

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE

CONSTITUTION OF HARMONY LODGE,

Number One Hundred and Forty Nine,

AT YEATES'S LOWER SCHOOL HOUSE, NANSEMOND COUNTY, VA.

SAINT JOHN'S DAY,

June 24, A. L. 5857, A. D. 1857.

BY

REV. W. B. WELLONS,

EDITOR OF THE CHRISTIAN SUN, SUFFOLK, VA.

BALTIMORE:

PRINTED BY SHERWOOD & CO.

N. W. CORNER BALTIMORE AND GAY STREETS.

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HARMONY LODGE, No. 149, }
24th June, A. L. 5857, A. D. 1857. }

REV. W. B. WELLS :

DEAR BROTHER,—This Lodge, after a resolution of thanks, has imposed upon us the pleasing duty of requesting of you, for publication, a copy of the interesting and able address which, on the occasion of its constitution, you have this day delivered before them.

In performing this duty allow us to add the assurance of our high appreciation of its merits, and to express for ourselves as well as for our Lodge, the confident hope that you will not permit any engagements to prevent you from furnishing a copy of the address for the purpose indicated.

With assurance of our high regard, we are, dear brother,

Yours, fraternally,

JOHN T. KILBY,
JOHN W. AMES,
JOS. W. MANSFIELD, } *Committee.*

SUFFOLK, June 25th, 1857.

DEAR BRETHREN,—Yours, requesting, on behalf of Harmony Lodge, No. 149, a copy of the address delivered by me on the occasion of its constitution, is before me. The address was prepared very hurriedly, amid many pressing pastoral and editorial duties, and I now have not time to rewrite it. This induced me to hesitate when your request was first made, but on reflection I have concluded to place it as it is at your disposal, and if you think it will do good, or advance the cause of Masonry, you are at liberty to have it published.

Praying that the blessings of the great Architect above may rest on Harmony Lodge, I remain, dear brethren,

Yours, fraternally,

W. B. WELLS.

(To Dr. John T. Kilby, John W. Ames, Jos. W. Mansfield, *Committee.*)

*To Comm. Wells
from Rev. Wm. Wells
1857.*

ADDRESS.

LADIES, GENTLEMEN AND BRETHREN :

It is a most interesting occasion which assembles us at this time. The subject upon which I am to address you has often engaged the attention and employed the minds of the most gifted and talented of our country. A new Lodge, of one of the most ancient and honorable orders that have ever existed among men, is this day to be constituted in this community;—an order well known in every land, and whose mystic words and signs are understood by every nation. At the formation of this new branch of an association which has often been misrepresented, the principles of which have been often misunderstood by the uninitiated, a true exposition may be expected. Such an exposition I propose to give you. The origin, progress and principles of the Order will each be examined, and the objections usually raised against it answered.

I would remark to those before me that the subject upon which I am to speak is one to which I have given much attention. I profess to be acquainted with all that is private and public in Masonry. It is not, therefore, a matter of theory, but a practical question with me. I have taken all the degrees which can be conferred in this country, and know the things whereof I affirm; and I am to speak in the presence of those who are qualified by knowledge and experience to detect any erroneous sentiment advanced or any mis-statement made. Under such circumstances my reputation as a man of truth and as a minister of Christ is at stake, and as I value my reputation I would not paint any thing in false colors to deceive or mislead the minds of the uninitiated. With this introduction I come to the subject.

The principles embodied in the Masonic organization have their origin in man's nature. As man came forth from the hand of his Maker, he had implanted in his soul the seeds of this institution. His natural disposition are the pillars upon which it rests. We are by nature social beings, and possessed of social feelings. In our own bosoms there is, however, a secret vault in which we deposit

and lock up such knowledge and impressions as we gain, and unseal and dispose of such portions of it at our pleasure as may be of service to ourselves or those with whom we associate. These qualities in man have been in exercise from the days of Adam and Seth until the present time. The history of mankind is one continued record of societies and associations, for mutual good, protection, safety, invasion or other purposes. We cannot live alone and fill our proper sphere in life. The divine Being who formed and fashioned us did not intend us to live alone, and for ourselves alone. He, in his wisdom, saw that this would not be best. We naturally crave the company, the society and the sympathy of others. We need the assistance and co-operation of others in order to protect ourselves, our property and our possessions. A world devoid of the principles of sympathy and sociability would indeed be a world of woe and misery. The origin of all law and government is founded upon this principle of our nature. We are compelled to associate together for mutual benefit and protection, and thus we learn to sympathize with and love one another. This principle cultivated introduced order, law and civilization in society. Becoming associated together as tribes, families and nations, rules of order and laws were adopted. Out of large societies thus formed smaller associations were organized. These smaller societies thus formed, having certain specified purposes in view, gave rise to the formation of the society of Masons, which has proved itself to be more durable and permanent than any which preceded it.

