

officers and mission-workers, for the rearing of His great temple. He has given, as the Apostle says, "some apostles, and some prophets and evangelists—some pastors and teachers—for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ." After the completion of Solomon's Temple, and before the workmen separated, no doubt they met together and cemented the bond of friendship that had existed among them during their seven long years of toil; and in order that they might in future years recognize each other wherever they might meet, they adopted certain signs, tokens and words—it may have been those used among themselves while working together; those familiar to them all; and yet unknown to the rest of the world. Hence, as we may reasonably conclude, arose the Order of Masonry, and as those men travelled throughout the world, they carried with them the truths and principles of their Order, and by their secret signs and tokens they were known to each other, and distinguished from the rest of the world. Hence the dissemination of Masonry, and its similarity and identity the wide world over. And in view of its sacred rise, its connection with the building of God's ancient temple and its usefulness to men in all ages, we would say:—"Let the grand old Order continue," "let the ancient customs prevail," and "let the ancient landmarks be preserved." Let me add; that Freemasonry is the most ancient of all human societies—the most ancient, having existence from time immemorial. It has come down to us through the ruin of states and kingdoms and empires, and has survived the wreck of nations. When wars have waged fiercely, and lands have been deluged with blood, her merciful and brotherly hand has rescued thousands from death, and has saved women and children from distress and despair. In short, our beloved Order has

taught her members to practice some of the highest principles of our holy religion—"to recognize in every son of Adam a brother of the dust," and "to relieve his wants, and to soothe his sorrows as far as their means permit." And again, Freemasonry claims to be the most honorable of all human societies, because she teaches the most honorable principles; because, in all ages, the honorable of the earth have patronized her mysteries and joined in her assemblies; because kings and monarchs have been promoters of her art and have not thought it beneath their dignity to exchange the sceptre for the gavel. Though Freemasonry has been before the world for almost unnumbered ages, and her history is one of which no Mason need be ashamed, full of glory and renown, and hence needs no word in vindication or of praise from me, yet, in view of recent slanders and bitter curses from high places,* allow me to add that our ancient and honorable Order is founded upon the truths of our holy religion; that on her doors of admission are inscribed "Faith in God," "Hope in immortality," and "Charity among men;" that on her banners are written Temperance and Fortitude, Prudence and Justice, and the first lesson she teaches man on entering her doors is to go down on his knees before his God and to vow his vows to God to be good and true. If she reminds man of his fallen and sinful state, she also points him to a living and forgiving God. If she impresses upon him his inevitable destiny, pointing him to a figurative death, and to other emblems of mortality, she also points him to a living and an eternal God, who can raise him from the tomb of transgression, and who will bring to every faithful and obedient soul peace and salvation. If Freemasonry tells men

*At this point all the brethren stood up, at the sound of the gavel, in token of a readiness to defend Masonic silence before the world, yet devotion to their Order.