

useless now for any purpose of protection; the sword alone of all the ancient implements of war, fitted to the hand of man, is the same to-day as in the earliest age, so Masonry, fitted to the hand and touching the heart of man, is the only institution which has come down to us through all the ages unsullied and untouched. The order, like every other human institution, has had its times of ebbing and reflux. It came into public prominence at a time when nearly all society was given up to dissipation. To such an extent was this the case, that in many of the old courtly halls, a page was kept to loosen the neckties of the guests after dinner. We must not blame the institution but the state of society for very much of what is bad and unprepossessing about it. We have through it all preserved the ancient land marks, and besides this we have very greatly raised the *watermark*. Time was when custom placed the flowing vessel upon the lodge table, as these old relics show, (pointing to a pair of decanters) It is said that men upon leaving our order fall away from their principles, it must be proved that, had they not been Masons, they would have been no worse. The recollection of what they have learned in the Lodge-room must ever attend them no matter where they wander. In the field of battle, with bayonets crossed, a sign, a word, has turned the tide of hate to streams of love. At sea, the shipwrecked mariner has gleaned many a ray of hope from the recognition of a brother. Many a starving family have been saved from utter ruin, by the timely help which only Masons know how to afford. The speaker here gave a number of instances which had come under his own personal notice where whole families had been supported in comfort and competence by the generosity of Masons, unasked and unthought of.

HIRAM BLANCHARD, Esq., was then called upon, and addressing the chair—said: What shall I say Most Worshipful Grand Master, what shall I say my brethren? What shall I say to you not only ladies only, but sisters, wives and daughters of my brethren—I might now well use the words of the old song, "They stole my child away," for have they not robbed me of that which I had intended to say, and left me standing upon my own resources. Under these circumstances I have no other alternative than to address myself to the ladies,—and for a little while to discuss some of their objections. He then referred, first grand objection to that husbands should have no secrets from their wives, and here he humorously characterized the thousand and one secrets that ladies have from their husbands. On this branch he offered that with the consent of the Grand Master, he would be prepared at the close of the meeting to assist in the initiation of any lady present to the degree of an entered apprentice, and would ever be quite willing to act as Junior Deacon. This remark was greeted with roars of laughter from the initiated, the ladies looking on in blank astonishment. A number of other objections were treated of in a like happy manner, and especially that one which attributed to masonic meetings intemperance and excess, denying in the most emphatic terms, that the use of intoxicating liquors, or any vice or frivolity was how allowed within the walls of a Masonic Lodge. We are unable, with our limited space to follow the speaker through his masterly answers to the numerous and common objections, nor do we profess to give any satisfactory account of the impressive manner in which he appealed to his audience, asserting that the Holy Bible there before them, and upon which he laid his hand, was the foundation and ground-work of all Masonic principles and mysteries, without which, no lodge could be opened, no candidate initiated, nor any other work performed. At this point the speaker again turned to the ladies, and said he was about to tell them unless prevented by the Grand Master, the great secrets of Freemasonry. He said this lodge has placed before you the words Faith, Hope and Charity, and the words Wisdom, Strength and Beauty, but the great secret have they withheld, *Love, Purity, Fidelity*. Love the great passion of the human heart, had ever been so recognized. Fidelity he described as the obligation which every mason took upon himself, not only to be faithful to a brother, and the outside world, but also as faithful in the fulfilment of his vows to his wife or sweetheart. Purity was the highest virtue to which a human being could hope to attain, and on this point he asserted that masonry required of all its members the most perfect *purity*, and especially toward the wives, sisters and daughters of the brother Masons, and declare that one of their most solemn obligations was not only to protect their honor, integrity and good fame, but also to visit with the most condign punishment that Mason who should offend. More he said "God help the Mason who within these walls should be convicted of a breach of this vow." The speaker closed with an emphatic appeal to the ladies, to lay aside their prejudices, to consider the matter fairly, and to feel that as Masons, men are better husbands, fathers, brothers, sons. He reminded them that they were the sisters to the millions of Masons scattered over the whole world, and upon whose protection they could at any moment rely.