves break fiercely around us. Hope in despair,—confidence amid surrounding dangers, and the cheering hopes of a "glorious immortality" while the dark night of the grave rests upon the horizon of earth—such are the teachings of these beautiful adornments of the lodge. Who shall say they are useless or trifling, or unworthy of regard. He who worships gold as his deity, and hopes for no other heaven than that on which he can now lay his hands and which is tangible to the senses;—he who has excluded death from his thoughts and blotted eternity from his memory; who has no "faith in God" nor hope in the future, may well ridicule these emblems and their heart-reaching instructions. He who looks on every thing but the

"almighty dollar" as unworthy his regard, and who feels *only* for himself; who cares but to gratify his passions, forgetful of his higher duty and destiny, may well turn away with averted eye. The lodge is no place for him; its voice of power cannot enter his heart, nor awaken within it a single aspiration that reaches beyond the circle of earthly gain or earthly glory.

These emblematical representations are not only impressive and truthful, but they fill an important place, and their silent monitions are of vast utility. Amid the pressing and crushing cares of life, when the affections are in danger of being wedded to material and perishing objects; and the thoughts liable to be attracted *only* to earth—what we shall eat and where-withal shall we be clothed,—when human nature is liable to forget its heavenly origin and immortal destiny how important to have frequently before the eye a visible, though it may be a silent monitor, to bid us think of other and future and dearer interests; to hear it say

"Oh, let not *all* thy heart
To *this* poor world be given;
Nor *always* be forgot,
Thy better rest in heaven."

How its soft and silent pleadings will find their way to the heart, and press upon its thoughts connected with eternal interests. And at such seasons of deep and solemn reflection, when the dawnings of a future life beam upon the realities of this, the present is seen in its proper aspect and assumes its legitimate character.

We see it, then, in the light that struggles down from a higher world, and immediately these interests of fancied magnitude—these objects of inordinate care—dwindle down to their own native insignificance. And in proportion as they contract their dimensions, the affections let go their hold upon them and take wing for a region of enduring pleasure, of incorruptible wealth, and everlasting repose. Thus these emblems work for eternal interests, and teach a lesson that will not be forgotten when heaven and earth have passed away. The outward world may not know the silent but effective influence these eloquent advocates of virtue have upon the heart; but the thinking and reflecting Mason, who has wisely improved his privileges, knows from experience the benefits to be derived from these sources. He has often thought and deeply pondered over the instructions received from these silent memorials, until he has felt—and *deeply* felt their force and truthfulness. And when the light of eternity shall dispel the mists of the present life, and we shall be able to “see as we are seen, and know as we are known,” then it will appear that these influences have had a greater share in recovering man from the error of his ways, than is now dreamed of by the fanatical ultraist of the present hour. Besides, the pride of the lofty and the lordly, when reminded of the instability of their grounds of boasting, is humbled; and compassion for the poor and the distressed turn upon his cold and frigid nature, a tide of human sympathy until it melts into kindness and charity.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE BLAZING STAR.

“The Mosaic pavement is a representation of the ground-floor of king Solomon's Temple; the indented tessel, that beautifully tessellated border which surrounded it; and the blazing star in the center is commemorative of the star which appeared to guide the wise men of the east to the place of our Savior's nativity.”

WEDD.

“The star—the star of Bethlehem.”

In the center of the ground-floor of every lodge there is the representation of a brilliant star. It is called one of the “ornaments” of the lodge; and of the three, it is the central and the most important one. The explanation of it *now* given in our rituals is, that it “is commemorative of the star which appeared to guide the wise men of the east to the place of our Savior's nativity.” This explanation, I am aware, is called in question by some, and even the right of this emblem to a place or part in our solemn mysteries is doubted. No one pretends that it is essential, like the furniture or jewels; it is but an ornament, and it *might* be a lodge without an ornament, but it would be an unfinished and imperfect one. For the satisfaction of all, then, I shall endeavor to ascertain its true character, why it is found on the ground-floor, and the proper explanation to be given it.

Brother Preston, in his "Illustrations of Masonry" says,—“Every thing that strikes the eye, more immediately engages the attention, and imprints on the memory serious and solemn truths. Masons have, therefore, universally adopted the plan of inculcating the tenets of their Order by typical figures and allegorical emblems, to prevent their mysteries from descending within the familiar reach of inattentive and unprepared novices, from whom they might not receive due veneration.” This is the reason why so many important truths are taught by types and emblems; and it may account for the fact that the original design of some of our emblems and figures are a little in doubt. The most attentive and careful, only, acquired a correct knowledge of what was taught by them; and hence after a succession of ages the *original* use of the emblem may have become somewhat obscured. And this *may* be the case with the one now under consideration.

The earliest tangible evidence existing of the use of this emblem, so far as the writer's knowledge extends, is a “tracing-board,” which was published in the early part of the last century—now nearly one hundred and fifty years ago. In the center of that venerable relie is a blazing star of five points, enclosing the letter G. Dr. Oliver, in explaining this tracing-board, says,—“Over the center pillar is a blazing star which forms one of the ornaments of a lodge, and is an emblem of that Prudence which ought to appear conspicuous in the conduct of every Mason; but it is more especially commemorative of that star which ap-

peared in the east, to guide the wise men to Bethlehem, to proclaim the birth and the presence of the Son of God. Here we have a direct reference to that divine Being who came into the world to drain the cup of sorrow for the purpose of reconciling us to God; and to die a sacrifice that he might work out human redemption. Our lessons of morality, thus invigorated by a brilliant object, ever present, like the Deity whom it represents, to quicken our faith, enliven our hope, and stimulate our charity, can scarcely fail to be effective both to our temporal and eternal benefit. In this point of view the blazing star becomes a symbol of more than ordinary value. If the other emblems of Masonry be inestimable, from their moral signification and universal application to regulate our conduct in the affairs of this world, *this* will far exceed them because it bears a spiritual reference to a system of infinite value and surpassing grandeur—a system which is the delight of angels, and the practice of the souls of just men made perfect.”

Dr. Hemming says—“The Blazing Star, or glory in the center, refers us to the sun, which enlightens the earth with its refulgent rays, dispensing its blessings to mankind at large, and giving light and life to all things here below.”

We know not where the good Doctor obtained the information that this emblem represented the sun, for we have found the sentiment no where else in any of the masonic writers that we have examined. Rev. Dr. Ashe, an eminent English Mason, who wrote in the

early part of the present century, intimates that the leading object of this emblem is to teach prudence, but that it also refers to the star of Bethlehem. For the reader's satisfaction, and that he may not be misunderstood, we will quote his language at length.

"The third emanation of Abrax, in the Gnostic hierarchy, was Phronœsis, the emblem of prudence, which is the first and most exalted object that demands our attention in the lodge. It is placed in the center, ever to be present to the eye of the Mason, that his heart may be attentive to her dictates, and steadfast in her laws, for prudence is the rule of all virtues; prudence is the path which leads to every degree of propriety; prudence is the channel whence self-approbation flows forever; she leads us forth to worthy actions; and as a guiding star, enlightens us through the dreary and darksome ways of this life.

"Virtue, by moralists is defined to be 'that steadfast purpose, and firm will of doing those things which nature has dictated to us as the best and most salutary,—a habit of the soul by which mankind are inclined to do the things which are upright and good, and to avoid those that are evil.' In short, virtue is moral honesty, and comprehends good principles.

"Of the virtues, of which prudence is the rule, three are called cardinal virtues, of which properly a Mason should be possessed,—Fortitude, Temperance and Justice; for without these the name of Mason is an empty title.

"That fortitude should be the characteristic of a

Mason, we need not argue ; by means of which, in the midst of pressing evils, he is enabled to do that which is agreeable to the dictates of right reason.

“ Temperance, also, must be one of his stedfast principles, being the moderating or restraining of our affections and passions, especially in sobriety and chastity. We regard Temperance, under the various definitions of moralists, as constituting honesty, decency, and discretion ; and in its potential parts, instituting meekness, clemency, and modesty.

“ We profess Justice, as dictating to us to do what is right to all, and to yield to every man that which belongs to him.

“ The cardinal virtues, prudence, fortitude, temperance, and justice, hold in their train the inferior ones of peace, concord, quietness, liberty, safety, honor, felicity, piety and pity, with many others which were adored by the ancients in those ages when they confounded mythology with the worship of the Divinity. Within the star-adorned zone of prudence, all the virtues are enfolded.

“ We may apply this emblem to a still more religious import ; it may be said to represent the star which led the wise men to Bethlehem, proclaiming to mankind the nativity of the Son of God, and so conducting our spiritual progress to the Author of redemption.”
Ashe's Lectures, page 111.

In the twenty-eighth degree of the French Rite, *ancien et accepte*, the Blazing Star is an emblem of truth, and is defined as “ a true Mason perfecting him-

self in the way of truth, that he may become like a blazing star which shineth with brilliancy even in the thickest darkness ; and it is useful to those whom it illuminates, if they be desirous of profiting by its light."

In the degree of Secret Master, pertaining to the modern Rites, the blazing Star represents the "light of Providence pointing out the way of truth."

Doctor Oliver, in his Dictionary of Symbolical Masonry, says—"The Blazing Star must not be considered merely as the creature which heralded the appearance of T. G. A. O. T. U., but the expressive symbol of that Great Being himself, who is described by the magnificent appellations of the Day Spring, or Rising Sun ; the Day Star ; the Morning Star ; and the bright, or Blazing Star. This, then, is the supernal reference of the Blazing Star of Masonry, attached to a science which, like the religion it embodies, is universal, and applicable to all times and seasons, and to every people that ever did or ever will exist on our ephemeral globe of earth."

Dr. Mackey, of Charleston, says of this emblem—"Formerly it was said to be 'commemorative of the star which appeared to guide the wise men of the East to the place of our Savior's nativity.' But as this allusion, however beautiful, interferes with the universal character of Masonry, it is now generally omitted, and the blazing star is said to be an emblem of Divine Providence. In the English ritual it is emblematic of prudence."

We know not, with certainty, in what aspect the emblem is regarded in the rituals of the English lodges; but we have seen that Dr. Oliver, the great English Masonic writer, admits that it refers to the star of Bethlehem, as well as to the virtue of prudence; and in this country almost every writer on the subject, from Webb to the present time, has given to it the same explanation. Brother Mackey's objection to this, we think, is not tenable. If every thing that "interferes with the universal character of Masonry" must be excluded from our lodges, strictly speaking, their dedication to the Saints John, and all allusions to Solomon and the Jewish rituals, must also be omitted, and the New Testament must be shut out, and the parallel lines destroyed. Indeed, Masonry would present a sorry aspect if every jewel borrowed from the Christian Dispensation were torn from its robes. This "universal character of Masonry" is, after all, mere moonshine—it has no such character, in the sense that some would have it. If every thing christian about it must be removed, for fear of destroying its universality, for the same reason all its Jewish features must be destroyed; and having lost the lineaments of both Jew and Christian, it would be exceedingly difficult to discover its parentage, its relations, or its nature. Instead of having a universal character, it would have no character at all; and we should have the strange exhibition presented of the most beautiful structure of human genius the world has ever seen, despoiled of its beauty and all

torn to fragments, because, forsooth, it is not *entirely* of the Corinthian, Composite, or Ionic order in architecture. Masonry is neither Judaism nor Christianity; but, founded upon the revelation of God to man, it partakes of both. In its symbols and forms and ceremonies, it partakes largely of the elder dispensation; but like every thing in that dispensation, which was typical and prefigurative of better things to come, it also bears a spiritual application and breathes the living spirit of the New Testament revelation.

The Blazing Star is doubtless an emblem of prudence,—so considered by Masonry for more than a century past. It may, also, have been regarded as indicating divine providence; and one, or both of these *may* have been its original signification among Masons. But as far back as any *recorded* evidence exists of its explanation, it has been commemorative of the star which led the wondering Magi to the cradle of the infant Redeemer at Bethlehem. This application of it, too, accords well with the recognition of the christian religion in the dedication of our lodges, and the festivals of the Baptist and the Evangelist, and many other kindred references. They all point to the same thing, and breathe the same spirit, and are all born of that “life and immortality” from the grave of sin and death, which were brought to light by the introduction of a new and glorious dispensation. We are not willing, therefore, to rob this beautiful and expressive emblem of the character it has borne for the last hundred and fifty years. Webb,

an early American writer on our rituals, used it, and that too, after he had thoroughly investigated its claims, with all the facilities furnished for that purpose by the most illustrious of the Craft in Europe and America ; and every masonic writer in this country, since his day, has acknowledged that Webb was correct. We are willing it shall teach us prudence, but we have another and more expressive representation of that virtue. We will consent that it shall remind us of that divine providence which watches over the pathway of frail humanity, and shelters it from a thousand dangers ; but let this not be its only language, nor the exclusive object of its mission.

The wonderful artizan of Tyre was a beautiful type of "the man of sorrows." He, and he alone, of all human artificers, was found capable of superintending the erection of the Temple on Mount Moriah ; as the "Lion of the tribe of Judah," alone, of all in earth or heaven, was found worthy to "open the book," and introduce a spiritual architecture for "a habitation of God through the spirit." The wise master-builder of the first Temple was allied by birth and lineage to Jew and Gentile both, and thus united the extremes of the human family in the great undertaking, thereby insuring peace between elements that were otherwise jarring in perpetual discord. So, too, the stranger of Bethlehem—"the Son of God," foretold to be such by the prophets, and acknowledged as such by "signs and wonders

and divers miracles"—brought extremes together, and restored amity and peace and friendship where hostility had existed before. The man of Tyre, too, suffered the penalty of a transgressor—preferring death and the grave to a forfeiture of integrity and innocence. And so, likewise, the prophet of Israel, at the peril of his life, in the face of his enemies, and in view of the cross, persevered in declaring himself to be the "Son of God," and went to the grave a victim to the jealousy and malice of his foes. And this parallel might easily be carried farther, if we dared to trace it on paper; but the intelligent Craftsman will readily perceive what our pen is forbidden to record.

