

favour of an institution which can boast of a Washington, a Franklin, and a Lafayette, as distinguished members; and which inculcates no principles, and authorises no acts that are not in accordance with good morals, civil liberty, and entire obedience to government and the laws.

Dr. Boerne, of Frankfurt in Germany, a distinguished member of the craft, is exceedingly eloquent and poetic, and not less just and truthful when he says, "that Masonry is the holy spring where faded beauty rekindled her homage, darkened wisdom her light, and weakened power her strength. Masonry is the refuge of threatened identity, the mediator of offended innocence, and the recompenser of unrewarded love. The mingled rights of life she has to regulate, the judgment of passion to punish, the action of the heart to scintillate. What the clumsy hand of ignorance has thrown together, she shall separate and revise with her genius. What the fire of passion has embraced too hotly, she shall cool with her mildness; and what has been judged too severely by the multitude she shall cover with her shield. She throws down the barriers which the prejudice of mankind has erected between man and man. She tears away the golden garment that covers the soulless body, and teaches us to value the tree by its fruit, but not for the soil on which it grows, nor for the hand which planted it. She protects fortune against the arrows of malicious chance. She seizes the rudder in the storms of life and brings the leaky ship safely into the harbour."

Quotations like these might be continued to an almost unlimited extent; but I feel confident, those I have adduced must be sufficient to satisfy every candid ingenious mind, that Freemasonry is not a corrupt institution, a wicked thing, to be denounced and despised, but a truly noble order, eminently worthy of the countenance, the affection and the support of the great and the good. To me, to you brethren, it can be no matter of astonishment, that in every age, men the most distinguished for their public and private virtues, for their social and moral worth, have been lovers and promoters of the art. That the most amiable, enlightened, humane princes and monarchs who ever sat on earthly thrones, have not thought it derogatory to their dignity to exchange, for a time, the sceptre for the trowel, have patronized our mysteries, joined in our assemblies, and delighted in the practice of our mystic rites.

Nor can I conceive it possible that the noble minded, generous hearted, open handed, God and humanity loving portion of even the initiated, can withhold their approval from an institution with so many evidences of paramount worth and excellence. That the narrow minded, close fist, ignorant, bigoted, miserly little specimens of humanity should do so is not surprising. It is the voice of such men, indeed, proclaiming our Lodges dark dens of iniquity, our ceremonies bacchanalian orgies, our vows of fidelity horrid blasphemous oaths, our symbols emblems of cruelty and death, and our dogmas and teachings subversive of all law, religion, and humanity, which has, unfortunately, in a few instances found a partial, a half credulous response in the bosoms of our wives, our mothers, our sisters and our daughters, causing their innocent hearts to deplore that their husbands, fathers, brothers or sons, should have been so woefully misguided, by their unlucky stars, as to have found their way into such dismal dens of vice as Masonic Lodges. I know a mason, a very worthy mason too, whose better half has heard such horrid tales of masonic doings, that she actually swoons or faints whenever she is aware of his having received a summons to attend a Masonic Lodge. To obviate this trouble, and save the dear creature from this distress, he was obliged, poor fellow, to request that notices of masonic meetings should not be sent to his dwelling. Now Masons profess, and I believe as a general thing they evince, as much gallantry as other men, and I am sure they as highly prize the good opinions of their lady friends. And with a view still further to satisfy you ladies, as well as the uninitiated male portion of this audience, that such representations as I have adverted to are gross libels upon the character of our institution; I will invite your attention for a few moments to a brief but truthful specimen of masonic teaching, after

which if your hearts and consciences will allow, denounce our institution, and tell us that we could be, and should be, better employed than in promoting its advancement.

Let us take, if you please, the sword of the Tyler. From this weapon of war, this implement of death, Masons derive a lesson of peace and of life. It is placed in the hands of the Tyler to enable him effectually to guard against the intrusion of enemies, to suffer none to pass except such as are duly qualified. It admonishes us to place a watch over our thoughts, a guard over our conduct, a sentinel at our lips, that no unworthy thoughts may be indulged, no improper words uttered, no sinful actions perpetrated to prevent us from preserving consciences void of offence towards God and towards man.

Again, let us take some of the implements of architecture. For instance, the mallet, the chisel, the twenty-four inch gauge, the square, the level, the plumb, the skir, pencil and compasses. Now, the 24 inch gauge is the first instrument put into the hands of the workman, to enable him to measure and ascertain the size and extent of the work he is about to engage in, so as to be able to compute the time and labor it may cost. The mallet or common gravel, is an important instrument of labor, and highly esteemed as an implement of art; though known among artists under various appellations, it is admitted by them all, that no important work of manual skill can be executed without it. The chisel is a small instrument, solid in form, and of such sharpness as to compensate for the diminutiveness of its size. It is calculated to make impression upon the hardest substances, and the mightiest structures in existence have been indebted to its aid. The square is to try and adjust all irregular corners of buildings, and to assist in bringing rude matter into due form. The level is to lay levels, and to prove horizontals. The plumb is to try and adjust all perpendiculars, while being fixed upon their proper bases. The skir is an implement which acts on a center pin, from which a line is drawn, chalked and struck, to mark out the ground for the foundation of the intended structure. With the pencil the artist delineates the building in a draft or plan, for the guidance and instruction of the workmen, while the compasses enable him with accuracy and precision, to ascertain and determine the relative proportions of its several parts.

