

claiming to ourselves a Patron so eminently superior to ordinary men, we assume no humble ground in the scale of moral excellence. In recognizing in his life, manner, teaching, and spirit, impressive illustrations of the great duties of the brotherhood we necessarily bind ourselves to high accountability;—and in publicly undertaking to consecrate a day in reverence of his holy life, we are floating before the eyes of the uninitiated—always a critical and censorious body—the glorious banner on which is inscribed our mission and our faith. May these reflections then arise to us, and influence us, and go along with us during our Masonic journey through life, from the ceremonies and engagements to which we have to-day committed ourselves. May we be forcibly reminded thereby, that upon us depend the prosperity and value of Masonry here;—that we each have *labour* to perform, and that our *work* must *square* to meet the requirements of the *Great Overseer*. No rough imperfect *ashler* will meet with his acceptance. The same exactness of finish and proportion required for the materials of the earthly temple will be demanded of us when offering our minds “as living stones for a place in that spiritual building not made with hands.” And it is the mission of Masonry, as I understand it—to help and direct us in this all-important undertaking. She professes not, indeed, to instruct her children in any particular system of ethics, views, or creeds. But acts rather as the hand-maid of religion,—that religion which is universal, and which rests on the Two great commandments in the Law. She points to certain moral principles and laws, and guides the faltering steps of man to that ever flowing fountain from which his hopes of temporal and eternal happiness are drawn. She speaks to him in no chilling words of formal ceremony,—but she aids him in his efforts. She throws open the doors of her Lodge Rooms and welcomes the worthy to her embrace. She asks him not to gaze upon heartless forms, idle meetings, or unmeaning characters. With reverential awe she leads him to the *source* of her own existence, and bids him gather *strength* from the GREAT LIGHT before him. From thence he learns the darkness of his *moral* nature, and those great duties, the practice of which can alone enlighten him, and make him a wiser and a better man. He sees in the room in which he stands, the glorious temple of Jehovah symbolized to his mind, and his soul is startled with the remembrance that the “all-seeing eye” is on him. From the “covering,” the “furniture,” the “supports,” the “extent,” and the “ground floor” of a Lodge, its rituals and symbols, he gathers the most beautiful illustrations of Bible history and christian character. Step by step, as he progresses, he learns the “more noble and glorious purposes” to which the working tools of our ancient brethren are to be directed in the field of his moral labours. He finds gathered around him “a society of friends and brothers, among who no contention should exist,” meeting on the level of a common humanity, with a common faith, a common hope, and a common charity; bound together by the indissoluble ties of fraternal love, strengthening each others