This leads us to the origin of Masonry. It cannot, and is not denied, by any who have given the subject an impartial examination, that this society has existed from remote antiquity. Some, over-anxious for the dignity of the order, have represented it as coeval with the world; others have dated its commencement in the days of the Eleusinian mysteries of Egypt. That societies, embodying some of the leading principles of Masonry, existed in the early ages of the world, and particularly in Egypt, may be proven to be true; but, after examining the subject very thoroughly, I think it very difficult to trace Masonry in its improved and speculative form farther back than the building of the temple of the Lord in Jerusalem under the reign of Solomon, king of Israel. The societies founded on similar principles, which existed in Egypt, had been the nurseries of the sciences and the secrets of architecture. There exist in Egypt at

this time monuments of architecture which must have been reared in the earlier ages of society. The arts and sciences were first cultivated in that country. The first and only object of those connected with the secret societies of Egypt was the mutual communication of knowledge connected with their profession as architects, and those only gained admission to the order who could bring with them an experimental knowledge of architecture.

When God directed Solomon to erect for him a temple in Jerusalem, and gave him the plan of the building, the best architectural skill was needed, and it is fair to infer that numbers of expert workmen connected with the societies in Egypt were employed in the erection of the temple; and to Solomon may be ascribed the honor of giving to Masonry its present speculative form. In the building of the temple there were workmen of every grade, from the entered apprentice to the master workman. Workmen were honored as they became expert and advanced in architectural knowledge, and those who were present and saw the completion of the temple, witnessed and were made the recipients of knowledge which had not before been bestowed upon them. Masonry had been the sanctuary for the preservation of the arts and sciences until the improvement in society has rendered it no longer useful for that purpose. But more than all, the sacred writings were preserved by its care through the dark gloom of the Babylonish captivity, together with the correct key for reading and understanding them, known only to the High Priests of those days. God in his wisdom and providence made this association the preserver of his Word, and devised this means to transmit it to future generations.

At the commencement of the Christian era Masonry had attained a respectable position among the Jews. St. John the Baptist, the harbinger of our blessed Lord, whose birthday we celebrate in constituting the Lodge at this place, together with John the beloved disciple of the Lord, were both active Masons, and to them Lodges are dedicated in all Christian countries. John the Baptist was born about six months before Christ made his appearance in the world as the babe of Bethlehem. An angel from heaven was sent to make known the event to his mother Elizabeth, when age and infirmity had caused her to despair of offspring. The angel informed her that he should be filled with the Holy Ghost from the womb, and be great in the sight of the Lord. He "should turn the hearts of the

fathers to the children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Previous to his birth and mission, the prophets spake of him in sublime and lofty strains. Isaiah described him as the "voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." Malachi, the last of the Jewish prophets, proclaimed the heavenly promise—"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of the Lord." Jesus said, in reference to these promises: "All the prophets and the law prophesied until John, and if ye will receive it, this is Elijah which was to come." John was eccentric in his appearance—"His clothing was of camel's hair, being bound round with a leathern girdle; his food was "locust and wild honey." He preached in the wilderness of Judea, and the people left the crowded city, and from all the regions round about Jordan they flocked to his ministry, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins, and were thereby prepared for the coming of the kingdom of the Redeemer of the world. The wilderness was his temple of worship, and the "clouded canopy or starry decked heavens" was the only covering of that temple, denoting the universality of that system of mercy and love of which he was the harbinger. In the midst of his prosperity he was cut down by a ruthless tyrant at the instigation of a weak and wanton woman. This harbinger of mercy and eminent patron of Masonry fell after the glorious light of the gospel had dawned upon the world. His disciples buried his body and bemoaned his death. Other prophets spake of a coming Saviour, he testified of one already come. He saw the glory of Christ eclipse his own, and rejoiced that *Jesus increased* while he *decreased*.

Could there have been a more illustrious individual chosen as the patron saint of Masonry? Does not the fact that all our Lodges are dedicated to him, together with St. John the Evangelist, with humble dependence and unwavering confidence in the supreme Ruler of the universe, argue much in favor of the purity and holiness of the doctrines inculcated in our Lodges and at our altars? It is true that some have, without reason or examination of the facts, pronounced it blasphemy in us to thus use these names. Such persons have always reared a fabric formed of prejudice upon a basis of ignorance, and no reasoning can enlighten a mind prejudiced when that prejudice is founded upon ignorance.

