

OUR DUTIES.

While we honor the names of our departed fathers, and lightly tread upon their graves, let us not forget that we will be remembered for our good or evil deeds, when our children's children occupy our places here. We must be careful, then, how we shall conduct ourselves, and whom we shall select to fill our places. We must avoid the evil and the dissolute, and place the mantle of authority on our best and safest men. Stand forever aloof from all jarring contests around you. Remember that we occupy a platform so far above the world's cold conflicts, that all the flags and banners of the earth commingle in one common hue. Companions! a citizens, discharge your duties to your country; do it faithfully—do it manfully and bravely, for no true Mason is a coward. No craven heart should ever enter here. He who is false to family, to kindred, or to friends, would be as false to all fraternal ties. Trust not such, nor even let him cross your threshold. In all your varied relations of life, political, religious, social, domestic, or fraternal, act freely, openly, manfully and independently. But beware of the insidious danger of one of these relations commingling with another. Think not that every man must be dishonest, whose faith, whose thoughts and feelings, differ from your own. If all men thought alike on every subject, no emulation would exist, and men would sink down to the level of the common brute. However much, in all the walks of life, you may revere a home or kindred, friends or country, principles or faith,—and cursed be he who feels not all this reverence,—yet as Masons, in that separate association, you know no land, no kindred, no country; you know no ties but those which bind you to each other, and cement the world-wide brotherhood in one community. It was beautifully said by the poet Wordsworth:—

"Dust as we are, the immortal spirit grows,
Like harmony in music; there is a dark,
Inscrutable workmanship that reconciles
Discordant elements, and makes them cling together
In one society."

Bound together by this tie, we freely grasp the hand of our country's foe, though fresh from the ensanguined field—of Christian, of Mahomedan, of Jew, of him who falls beneath the wheels of ignorance—a martyr to his faith—we ask not whence he came, or what his kindred or his faith; enough to know that he was formed by God Almighty's hand, and meets us with the grip of brotherhood. 'Tis this, and this alone, that has sustained our Order through tumultuous ages. Suppose the Christian world should say, no Jew shall pass our threshold, though it be the institution of their fathers—although it was Israel's king who laid the corner-stone of that great temple we commemorate. Suppose the Jew should say to Christian followers, we hold no trust in common with your faith; you, therefore, shall not enter where our fathers worshipped. Suppose Republicans should say, no monarch, or the subject of a king, shall come among us; we here eschew all brotherhood with Solomon, or him of Tyre; we strike from our rolls the venerable name of Sir Christopher Wren. Or should the Masons of imperial countries say to us, you are demagogues, we hold with you no converse. Where then would be our long-remembered line? Three thousand years of lineage would then be buried in oblivion. In the nineteenth century, Masonry, like every other society

that has lived and died amid the world's convulsions, would fly into a thousand fragments, like sparks from the blacksmith's anvil; each peculiar dogma would start a lodge or chapter of its own; its identity would cease amid contending factions, and you would witness the mournful ceremony of standing around the grave of Masonry, while you heard the cold clods rattle on its coffin. Then stand aloof from all contending factions, whether sectional or national, world-wide or intestine; let all the elements of war and conflict rage; let the storm-cloud burst in all its fury, and in all its horrors; mingle with them as you may, represent as you will, as men have done since the world began, all the diversity of feeling, of sentiment or of prejudice, that constitute the fearful element of strife; but in the name of Heaven, and for the sake of Masonry, mingle not the Mystic Band as such in this contending jar.—
Bro. R. R. Rees.

WHO IS THE BRIGHT MASON?

BY REV. DR. BAIRD.

Who is the bright Mason? He who is deeply read in all its ancient lore, yet is reckless of his Masonic practice? His Masonry is but a jewel of gold in a swine's snout. Is he bright who can pronounce all its sacred lessons, and flippantly rehearse all its sublime teachings, and then grieve sober decency with his profanity and dissipation? He is but a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. He is the bright Mason whose life reflects back again the pure light that shines from the altar.

Allow me to close this part of my address by an allusion to that significant word in such common use in the Lodge, "Labor." How, where, and for what do you labor? You must study to know the design of the Great Master. You must take the working tools and go down into the rugged quarry of your own heart—take the light with you, and there faithfully put to the test each rising motive, thought, and intention. Gird up your loins with true courage, and make good proof of your workmanship. This is the way, time, and place, to learn to subdue your passions and improve yourself in Masonry, and mightier is he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.

The trials and triumphs of the last few years should admonish us to watch and be sober. Never before was it the lot of this venerable Institution to weather a storm of such vast desolation. Many and great were the temptations to cut loose from its moorings, and drive upon the sea of universal confusion. Scarce an institution, civil, political, or ecclesiastical, that has survived the storm and full many a wreck of past greatness is yet drifting upon the sullen and troubled billows. The genius of destruction even now seems to delight in the vast variety of the general catastrophe.

There is a gallant ship, new and strong, the name of its builders still bright upon its keel, freighted with the hopes of many millions, but dismantled by the tempest, and still floundering in a trough of the sea, and yonder are others, who sailed under sacred ensign—some broken in twain, each half afloat and claiming to be the original—others shattered to fragments and become the sport of the spirit of change. Every American Mason, especially, ought