From these and many other considerations that might be urged, this reference of the blazing star to the scenes of Bethlehem must be regarded in perfect harmony with the whole genius and spirit of Masonry. It uses the same language that other types use, and partakes of the same general features of the whole family of masonic emblems. There let it stand, then, in its life-developing character, and in its sublime moral beauty, pointing with unerring finger to Bethlehem and the manger. From the East and the West, from the North and the South, let it continue to lead the enquiring stranger to the "hope of Israel." Let it tell of a starry night, and shepherds watching their flocks, and enquiring strangers; let it rest "over the place where the young child lay," and shed its rays of calm and serene beauty along

the path to the caravansera and the SHILOH. Let it be the herald of good tidings and great joy—the abiding impersonation of that wonderful event which proclaimed deliverance to humanity, and opened, through the dark chambers of the tomb, a “high way” to immortality in the heavens. Let the mystic light which emanates from that radiant star flame along the pathway of the obedient Craftsman, until it shall guide him to Mt. Zion,—the city and temple of the God of Israel.

Star of hope, thy mystic ray,
Pointing to the promised One ;
Now foretells the coming day—
Ushers in the glorious Son.

CHAPTER XVII.

OUR HOUSEHOLD JEWELRY.

“ Then to be good is to be happy ; angels
Are happier than mankind, because they're better.
Guilt is the source of sorrow ; 'tis the fiend,
The avenging fiend, that follows us behind
With whips and stings. The blest know none of this ;
But rest in everlasting peace of mind,
And find the height of all their heaven is goodness.”

A building properly prepared in every respect for an agreeable habitation, should not only be furnished with every necessary article for comfort and convenience, but also ornamented to make it attractive and inviting as a place of residence. In addition to these, when the resources of the occupant will justify it, the building is farther adorned with jewelry, to make it increasingly attractive. These jewels, in a lodge room, may be made to answer the purpose of *ornament* or *utility*, according to the necessity, inclination or habits of the occupant. The lodge requires jewels, and the mystic temple is not fully prepared for masonic purposes until they are there ; and they must also be of a proper kind and in their appropriate places. They are six in number, and their uses are as various as their forms. They are denominated the *Square*, *Level*, *Plumb*, *Rough Ashlar*, *Perfect Ashlar*, and *Trestle-board*. Wealth and fashion may smile at

the brief list of jewels which adorn our home of peaceful labor, as well as at their simple forms and humble pretensions; but when we assure such that every treasured jewel of our temple-home has a voice and language, and that we may commune with it, and learn great truths from it, and be made wiser and better by its instructions, the smile of pity or contempt will be changed to one of warm approval, or sincere admiration. Come and go with us to that quiet retreat of friendship and virtue, and listen while we hold converse with these humble but impressive monitors. The first, most dignified, and important of these jewels is

THE SQUARE.

We have already, in the 14th chapter, dwelt at length upon the mechanical and moral uses of this valuable instrument, as well as upon the position it occupies in the lodge. It is one of the great lights of Masonry; it is a working tool pertaining to the second degree, and it is the appropriate Jewel of the Master of a lodge. It teaches truth, virtue, and morality; and is indispensable in both operative and moral Masonry. But the reader is referred to the chapter above named for further information on this subject.

The next in the list of Jewels is

THE LEVEL,

Which is an emblem of equality. It is one of the working tools of a Fellow Craft, and the distinctive

badge of the Senior Warden. In operative Masonry it is used "to lay levels and to prove horizontals." It is of the utmost importance that particular parts of a building should be level; and this remark does not apply only to the foundation or corner stone, but the rule is equally imperative in relation to various other portions. If these parts are not level, the building cannot be properly and substantially erected. Hence it is the duty of the superintendent of the work to have frequent recourse to this invaluable instrument to test the work as it progresses towards completion; and he who neglects this duty is justly liable to censure.

As beings who share a common humanity, and who are traveling to the same eternity, all men may be said to be upon a level. They are formed by the same divine hand, have placed before them a common destiny, and will finally be judged by the same righteous law. Hence, "we are all traveling upon the same level of time," we share in the common infirmities of our nature, and will soon reach the same bourn from which there is no return. In the erection of our moral edifice, we are taught by the level to lay "a good foundation;" to see that it is firm and substantial, and well prepared to support the moral structure we purpose to rear upon it. And in all the subsequent upbuilding of human character, this instrument should be in constant application. It is not designed to teach us that in station, or in moral or intellectual qualities, all men are equal; for this is not

the case. But it is to remind us that "we are descended from the same stock, partake of the same nature, and share the same hope; and, though distinctions among men are necessary to preserve subordination, yet no eminence of station should make us forget that we are brethren: for he who is placed on the lowest spoke of fortune's wheel, may be entitled to our regard. A time will come, and the wisest know not how soon, when all distinctions but that of goodness shall cease, and death, the grand leveler of human greatness, reduce us to the same state."

The Level is the appropriate Jewel of the Senior Warden, who is, by it, continually admonished of his duty to preserve harmony among the Craft, during the hours of labor. It is also one of the working tools of a Fellow Craft, and, in that character, it is to remind him of the level of time on which he is traveling in common with others, and that they shall all soon return to the dust from whence they came.

THE PLUMB,

Is the third Jewel in order. It is used in operative Masonry to raise perpendiculars, and to prove that the work is upright. It should constantly be at hand for this purpose, for without it all is uncertainty in the erection of a wall or pillar. It is one of the working tools of a Fellow Craft, and is to impress upon his mind the importance of rectitude of conduct. It is also the Jewel worn by the Junior Warden, and, as such, "admonishes us to walk uprightly in our

several stations ; to hold the scales of justice in equal poise ; and to make our passions and prejudices coincide with the line of duty." Generally, it teaches uprightness of conduct, or moral rectitude, " to avoid dissimulation in conversation and action, and to direct our steps to the path which leads to a glorious immortality." Moral rectitude is that course of conduct which harmonizes with the moral precepts of the Bible, as this is the only true standard of moral conduct. To do right is to do as that book requires ; to walk uprightly, is to walk agreeably to its moral teachings. That is the only true spiritual plumb-line, guided by which, in the discharge of all our duties to God and man, we shall be enabled to erect our moral edifice—such an one as will stand firmly upon its " sure foundation" when " heaven and earth shall pass away."

The next in order of our household Jewels, is

THE ROUGH ASHLAR.

This is a stone as taken from the quarry, in its rude and unpolished state. The *material* is in it which may be wrought out for noble and glorious purposes. By a proper application of instruments, directed by art, it may be prepared for any, even the most distinguished place in the building ; or the beautiful statuary may be hewn out from the unshapely mass, and prepared to adorn and beautify the structure when completed. The statue is there already, but art and industry must be applied to bring it out to view. The squared and

perfect ashlar is there, but the tools and skill of the workman are necessary to remove the external roughness, and prepare it for its allotted place in the building. "What great alterations are made in a rough ashlar by the mallet and chisel!" When first taken from the quarry it has neither form nor comeliness; it is rough, unshapely, and apparently unfitted for any purpose whatever. But let the workman apply his instruments, his skill and his strength; piece after piece of the unsightly protuberances is removed, until the rough mass assumes shape; the sides are levelled, the angles are perfected, and the stone is "fitted for the builder's use."

In moral Masonry, the Rough Ashlar reminds us "of our rude and imperfect state by nature,"—"ignorant, uncultivated and vicious." This degraded condition, and these debasing passions, are characteristic of the human heart and mind every where, until education and moral culture have changed and modified it;—until, in the language of our great light, it has been "created anew:" until the latent beauties and excellencies have been developed, the rough exterior removed by the labor of the spiritual artist, and the young immortal is fitted for usefulness here and immortal felicity hereafter. This emblem is exceedingly impressive, and truthfully indicates our condition by nature. To an ordinary observer, the stone, when first removed from the quarry, is a mere rough and misshapen mass of matter; it is neither comely in form, nor adapted to any purpose. Let the artist, however, ex-

amine it, and he will discover in it numberless properties of excellence and utility; concealed by its unsightly exterior, there are qualities of inestimable value, and the diligent hand of the skilful workman can bring them all out. So, also, with man. Notwithstanding his ignorance and the rough and vicious exterior of his nature, the moral artist discovers within the germ of an immortal being, and faculties capable of infinite improvement. There is a living soul there, and by the skilful application of moral effort, the ignorance and vice that pertains to it as a common inheritance of humanity may all be removed, and that soul fitted for a place in the temple of God,—to shine as one of the stars of heaven for ever and ever. Glorious and immortal destiny! Who would not, then, linger around the “rough ashlar,” if perchance he might discover a jewel of priceless value—a gem fit for a heavenly coronet.

THE PERFECT ASHLAR,

Represents “that state of perfection at which we hope to arrive by a virtuous education, our own endeavors, and the blessing of God.” This, it will be seen, is exactly the reverse of that condition represented by the rough ashlar. *That* was the natural condition of the moral material; this is the same material after it has passed the ordeal of moral culture, and with all its excellent qualities and inherent beauties fully developed. Here, then, is the moral workshop, and this the appropriate and highly honorable employment which

claims, and should constantly receive the attention and efforts of speculative Freemasonry. To make, out of these rough ashlar—uncultivated, ignorant, and vicious natures,—perfect material for the heavenly building, to educate and cultivate perverted and fallen human nature, until its moral beauties are restored, and it is prepared for the employments and companionships of the New Jerusalem.

Masonry teaches us that this work can be accomplished, and that we are faithfully and earnestly to engage in it;—to engage in it as moral artizans in preparing a work for everlasting ages. But how? By what peculiar process shall the work be done? Masonry answers, and the plan is three-fold.

FIRST:—"By a virtuous education." The moral perceptions of the soul must be cultivated. It must be taught to distinguish vice from virtue, and this by an application of the moral law—the only infallible rule by which they may be distinguished. It must be taught the heinous and revolting nature of vice; that it is offensive to God, injurious to man, and repugnant to moral law. It must be taught that virtue is lovely in itself, capable of conferring untold benefits and blessings, and secures the approval and benediction of the Grand Master of all. The moral pupil should be taught to avoid the paths and associations of evil, for

"Vice is a monster of such frightful mien,
That to be hated, needs only to be seen;
Yet, seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure—then pity—then embrace."

He should be taught that vicious associates and vicious conduct "lead down to death;" while the paths of virtue are "paths of peace," which "shine more and more to the perfect day."

SECONDLY :—Moral culture should be succeeded by individual effort—"our own endeavors." Without an active ambition is waked up in the soul, and stern and continued efforts are put forth by the individual himself, education will be of no avail. He must hate vice enough to induce him to avoid it—to fly from it, however attractive it may seem; to shake it off, however painful or long continued the effort which may be required to accomplish the task. It must be avoided as the deadly serpent; its paths must be shunned as the way to ruin; and its deathly stupor must be shaken off before it is succeeded by a death from which there is no awaking. Personal effort is absolutely essential to success, and must be induced at all hazards, and at whatever cost, or no good will be accomplished, and education will only enhance the bitterness of despair. Effort, then, should be the object; personal, strong, unceasing effort; for unless the individual himself arouse his own native energies and put forth the exertions of which he is capable, all extraneous efforts will be fruitless. As a moral agent, his own consent and co-operation must be had, or no improvement can be made, and the initiate who is content to "see and not perceive, to hear and not understand," to "know the right and yet the wrong pursue," or even if he do not pursue the wrong, if he *will* not pursue the right—*will* not

make every effort which may be required to obtain a victory over his passions and acquire a meetness for his glorious destiny, should be given up as unworthy the labor of others. This is the true secret of that lack of improvement exhibited by so many nominal Masons. They see the true light, but allow it to glimmer in the distance and vainly wave them on to moral and masonic acquisitions, without making a single effort to follow and grasp the glorious prize.

THE THIRD, and great means of improvement, and without which all human efforts will be vain, is "the blessing of God." The farmer may plough and sow, but unless propitious heaven send down the fruitful shower and the genial rays, the labor will be in vain. The artist may plan his designs and prepare his instruments, but unless God give him wisdom to design correctly and strength to execute his purpose, all the preliminaries will be useless. So, too, in moral culture. Light may be poured into the dark understanding, and the individual himself may be aroused to effort; but unless the blessing of God be upon the labor, it will end in disappointment. The dew of heaven must descend and fructify the soil, or the seed will not germinate nor the plant reach maturity. If, then, we would succeed in preparing a perfect ashlar, one that shall be worthy a place in the temple and city of God, His blessing must be implored, and secured, upon our labors. To this end we must go back to masonic first principles, which teach us to "implore His aid in all our laudable undertakings." We must "ask," and we shall "re-

ceive" to the extent of our necessities. And Masonry teaches us not only to ask for ourselves, but to remember in our petitions that others need as well as we, and our invocations should be for them as well as for ourselves. It is to be lamented that so many among us neglect this first duty of Freemasonry. To "implore the blessing of the Deity" is a first duty, as it is a first principle, in Masonry; and it is a *last* as well as *first* duty. The worthy and diligent Craftsman never forgets first principles, but applies and illustrates them in all his masonic career, especially one so important as this, and on which, to so great an extent, depends the success of all his future labors. May the *reader* nor the *writer* ever forget to "ask and receive" the aid and support and blessing of Jehovah on all their laudable undertakings; so shall they be presented at last as perfect ashlars, fitted to enjoy a place in the temple of God forever.

THE TRESTLE-BOARD,

The last of the enumerated jewels in a lodge, "is for the master workman to draw his designs upon." On this the architect draws all the designs of the several parts of the building, and by this the operative is directed in his labors. He must work agreeably to those designs, and if they are perfect, his work, when completed, will also be perfect, and will be accepted by him for whom it is wrought. By this jewel we are reminded that, "as the operative workman erects his temporal building agreeably to the rules and designs laid down

by the Master on his trestle-board, so should we, both operative and speculative, endeavor to erect our spiritual building agreeably to the rules and designs laid down by the Supreme Architect of the universe, in the great book of Revelation, which is our spiritual, moral and masonic trestle-board."

As moral builders we have a spiritual trestle-board, which is the book of the law, in which the Supreme Architect of the universe has made known his will, and by which we are to be directed in building for eternity. All the designs and instructions necessary to enable us to erect and *finish* our moral structure, are there laid down. If we build according to them, we shall do well, and shall be received and acknowledged as obedient and faithful workmen when the temple is completed. As Masons we are bound "strictly to observe" all those designs, and to introduce nothing into our workmanship but what those designs indicate; and while we do this, the world will be compelled to acknowledge us as moral builders, whose only object is the welfare of man, and whose reward shall be secure when the labor is ended.