But we pass to notice the progress of Masonry under the Gospel dispensation. Lodges were established in Great Britain by those who had been educated in the East as early as the third century. St. Alban was its first patron in that country. At his death Masonry declined, and was not again revived until the sixth century, when Christianity was introduced there more fully by St. Austin, and with it the Masonic art. Christianity and Masonry traveled together hand in hand until the death of St. Austin, when it again declined. It revived again under the reign of Alfred the Great, and went on in splendor until it acquired a name, which it had not possessed since the days of the wise king of Israel. In the tenth century, Athelstein, then the ruling monarch of England, established a Grand Lodge, and appointed for Grand Master his brother Edwin, who commanded all the brethren to meet at York, where a constitution was framed and adopted. This gave rise to the appellation of "Ancient York Masons," so well known in all civilized countries. From the adopting of the constitution at York until the present its history is clear and distinct. For several years the brethren held their public assemblies, but were sometimes prohibited by legislative authority. It, however, continued to flourish in many places, and in the reign of Henry VII, who ascended the throne of England in 1422, it attracted great attention. But in the third year of his reign Parliament passed a severe act against the fraternity. They enacted that the Masons should no longer hold their chapters and annual assemblies; that those who summoned such chapters and assemblies should be considered felons, and that those who resorted to them should be fined and imprisoned. When king Henry ascended the throne he was a minor, but when able to take into his hands the government of his kingdom, he not only permitted the Order to hold their meetings without molestation, but honored the Lodge with his presence as a brother. Before he was initiated he examined with scrupulous care the principles and usages of the Order, and entered upon his duties understandingly.

While Masonry was thus flourishing in England, it was at the same time patronized in the sister kingdom by James I. It continued to flourish under the reign of James II, and during the succeeding reigns of the Scottish monarchs increased rapidly in numbers and influence. In the seventeenth century Lodges were held throughout Europe, and may now be found among all civilized

nations, and even among most of the uncivilized and barbarous tribes of the earth.

Masonry, in its improved form, was introduced into this country by the early emigrants from England, France, and other portions of Europe. It found in this land a soil congenial to its growth, and spread with astonishing rapidity. The first regular Lodge was established at Boston in 1773. A Lodge was constituted the ensuing year at Philadelphia, and the world-renowned statesman and philosopher, Benjamin Franklin, was its first Master. The first Grand Master in America was Joseph Warren, who fell a martyr to Liberty's cause on the heights of Bunker Hill. In 1775 most of the leading men who engaged in the revolutionary struggle were members of the fraternity. Most of the signers of the declaration of independence were Masons, and only one Major General in the revolutionary army is known not to have been a member of the Order, and that man was Benedict Arnold, the traitor. Doubtless many of the distinguished men of those days were brought into the society by the example and under the influence of Franklin, who was admired by all for his purity of character and great wisdom. High on the tablet of Masonic fame stands the name of George Washington, the father of his country, Lafayette, the compeer of Washington, John Marshall, and a host of other kindred spirits. The influence of such men gave the institution a character which caused the number of faithful craftsmen to increase with astonishing rapidity. But few men have distinguished themselves in this country, either as theologians, statesmen or men of science, that have not bowed and worshiped at the Masonic altar. And it is a fact worthy of record, that there has not been a single instance in the history of this nation where a Mason has turned traitor to his country. Patriotism is taught in our Lodges, and is one of the leading virtues of a true and faithful member of the fraternity.

Yet with these evidences and external developments of its character, no association has been more misrepresented and more bitterly assailed by its opponents. Ignorance, political bigotry and religious superstition have all united to pull down the time-honored and heaven-favored institution. Political demagogues have mounted the hobby of anti-Masonry and endeavored to ride into office on it, but have soon fallen at the feet of the good sense and better judgment of the people. It has rarely ever occurred that an intelligent, think-

