

Comp. Benjamin Parks, published in the *Keystone*:

A few years since, a few Masonic brethren went to a neighboring town for the purpose of opening and constituting a new lodge. In passing along the street to the hotel where they were to stop, their attention was called to the proclamation of an auctioneer, that at 1 o'clock to-day would be sold at the house late of — deceased, the whole of the household furniture for the payment of rent. A curiosity well understood by those who have been Masters of lodges, accustomed to listen to tales of distress and want, prompted inquiry. The information obtained was, that — had lately died leaving a decrepit widow and two daughters, whose labor at dress-making had for several years barely supported their parents, and that the sickness and burial of their father had so exhausted their means as to render it impossible to pay their rent. They were now about to be left portionless and homeless, with the almshouse in view as the probable home for their mother for the approaching winter. A visit was paid to the ladies, and the information obtained, that among the papers of the deceased was a certificate of membership in a Masonic Lodge in Ireland. This, although not necessary to excite the compassion of the inquirer, made it his business and duty to act, and furnish the key to obtain immediate relief.

The Brethren were called together, a purse made up, and a Brother commissioned to attend the sale and purchase the goods for the daughters. The public, learning that the bidding was for the daughters, forbore to raise the price, so that the purse was not exhausted; and the evening which had been looked to as one of cheerlessness, misery and want, without a bed whereon to rest, found them in possession of all their goods, with a few dollars as a capital upon which to commence a small business, and with a consciousness that in the land of their adoption they had found friends and protectors,

drawn to them by the magnet of that certificate of Brotherhood.

Another case: Before the construction of the Pennsylvania Railroad, when the mode of conveyance from Harrisburg West was by canal boat and Portage Railroad across the Allegheny Mountains, a boat left Pittsburg for the East crowded with passengers, mostly well dressed and of the class called genteel. Among them were merchants from the South and West, going to the Eastern cities to purchase goods; Eastern men returning home well pleased with their investments in Western lands and mortgages, and one party on their wedding tour, via New York, Saratoga, Niagara and the lakes, home.

In one corner of the boat, on a side bench, lay a man apparently about twenty-five years of age, nearly at death's door with consumption. Weak and wan, he could, with difficulty, sit up during meals while it was necessary to use the bench whereon he lay, as a seat at the table. His deep hollow cough and continued expectoration, added to his almost dying look, were painful to listen to and have continually in view. At Johnstown he was placed in the cars and crossed the Portage road to Hollidaysburg, where another boat was waiting, bound for Harrisburg. On reaching Hollidaysburg, the passengers rushed out of the cars, hurried to the boat, and inquired for the Captain, addressing him somewhat as follows:

"We have come on from the West and desire to take passage on your boat, but it must be on this condition, that you do not take on the same boat a sick man now in the cars, whose presence has been so disagreeable to us since we left Pittsburg, that we had rather not go on to-day than to travel with him. We await your decision."

The Captain, who was a resident of Harrisburg, and from the heart outwards every inch a Mason, replied: "Gentlemen, I have heard your statement and refuse your request." He then had the sick man removed on