We have thus given a hasty description of our household Jewels. We are sensible that we have not developed all their excellence, nor brought out all their brilliancy, nor fully described all their important uses. But enough has been said to satisfy the honest enquirer, that these Jewels constitute an invaluable treasure; and that if preserved and used according to the original design, they must have a most happy and favorable influence upon our labors in speculative Freemasonry.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MEMBERSHIP.

“ You agree to be a good man and true, and strictly to obey
the Moral Law.” CHARGE TO A PAST MASTER.

“ In whom may we trust ? Shall the buckler of power
Be the aid of the heart in adversity's hour ?
Shall we lean on the hilt of the warrior's sword,
Or trust in the breath of a sovereign's word ?
The sword may be snapp'd, or the mighty one's breath
Be chilled, ere its promise is plighted, in death !
And hopes which were springing to brighten our way,
Fall back on the heart in woe's darkest array.”

“ But were there a being in whom all combined,
Power, wisdom, and love—some omnipotent mind,
Which, all things foreseeing, could all things prevent,
Or mould into mercy the coming event—
There, there might the spirit with safety confide,
For power to assist, and for wisdom to guide ;
For love to support 'till the *rough path* be trod,
Then, brother, look upward,—*that being is God.*”

MELODIES FOR THE CRAFT.

THE moral requisitions of Freemasonry are of a lofty character. From the beginning to the end, in every form and feature of this venerable institution, it bows down and worships an acknowledged Deity ; not a deity of wood or stone, the work of human hands ; not the Jupiter of the ancients nor the Mammon of the moderns ; but the Sovereign, Creator, and Preserver of heaven and earth : the being who was proclaimed to Moses amid the sublime and terrible

revelations of Sinai, as "the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth; keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty." We acknowledge the existence of *such* a Deity, and while contemplating his perfections, or at the mention of his sacred name, we are taught to imitate the conduct of Moses, when that name was proclaimed to him—"he made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped." There is not a single outline or portion of our mystic temple,—column or corridor, porch or pillar, ground floor or sancium, from the initiatory steps of the Entered Apprentice to the crowning glories of the Royal Arch, but what bears in living characters an acknowledgment of God. We have often wondered at the aspersions heaped upon the Craft on suspicion of its infidel doctrines or infidel tendencies. It is the most groundless suspicion that was ever entertained by man. Take the written law of God away from Masonry, together with the moral duties it enjoins, and there is nothing left worth a thought or a care! Strike out from around and within our temple the name of JEHOVAH, and the whole structure will crumble into ruins. That name, to Masonry, is like the vessels of gold in the ancient Temple at Jerusalem; despoil our temple of that, like the heathen did the other of its golden treasures, and you will not need to proceed farther, as did they, and consign the structure to the flames; it will tumble to the earth

of its own accord, never to be reconstructed until that treasure is restored. It is the living spirit animating the otherwise inanimate form ; it is the divinity within presiding over the mercy seat, between the wings of the cherubim, that, concealed in the radiations of his own glory, gives value, and life, and renown, and immortality to the place. Masonry infidel in its nature or tendencies? Masonry compared with the Illuminati of the last century, based on atheism and covered with crime! Hush! think it not, else the fire flame out from above the ark of the covenant and consume you with its indignation. Never breathe it again in the presence of this white robed angel of antiquity, nor in the light of its glorious mercy-deeds. No, no; the temple we build is a temple for God. On it his name is inscribed, and within it his glory is revealed.

But let us come back to a careful and sober examination of this question: let us see its records, and trace its character, examine its features, and search in its secret chambers, and see what can be discovered of its religious aspects. The original constitutions say that Masons are required to "*be good and true men—no immoral or scandalous men, but of good report.*" Another portion of the same venerable code declares that "*a Mason is OBLIGED, by his tenure, to obey the moral law; and if he rightly understand the Art, he will never be a stupid atheist, nor an irreligious libertine.*" Now let us examine a Mason in the light of these two moral requisitions, and we shall see at

least the reflections of what he ought to be. They present themselves under two general heads: *first*, the creed; and, *second*, the practice. We will briefly consider them both.

First: What must be the faith of a Mason on this vital question? He must not be a "stupid atheist." The word "atheist" signifies a person "who disbelieves the existence of a God, or supreme intelligent Being." And the word "stupid" is prefixed, to show the estimate which our fathers placed upon a man who could entertain such a belief: and especially a man who was of "mature and discreet age," with his mental perceptions and reflections ripened and perfected, and thus qualified to weigh the evidence presented, and form a rational opinion on a question of such magnitude, and of so much importance to the welfare of our common humanity. A writer, in a volume much older than that from which we have quoted, and of much higher authority, uses the following language in relation to this very subject: "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God." The inference of this language is, that the writer supposed *none but a fool* would entertain or declare such a sentiment: and I am inclined to think that he was correct,—that no man of sound mind, and of mature and discreet age, having the ordinary capacity of men in general to come to a sound and legitimate conclusion, could possibly indulge such a belief. He must be, in the blunt language of the old Hebrew writer, "*a fool*." But the same writer inti-

mates that even such a person has not the hardihood to speak the sentiment with his lips, aloud,—he says it “*in his heart,*” but he dare not, in the face of earth and heaven, give such a sentiment form and sound. It is too unnatural, too repulsive to the in-born feelings of his soul; too antagonistic to the elements of his immortal nature, even fallen and depraved as they are. If he is so utterly destitute of wisdom and moral sensibilities as to entertain such a monstrous sentiment, he utters it only in the silent, corrupt, and gloomy chambers of his own heart. The winds of heaven would almost refuse to bear the sound from his impious lips; and the bright sun or glowing stars would crimson with indignation at hearing it, or cover his cheek with shame while he attempted to utter it. “No God!” The heavens from above, and the earth from below, and even the empire of the dead, all unite in declaring such an expression monstrous. No wonder the king of Israel pronounced such a man a “*fool:*” no wonder Freemasonry declares him to be “*stupid.*” He is both: and, in addition, he is mad and corrupt; developing a moral obliquity that startles earth and heaven with surprise, and presents a mental imbecility but little, if any, above “the brute that perisheth.”

The man who approaches the altar of Masonry, then, must believe that there is a God, a supreme intelligent Being, a great first Cause, infinitely wise, powerful and good. In short, he must have an unshaken faith in that Supreme Being which nature

declares with a thousand tongues, and the Bible which we cherish clearly and unequivocally reveals: The Maker of all things; the Supreme Lawgiver, and who will finally become the Judge of all mankind. And why must he have this faith? Because the want of it is conclusive proof of either insanity or imbecility, or both: and because, also, no reliance can be placed in the moral integrity of a man who dares to utter, even in his heart, such a monstrous blasphemy. Such a being would be an unfit associate for the lodge-room; he could not feel the warm and holy sympathies that should swell a brother's heart; he could not appreciate the kind and enduring bonds of fraternal love; he could not be trusted with a sacred deposit that should be guarded with sleepless vigilance, and protected, if need be, with the last effort of his waning life. No, no; an atheist would be as much out of place in a lodge, as Lucifer in heaven, or a monster in the saloons of intelligence and beauty, or an ill-omened bird of night in a grove of golden-plumed and sweet singing canaries. The association of two such opposites—such antagonisms in sentiment and feeling and action, would work its own destruction; it would produce an effervescence of discord and confusion, resulting in ruin to the lodge, and a deeper stain, if possible, upon him who caused it.

But, secondly, he must be correct in practice, as well as sound and scriptural in creed. The constitution says he must not be "an irreligious libertine."

This word, libertine, in its modern and general acceptation, signifies a man of licentious habits; without moral restraint; a debauchee. In its original and antiquated meaning, it referred to a free-thinker, or deist. It is "derived from the Latin *libertinus*, a man that was once a bondman but who has been made free. It was metaphorically used to designate one who had been released, or who had released himself, from the bonds of religious belief, and become in matters of faith a doubter, or denyer. Hence, an 'irreligious libertine' designated the man who, with a degree less of unbelief than the atheist, denies the distinctive doctrines of revealed religion." Mr. Webster says it means one "not under the restraint of law or religion." Mr. Mackey, an eminent masonic writer, says "the expression 'irreligious libertine,' alluding, as it does, to a scoffer at religious truths, is eminently suggestive of the religious character of our institution, which, founded as it is on the great doctrines of religion, cannot be properly appreciated by any one who doubts or denies their truth." Here we learn that a Mason must not be one who denies, or scoffs at, religion or religious truth.

But the constitution goes further—much further than this. It has stated, as we have seen, what he must *not* be,—an atheist, a scoffer, or a doubter. He must not only believe in a Supreme Being, but he must profess his faith in Him, and in the great truths of religion founded on this faith as its "chief corner stone." But a religious character which consists

alone in creed, is like a well-rigged ship, with every mast and spar complete, and every sail spread to the passing breeze; but with no ballast in her hold. While she lies securely sheltered in port, and the winds are hushed, and the anchor or lawser retains its hold, all is well. It is an object of surpassing beauty and a specimen of finished workmanship. But let her venture out into mid-ocean in this condition, and the first rough gale that sweeps over the sea will capsize her, and the "thing of beauty" will be shorn of its loveliness and scattered in fragments on the rolling waves. So with a man whose moral acquisitions consist alone in belief. He must have something more if he would be a Mason. The law says he must be a "*good and true*" man. He must be a man of moral integrity; one to be relied on in every emergency; true to himself, his fellows, the faith he professes, and the Being before whom he bends in adoring reverence. He must be one in whom the Craft may have confidence, that he will "keep that which is committed to him" with unfaltering fidelity. That he will maintain the honor and dignity of the Order, and promote its usefulness in every possible way. That he will not be a "drone in the hive," but faithful in the work of building up a "spiritual temple" to adorn the "*New Jerusalem*." And, finally, that he will be faithful in the performance of those religious duties particularly enjoined upon him as a member of the Craft.

The language of the rule is very specific and

pointed. His character must not be "scandalous" or "immoral." He must so conduct himself as not to dishonor or disgrace the association with which he stands connected. He must be of "good report," of fair fame; those who know him must speak well of him as an upright man, whose general deportment commands the esteem of, and secures a "good report" from, the community in which he lives. If he must not be an "immoral" man, he must, then be moral in his character; or, as it was previously said, a "good" man. But what is a *moral* man? It is one whose character and conduct comport with the moral law—God's law—as revealed in the Holy Scriptures. As a block is said to be square whose angles and sides have been tested by the application of the square; so human character is moral or good when it has been tried and proved by comparing it with the moral law. If character and conduct conform to that, it is moral; but not otherwise.

And now, to sum it all up in a few words, a Mason must believe in God—in the God of nature, of grace, of providence,—the God revealed in the Bible. He must also believe in the great essential truths of revealed religion, and *govern himself accordingly*. And the primary condition of his admission into our ranks and of his continuance therein, is his observance of, and conformity to, the moral law "as it is revealed in the sacred code." What does the constitution say? "A mason is obliged, *by his tenure*, to obey the moral law." The tenure by which he holds a standing

among us, is the moral law. The language must mean this if it mean any thing. He is *obliged* to obey that law, or forfeit his claims to fraternal relationship; and we respectfully urge this view of the question upon the attention of the lodges and the membership. If we are correct in the conclusion drawn from the premises laid down—premises that will not be called in question—then we have at once a moral standard by which to measure the conduct of the members; and each lodge and every member, may learn when and how a masonic membership may be forfeited.

It is a very mistaken idea, that Freemasonry is an association for *mere* social or convivial purposes. Its aim is much higher—its designs more elevated; and though it may bring together, and unite in bonds of enduring friendship, many who would otherwise have remained entire strangers to each other, yet the friendship owes its purity and perpetuity to the foundation of moral principle on which it is based. A friendship on any other basis would not stand the test of trial for an hour. But Masonry is more than mere friendship: it embraces within its view the condition and relations of eternity. It rests on the inspired volume, and draws from *that* the grand moral panacea for all the ills of our immortal nature. It recognizes a future, and an accountability in that future. It acknowledges the necessity of a preparation for that future, and urges an earnest and unremitting attention to it: and while it disavows any claims to being a sovereign remedy itself, it constantly points

the candidate to one, and commends to him "the true light," that, if faithfully followed, *will* guide him to safety and to God.

It expressly declares that Masonry is "so far interwoven with religion, as to lay us under obligations to pay that rational homage to the Deity which at once, constitutes our duty and our happiness." It enjoins upon her members "to implore His blessing, and to consider Him as the chief good." And beside the grave it utters to the living its solemn admonitions, not to "postpone the all-important concern of preparing for eternity ; but embrace the happy moment while time and opportunity offer, to provide against the great change, when the reflections of a virtuous and holy life will yield the only comfort and consolation." The impressive ritual is closed with this pointed exhortation :—"Let us seek the favor of the ETERNAL GOD, so that when the awful moment of death arrives, we may be enabled to prosecute our journey without dread or apprehension, to that far distant country whence no traveler returns."

Such are the doctrines, admonitions, and requisitions of ancient Freemasonry. They fully recognize the Bible, with its moral code and sanctions ; and point to it as the healing fountain where every stain may be washed away.

CHAPTER XIX.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MEMBERSHIP.

(CONTINUED.)

“Lord, what offering shall we bring
To thine Altar, when we bow ;
Hearts, the pure, unsullied spring,
Whence the kind affections flow.
Soft Compassion’s feeling soul,
By the melting eye expressed ;
Sympathy, at whose control,
Sorrow leaves the wounded breast.”

HAVING examined the interior of the lodge, it might be well to assemble the members and further sketch their character, portraying the spirit with which they congregate. The uninitiated are never permitted to look inside of a lodge while in session, to see who are there, or to enquire why they come, or what spirit they are of. The task imposed upon me is an important one ; and my endeavor shall be so to perform it that I may stand up fearlessly, as well before the Craft, as those not of the Order, and claim with confidence that the limning is accurate. If the portraiture is not true to the original, it is because the original is not true to itself. I am telling what a lodge of Masons *ought* to be, not what they are, in all cases ; for it must be admitted that, in some instances, unholy hands have marred the beauty of the model, and produced a monster instead of an ornament.