ing, reading man, having made himself acquainted with the principles of the Order, failed to approve of them, even though other circumstances may have caused him to stand aloof from them. Every effort made by the opponents of the Order to put it down has failed. Amid all the opposition which it has met, Masonry still stands firm and unmoved; and to-day its prospects are brighter than ever before. Go where you will, and you will meet with craftsmen good and true. A Mason can never be a stranger, or friendless, where civilization exists; and even among savages he may often meet with those who know the signs and understand the obligations of a free and accepted Mason. We ask, what but divine power has sustained us?—Who but God could have upheld us? More than three thousand years have gone down the stream of time since the Masonic altar was erected and Masonry commenced her glorious march. The whirlwinds of war and destruction have passed over the earth, spreading desolation and death every where; monuments of greatness and grandeur have crumbled into dust, the sceptre has fallen from the palsied arm of the monarch, and lofty thrones and empires have passed away in the great drama of destruction; since Masonry, clothed with the light of heaven, first shed its brilliancy upon the benighted bosom of the world. Hand in hand with science, it has kept its march amid the melancholy ruin of ages, the prejudices of bigotry and the tyranny of ignorance. These have all fled before it. Its lamp has illuminated the dark pages of history, and shed its rays of light upon the pathway of science. Persecution has not destroyed, neglect has not dissolved, nor has prosperity severed from its legitimate objects, this noble institution. It has unveiled itself in the presence of the All-seeing Eye, and in the fear of God and to him the sacred tenets of its order are known. Masonry has out-lived the kingdom that gave it birth; the glittering towers of Troy have fallen; Greece, the land of glory and of song, is trampled under foot; Rome, who sent forth her edicts to the world, has been deluged in blood, and the red arms of her destroyers have prostrated her martial glory for ever; but Masonry still marches onward; its influence is still increasing, and thus it will continue until time shall grow grey, fold itself in the arms of death, and the knell of its departure shall be every where heard.

But I must not omit to notice one of the greatest obstacles which Masonry has ever met in its triumphant march. I mean the un-

worthiness of some of its members. This has been the greatest barrier in the way of its success. The deepest wounds the Order has ever received have been at the hands of its professed friends. If every individual, bearing the name, was a *true Mason*, the institution would have nothing to fear. But, alas! "they are not all Israel who are of Israel." A man's being a member of the Lodge, and wearing the name of a Mason, no more makes him a worthy brother, than does a man's connection with the church make him a good Christian. Many find admittance into the church who prove themselves unworthy of the holy connection. Since, then, the church is sometimes imposed upon, and unworthy men find admittance to the sanctuary where only the righteous should enter, and with all our care we cannot so guard our portals as to keep them out, can Masonry expect to fare better? With all her care and scrutiny, she cannot prevent unworthy persons from sometimes finding admittance into her sacred chamber. This objection to our Order is sometimes made by those whose honest opinions are entitled to respect. There is not a faithful craftsman present who has not felt its force when this objection has been made in his hearing. But it has always seemed to us very unjust to judge of the character of any association by its most unworthy members. The world should not judge us by the dead branches of our body, or those whose consciences will allow them to violate their most sacred obligations. One thing we do know, there is nothing in the secret transactions of the Lodge calculated to make men bad or worse than before their connection with it. In all the ceremonies of initiation, or conferring of higher honors, moral and virtuous lessons are taught. There is no precept taught in the rituals of Masonry that does not breathe the purest morality—that is not sanctioned by the word of God and the approval of all the wise and good. But unless the heart is inspired by holy and virtuous motives and desires, the lessons of morality and purity which we teach will be lost to the individual seeking honor at our hands, and will be to him "as a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." By tools and implements impressive lessons of morality and virtue are taught, but it is only those who use them for a noble and glorious purpose who are benefited by the information imparted. A man may be a Mason in *theory* and not in *practice*. To be good and true he must practice out of the Lodge those noble virtues taught in it, ever bearing in mind that he is traveling "on the level

of time to that undiscovered country from whose bourn no traveler returns.”

