

with a curse, "because he was such a fool as not to compromise with his creditors, thereby saving, as he might have done, the bulk of his fortune." The kingly spirit of both son and daughter-in-law revolted from this. They paid the last dollar, and utterly penniless, but rich in honor and mutual love, with their children sought the then "Far West." The rest of the story is soon told.

In the strange incoherence of his mental wanderings, I gathered that he was a Mason. A gold chain which I, at first, supposed supported a watch, proved to have attached to it a Masonic jewel bearing the inscription:

PRESENTED TO _____, PAST GRAND MASTER OF _____, BY THE GRAND LODGE.

_____ —, 18—.

"In the darkness he feared not. In the danger he stood firm."

At that time there was not a Masonic Lodge, to my knowledge, within a hundred miles of K——. I was not myself then a Mason, although loving Masonry for my father's sake who "feared not in the darkness, and in danger stood firm." I have heard that C—— and W——, of our village were Masons, and speedily resolved upon a test. Mounting my horse, I rode to the village, called upon each of them, and stated the facts. Noiselessly, but efficiently, they acted, and acted at once.

It was wonderful how speedily that lowly log-house, in the far-away forest, was supplied with comforts, with luxuries, and sympathizing attendants. Alas, it was too late for poor——. Once I thought his countenance glowed as though he felt the fraternal token from one that watched him in his final hour—but the secret is with God only. He passed away and left to his family an untarnished honor, and little else. But I saw him buried as a Mason; for the first time I had witnessed the solemn ceremonial. The wife and children were still unable to be present, but beneath the wintry sky, the evergreens fell upon a beautiful coffin, which brotherly love had provided, and fraternal tears followed him to the narrow house. The next day a petition for a Masonic Lodge charter was signed in K——, and now and ever since it has had reason to boast of as prosperous and loving band of brothers as the country affords.

The widow and children were not forgotten. The rough log shanty has given place to a modest cottage, over which the vines clamber, and around which roses cluster. Want fled away and comfort came, charmed by the genius of Masonry. No niggardly provision was made by those Masons in the dark and speechless hour of adversity, for the family of him who "in the darkness feared not, and in the danger stood firm."

Time, which has scattered silver thread in the raven tresses of the Mason's widow, has also mellowed her sorrow into the serene hope of ere long joining him in that better land where the tears are wiped from all eyes.

The daughter lives, and happy in new ties, brings glimpses of the earlier life to the sad eyes of her mother.

To-day the little boy, now grown a man, with all the father ennobling his brow, called upon me, on a furlough from his regiment, having received a severe but not dangerous wound, whilst leading his company during one of the most trying hours at Shiloh. He remembered me