The lodge I would describe is an original one ; such as the genius of the Order, herself, would gather. Each block in the edifice is of the purest material, finished and tested by a Master's hand ; and the whole, when collected and united, constitute a living temple, on which God and angels may look with complacency.

In order to be certain of our position, we will go back to first principles,—to the organic law, and see what that requires as the general characteristics of the membership. To the “ Law and the Testimony ; ” we appeal to that as to a witness the world dare not discredit, and the Craft will not. For nearly a century and a half that law has been published to the world, and Masons have appealed to it in all cases as conclusive evidence and supreme authority. They could not discard it now if they would ; and I know them well enough to believe they would not if they could. We will then bring up the old book, as a long tried and well accredited witness, and hear its testimony.

“ *The persons admitted members of a lodge must be good and true men, free born, and of mature and discreet age ; no bondmen, no women, no immoral or scandalous men, but of good report.* ”—*Anderson's Constitutions, edition of 1723.*

There are three particular points in this description that must be noticed. *First* : The members must be *men*, not *women*. Here is at once an insuperable barrier against the admission of females. It

is the written behest of masonic antiquity ; and we dare not disobey the law, or murmur at its restrictions. It does not comport, we are aware, with the modern dogmas of "woman's rights" and the "equality of the sexes." But such is the law, and it is as unchangeable as that of the Medes and Persians. This is only one aspect of the law on this question ; the other is found in the unwritten code, in strict harmony with this, its echo, and as incapable of change or modification. The *reason* for such a prohibition is quite a different thing from its existence. The reasons are self-evident to every one who has passed the ordeal of our mystic brotherhood ; and though others might be given to satisfy the curious and inquisitive of the other sex, yet we shall not attempt it here, as it would be out of the circle of our present specific duties. The effort is to describe the characters and delineate the features of the assembled lodge, as they are required to be ; not what they might be if Masonry was different, or was not Masonry. Nor will it be our business here to stop and answer every question asked, nor defend the venerable form before us for not appearing in a fashionable dress of modern construction, with painted cheeks and frizzled hair and satin slippers. It is enough to say that females are excluded by a law as old as Masonry itself, and equally unchangeable ; indeed it is a part of Masonry, and enters into the elements of its being.

Second. He must not only be a man, but he must

be possessed of certain natural endowments of birth, of body, and of age. 1st. He must be free born, not a slave. He must be free by birth; his mother must have been free at the time of his birth. For as the child always partakes of the civil relation of the mother, if she were a slave at the time of his birth he would be also, and hence he would not be free born. To be born in a state of slavery, has always been regarded as an inferior and degraded condition. And though such an one may be possessed of as sound a mind and as pure a heart as others that are born in freedom, yet the fact has always been deemed a barrier to privilege, honor, and distinction; and this blot upon the genealogy seems to have been recognized even by the Almighty. Ishmael, the son of Abraham by his female slave Hagar, was the elder son of the Patriarch; but he was a slave, and God saw proper to perform a miracle in behalf of Sarah, in order that the promised Messiah might come through a descent not stained by the badge of servitude. So far as human wisdom can discover, and according to the laws of primogeniture, Ishmael was as much entitled to the proud distinction of being the progenitor of the Savior, as Isaac; but his mother was a slave, and *he* bore the dishonoring curse of bondage. It is enough that, in this requisition, Freemasonry follows an example set and sanctioned by infinite Wisdom itself. We are aware that within the last few years, the Craft in Great Britain have seen proper to bow to a false conception of the fitness

of things, and change the words "free born" to "free man." But they have done it without right or reason ; and in doing so, have laid violent hands upon a principle sanctioned by the wisdom and practice of four thousand years. It is to be hoped that no other jurisdiction will sustain the act by following the example. A Mason must not only be a free man, but his birth and parentage must be unstained with the badge of servitude.

2d. He must be of "hale and entire limbs, as a man ought to be." He must not only be a man, but a sound and *perfect* man, in body and in limb. When Masonry was a practical science, requiring active manual labor, it was all important that its members should have the physical capacity to discharge the arduous duties incumbent upon them in their profession ; but this they could not do if they were maimed, or in any respect physically defective. In the character of speculative Masons, there is the same necessity for the enforcement of this ancient usage. There might be some slight defects of body, which would not prove an insuperable objection. As, for instance, the loss of one eye, or a finger, particularly if it be from the left hand, or a toe, so that he would not be thereby prevented from learning the art, or performing the mystic labors of the Craft. But the loss of both eyes, an arm, a leg, or even some of the fingers or thumb of the right hand would entirely disqualify him for masonic fellowship, and forever exclude him from all participation in the

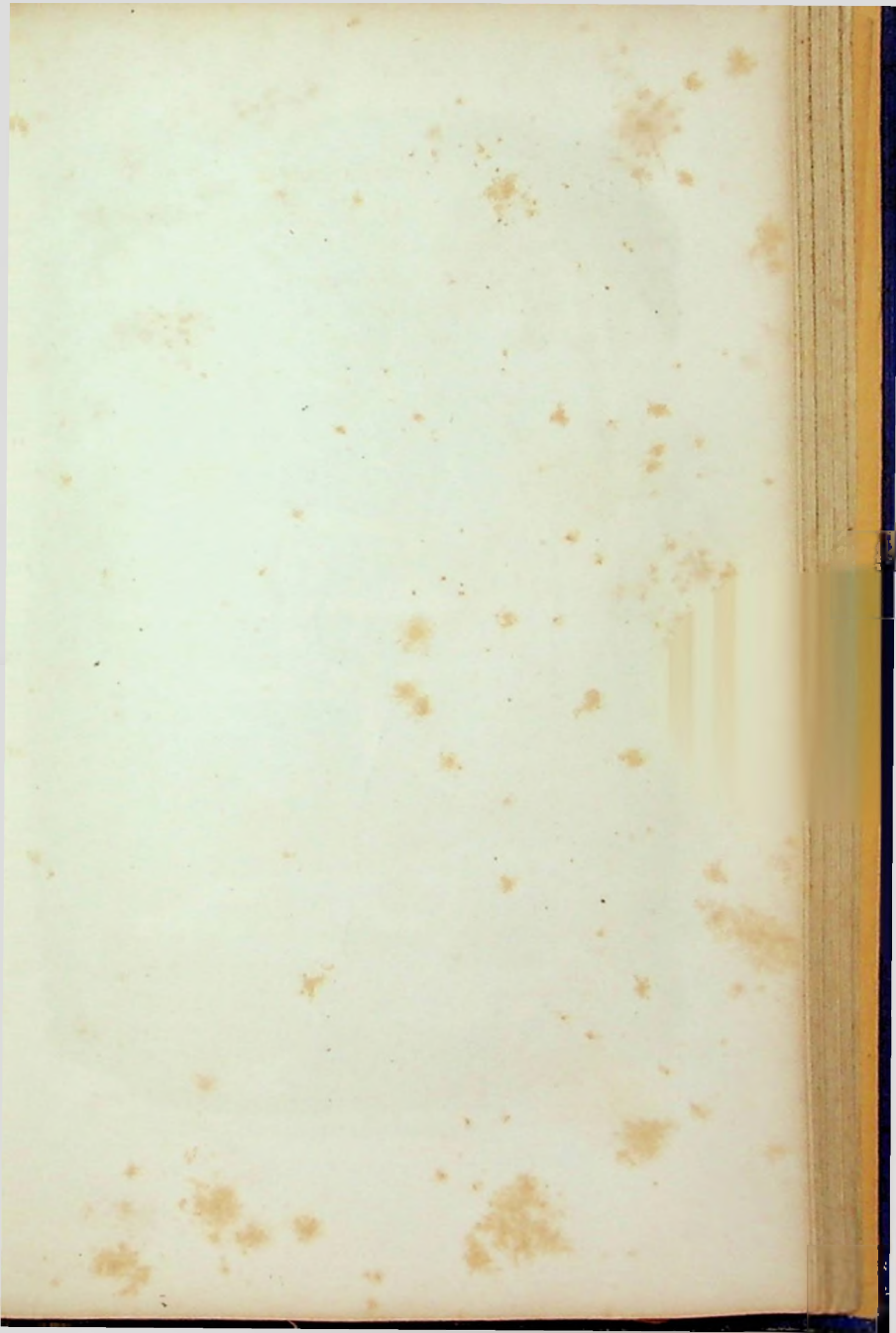
“rights and privileges” of ancient Freemasonry. The old “Charges” specifically state “that no Master should take an Apprentice, unless he be a *perfect* youth, having *no maim or defect in his body*, that may render him *incapable of learning the art.*” And for this, also, the Craft have the sanction of high authority. A man physically defective could not minister at the altar under the Mosaic dispensation; and an animal, unsound in body, was not suited for sacrifice: this exclusion was by express command of God. In this, then, as in other matters, Masonry follows an illustrious example.

3d. He must also be of sufficient years—“of mature and discreet age.” This was necessary; for before a person should take so important a step as that of becoming a Freemason, he should be of mature and discreet judgment, and this could not be expected unless he had reached that age when his faculties have attained their full vigor. He should be capable of exercising a ripened judgment; to weigh well the consequences of a step that is to affect, to a greater or less extent, the whole of his future life. He should be able to look at the undertaking in the light of sound reason, and understand fully the consequences of pursuing a given course of conduct. He should be able to decide for himself, “unbiased by friends,” or prejudice, or passion. He should act as a rational being, capable of looking dispassionately at results, and deciding for himself what will be best for him under the circumstances. He

should be of such an age that it might reasonably be presumed his mind had reached its maturity ; that he was " responsible for his actions, and competent to understand the obligations, comprehend the instructions, and perform the duties of a Mason." 'This is necessary, not only for his own security, but also for the safety of the Order.

At what particular age this state or maturity of mind is reached, is difficult to determine in all cases. It is to be presumed that some reach it much earlier than others; for some at eighteen years of age are much more matured in their mental powers than others at twenty-five. Hence the ancient rule named no number of years, but " mature and discreet age," whether that be at eighteen or twenty-eight. During the last hundred years, the attempt has repeatedly been made to fix a specific age, and make the rule arbitrary. Hence in some countries the age of twenty-eight was the rule ; in others, twenty-five ; others, again, twenty-one ; and, under some particular circumstances, as low as eighteen. The rule at this day generally conforms to the civil law fixing the age of majority, of the country in which the Craft are found, and twenty-one years I believe is now required in every state of this Union. It was remarked above, that under some peculiar circumstances, persons were initiated under twenty-one years of age. This was more frequently the case a hundred years ago, than now. The Constitutions printed in 1723 were then strictly followed, at least in all the prov-

inces of the British empire. Hence Washington and Warren, and perhaps others, were initiated under twenty-one years; simply because they were deemed to be of "mature and discreet age." The rule is now, however, twenty-one years; and it would be regarded as a violation of masonic law and usage to admit a person under this age. It may as well be remarked here, that the rule referring to mental qualifications, applies to capacity as well as maturity; and an insane person or an idiot is as effectually excluded as one whose mind has not properly matured for want of age, or has decayed by reason of old age. And now having described the physical and mental qualifications, we shall reserve the question of moral qualities for another chapter.





CHAPTER XX.

MASONIC CREED.

FAITH, HOPE, AND CHARITY.

“The three principal rounds admonish us to have faith in God, hope in immortality, and charity to all mankind.”

WEBB.

IN describing an association professedly moral in its character, it is well enough to know on what doctrines as a foundation such moral character rests. There are two elementary principles that enter into the composition of moral character—a truthful creed, and a correct practice. Without the first, there is little probability that the latter will exist. Although it is admitted that occasionally such a phenomenon is seen,—a moral deportment is exhibited despite the immoral tendency of the individual’s opinions. Yet even in such cases, where the moral law and its author are both professedly discarded, there is still a lingering, innate, unwilling concession to the existence of both the one and the other,—compelling conformity to precepts which are in theory denounced, and extorting from the heart and life an unwilling homage to the claims of a law which the tongue disavows. But without an obedient life, an orthodox creed is of little or no avail.

Freemasonry teaches a moral creed to its children,

and then bids them go and practice upon that creed, and illustrate before the world, and in the sight of heaven, its purity and excellence. Does the reader ask for the creed of Freemasonry? I answer, it is "FAITH IN GOD, HOPE IN IMMORTALITY, AND CHARITY TO ALL MANKIND." There it is, simple, plain, practical; the unlettered may understand it, and *all* may practice it. It is not concealed in "learned languages" nor buried in swelling tomes. Neither Pope nor priest has smothered it with a profusion of learned criticism, nor obscured it by an admixture of their own ill digested dogmas. You need not wade through the muddy streams of religious controversy to find out the sense of the words, nor entertain any doubts about their original signification. The words mean precisely what they say, and say exactly what they mean; and they are brief as they are beautiful; filling scarcely as many lines as other creeds do volumes. I propose to examine them in detail. The first branch of a Mason's creed is,—"FAITH IN GOD." But it may be necessary to examine a little more carefully into the full import of this expression, in order to justify its claims to masonic regard. What is understood by having "faith in God?"

The word, faith, in the sense we use it, is borrowed from the Holy Scriptures; and its definition must be ascertained from the same source. Examined etymologically, the word signifies a *belief of the truth*, "or that persuasion by which a proposition is received as true,"—whatever that proposition may be. This is its

general meaning, and it receives its particular modification, from the object to which it relates. When referring, as it does with us, to the existence and perfections of the Deity, the original inspired writers, who use it in that relation, should be permitted to explain it. That great and distinguished Hebrew, Saul of Tarsus, afterwards the apostle of the Gentiles, defines it as follows: "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." *Heb., 11th ch.* This phrase, as it stands, seems at first sight a little obscure; but when we refer to the fact that the word here translated *substance* is, by the most eminent critics, rendered *confidence*, a part of the obscurity is removed, for this rendering perfectly agrees with the etymology of the word. It would then be—faith is the *belief, confidence, or strong persuasion* of the truth or reality of the things hoped for; or the strong persuasion, or demonstration, of the existence of the invisible things hoped for. A very learned writer says it is "such a *conviction* as is produced in the mind by the *demonstration* of a *problem*; after which demonstration no doubt can remain, because we see from it that the thing *is*; that it *cannot but be*; and that it cannot be *otherwise* than as it is, and is proved to be." Such a demonstration, for instance, as is furnished by the forty-seventh problem in the first book of Euclid,—“the square of the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle is equal to the sum of the squares of the other two sides.” The truth and certainty of this is demonstrated in a manner to leave no room for doubt; or, rather, the mind is

convinced by the demonstration, that such is the truth, and that it *cannot be otherwise*.