Some, in their zeal, may have regarded Masonry as superior to religion, and have valued the Lodge more than the church. Such persons are sadly and dangerously deceived. This mischievous error should be corrected. No human institution can compare with a divine institution. The church is a divine institution;—it has a divine Author and Head. Masonry is a human institution, and of human origin; and whilst we claim for it the protection of the divine Being, we cannot claim entire perfection. The principles and teachings of Christianity are perfect, because they came forth from a perfect Author. Every production of man has imperfection stamped on it. Masonry is, therefore, inferior to the church of Christ. But I most solemnly affirm that I believe that the principles of Masonry, fully carried out, would place us far in advance of any human institution with which I am acquainted. Next to the church of the living God, give me a good Masonic Lodge. Next to Christianity stands Masonry. Let the duties of religion and the requirements of religion ever stand paramount to all others. Masonry enjoins no duties and presents no claims that may not yield to religious requirements. It does not profess to be a religious institution, but merely claims to be a benevolent institution, founded upon the principles of virtue and morality. A man may be a Mason and not a Christian, but every Christian must practice the principles of Masonry. Every true Mason is a practical Christian; but one may practice the principles of Christianity and yet not be a Christian in experience, having never exercised “repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ,” and had “the Spirit given to bear witness with his spirit that he is a child of God.” Every true Mason is a moral and virtuous man. He practices rigidly the principles of morality and virtue, and is in *practice* a Christian, if not in *experience*. St. James says, “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” Pure and undefiled Masonry visits the fatherless and widow in their afflictions, reaches for the kerchief of sympathy and wipes away their tears, pours the balm of consolation in their wounded bosoms, extends the hand of charity and promises to be a constant friend in every time of need. By such acts she is kept “unspotted from the world.” Believe me, the

Masonic Lodge is not the place for the drunkard, the profane swearer, the Sabbath breaker, the gambler or the libertine. No man guilty of such things can be a true Mason, and no man initiated into the secrets of the Order can be guilty of such sins without violating his solemn obligation and perjuring his own heart and conscience. The principles of Masonry enjoin love to all mankind, but more especially to the brotherhood. In the Lodge our religious and political opinions, be they what they may, are all buried, and all meet on a common level. Here men of every religious and political persuasion unite and form one common, one universal brotherhood. Every member of the fraternity has to profess faith in the Deity, and acknowledge his dependence on him, before he can take the first step in Masonry. No man has ever been, or can be, initiated into the secrets of Masonry who holds atheistical sentiments. If any such have ever entered our doors, it has been with perjury on their lips and guile in their hearts. This principle brings the Christian, the Jew, the Turk, the Hottentot, and the Indian of our own country, together, and assenting to this great truth they meet on a common level. In Masonic language, they can converse together and feel themselves brethren. The Mason may, therefore, travel through the world and find friends among all nations, and secure from Masons of every clime friendship and confidence.

The candidate for Masonic honors on first entering the Lodge room, after acknowledging his belief in the existence of the Supreme Being, is taught to go to him as an infinitely wise and good Parent and implore his blessings upon him; to seek from him divine wisdom, that he may be enabled to display the beauty of holiness in the honor of his holy name. He is not allowed to lose sight of this at any future step he takes. He is instructed to offer prayer to God, and rely upon him in every advance he makes. He is furthermore taught in the first degree of Masonry to divide his time, so that one third part may be devoted to the service of God and to relieve the distresses of the worthy, to divest his heart of all superfluities and vices of life, and fit his mind and soul as a living stone for that spiritual "building, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." He is taught that only by purity of life and conduct he can gain admission into the celestial Lodge above. He is instructed, not only to have faith in God, but hope in immortality and charity to all mankind. He learns that all well governed Lodges are compelled to be furnished

with the Holy Bible, Square and Compass. The Bible being dedicated to God, the square to the Master of the Lodge, and the compass to the craft, teaching them to "circumscribe their desires and keep their passions within due bounds." Brotherly love, relief and truth are impressed upon his mind, and he is instructed to practice strictly temperance, fortitude, prudence and justice, as the four cardinal virtues of Masonry. Again, he is most solemnly charged to inculcate three great duties—to God, his neighbor, and himself. To God, in never mentioning his name but with that reverential awe due from a creature to his Creator; to his neighbor, in doing unto him as he would be done by, and to himself by avoiding all irregularity and intemperance which may impair his faculties or debase the dignity of his profession. He is required to be a quiet and peaceable subject in the state, true to his government and just to his country, never to countenance disloyalty or rebellion, but patiently submit to legal authority and conform with cheerfulness to the laws of the land in which he lives; and in his outward demeanor, to be particularly careful to avoid censure and reproach. These moral, wholesome and salutary lessons are all taught him at the time of his initiation, and constitute the foundation for all that is to follow as he advances in Masonic knowledge.

In the next step, or second degree of Masonry, he is taught to walk uprightly, to square his actions by the square of virtue, to practice universal benevolence, and always remember that we are journeying to that undiscovered country "from whose bourn no traveler returns." He learns that the internal, and not the external, qualifications of man are regarded by Masonry. To influence him to action, the Bible is kept constantly before him as the great light in Masonry; the precepts taught in this Holy Book are to be obeyed, and his life and conduct to be governed by it.

