

boasts of the highest antiquity, that it can rank among the number of its votaries some of the greatest and best of men, and that its rules and regulations are wise and good. Adopting the language of one of the Fraternity, I can say with reference to one leading object for which we are now convened that "the Mason is engaged by bonds to works of beneficence. What others might do from sentiment or neglect to do from the want of it, he will certainly perform both from sentiment and principle. All his acts are justice; all his feelings mercy. His religion is the worship of God; his politicks devotion to his country. He cultivates the moral and social duties, and among these Charity is pre-eminent. Charity is the Arch which, expansive as the Heavens, composes the canopy of our Temple, and which rests on the two main pillars which are *established in strength*. The Key-stone of this Arch is brotherly love, which binds the parts together, and confirms their solidity. Love and Charity are the heart and soul of Masonry. They prompt to feeling and to action. It is their province to govern our conduct, and it is our duty to submit to their control; for they are the brightest daughters of Heaven."\* All that remains for me then, Brethren, is to call you to the exercise of those very principles which bind you together, and to the immediate display of those feelings by which you profess ever to be actuated. Extend your sympathy beyond the limits of your own craft. Regard the whole world as one Lodge—view the human race as one family—behold in every fellow creature a Brother—and let your benevolence be as wide in its range as the universe of God. Compassion is the call of our Father in Heaven to us his children exciting us to relieve the distresses of our brethren. This is an affection wisely interwoven in our frame, that whereas abstracted reason is too sedentary and remiss a counsellor, we might have a more instant and vigorous pleader, urging us on to deeds of charity and "labours of love." As far, indeed, as it is ingrafted, it is mere instinct; but when we cultivate and cherish

\* Masonic Oration by George H. Richards, Esq.