Now apply this definition of the word to the object with which it stands connected in this article of our masonic creed. Nature asserts, "there is a God." She asserts it with her thousand tongues, and in all her varied forms, from the great luminary of day down to the animalcule that is only discoverable by the microscope. Every system of worlds, and every world of every system, declares it. The material creation around, above, beneath us, in all its ten thousand various aspects, declares it. Every mountain that rears its majestic brow into mid-heaven; every valley with its carpet of green and flowers; every tree of the forest, and every spire of grass upon the plain; stern winter in his icy robes, and smiling summer with his bloom and fragrance; every beast of the forest, every bird of the air, every fish of the sea, or insect that crawls upon the earth—all declare *there is a God*. Old ocean, in tempest or in calm alike, declares it; and the deep-toned thunder utters its solemn confirmation of the truth. The unquestioned masonic authority is, that "the great books of nature and revelation" constitute "our spiritual, moral, and masonic trestle-board;" and we have seen that nature records *her* testimony on the arched sky, the green earth, and the rolling sea—every where, by every feature, and in unmistakable language declaring **THERE IS A GOD**.

But the "book of nature" is not alone in giving its recorded testimony to this great and vital truth. Reve

lation comes to its aid, if aid were needed, and re-asserts the same fact, and attests it by demonstrations which put doubts to flight and satisfy the mind that *it is so and cannot be otherwise*. "There is a God," is the great corner stone on which revelation rests ; it is at the foundation of all the truths revealed. Remove this, and the whole fabric falls to the ground. Thus nature and revelation combine to write this essential truth upon "our spiritual, moral and masonic trestle-board." There is the recorded testimony in letters instinct with life, blazing on every page, and proving with the certainty of a demonstration that there is a God. In the presence of earth, before all generations of mankind, in every age of the world, and in the sight of every intelligent being in heaven and earth, these two witnesses stand up side by side and declare **THERE IS A GOD**. The evidence is sufficient—ample—overwhelming,—incredulity itself could ask no more. The mind is convinced ; not a reasonable doubt lingers behind ; faith, resting implicitly upon the evidence adduced, lays hold of the truth and boldly re-affirms it. **THERE IS A GOD**. This is the *faith* mentioned in our masonic creed.

But what of the *object* of that Faith ? What is embraced in the expression—"Faith in God ?" We may remark, in answer, that faith takes an enlightened view of the *character* and *perfections* of the Being whose existence has been demonstrated ; and accepts him as he stands revealed in His word and works.

The word, God, is of Anglo-Saxon origin, and was used in that language to signify not only the Supreme

Being, but likewise *good*, in the abstract. Hence, by the use of this word the Anglo-Saxon fathers would convey the idea, not only of a Supreme Being, but one essentially *good*—possessed of every superlative excellency. The learned tell us that “the Hebrew word in the first chapter of Genesis, which is translated *God*, is *Elohim*, a plural noun, which they have traced to the Arabic root *alaha*, which means to *worship* or *adore*; hence, denoting the Supreme Being, the only proper object of religious worship and adoration.” The same author assures us that “the word in Greek is *Theus*, and in Latin *Deus*, which in those languages signify the Supreme Divinity, or Ruler of the Universe.” In the Holy Scriptures “He is also termed *JEHOVAH*, *the self-existent God*; *SHADDAI*, *Almighty*; *ADONI*, *Supporter*, *Lord*, *Judge*; and various other terms are used, more or less indicative of his character.” The idea conveyed is, “the eternal, independent, self-existent Being, whose purposes and actions spring from himself, without foreign motives or influence: absolute in dominion, the cause of all being; upholder of all things; infinitely happy, because infinitely good; and eternally self-existent, needing nothing that he has made. Illimitable in his immensity, inconceivable in his mode of existence, and indescribable in his essence; known fully only to himself, because an infinite mind can only be comprehended by itself. A Being, who, from his infinite wisdom, cannot err or be deceived; and who, from his infinite goodness can do nothing but what is eternally just, right, and kind.”—(*Dr. Clarke*.) Such

is the God whose existence and perfections are revealed in nature and revelation ; the God of the universe, of the past, the present and the future ; the God which Masonry recognizes, and in whom it requires us to believe—and trust.

There are men on whose eyes the light of revelation has not yet dawned, and whose hearts its mellowing and changing influences have not yet reached, and whose moral perceptions are consequently still obscured. They "know not God," in the light of his own revealed character ; and yet reason is able to trace some dim outlines of a superior being. He is seen in the stars of heaven or the waves of the sea ; He is heard in the evening zephyr, or the last sigh of the waning storm as it dies away among the tree-tops ;—in the moaning of the wind as it sings the requiem of departing summer, or in the giant march of the tempest as it sweep over land and sea. These are but the faint shadowings of the Almighty ; and the perverted heart of humanity bows down and worships the sun and the star, the mountain or the sea ; for these are emblems of power, and he has no conception of a spiritual Being, Infinite—Almighty—Eternal.

The God in whom a Mason believes is not the *Vishnu* of the Orientals, nor the *Manitou* of the Indians. He is not the creature of human reason, prefigured by objects and features of material creation ; but the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob. He is the Being who, in thunder, in the earthquake, and in the "still small voice," communed with the prophet

of Israel on Sinai of old. He who in flame and cloud guided the redeemed of ancient days from bondage to freedom,—He whose cloudy presence was in the Temple at Jerusalem, and over the mercy seat between the cherubim. It is He who sent his angels to the watchful shepherds, when at midnight they were startled with a wonderful announcement; He whose word silenced the storm, calmed the rolling billows, restored health to the afflicted, and eye-sight to the blind,—whose voice the dull cold ears of death heard, and gave back its victim to life at the sound; He, who, in his written word, has announced himself as the Creator, the Preserver, and the final Judge of man. He who has declared he would not “hold him guiltless” who violates his law, but “will save to the uttermost” the obedient and believing.

Faith in God,—as the God of providence and grace, as well as the God of nature; a God of love, of mercy, and of justice—eternal and unchangeable; just such a God as poor frail and perishing humanity needs. *Faith in Him*, that what he has said is true; that He is *able* to save, and *willing* to save; faith that He is what He is represented to be in the “books of nature and revelation;” and, consequently, that we may “trust in Him” with entire and unlimited confidence for the present and the future. “Faith in God,”—as one who takes cognizance of moral action; to reward the obedient, and to vindicate his violated law. Faith in his promises of good to the virtuous and faithful; and in his threatenings of evil to the disobedient. In

short we "accept and receive" him as "the Lord" who stood above the topmost round of the ladder, and revealed himself to the sleeping patriarch; and we accept and believe in Him *as he is there revealed*. Let us examine into the character there given him.

It is a precept in Masonry—more than a precept, a rule of action, that before engaging in any important enterprise, the approval and the blessing of the Most High should be invoked, and that in times of difficulty and danger—of doubt and uncertainty—we should always trust in God. It was in harmony with this rule of action that Jacob, when he lay down to sleep on that lonely night near the city of Luz, sought for help and direction of Him who was able to guide and to save. And this is no presumption. It is true the fact was not expressly stated at the time, yet long years afterwards Jacob confessed that on that night of sorrow and despondency he had *called on God for help!* It was under brighter aspects of human life, after Jacob had passed his long servitude in the country to which he had fled, and when venturing back again with a large family to embrace his venerable father in Mamre, that he came once more to Luz. He had turned aside at the express command of God, to visit again that memorable spot, and "make an altar there." And in giving directions to his family to prepare for this event, he says "let us arise and go up to Beth-el; and I will make there an altar unto God who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went."* This

* Lev. xxv, 3.

was a frank acknowledgment, and it furnishes a key to all the occurrences of that night of vision. Jacob, in "the day of his distress," had implored help and direction of the Deity, and was *heard and answered*. "Faith" in Him who hears and answers the prayer of the penitent in "the day of his distress." Faith in Him who was the protecting aegis over Jacob, when sleeping on his pillow of stones,—who heard his prayer for direction, protection, and a guide; who changed his deep distress into consolation, and assured him, by a strange revelation at midnight, of his watchful presence and fatherly protection. Faith in *that* God—that his ear is ever open to the cry of distress and weakness, and that he is powerful to "save to the uttermost."

"Faith is the subtle chain
That binds us to the Infinite: the voice
Of a deep life within, that will remain
Until we crowd it thence."

By the exercise of faith, we apprehend the presence of the Supreme. We bow before him and "implore his blessing on, and his aid in, all our laudable undertakings;" and assured that the sincere and simple prayer of the heart is heard, and of his ability and willingness to answer, we "trust in Him," as one who cannot deceive us, and will not desert us. By the exercise of this we claim and realize that "He is," and that he is with those whose "trust is in him,"

"For God is lost if faith be overthrown."

But this "Faith" goes still further. It lays hold

of all the blessings that God has promised to his faithful and obedient ones in the future. It hears Him say, as it was said to Jacob, "*it shall be well with thee;*" and this promise becomes as an anchor "lodged in the clefts of eternity's rock," sustaining and encouraging him in the wildest storms through which he passes to his much desired and long sought haven. In the light which beams along the track which faith discovers, death has lost his sting and the grave its victory. The stream which divides a land of bondage and a howling wilderness from the perfect freedom of the promised inheritance beyond, is discovered to be a narrow one at best; and in the distance faith realizes a smiling land—an everlasting inheritance "flowing with milk and honey."

"Faith builds a bridge across the gulf of death
To break the shock blind nature cannot shun,
And lands thought smoothly on the farther shore."

Such is the "Faith in God" which Masonry teaches; such its objects, and such the everlasting blessings on which it lays hold. We cannot close this chapter better than by applying to our readers the exhortation, or command, of Him, on whose peaceful bosom, at the "last supper," leaned the beloved patron of our Order,—"**HAVE FAITH IN GOD.**"

CHAPTER XXI.
MASONIC CREED.
(CONTINUED.)

HOPE IN IMMORTALITY.

“Eternal hope! when yonder spheres sublime
Pealed their first notes to sound the march of time,
Thy joyous youth began—but not to fade,
When all the sister planets have decayed ;
When wrapt in fire the realms of ether glow,
And heaven’s last thunder shakes the world below,
Thou, undismayed, shalt o’er the ruins smile,
And light thy torch at nature’s funeral pile!”

CAMPBELL.

“Hope ends in fruition.” MASONIC CHARGE.

HOPE in immortality is the second article in the Masonic Creed ; but what is embraced in this expression ? To answer this question understandingly, it will be necessary first to ascertain the true definition of the word.

According to Webster, Hope is, 1. “A desire of some good, accompanied with at least a slight expectation of obtaining it, or a belief that it is obtainable. *Hope* differs from *wish* and *desire* in this, that it implies some expectation of obtaining the good desired, or the possibility of possessing it. *Hope*, therefore, always gives pleasure or joy ; whereas *wish* and *desire* may produce, or be accompanied with, pain

and anxiety. 2. Confidence in a future event; the highest degree of well-founded expectation of good. 3. That which gives hope; he or that which furnishes ground of expectation, or promises desired good. 4. An opinion or belief not amounting to certainty, but grounded on substantial evidence.

Theological writers tell us that hope is compounded of *desire* and *expectation*, for both are necessary to constitute it. We may desire that which we have no good grounds to expect; and we may expect that for which we have no desire. It may be desirable to possess a given object, but that object may be so entirely beyond our reach as to prevent all expectation of ever obtaining it. And on the other hand we may expect something which we not only do not desire, but which we exceedingly dread. Neither of these conditions of the mind is what is understood by hope. To constitute hope, the object must be excellent and desirable in itself, and thus create in the mind a strong desire to obtain it. If, in addition to this, we have the assurance of one who has the power to impart the desirable good, that we *shall* be put in possession of it, we may then be said to *hope* for it. We have an ardent *desire* to obtain it, because it is in itself desirable; and we have a reasonable *expectation* of obtaining it, because he who has the power has promised to put it in our possession—hence we entertain a *hope* that our desire will be granted and our expectation realized. This is hope—a good hope—a scriptural, and, consequently, a masonic

hope. It is that hope which is "as an anchor to the soul," and which constitutes one of the three branches of a Mason's creed; a hope, which, with every *good* Mason, will ultimately end in fruition—the full and eternal fruition of the object so ardently desired.

And now as to the *object* of a Mason's hope;—it is immortality; a life that shall never end; a happy and desirable existence in His presence, where "there is fullness of joy," and at His right hand where "there are pleasures for evermore." Immortality is "the quality of never ceasing to live or exist; exemption from death and annihilation; life destined to endure without end. Exemption from oblivion." This, in itself, is desirable; but more especially so when coupled with the idea of a co-existent happiness. Immortality is desirable for its own sake, and to some extent, without reference to its condition.

"Immortality o'ersweeps

All pains, all tears, all time, all fears—and peals
Like the eternal thunders of the deep
Into my ears this truth—Thou liv'st forever."

The loss of being is, in itself, of all things the most undesirable. The thought of non-existence is abhorrent to human nature, and the mind dreads it as it dreads the march of the earthquake.

"—— whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,
This longing after immortality?
Or whence this secret dread, and inward horror,
Of falling into nought? Why shrinks the soul
Back on herself, and startles at destruction?"

ADDISON.

It is because the human soul possesses an innate, longing, unquenchable desire after continued existence. Nothing is so abhorrent to the human mind as the possibility of ceasing to be. Existence is a luxury which captivates every faculty and power of the soul; and it may with propriety be asked—what would not a man give in exchange for life?

But that immortality on which the soul fixes as an object of hope, is a *happy*—a *blessed* immortality. When unmixed happiness is connected with perpetual being, it makes that being an object of still more intense desire. Yet that *desire* is not *hope*. In addition to an ardent desire after immortality, we must have a reasonable expectation of obtaining it. It does not come within our province, in a work like this, to adduce evidence of the soul's immortality. Yet we may remark that the nature of the human mind; its desires, its passions, its capacities, all conspire to furnish evidence, strong and conclusive, that the soul is immortal.

“ 'Tis the divinity that stirs within us :
'Tis heaven itself that points out an hereafter,
And intimates eternity to man.”

