

ened and purified the attachment to the Order, of men whose sanction of any institution would be guarantee for its sound principles and beneficent designs. They came to bear testimony before their younger brethren to its advantages, and were received with a respect and cordiality which, in itself, afforded proof that the fraternal feeling, in the case of the most eminent and valued members, ripens into a real and enduring affection. As a spectacle nothing could be more imposing, and the large area of the Exhibition Palace gave full scope for its elaboration. When the procession came upon the orchestra, and the brilliant decorations, added to the rich dresses of the company, presented to the eye a mass of varied colors, the beauty and animation of the scene were impressive. The proceedings lacked no feature of interest. The girls of the Masonic School, excellently tended as they certainly appear to be, were simply and neatly attired; and, when they performed, did so with some measure of grace and effect. The speaking, on an occasion when speaking is excessively difficult, was lively and creditable. Lord Plunkett spoke with pungency and wit. Bro. George Woods Maunsell, as usual, was most effective; and the Vice-Chancellor administered financial advice with unction and authority. The distribution of prizes, of course, was a transaction which only a comparatively few, in so many thousands, could witness, but the assemblage were well pleased in being present on an occasion so worthy of remembrance, and connected with a work of genuine philanthropy. Such a meeting, in short, made full amends for any slights that may ignorantly have been cast upon the Order, and was well calculated to advance its interests. The only drawback to the perfect pleasure of the meeting was a report of a falling off in the receipts of the charity. This ought not so to be, especially at a time when Masonry is on the increase. The school ought to be large enough to accommodate, and have funds enough to support the children of all Masons whom misfortune prevented from making provision for them; and until the Order can boast that it leaves no orphan uncared for, it will be open to a reproach very much more serious and dangerous than any that could be directed against it by the least scrupulous of its foes.

MASONIC INFLUENCE.

It is said there are one hundred and thirty-three Freemasons in the English Parliament—fifty-six in the House of Lords, and seventy-seven in the Commons. The Prince of Wales is proud of his connection with the Order; peers and noblemen, of all grades and creeds, esteem it a privilege to have a place in the Lodge. If the Order was dangerous, surely by its numbers and influence in Parliament, it could make its influence manifest for evil. But in the long years of its history it has proved itself the advocate of peace, good order, friendship, morality, and brotherly love. It even aided in granting to the Roman Church—who is its most inveterate enemy—the rights and privileges it now enjoys in England. And to-day, if it were to exert its social and political influence in that country, the Roman Church could be placed in a very different position there. It is by the clemency and forbearance of the Order, that its most uncompromising enemy enjoys equal privileges with itself.

In the House of Lords there is one Bishop, seven Dukes, eight Marquises, and seventeen Lords who are Freemasons, and one Earl is the Grand Master of the Order. But this is only a tithe of its strength; in the Commons it is still stronger, and then its members are every where in society, among the clergy, and the laity. It has the power, if so disposed, to create disturbance in the State, but its duty forbids, as it recognizes duty as the great law of Masonry.

Whatever jealous and interested parties aver concerning the danger which Church and State may apprehend from it, the history of the past proves it all to be groundless. Masonry never headed an insurrection, never united its forces to overthrow the Government, never soiled its fair escutcheon in the degrading arena of political strife. On questions of creed, it has never persecuted. Can the Roman Church say as much? In all the history of the past, whether traditional or recorded, *there is no blood upon the hands of Freemasonry!* It never persecuted—never imprisoned—never tortured for opinion's sake. Such intolerance and cruelty have been left to those who profess to be *par excellence*, the exemplars of mankind.

The first injunction of the order is obedience to the moral law; the second is obedience to the laws of the country; the third is toleration in the matters of creed and conscience. It believes that "he that feareth God and worketh righteousness, is accepted of Him," whether he be prince or peasant, Jew or Gentile, Protestant or Catholic. If it errs in this, then the great apostle was in error, and it shelters under the authority of inspiration. Obedience to the foregoing is the stern duty of every Mason, and duty, as I said before, is the great law of Masonry,—inflexible as fate, exacting as necessity, and imperative as destiny. The church may utter anathema