As he progresses beyond this, new beauties open before him, and increasing light bursts upon him, making plain and still more impressive the lessons already learned. He is taught to fear God, pray to him, and in all his actions to remember that the All-seeing Eye, whom the sun, moon and stars obey, and under whose watchful care even comets perform their stupendous revolutions, pervades the inmost recesses of the human heart and will reward all according to their merits. He is reminded of the swiftness of time, the shortness of life and the certainty of death, and the necessity of a well

grounded hope, which reaches beyond the grave even into the blissful realms of eternity.

As he progresses onward, and passes the overseer's square, he is charged to "lay aside all malice, and guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speaking," "to honor all men, love the brotherhood and fear God," ever bearing in mind that "the stone which the builders rejected, has become the head of the corner."

Another moral lesson follows, in which we are taught to conceal a secret treasure in our hearts, that when the emergencies of life are over, we may be prepared to complete our spiritual temple with the hidden treasure provided.

The temple completed, we render aid in finding those excellent jewels that stamp with importance the whole history of the ancient craft. We gain admittance into the earthly sanctuary, or that which faintly represents the great tabernacle above where the great High Priest of our profession presides. Lessons are taught here never to be erased from the memory. By figure we are impressed with our fallen state by nature; the destruction by sin of the temple of our hearts, where God originally dwelt; the captivity of our souls to sin and Satan; the proclamation of salvation and deliverance through the merits of a Redeemer; our return to our heavenly Father's house; the difficulties and ruggedness of the road from bondage to liberty, and the necessity of humility and a faithful reliance upon the instructions of our great Conductor to guide us safely in the straight and narrow way, through the vale of death, to the dwelling place of the great I Am, where, by the *signet* of eternal truth, we enter and find rest to our weary souls.

And yet the seeker of truth, still desirous of advancing in usefulness, argues his cause before those high in authority, and is encouraged with the universal declaration that "truth is great, and mighty above all things, and will prevail."

When the highest point of our noble Order is reached, the faithful and persevering knight commands skepticism and infidelity to stand aside, and pledges eternal consecration to the God of the Bible and the religion of Jesus.

With all these facts before us, I ask if Masonry is not a good institution? Can it be what its enemies have represented it? Can the Society be corrupt? Can our organization conflict with the church of Christ? Nay, may I not say that Masonry leads us right

up to the door of the church, and bids us enter and be eternally saved.

But we must hastily glance at some objections which have been made against this noble Order. "It is a secret society." I am proud that it is, and that it is the mother of secret societies. Mere secrecy cannot affect the character of any society. Secrecy for an evil purpose would be highly improper, but secrecy for the purpose of obtaining a lawful end cannot be wrong, since there is nothing wrong in secrecy in the abstract. Where has there ever been an association without secrets? Every association has its secrets. There are secrets in the councils of the nation, in the councils of the state, in churches, in families. No family would have every family transaction made known to the world. Secrecy is one of the greatest beauties of the order. It enables us to detect all impostors, and to open the hand of charity only to the worthy and deserving. It throws around us a shield of protection which nothing else can give, and stamps with importance all our actions.

I have sometimes been asked, if my Masonic obligation would not compel me to conceal the faults and misdeeds of a brother Mason, and even cause me to refuse to give evidence in a court of justice where a Mason was on trial for a violation of the law? I have always answered emphatically, No. So I say to-day. One of the fundamental principles of the Order is, that it is not to interfere with our duty to ourselves, our country, or our God. All true and worthy Masons are true to themselves, their country and their God. We are under no obligation to an unworthy man, even if he should wear the name of Mason. It is only the worthy to whom we are bound. By a worthy brother we will ever stand;—in prosperity, in adversity, in health, and in sickness the same. When the world smiles on him we rejoice, when fortune frowns we mourn with him. Our houses, our arms, our purses and our hearts are always open to him.

But we are reminded by some, that we ought to let our light shine, and not to "put it under a bushel" or a bed, but on a candlestick, that it may give light to all around. Are we not also commanded, when we give alms, "not to let the left hand know what the right hand doeth, that our alms may be in secret, and our Father which seeth in secret will reward us openly?" Do you ask us for our lights? We point you to our afflicted brethren, who have re-

ceived in secret that which has cheered them on life's journey; to the cottage of the lonely widow, whose tears have been dried by us; to the wailings of orphan children, whose cries have been hushed and whose homes have been made happy by us. These are our lights. To them we point. They shine, and will continue to shine.