And in addition to the array of testimony which may be gathered from this source, revelation comes in authoritatively to settle the question beyond all cavil or dispute. In relation to this, “thus saith the Lord,” sets all doubt aside, and forever allays every fear. The “Book of the Law” is a whole volume of testimony in favor of the hypothesis, and no lingering

doubt can remain after that testimony has been admitted.

From what has been said, we learn that immortality is not only desirable, but it is certain that we shall possess it, and therefore we have a good and sufficient reason to expect it. Hence we *hope* for it, for we both desire and expect it. It is true that it is yet in the future, and therefore it is a proper object of hope, "for what a man *hath* why doth he yet *hope for?*" Possession is the end of hope, for hope that is realized is no longer hope—it has ended in fruition. The trembling spirit has grasped the glorious boon, and hope is lost in everlasting possession.

Our spiritual trestle-board marks out "the path to a glorious immortality," and the faithful Mason is not only pointed to the way of life, but he is urged to walk in it. And if he have a proper "faith in God" as his foundation and chief corner stone; if he implore his aid and place his trust and confidence in him; if he take the "great Light" as the rule of his faith and conduct, he will be enabled to find and travel in the path of life and "fear no danger:" confiding in the promise of a blessed hereafter to those who follow the teachings of that "great Light," he will be enabled to indulge a "hope of a glorious immortality." The future will be not only sure, but it will be attractive; and a "lively hope" be enjoyed of "an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for" the faithful and obedient.

Masonry encourages us to seek—to obtain—to indulge such a hope as this. The three rounds of that mystic ladder are always before the eye of the attentive Craftsman. He sees, by the heavenly messengers that are continually passing and re-passing on it, that it is a high way from earth to heaven—from the sorrows and uncertainties of mortal life, to the perfect and changeless bliss of a glorious immortality. The prize is set before us ; the gracious boon is promised by one who can and will make good that promise. The path to its possession is intelligibly drawn upon our “spiritual trestle-board,” and it is so plain that none need misapprehend its directions. Press on, then, weary one ; the labor of life’s day will soon be ended, the goal will soon be reached, and the prize obtained.

“Hope on—hope ever.”

CHARITY,

Is defined to be, “in a *general sense*, love, benevolence, good will ; that disposition of heart which inclines men to think favorably of their fellow men, and to do them good. In a *theological sense*, it includes supreme love to God, and universal good will to men.” In a more particular and limited sense, it means “love, kindness, tenderness, liberality to the poor, consisting in almsgiving or benefactions, or in gratuitous services to relieve them in distress. Liberality in gifts and services to promote public objects of utility. Candor ; liberality in judging of men and their actions, a disposition which inclines men to think and judge favorably, and

to put the best construction on words and actions which the case will admit." What we mean by charity, then, is "supreme love to God, and universal good will to man." As it stands in our "creed," it refers more particularly to man as its object,—man in the aggregate—*all men* ; and the love that warms and fills the heart of the genuine Mason, embraces in its ample folds the whole family of man. It is the legitimate offspring of love to God, for he that loves God *cannot* hate his brethren.

The relation subsisting between the individual and his Maker, is known to others only by the effect which that relation has upon his conduct towards the community around him. If the heart be good—if it be pure—if it be a "habitation of holiness"—a temple suitable for a residence of the Spirit, God will dwell in it. "God's love"—pure, unmixed, eternal love ; and when He dwells in the heart, there is in it a fountain of love—of pure, god-like, boundless affection. There is a living spring within, the streams of which

"— the whole creation reach,
So plenteous is the store."

God is the fountain ; and that fountain sends out enduring streams which reach and encircle every individual of our race. If a man love God, he will "keep his commandments," and one of them is, to "love his brother also." In the nature of things it cannot be otherwise. And the evidence of our love to God is shown in the fact that we "love the brethren." Not

a love that merely prevents us from doing them an injury, but a love that prompts us to do them all possible good. God loves all the workmanship of his hands; and because he loves them he makes them the objects of his goodness and benevolence. Now, if God dwell in the heart, filling it with infinite love, it will entertain the same feelings toward the rest of its kind; and those feelings will prompt it to continual acts of kindness to them—to do them good in all possible ways, and by every means in its power.

This is what is meant when we say that "Charity to all mankind" is an element in our masonic creed. And, I may be allowed to remark just here, that this moral condition of the heart is the object and aim moral Masonry. Our ancient brethren were opera Craftsmen, chosen, and set apart to "build an he for God," in which he might manifest his presence, where he might dispense blessings to all who sought them in the manner he had prescribed. We are speculative, or moral Craftsmen; and it is our duty, equally as it was theirs, to erect a temple for God in which he may dwell; but it is a spiritual temple and is designed as a habitation for the eternal spirit. And as from between the Cherubim, over the mercy seat in the Temple at Jerusalem, Jehovah granted his blessings and benedictions upon the whole of ancient Israel,—so from the fountain of a pure heart, which God has deigned to make his dwelling place, blessings of love and kindness and good will go out to every child of man. Those hearts that swell with love to all, are *good* hearts, and bear upon them the broad seal of eternal love.

“As the rivers farthest flowing,
In the highest hills have birth ;
As the banyan, broadest growing,
Oftenest bows its head to earth,—
So the noblest minds press onward,
Channels far of good to trace ;
So the largest hearts bend downward,
Circling all the human race.”

Mrs. HALE.

The creed of a Mason, then, is to love all mankind. He should know no other emotion of the heart than charity—charity to all. His acts of benevolence should embrace all, and, as far as in his power, he should do good unto all. I would not be understood here as meaning, by doing good to all, the mere giving of alms to those who need ; but to do good to them in every possible way ; to bestow upon them intellectual and moral, as well as physical blessings. It is the duty of a Mason to “dispense light and information” as far as possible among all classes of community ; to make them wiser and better, as well as to relieve their bodily necessities ; to dispel the clouds of ignorance and error that hover over our common humanity, and let in upon them the sunlight of truth ; to dash from their lips the cup of poison and point them to the healing waters that gush from the fount of life. This is masonic charity ; this is the legitimate offspring of our beautiful and heaven-born creed. A Mason should try to make the world better and happier from his having lived in it. He should carry sunshine with him wherever he goes, until gloom and wretchedness fly at

his approach. Gathering into his own heart and mind rays from that "great Light," which is ever present in the lodge room, he should go out and scatter them through the dark paths of human life, until all within his reach should feel the genial influence of his presence.

This creed also teaches us to be charitable to the opinions and actions of men; not attributing conduct to base and unworthy motives, but putting upon it the best construction the circumstances will allow. There is a world of meaning in this saying of one of the sacred writers—"Charity *thinketh* no evil." It does not surmise, and presume, and imagine, until the best intended action is transformed into a deed of wickedness; it does not impugn the motives, nor without evidence attribute an intention which never entered into the mind of the actor; it *thinketh* no evil of any one, nor presumes an action springs from an improper motive unless there is evidence of the fact. Charity is patient, also, and endures wrong rather than return evil for evil, trusting the evil doer will discover his folly and change the tenor of his conduct. Indeed there is no better definition, or exposition, given of Charity than by the same writer to whom we have already referred; and I will quote it here, that seeing it in a new relation, all may discover its appropriate and beautiful application: "Charity suffereth long and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up; doth not behave itself unseemly; seeketh not her own; is not easily provoked; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but re-

joiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." Every one will discover at once that this description of charity is drawn by a master's hand, guided by the spirit of unerring truth; and it is *the* charity referred to in our mason-creed. It is that which God approves, and which never faileth. The gift of prophecy shall fail, and that of tongues shall cease; knowledge, too, shall vanish away, but charity endures forever. Faith and hope are its twin-sisters, but they are short-lived and passing away. They precede her in time and order, and constitute the foundation on which she rests; yet, having performed their mission, the one is changed into wisdom, the other into possession, but charity abideth ever. No wonder it was said "the greatest of these is charity; for in the triad of graces, this, only, is immortal. Like the stream that meanders through many lands, it blesses and beautifies wherever it goes; and finally comes back to its parent fountain, to be baptized afresh with its own immortality. Cowper has beautifully described this virgin daughter of the skies in language as inimitable as the portraiture is accurate.

" Pure in her aim, and in her temper mild,
Her wisdom seems the weakness of a child :
She makes excuses when she might condemn ;
Revil'd by those who hate her, prays for them ;
Suspicion lurks not in her artless breast ;
The worst suggested, she believes the best :

Not soon provoked, however stung and teas'd,
And, if perhaps made angry, soon appeas'd ;
She rather waves than will dispute her right,
And, injur'd, makes forgiveness her delight."

It may be added, as a closing remark, that charity is discriminating in her blessings. She does not "cast her pearls before swine," nor pronounce a benediction upon conduct that merits only censure ; and while she does good and is kind to all, she remembers to be especially so "to the household of faith." Her blessings fall like the dews of heaven upon those who worship at her household altar, but yet are not limited to the family circle. May this grace ever shine with increasing loveliness in the hearts and lives of all who are embraced in our mystic brotherhood.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE FOUR CARDINAL VIRTUES.

TEMPERANCE, FORTITUDE, PRUDENCE, JUSTICE.

“He who knows what is good and embraces it, who knows what is bad and avoids it, is learned and temperate.”

BURTON.

THERE are certain virtues, the possession of which is a *sine qua non* with every Mason. Without these no man should be admitted among us, whatever other qualifications he may have to commend him to masonic regard ; for without them he can never “ become a *true* and *faithful* brother among us.” It is an elementary principle in Masonry that, in selecting the material for our mystic temple, there are some qualities that are indispensable. These are not wealth, nor station, splendid talents nor distinguished alliances. “ It is not the external, but the internal qualities of a man, which Masonry regards.” The cunning artificer of Tyre was an obscure individual and of humble parentage ; yet his modest worth, his devotion to the art, his well-known virtues and his unbending integrity pointed him out as a suitable person to superintend the erection of the first temple for the worship of the true God, and in which labor he

might earn a fame that should extend through all lands and be perpetuated to the end of time. One of the qualifications of a candidate for Masonry, and without which all others will be unavailing ;—one of the virtues most impressively taught in our mystic ceremonies, and one which every Mason is bound to cultivate, is *temperance*. If he have not this virtue he should never be admitted among us ; and if, in after life, he forfeit his integrity in this respect, and *will* not reform, he should be promptly excluded from masonic fellowship.

Temperance is defined by our best lexicographers to be “ moderation ; *particularly*, habitual moderation in regard to the indulgence of the natural appetites and passions ; restrained or moderate indulgence.” This definition is a little different from the one usually given it in these days of modern ultraisms. In the language of the day it signifies total abstinence from all intoxicating drinks ; but this is no the proper and legitimate meaning of the word. The definitions differ materially ; the one is entire abstinence from, the other is a moderate and proper use of. The one is limited in its application to the use of intoxicating liquors ; the other applies to both eating and drinking, as well as all the other appetites and passions of human nature. And while we would say nothing against, but rather commend total abstinence from the use of alcoholic drinks, we wish to rescue the virtue of temperance from violent hands and allow it to appear in its native and comprehensive loveliness.

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Our masonic definition is as follows: "Temperance is that due restraint upon our affections and passions, which renders the body tame and governable and frees the mind from the allurements of vice. This virtue should be the constant practice of every Mason, as he is thereby taught to avoid excess, or contracting any licentious or vicious habit, the indulgence of which might lead him to disclose some of those valuable secrets which he promised to conceal and never reveal, and which would consequently subject him to the contempt and detestation of all good Masons."

Such is the masonic standard of temperance which our Order requires. As a commentary upon this definition, the present M. W. Grand Master of Ohio, William B. Hubbard, Esq., makes the following very judicious remarks, which are worthy the careful attention of every member of the Craft.

"Whoever reflects but a moment upon his own existence, will know that he is possessed of two natures, intimately blended into, and made one. He is animal and spiritual—body and soul, or matter and mind. Upon each, and for each, are impressed at his creation certain organic laws. The due observance or regard of these laws, leaves as a consequence health and happiness, or a sound mind in a sound body; a violation of these laws produces sickness, disorder, and more or less of misery. The mind or soul being the superior of the two natures, controls and governs, to a very great extent, the other nature,

or the body. Thus then we see the necessity and importance of governing and restraining the appetites of the body, or natural man, and of controlling the passions of the mind. Thus we see also that temperance, in its largest and most perfect sense, would lead us to live in strict accordance with, and not in violation of, the organic laws of mind and body; and that intemperance consists in the violation of any of those existing laws. And it is in this sense, doubtless, that the inspired apostle considered it when he enjoined it upon us and all men, to add to our faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge *temperance*, &c. And again, 'every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things.' Strict temperance in eating and drinking, is nothing more nor less than keeping the appetites of the animal man 'within due bounds,' by means of the superior power, the mind. The latter in its unclouded and healthy state, teaches us that we ought to 'eat and drink *in order to live*, and not live *in order to eat and drink*.' In this way the body, the animal man, becomes freed from all impurities that lead to disease and suffering, and is thereby rendered a fit temple for the indwelling of an immortal spirit. That spirit, thus unclogged and undebased, increases in strength, knowledge, and purity. It goes on from elevation to elevation, until at length it is enabled to see as clearly by faith, as Moses saw by his natural vision, the promised land." Such is the philosophical and moral aspect of this virtue; but it has a claim on us

for observance of a yet higher character. Intemperance, *in any thing*, is directly forbidden in the great Light of Masonry, and no Mason can violate that law and remain guiltless in the sight of God or man.

FORTITUDE

Is described in our rituals as "that noble and steady purpose of the mind, whereby we are enabled to undergo any pain, peril, or danger, when prudentially deemed expedient. This virtue is equally distant from rashness and cowardice; and, like the former, should be deeply impressed upon the mind of every Mason, as a safeguard or security against any illegal attack that may be made, by force or otherwise, to extort from him any of those secrets with which he has been so solemnly entrusted."

