

the Temple,—at once their glory and the admiration of the world,—where is it now? Not one stone is left upon another. Babylon, in her day the queen of nations, has fallen, never to rise again. Egypt, with her kings and philosophers; classic Greece and imperial Rome, we now find but occupying a page in the history of the world.

But Freemasonry, at this moment, shines throughout the world with as bright and undiminished a lustre as when first revealed by God to man!

Sages and legislators have not disdained to join our Order; princes and potentates have exchanged the sceptre for the trowel and gavel, and ranged themselves under our banner.

No trials, no persecutions, no anathemas, will be able to destroy the principles of Freemasonry. The rains may descend, the floods may come, the winds may beat and blow vehemently against our institution, yet it will stand firm and impregnable, because, like the wise man's house, it is founded upon a rock. Its principles are coeval with the history of the world, and they manifest themselves wherever civilization exists.

In a Masonic Lodge discussions on religious or political subjects are strictly prohibited; and because those two great subjects are excluded the outer world looks upon Freemasonry as something very mysterious. Those people cannot conceive that a society can be of any consequence which excludes discussions upon politics or religion—or, in other words, upon state and church. But we, my brethren, know that Freemasonry looks beyond the narrow limits of particular institutions, whether civil or religious, and views in every son of Adam a brother of the dust. We have a higher and nobler subject which claims our attention, than that of arguing about matters of state, with its strongly opposed parties; or about matters of church, with its creeds and dogmas; either of which subjects create more or less feelings of animosity. The state and

the church separate men, and make them enemies; Freemasonry will unite and fraternize them. Freemasonry unites all men, without regard to religion, country or rank. All subjects which have a tendency to purely civil matters, narrow the sphere of action; but, passing beyond those limits, man stands upon a vast, a free and a grand field.

That grand spiritual building which we as Freemasons are erecting, is the grand edifice of HUMANITY! It is a grand work, a noble undertaking.

All discrepancies and wants of mankind can and may address themselves for relief to this invisible institute, which thinks and cares for them, helping where it can help, without obliging the recipient to thanks. As if coming from a cloud, the helping hand appears; and, without being recognized, it withdraws into that cloud.

Brethren, how pleasant it is to imagine a society of men acting in silence, consulting for the welfare of mankind,—a society where work itself is in some measure a secret, but at which they labor as on an endless plan. Where is there a worthier or nobler pursuit for a society than that of promoting the welfare of mankind? Freemasonry standing upon that summit, she is that for which at all times past all the good men have striven, without infringing upon the rights of either state or church. Freemasonry is, as it were, the heart of mankind; and we pray, let that golden age that lives in all our hearts be brought down to those free souls that belong to her, that are elevated above all distinction and sectarian spirit, and who all worship at the altar of HUMANITY!

Compare that which Freemasonry has created and creates, with that which is produced by the artist, and what do we find? The painter produces his picture, the sculptor his statue, the architect his dome; the poet his song, the composer his music; but colors fade, monuments are demolished, buildings tumble down,