

resent "charge. The man who travels from place to place, and from Lodge to Lodge, under the guise of Masonry, and solicits aid from Lodge or member, without any definite plan or intent of repaying, is, in point of fact, no more of an impostor than he who smirches the good name of a brother Mason, from no higher motive than envy, suspicion or distrust. Beyond a doubt, many a brother speaks disparagingly of another without any intent to injure him in business or reputation; but such a course gives encouragement to the malicious and ungenerous, and to those who would prey upon the good name of the really worthy—imposture, therefore, is not practised solely by design, but sometimes by neglect. It is an imposition, too, and one which should not be tolerated, for Masons to mislead their families as to any of the duties or obligations of the Craft, proper for the profane to know, and surely no worse delusion or trick can be played upon a wife than for a husband to assert that, in case of death to him, the Masons will look after his widow, and secure her from want. This sort of imposition should never be practised even by innuendo; show the wife the nature of the bond, that she may see to what extent, no further, she can claim. Let her see how absurd must be the preliminary declaration, by her husband, that he has sought the privileges of Masonry through "a sincere wish to be serviceable to his fellow-creatures" if he teaches her forthwith to hold out her hands in demand. Such, however, is the nature of the contract that, if poverty and decay comes—especially if they come in spite of the prudent and careful efforts of a brother—his widow and children have a right to expect sympathy and relief, as far as lies in a brother's power, without injury to himself or family. Not to afford this is a form of imposition that "fills the heart with pain,"

"And maketh even the little child
In bitterness complain."

Masons know full well how frequent—and how pressing, too—are the calls for charity, from within the limits of their own Lodge circle; and they know, quite as well, how constant and persistent are the many which come from without. These latter demands are pressed so skilfully, that their success frequently confounds the former, pushes the honest claimant aside, and leaves her to the pain of a bitter disappointment. It is not unfrequently that notices, in print or by letter are sent to Masonic centres, warning the brotherhood against A.B., who has been imposing upon the Craft, in a certain section, by fraudulent representations of his dire necessity and his unimpaired Masonic standing. To delay, under such circumstances, seems unjust—even cruel, the coveted aid is given, and fraud progresses, until checked by the discovery of his true character, and then he is posted as an impostor. Women have occasionally played the *role* of a Mason's widow so skilfully—adding, at times, one or more orphan children to their presentments—that Charity Committees have come to regard such applicants, if personally unknown, with immediate distrust. Thus it comes to pass that successful knavery may sometimes cause the doors of charity to be closed against the really worthy. But even the worthy may become impostors in Masonry, without intending for a moment to fill such a character. If it be granted that Masonry is founded upon the principles of universal philanthropy and benevolence, it must also be granted that every step taken in it is to be sustained by industry. The maimed cannot be admitted, for the general reason that Masons should be self-supporting, and not a charge upon the fraternity. The benevolence of the institution, however, recognizes the fact of poverty, in consequence of age or decay, and also because of widowhood and orphanage; but, in justice to all, it also expects that all who come within its