Webster defines fortitude to be, "That strength or firmness of mind which enables a person to encounter anger with coolness and courage, or to bear pain or adversity without murmuring, depression, or despondency. We sometimes confound the effect with the cause, and use *fortitude* as synonymous with *courage* or *patience*; but *courage* is an active virtue or vice, and *patience* is the effect of *fortitude*." This virtue is essential in the character of every man, and especially so in that of a Mason. In the rough and dangerous path he has to travel, he requires fortitude to enable him to "endure unto the end;" and he needs this virtue also to enable him to persevere in the pursuit of knowledge, even while doubts and uncer-

tainties rest upon his future. He needs it for perseverance—for endurance; and the more mature this virtue is seen in him, the steadier and loftier will be his character. The old prophets exhibit this in the highest sense; so do the apostles, especially Paul, and Peter, and John. They did right in the face of all opposition, and were ready to endure the consequence of that opposition, whatever it might be. So the just and upright Mason follows the designs drawn upon his spiritual trestle-board, without regard to consequences, and leaves the event with Him who drew those designs.

“ — Gird your hearts with silent fortitude,
Suffering, yet hoping all things.”

PRUDENCE

“ Teaches us to regulate our lives and actions agreeably to the dictates of reason, and is that habit by which we wisely judge, and prudentially determine, on all things relative to our present, as well as our future happiness. This virtue should be the particular characteristic of every Mason, not only while in the lodge, but also when abroad in the world. It should be particularly attended to in all strange or mixed companies never to let fall the least sign, token, or word, whereby the secrets of Masonry might be unlawfully obtained.”

Prudence is *practical* wisdom. It “implies caution in deliberating and consulting on the most suitable means to accomplish valuable purposes, and the exercise of sagacity in discerning and selecting them. Prudence differs from wisdom in this, that prudence implies

more caution and reserve than wisdom, or is exercised more in foreseeing and avoiding evil than in devising and executing that which is good." This is a very important and necessary virtue, for half the ills of life are the result of a want of it, or of the exercise of it. Many of the moral, as well as the physical evils of human life, may be avoided by a timely exercise of this useful virtue. How much better and happier would men be if prudence were consulted before action. Imprudent speculations, producing bankruptcy, poverty, and ruin, would be avoided; improper tempers, which recoil upon the heart that indulges them, would be suppressed and conquered; vicious appetites, which destroy the bodily powers even before youth has passed way, would be restrained and subdued; and the tongue, that prolific source of mischief, would be bridled, or taught to speak only when wisdom dictates or prudence declares it proper. In every condition of human life; in all the relationships of society, and in regard to every act that can, directly or indirectly, influence for weal or woe, prudence should sit at the helm and in all cases be consulted.

"Consult your means, avoid the tempter's wiles,
Shun grinning hosts of unreceipted files;
Let heaven-eyed prudence battle with desire,
And win the victory, though it be through fire."

JUSTICE

"Is that standard or boundary of right, which enables us to render to every man his just due without dis-

tion. This virtue is not only consistent with divine and human laws, but is the very cement and support of civil society ; and as justice in a great measure constitutes the real good man, so should it be the invariable practice of every Mason never to deviate from the minutest principles thereof."

Justice "consists in giving to every one what is his due ; practical conformity to the laws and to principles of rectitude in the dealings of men with each other." This is its common acceptation, for it is most frequently applied to transactions of men with each other. But it has a higher and more important application. Man occupies a two-fold attitude, and has a relationship to earth and heaven both ; for while fraternal duties connect him with his fellow man, he has a filial relationship to his creator ; and while he is bound by immutable laws not to defraud his brother, the same laws require him to render unto God that which is his rightful due. In both these aspects Masonry regards and enjoins this virtue.

FIRST, he should be just to his fellow man. Never defrauding him or doing him wrong in any respect, either in his property or reputation. In relation to this rule of action, we borrow, as we do in all others involving moral conduct, from that Book which is "the rule and guide of our faith and practice,"—we are enjoined to "do unto others as we would have them do unto us ;" and this, we have said, not alone in pecuniary matters. We may be faultless in this respect, and yet in another be guilty of great injustice. We



of morals intended, and which should be clearly indicated by the general features of the Order. All will readily concede that Masonry is a system of morals, taught by allegorical figures and symbolic representations. But the question as to whether that system is derived from the Bible, the Koran, or the Shasta, is also important, and, as the writer confidently believes, is fully and forever settled by the genius of the Order; for every principle, form, and feature of Freemasonry takes its tone and character from the Bible. We have found this to be the case in all the matters treated of in this work; and the dedication of our halls is fully confirmatory of this doctrine.

A Patron is "one who countenances, supports and protects either a person or a work;" or "a guardian whose name a person bears, or under whose special care he is placed." Patronage, is "special protection or support; favor or aid afforded to second the views of a person, or to promote a design."

St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist are denominated the patrons of Masonry, and to them, all Masons professing christianity, dedicate their lodges. And as there are but few lodges in the world except among christian nations, such dedication is now the general practice, while any other form is an exception to this general rule. These two eminent men are claimed as patrons of the Order, because the moral precepts which they taught, are recognized as the moral code of Masonry; for while

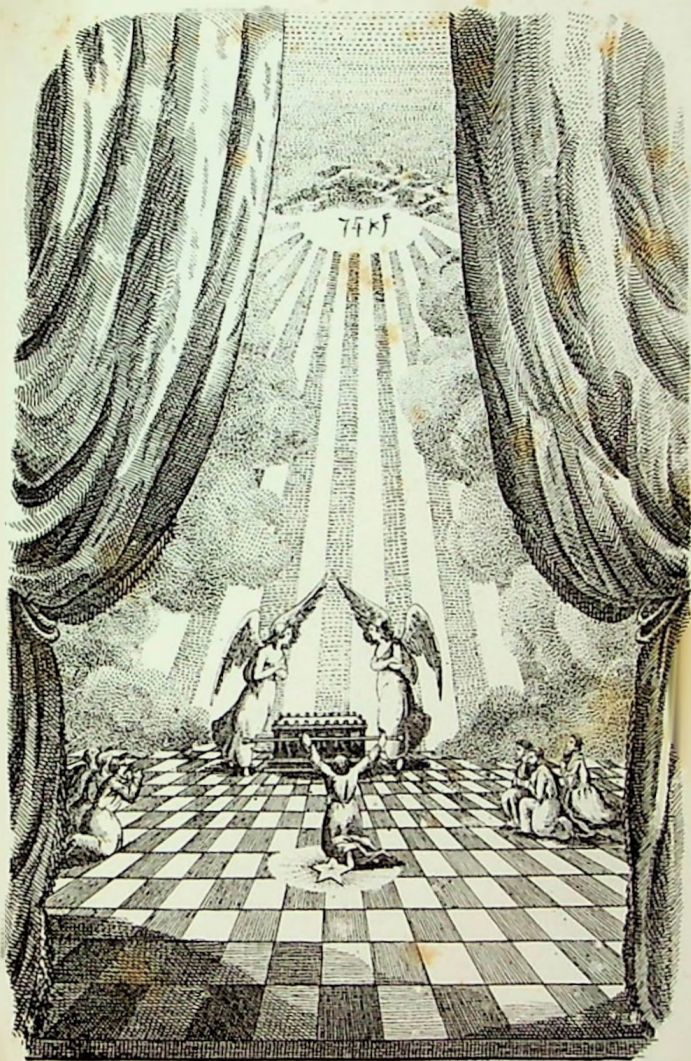
CHAPTER XXIII.

THE DEDICATION OF THE LODGE.

“Brothers rejoice! for our task is completed,
After the pattern appointed of yore;
Let the reward to the Craftsmen be meted,
While with thanksgiving we bow and adore.
Low at the feet of Him,
Throned where the Seraphim,
And the Archangels sing anthems of praise:
Born of the lowly dust,
Wanting in faith and trust,
How shall we worship Thee, Ancient of days?”

MRS. BOLTON.

AFTER having given the “outlines” of our masonic Temple, and placed within it the furniture, ornaments and jewels which properly belong to it:—after describing the character of those who assemble in it, the creed they entertain, the virtues they cherish, and the spirit with which they convene for masonic labor; it is right that we should know something about the Patrons of the Order, to whom our halls are dedicated. We should also understand fully the general purposes for which our halls are used, and the moral virtues, to the cultivation of which they are consecrated. If Masonry be a system of morals, however taught, all its parts and purposes, its outlines and aspects, should, with harmonious unity, point to this system. They should point to the *particular* system





of morals intended, and which should be clearly indicated by the general features of the Order. All will readily concede that Masonry is a system of morals, taught by allegorical figures and symbolic representations. But the question as to whether that system is derived from the Bible, the Koran, or the Shasta, is also important, and, as the writer confidently believes, is fully and forever settled by the genius of the Order; for every principle, form, and feature of Freemasonry takes its tone and character from the Bible. We have found this to be the case in all the matters treated of in this work; and the dedication of our halls is fully confirmatory of this doctrine.

A Patron is "one who countenances, supports and protects either a person or a work;" or "a guardian whose name a person bears, or under whose special care he is placed." Patronage, is "special protection or support; favor or aid afforded to second the views of a person, or to promote a design."

St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist are denominated the patrons of Masonry, and to them, all Masons professing christianity, dedicate their lodges. And as there are but few lodges in the world except among christian nations, such dedication is now the general practice, while any other form is an exception to this general rule. These two eminent men are claimed as patrons of the Order, because the moral precepts which they taught, are recognized as the moral code of Masonry; for while

these virtues combined constitute Masonry. This is the meaning of the word in the first act of dedication, for it is fully explained by the language of the two following acts. The lodge, then, is dedicated to Masonry ; and if it be asked what is Masonry, we answer it is virtue, or moral goodness, and universal benevolence. These are the virtues to be taught, and such is the spirit and practice urged upon all who are admitted among us. To this use the hall is dedicated ; and it is a violation of first principles to appropriate it to any other. No angry disputations must take place within its walls ; no discord, ill feeling, or vicious tempers must be manifested there. It is a retreat sacred to the purest friendship, and to the cultivation of the brightest virtues that can adorn humanity. It is to make men better, that we meet there ; and all our labor while there, and all the rituals and charges and ceremonies of the Order, tend to this point. Every jewel and ornament, every article of furniture, and every emblem and hieroglyphic utters its voice of solemn admonition. And, above all, God is there, uttering from the altar out of his revealed Will, his supreme injunctions, which, if obeyed, will make us *good* and *useful* and *happy*, for ever and ever.

In conjunction with this, it should be remembered that the hall is consecrated and set apart to preserve the memory of the two Saints John. But in what way is the lodge used to preserve their memory ? By merely recording their names there, or observing a

festival which bears their names ; or to hand down to future ages the fact that such men lived on the earth at such a period of its history, and within such a nation ? Surely not. The hall is consecrated to their memory in a much higher and holier sense than this. It is to be done by following their teachings, and reducing their precepts to practice ; by exhibiting in ourselves the virtue, the integrity, the self-denial, the temperance and the moral courage of the one ; with the humility, the meekness, the innocence and almost seraphic love of the other. This is to revere and preserve their memories. These virtues should all be blended in us ; and if the world asks us for our model, we should point to these illustrious names. By this means their memory will be perpetuated to the end of time, for each brother will be a living monument showing the record of their goodness “ to be read and known of all men.” Thus by studying their precepts and emulating their virtues, we shall preserve their memories, and hand down to future ages a living exemplification of their glorious characters.

The Baptist was an extraordinary character. The position he occupied, as intermediate between the Jewish and Christian dispensation, closing up the one and heralding the other, was a marked and important one. His parallel, the Evangelist, in speaking of him declares, that he “ was sent from God ;” and the Savior affirms of him that “ among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a

greater than John the Baptist." To this testimony might be added the fact of his singularly pure and blameless life. Living in humble retirement, and foregoing all the enjoyments and pursuits of the great world, he devoted his life to the cultivation of his religious character. Plain in his dress, abstemious in his diet, and rigidly austere in all that pertained to his own gratification, he went "preaching repentance" to his countrymen, and urging reformation of life upon all with whom he met. He did this, too, without fear or favor, and denounced the corruptions of the court and the crimes of the king as fearlessly as those of the humblest citizens. His moral integrity and his firm adherence to truth at length cost him his head. Herod had violated, alike, the laws of God and man, and the unswerving John told him so to his face. His guilty paramour could not endure the truth, and through her influence the incorruptible John was thrown into prison and subsequently beheaded. Thus fell a martyr to truth and righteousness; but he left a name prominent among the good and great, and his memory will be cherished while virtue is appreciated and Masonry exists in the world.

The Evangelist was called "the beloved disciple." There was something about him, something in his spirit and manner and language, that won the affection of all who saw or heard him. He was, in every sense, a living illustration of that love which formed his theme on all occasions. Reposing upon the bosom of the Redeemer, he was the living impersonation

of that heavenly virtue. His own love for his Master was sincere and unflinching to the end ; and neither the hate of his countrymen nor the terrors of an arraignment before the high priest, could shake his attachment. He accompanied him before Pilate ; he traveled up Calvary with him, and stood near his cross until he died, and received the stricken mother as the sole legacy of his dying Lord.

He tarried and labored long on the earth, after the Savior was crucified, and obtained many seals to his ministry. He was persecuted, imprisoned, banished, thrown into boiling oil,—but yet survived. And amid all his sufferings, love was still the burden of all his letters ; even when he was so old and feeble that he had to be carried to the place of worship, and could only utter a few words, they were “ little children, love one another.” “ If God so loved us we ought also to love one another.”

Among all the great characters of antiquity, there are none who so fully impersonate the spirit of Masonry as John the Evangelist. “ I know not how it is,” said a learned and eloquent Grand Master of Ohio, “ but never, during the ministrations of the station I have been so long honored with among you, have I been called upon to give a charge to my brethren in Masonry, without a lively appreciation of the loveliness of his character who was permitted to lean upon his Master’s breast ; and, perhaps, to catch a double portion of the benignity of the Master’s spirit. You all know to whom I allude,—him

of the Apocalypse—the patron saint of our order. While sojourning amidst the magnificent scenery of the celestial city, and holding commune with the masterful beings who thronged its golden streets ; listening to the uninterrupted tide of adoration that welled around the rainbow throne, like the sound of ‘many waters,’—there passed upon him the same infusion of spirit and heavenly unction that animate the blessed intelligences who swept across the mystic panorama of his lofty vision ; and hence his sweet pistles breathe the sentiments, while they speak the dialect of the ‘Upper Sanctuary.’ Surely no more enduring eulogy could be written for our institution, than the simple statement, that upon the burthen of his every discourse there is personified the embodiment and poured out the very soul of Masonry. We emblazon his name, and record his actions, upon the proudest page of our associated history ; we are accustomed to set apart a solemn festival to commemorate his anniversary ; and we plant our altars and dedicate our lodge rooms to the memory of the Holy St. JOHN. We are all of us, therefore, most imperatively bound to respect and revere his opinions. Will you then permit me, in addition to what I have so imperfectly but affectionately advised, to invoke his honored presence among you, and thus to catch, as it were, from his own lips, his own most beautiful teachings ? And I would to heaven, my companions, that the noble lessons were graven upon our gates and upon our door posts,—that they were bound as a

sign upon our hands, and as frontlets between our eyes ; and so to be taught diligently to our children forever. Hear him, then : ‘ Brethren, I write no *new* commandment unto you, but an *old* commandment, which ye have had from the beginning ;—*that ye love one another*. He that loveth his brother abideth in the *light*, but he that hateth his brother walketh in *darkness*. GOD IS LOVE ; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.”