Brethren of the mystic tie, I now turn to you. Let it be your constant aim to preserve untarnished and unimpaired the legitimate character of Masonry. Remember that the world will look at you, and judge the cause by your walk and actions. Let your walk be such that you may be as shining lights to all around you. However pure and holy our professions may be, and however wholesome our private instructions may be, yet the world will judge of the institution by our external actions. By our fruits we shall be known. If our pathway is strewn with acts of benevolence and brotherly kindness; if we exercise charity to all men, visiting the fatherless and widow in their afflictions, rejoicing with those who do rejoice and weeping with those who weep, we shall exert a good influence in the world and insure the approbation of our great High Priest above. Ah! methinks angels behold with sensations of pleasure and delight the true Mason dispensing charity to the needy, binding up the wounds of the distressed, feeding the hungry and clothing the almost naked. Let us to-day, my brethren, renew our allegiance to Masonry, and dedicate ourselves anew to its holy principles, and let us live and act as becomes Masons. If we cleave to our principles, and carry fully into practice the lessons taught us in our secret meetings, superstition, ignorance, bigotry and prejudice may all unite against us, but they cannot harm us. Our temple must stand, being founded on a rock which even the gates of hell shall not prevail against.

To the brethren who compose Harmony Lodge particularly let me give a word of counsel. The uninitiated will look at you, and judge the cause by you. Be very discreet in your conduct, and let no stain ever rest upon our Order by any unworthy act of yours. Guard well the outer door of your sanctuary, and see that none enter but the worthy. And if at any time an unworthy man shall find admittance, be in haste to reform or disown him. Let not the grossly immoral man find a shelter in your bosom. Feed the hungry, clothe the naked, remember the fatherless, pity the widow, and be kind to the poor. Live in union, remember well your obligations

and the tie that binds you together. Act as brethren towards one another, and the God of peace shall be your God, his protection shall be yours, and his blessings shall rest upon you here and hereafter.

But let none be deceived. While I recommend so earnestly the principles of morality and virtue, and rejoice in the good to be accomplished by Masonry, I must in candor say to the fraternity that 'tis Christianity alone that can disperse the gloom of death, and shed a halo of glory around the tomb. Morality and the principles of Masonry may shed their benign influence upon us through life, and down to the gates of death; but then a stronger power is needed. Religion can span cold Jordan's stream, ride its stormy billows in triumph, and conduct us safely to the port of eternal rest, where the wicked cease to trouble and the weary soul finds sweet repose. Let me exhort you, my brethren, not only to be moral men, and Masons good and true, but to be Christians in experience and Christians in practice—servants of Christ, and children of God. Let the impressions made on your mind, when you first bowed at the Masonic altar to invoke the blessings of Deity upon the step you were about to take, continue to grow and strengthen, until they shall ripen into fixed principles, and bring forth fruit to the glory and honor of God. Then shall you be permitted "to eat of the hidden manna, and a white stone shall be given you, and in the stone a new name, which no man knoweth save him that receiveth it."

I cannot close this address without offering a few words to the fair ones who have honored us with their presence to-day. I know that many of you sympathize with us in all our labors, and smile approvingly at every advancing step we take. You may, however, feel disposed to complain at the regulation in our laws which excludes you from the Lodge-room, and the secret transactions of our meetings. Permit me to say to you, ladies, that it does not belong to your sphere in life thus to intermingle with us. There are duties devolving on the Order which do not belong to your position. The softness and delicacy of your nature disqualify you for them. You are excluded on the same principle that you are excluded from the ballot-box and the battle-field. But let me assure you that you are not uncared for. Masonry teaches and cultivates principles which cause you to live in our hearts' warmest affections, and compel us to look upon you with profound veneration. We can most solemnly

pledged to your protection and defence. It is made our duty to watch over the widow and orphan, and with the love of a brother, or the devotion of a parent, to minister to their wants. I hesitate not to say that, could you be made acquainted with all the secrets of our Order, and know fully our obligations to you, we should have your undivided sympathy and support. Not an intelligent lady in the land would be so blind to her own interest as to oppose the march of Masonry. I regret to say that Masonry has, in some instances, suffered at your hands. Wives, mothers, and sisters have raised the warning voice against us, as though we were the enemies of your sex. But we know that this has resulted from a lack of information, for woman never errs of choice. Her errors are always errors of the head. But we have never known a single lady to be made acquainted with the nature and design of our organization, who did not bid us God-speed. Are there "Daughters of Sion" present to-day? if so, I know that in the fullness of your hearts you say to us, go on. If your husband, your father, or your brother, is present, clothed in appropriate regalia, you feel for him a tenderness greatly increased by the company he keeps. These, these, our brethren, will be your friends under the most trying circumstances.

