

slander. And this word comprises a multitude of sins, from idle gossip of harmless intent, up to malicious detraction of one's character. Alas! how much mischief is hidden beneath those baneful words, "they say." And who are "they"? "The cowed monks, the hooded friars, who glide with shrouded faces in the procession of life, muttering, in an unknown tongue, words of mysterious import? Who are 'they'? The midnight assassins of reputation, who lurk in the by-lanes of society, with dagger tongues, sharpened by invention and malice, to draw the blood of innocence, and hyena-like, banquet on the dead? Who are 'they'? They are a multitude no man can number, searching for victims in every city, town and village, wherever the heart of humanity throbs or the ashes of mortality finds rest. Skulkers: cowards. Give me the bold brigand who thunders along the highways with flashing weapon, that cuts the sunbeams as well as the shades; give me the pirate, who unfurls the black flag, emblem of his terrible trade, and shows the plank which your doomed feet must tread; but save me from the 'they-sayers' of society, whose knives are hidden in a velvet sheath, whose bridge of death is woven of flowers, and who spread with invisible poison even the spotless whiteness of the winding sheet." Of all such enemies beware.

3. Again: no mason has any right to take the name of God in vain. How often are we enjoined, in repeated solemnity, to never speak His name but in language of fitting reverence and filial regard. The disgusting habit of seasoning the speech with profanity deserves, and should receive, the contempt and condemnation of masons in all times and places. Officers of lodges, especially should set a noble example in speech; and if any brother persists in this degrading, offensive habit, after fraternal, kindly warning, his lodge should take due notice of his offending, and call him to answer therefor. It is a useless vice, utterly indefensible in the dominion of good taste, good

language, good morals. George Washington, an honored mason, as well as honored citizen, in an order to his troops, touching this habit, said, "It is a vice so mean and low, that every man of sense and character detests and despises it." Think of it, my brethren: we assemble around our altars, pay our adoration to Deity, pledge ourselves to each other in solemn obligation, asking God to witness our vows, then some members of our craft go out from such ceremony among their neighbors and friends, in their own homes even, and indulge in shocking, unblushing profanity. How much, think ye, are the family and fellow-men of such masons *impressed* with the beauties, the beneficence, the morality of Freemasonry?

If there be one who hears, or who may read these words, who has this thoughtless habit, let me, in all sincerity, candor and earnestness, urge you that when tempted to break forth into such indecency of speech, such blasphemy, you go straight to our own hall, and there before the altar, alone, pour forth, if you will, your oaths and disgorge your mind and mouth of this debasing impurity and vice. Yes, I mean just this; and for four good reasons:

1. A brother has no right, after what he has said, seen and heard around this masonic shrine, to go out to the world and advertise our Order and its principles in language so contrary to all its teaching.

2. He has no right to carry from this masonic home to his domestic hearth stone, to wife and children, any language but that of purity, decency, self respect, reverence and truth.

3. He has no right to treat a brother Mason, either in speech or behavior, with aught but respect and the consideration due to one who entertains reverence towards spiritual subjects: and

4. A mason has no more right to blaspheme than to deny God. The one is just as unmasonic as the other. Neither has the shadow of a warrant in our tenets, and neither should be tolerated by us.

Without pure and chaste language,