Such is the spirit and character, and such the heaven-pictured moral lineaments of the beloved patron of our Order ; and such the man to whose memory we dedicate our halls. It is to perpetuate the fame of his moral goodness, to emulate the purity and loveliness of his character, and to illustrate in practice the beautiful tendency of his instructions, that we dedicate our lodges to his memory. May his name and precepts be an ever present inducement for us to press on in our moral achievements, until we shall have exchanged the labors of earth, in the lodge consecrated to his memory, for the home and rest of the weary,—the heaven to which he has gone.

The question is asked, *why do we dedicate our lodges to the two Saints John ?* If Masonry took its moral aspects at the building of the first Temple at Jerusalem, to whom were the lodges then dedicated ? And why change, or where is the authority for such change ? These are important questions and demand a candid and careful answer. If the dedication of our lodges to the two Saints John is sanctioned by the

highest authorities of our Order,—if it be legitimate and not a mere assumption, the act has, in itself a most important bearing, for it directly recognizes the divinity of the christian religion, and the authority of the New Testament Scriptures. It will be well, then, to enquire into the antiquity of such dedication, as well as for the authority for it.

There can be no doubt that, during the early history of the Order, preceding the introduction of the christian dispensation, lodges were dedicated to Solomon—if to any one. It is true that we have no written authority for this; it rests exclusively onasonic tradition, which asserts such to be the fact, and gives as a reason that he was our first M. E. G. Master. This is the story which tradition brings to us; and the origin of the Order, together with its relation to Solomon, and a most important event of his reign, both strengthen the traditional history. Then if Solomon during his reign, and down to the abrogation of the Jewish polity, was regarded as the patron of the Order, why does he not still bear that relation? or, why are the Saints John substituted for their illustrious predecessor?

Masonry, in its original operative organization had nothing to do with Solomon or Judaism. It was doubtless an association of Dionysian artists, who, as builders in Tyre, won for the architecture of that city a world-wide renown. When the great Jewish Temple was to be built for the worship of Jehovah, the aid of these artists was invoked, and the king of Tyro

sent a large number to assist in the important work. By their assistance the Temple was built ; and at its completion and dedication, the association of operative workmen was re-organized on somewhat different principles, and a new vitality was infused into it by its connection with the word and worship of the God of Israel. The religion of the Jews was then the only form of religion on earth which was recognized as true in itself and acceptable to God. Linked with that form of worship, and invested with its important truths, and charged to carry those truths with it round the world, it became identified, in its religious or moral aspects, with the Jews as a people and Judaism as a religion. It was natural, therefore, that it should claim Solomon as its patron ; for it was under his reign and superintendence, and in part if not in whole by his instrumentality, that it had assumed the character it then bore. Consequently it was reasonable and right that the lodges should be dedicated to so illustrious a monarch.

But the Jewish dispensation was not designed for perpetuity. It was a dispensation of types and shadows : it constantly pointed to a clearer, brighter light which was to dawn upon the world ; and it every where proclaimed with trumpet-tongue its own approaching decay and dissolution. And it proclaimed the truth ; for when the fulness of time was come, a new and perfect dispensation was ushered in. The types and shadows of the Mosaic economy passed away ; the Temple in which were performed its

sacred rites and ceremonies was destroyed ; the offerings and the incense ceased—forever, and the nation was scattered in fragments over the earth. There was no longer any need that the blood of animals should be shed as a sacrifice, for the “Lamb of God” had offered himself once for all, as a sufficient atonement and satisfaction for the sins of the world. The priesthood was abrogated, for he who was “a priest forever after the order of Melchizedeck,” had taken upon himself the sacerdotal office. He had poured out his blood as an atonement, and then ascended on high, into the immediate presence of the Father, where “he ever liveth to make intercession” for us all. And the best evidence that this was in the order of God, and according to his wise disposal, is that the Jewish polity then came to an end ; their Temple and city, nation, priesthood and people were rent and sundered, or borne off to degradation and bondage—that the very name became a reproach and by-word among men, while the individuals pertaining to the race remained every where living witnesses of the wonderful facts. And even now it may be truly said,—

“The wild bird hath its nest,—the fox his cave,
Mankind their country—Israel but the grave.”

For nearly eighteen centuries, their condition has been a perpetual demonstration of the truth of divine revelation. Judea was once a “land flowing with milk and honey.” Her plains were covered with

flocks and herds, and her mountains and quarries were sources of inexhaustible wealth. The land was teeming with population, the nation was powerful and respected; music and poetry, the arts and sciences, were cultivated to an extent rarely excelled, and wealth abounded all over the land. But look at that favored country now! The "fulness of time" came; a better and perfect dispensation, long promised by Jehovah, and predicted by the prophets, was introduced. Its inconceivable blessings and exalted privileges were first offered to the Jews, *but promptly rejected*. The counsels and purposes of heaven could not be trifled with; and now—

"Fall'n is thy throne, oh Israel!
Silence is o'er thy plains;
Thy dwellings all lie desolate,
Thy children weep in chains.
Where are the dews that fed thee
On Ethau's barren shore?
That fire from heaven which led thee,
Now lights thy path no more."

At the destruction of the Jewish polity and nation Freemasonry took shelter under the banner of Christianity—for *it had no other refuge*. Besides, it was what she had long expected and looked for; the law and the prophets, from which she had derived vitality for a thousand years, had predicted it, and all her hieroglyphics and emblems had pointed to it. What else could she do when it came, but recognize it? When her former refuge was gone, her patron

and protector destroyed or doomed to bondage, was she to follow the example, reject the light, refuse to recognize the hand of God, deny the truth she had so long carried with her, *and die?* She chose a wiser part; and when her patron was superseded by that which became the "end of the law for righteousness," she recognized the fulfilment of the prophecies, accepted the light of a new and perfect dispensation, and has ever since, in weal and woe, adhered to its fortunes. Let not Israel complain of this—*the fault is her own.*

That Masonry has, ever since the introduction of christianity, recognized the two Saints John as her patrons, and dedicated her lodges to their memory, we think there can be no doubt. Why these two particular persons were selected, it is now difficult to say; and as there is neither record nor testimony to settle that question, it will probably forever remain unanswered. But that they were selected, and have long been recognized, cannot be doubted.

Up to the year 1717, the landmarks of Masonry were doubtless preserved with great exactness. At the revival of the Order in that year, a number of learned and worthy brethren, consisting of such men as Anthony Sayer, Ellicott, Lamball, Payne, Desaguliers and others, "used the most strenuous exertions to put the system into a form consistent with ancient observances." They "perused old manuscripts, digested ancient constitutions, collected the old Gothic charges, and consulted intelligent breth-

ren" in relation to the rites, doctrines, ordinances, &c., of the Order which had been handed down from remote ages. Those which had the unequivocal sanction of ancient usage were preserved, and have come down to us bearing the unmistakeable marks of a high antiquity. The system of Masonry then promulgated is the only system that has the sanction of authority. "All previous notices of the Order, like the links of a broken chain, are unconnected and detached; and though extremely valuable as parts of a whole, are defective because the connecting links are wanting, for they were burnt to ashes, and cast forth to the winds of heaven, by jealous and factitious brethren" who feared they might fall into improper hands. A system of lectures was then arranged and adopted; and in that system the phrase—"the holy lodge of St. John" occurs more than once. This is conclusive evidence that the Saints John were at that time considered the legitimate patrons of Freemasonry. The same system refers to "Christian Masons," and "Christian usages;" showing conclusively that christianity was recognized by the Order. The French system of 1730, which was transplanted from England, contained the same reference to the Evangelist. In Dunkerly's lectures was the same recognition, describing the lodge as "dedicated to God and holy St. John;" and this language, slightly varied at times, was in general use in the lodges of England as well as on the continent; and the same acknowledgment of the Johns

was brought with the Order to this country in 1733, and has come down with it to the present day. The same appears in the Kilwinning system of Scotland, which can be traced back to near the twelfth century. The language of Dunkerly which was in use early in the last century, concerning the parallelism is quite emphatic ; more so, indeed, than that now generally used. It was as follows :—"This circle is embordered by two perpendicular parallel lines, representing St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist, who were perfect parallels in christianity as well as in Masonry," &c. Such are the facts and evidence concerning this question ; and there can no longer be doubt that these two eminent men, and the religious system with which they stand connected, have both been recognized by Freemasonry from a very early day. We find it to be so as far back as we have written history on the subject, and tradition fully confirms the rest.

Our brethren who are unwilling to admit the truth of christianity, insist upon dedicating the lodges to Solomon, and striking out all reference to the christian dispensation ; and they give as a reason that a recognition of christianity *strikes at the universality of Masonry*. Well, suppose we dedicate our lodges to king Solomon, strike out all reference to the Baptist and Evangelist, and omit all quotations from the New Testament Scriptures in our rituals, would it not be violating the universality of the Order ? All men are not Jews, no more than they are all Christians ;

and the latter have a stronger reason for objecting to Solomon, than the former have for protesting against the Evangelist. Indeed, to go back to the Jewish formula would strike a much heavier blow at the universality of Freemasonry than to perpetuate the names of our patron saints. Besides, Judaism was superseded by christianity which is the perfection, and was reared upon the foundation of the former, and it is now in the ascendant and must be until all men, every where, acknowledge the cross as the insignia of the world's salvation. All the civilized nations of the world now recognize, directly or indirectly, the christian religion; while Judaism is not recognized by any nation, and only by the individuals of an isolated race. The dates of the world are the dates of christianity; the great leading festivals are in commemoration of events in her history; and it now approaches nearer a universality than any other form of religion known. Hence the objection has but little if any force whatever.

“The holy St. John” is a phrase now domesticated in our masonic family; it is written upon the memory of every Craftsman, it is heard wherever the sound of the gavel is heard, and to omit it in our rituals would be like blotting a star from the gemmed covering of the lodge, or extinguishing one of the luminaries at our altar. Whatever may have been the formula, or whoever may have been the patron, under a former dispensation, the present illustrious patrons are now too deeply impressed upon the mem-

ory, and too firmly fixed in the affections of the Craft, ever to be severed or forgotten. For eighteen centuries they have been identified with the Order, and the union must continue until these earthly temples shall give place to an heavenly one, and the sound of our mystic implements be succeeded by the harmony of angels.

CONCLUSION.

Our task is completed, though not so well as we could have wished, or the reader desired; yet if we have exhibited a single feature in the outlines of our mystic and venerable temple, whose beauties the reader had hitherto failed to discover, and which shall induce a heartier appreciation of the moral truths of Masonry, we shall be content. From a close observation, extending through many years, we have been led to conclude that Freemasonry is rarely seen in its moral aspects, even by her own children, as she should be. A little close attention will discover amidst our symbols and allegories, great truths; but they are too often passed by *because of their magnitude*, while matters of less import are nicely observed and carefully treasured. The eye is feasted upon the shining adornments of the casket, while the native splendors of the gems within are forgotten or neglected: a richly adorned apron attracting a score of wondering eyes, while a single truth evolved from our mysteries, though of priceless value and everlasting interest, can with difficulty secure the attention of a single ear.

In preparing this work, we have lingered many an hour around the "old foundations" of our noble structure. Bearing in our hands the square and compasses, the level and plumb-line, the gauge, the mallet, and their associated instruments, and directing our researches by the rays of that great central luminary which is ever present in the lodge, we have endeavored to examine and measure the whole outline of the building. We have wandered among its standing and massive columns; we have gazed with irrepressible emotions upon that star which ever shines from the central ground-floor; and we have "looked aloft" to the star-gemmed roof, and studied the glorious truths uttered by Him who sits above overlooking the whole. We have told what we saw, and repeated what we have heard, and revealed the conclusions to which we have been led. We believe those conclusions are correct, and that they firmly rest upon the foundations of the elder temple which shall never be removed until material structures shall give place to those that are spiritual and eternal.

Our conclusion is this:—That ancient Freemasonry is founded on the great doctrines of divine revelation; that its essential truths are truths borrowed from inspiration; that its mission is to the world; and its object, to glorify God and benefit man. If we are correct in this, then, just in proportion as it falls short of its object, it fails in its mission. It is in benefiting man that we glorify God;—benefiting him in body and mind and soul; elevating his

thoughts, purifying his affections, and guiding his steps into the path that leads to a glorious immortality : teaching men to love God, that they may love one another ; and from hearts full of obedient love to their Maker, directing streams of charity and kindness to all their fellows. It is to do good among men, and destroy or lessen the evils that exist :—this is Masonry,—this is her mission.

And now, having finished the “ outlines ” of our masonic temple, and traced its general aspects ; and having described its furniture and jewels, and justified its dedication ; and having pointed out its general design, aims, and objects, we affectionately request the reader, whether Jew or Gentile, to unite with us in an invocation to Him who presides over all our labors ; for without his aid and blessing all our efforts will be in vain.

“ Show us the truth and the pathway of duty ;
 Help us to lift up our standard sublime ;
 Till earth is restored to the order and beauty,
 Lost in the shadowless morning of time.
 Teach us to sow the seed
 Of many a noble deed ;
 Make us determined, unflinching, and strong ;
 Armed with the sword of right,
 Dauntless and the fight,
 Help us to level the bulwarks of wrong.”



J. B. Stephens

Presented by

General C. Mayzner

Norwalk

Ohio

August 12th

1856