That ladies cannot be made acquainted with all the secret workings of Masonry, is to some a great objection to the Order. But permit me to say that the most important secret may be communicated; and I may, without any violation of my obligation, make known to you, ladies, one of the most important secrets of Masonry, by relating a circumstance that actually occurred.

A lady in a Western city was much opposed to Masonry, because she could not be made acquainted with its secrets. Her husband was a Mason, and true to his profession, but much against her wishes. On a cold, dark, and rainy night in winter, he returned home from the Lodge, and, without saying any thing to his wife, went to the hired woman, and directed that a warm quilt and a shawl, which his wife had ceased to use, should be brought to him, and putting them in a basket containing some other things, he opened the door, and quietly went out. His wife, who had seen all this from another room, seized her bonnet and shawl, and followed on after him. He passed through several streets until he came to a dilapidated building, when he ascended a flight of steps, knocked at the door, which was opened by a female, whose form

was visible by the dim light within the room. He handed in the basket, said nothing, and immediately left. Noticing the number and the street carefully, the wife hurried back home through the rain and hail, almost bewildered by her reflections, and what she had seen, and arrived there a little in advance of her husband, who came a different route. When he came in, she waited for an explanation, but not a word did he say about it. They retired—he was soon quietly asleep, but no sleep came to her eyes. Her curiosity was excited to the highest pitch; her jealousy was aroused, and her mind was just ready to receive the unwelcome thought that the love promised her at the bridal altar had been given to another. Morning came, but its brightness brought no peace to her troubled bosom. Her husband went to his place of business, and she went and communicated what had transpired the previous night to a female friend, a widow lady, living near by. They determined to visit the place where the basket was left, and if possible ascertain the true character of the inmates of that old dilapidated building. That afternoon was the time appointed to execute the plan devised. A stormy night had been succeeded by a bright and lovely day, yet the wind blew, and the weather was very cold. They reached the place, ascended the steps, knocked at the door, which was soon opened, and before them stood a tall, spare girl, with blue eyes, light hair, and pale cheeks, with a care-worn countenance, holding in her hand, a piece of goods on which she had been sewing, who politely invited them to come in, and handed them seats. The first thing that met the eyes of the distressed wife, was her quilt spread on the bed, and her shawl hanging on the back of a chair. Some one soon moved in the bed on which the quilt was spread, and on turning their eyes in that direction, a female turned over with difficulty, and commenced coughing, and the girl who met them at the door, hastened to her assistance, called her mother, dear mother, and raised her up to prevent her from losing her breath. After awhile she became more composed, and entered into conversation with them. They at once saw that she was almost in the last stage of consumption. Her appearance told them but too plainly that she had seen better days. They inquired how long she had been sick, and then she told them how long, and how much she had suffered. She spoke of former days, when her circumstances were prosperous—told them of her husband's success in business, how he came to

that place, prospered as a merchant, grew rich, stood security for a friend, the house with which his friend was connected failed, his friend failed, her husband lost all, soon after died, leaving her penniless, with that only daughter, pointing to the girl sewing. They lived by sewing; her health failed; for a long time she had been confined to her bed, and all that they had to subsist on was what her daughter earned by sewing. Said she, "we have had to part with our bed-clothes, piece by piece, to get food and wood, and yesterday we concluded we should perish with hunger and cold, but God, in whom we trust, sent some messenger, to us unknown, and made us happy. A gentleman knocked at the door last night, and handed in a basket nearly filled with provisions, and this quilt which covers me, and that shawl, which my daughter put on, and went out early this morning, and procured some sewing from a lady, and thus the Lord blesses us; but *my* sufferings will soon be over, and I shall rest in heaven, but that poor child," pointing to her daughter, "what will become of her?"

By this time all eyes were filled with tears, and, said the jealous wife, with her heart tendered, "For the first time in my life I found out the secret of Masonry." "What is it?" inquired one. "*To do good, and say nothing about it.*" So I say to you, ladies, the greatest, and the most important, secret of Masonry is **TO DO GOOD, AND SAY NOTHING ABOUT IT.**"

In conclusion, let me say to you, my brethren, who compose Harmony Lodge, be true to your name,—your principles—your sacred obligations. May you show, by your example, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. And when life's busy day is past, may we all have washed our robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, and, clothed with immortality, rest in "that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens!"