Now as speculative, or free, and accepted Masons, it is the moral conveyed in these emblems which we are called upon to regard.

From the twenty-four inch gauge we derive a daily lesson of admonition and instruction. It is divided into twenty-four equal parts, and recalls to our minds the division of the natural day into twenty-four hours, teaching us to apportion and appropriate them to their proper objects—prayer, labor, refreshment and sleep. From the mallet we learn that skill without exertion is of little avail; that labor is the lot and the duty of man. The heart may conceive and the head may devise in vain, if the hand be not prompt to execute the design. From the chisel we learn that perseverance is necessary to attain perfection. The rude material can receive its fine polish but from repeated efforts alone; and nothing short of the most assiduous exertion can induce the habit of virtue, enlighten the mind and render the soul pure. The square teaches morality; to regulate our actions by rule and line, and to harmonize our conduct with the principles of morality and virtue. The level teaches equality; that we are descended from the same stock, partake of the same nature and share the same hope; that he who is placed on the lowest is equally entitled to our regard with him who is placed on the highest spoke of fortune's wheel,—because, a time will come when all distinctions among men, but that of goodness, shall cease; and death, the grand leveler of human greatness, shall reduce us all to the same state. The plumb teaches justness and uprightness of life and conduct; to avoid dissimulation in conversation and action; to hold the scale of justice in equal poise; to observe the just medium between intemperance and pleasure, and to make our passions and prejudices coincide with the line of our duty. The skir points us to that straight

and undeviating line of conduct laid down for our pursuits in the volume of the Sacred Law,—the first great light in freemasonry,—which we are taught ever to regard as the unerring standard of truth and justice, and to regulate all our actions by the Divine precepts which it contains. The pencil teaches us that our words and actions are observed and recorded by the Great Architect of the universe, to whom we must render an account of our conduct through life. The compasses remind us of His unerring and impartial justice, which, having defined for our instruction on the limits of good and evil, will finally reward or punish us, as we shall have observed or disregarded His Divine commands. These architectural implements emblematically teach us to have in mind and to act according to the laws of our Divine Creator, that, when we shall be summoned from this sublunary abode, we may ascend to the grand lodge above, where the world's Great Architect lives and reigns for ever. This is all very well; but then, those horrid emblems of cruelty and death! That coffin, skull and cross-bones! Yes; but they are designed not to alarm, but to lead us to contemplate our inevitable destiny; to guide our reflection to that most important of human studies, the knowledge of ourselves. They teach us to be careful to perform our allotted task well while it is yet day; to listen to the voice of nature, of reason and of revelation, which all unite in bearing witness that even in this perishable frame resides a vital and immortal principle, which inspires a holy confidence that the Lord of life will finally enable us to trample the king of terrors beneath our feet, and, lifting our eyes to that bright morning star, whose rising brings peace and salvation to the faithful and obedient of the human race, joyfully exclaim: "O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory?" Tell me, ye who know, is there a place beneath the sun where the doctrines of a resurrection and an immortal life are more clearly and more forcibly taught than in the bosom of a masonic lodge? Such is a truthful specimen of the character of masonic teaching. And, were we to continue the illustration of the symbolic significance of the entire ensignia of our order, from the floor, the furniture and decorations of the lodge, to the regalia and jewels which adorn the persons of its members, we should find as little to object to, as much to approve and admire, as in the instances to which I have adverted.

It has been stated that *benevolence* and *charity* are distinguishing characteristics, are the brightest ornaments of our profession. In one of our most beautiful and impressive lessons we are taught ever to preserve them in their fullest splendour and brilliancy. To seek the solace of our own distress, in the active principles of *universal* benevolence and charity, by extending relief and consolation to our fellow-creature in the hour of affliction, irrespective of country or of creed. Indeed, in almost all our ceremonies and charges these principles are strikingly and forcibly inculcated. Worthy distressed members of the craft and their families are, of course, more particularly the objects of masonic benevolence, though it is not confined to the fraternity. It knows no limits but *limited means*. It is not, indeed, very ostentatious in its administrations. It relieves the necessities of the unfortunate stranger in a foreign land; and sends him comfortably on his way homeward, without noise or parade. It silently watches at the bed-side of illness and pain, ministering to the wants and balm to the throbbing temples of the invalid, sustaining the sinking heart and smoothing the pillow of the dying craftsman. It gently wipes the falling tear of distress from the widow's cheek, shelters, protects, feeds, and clothes the helpless orphan, sounding no trumpets before, nor making public proclamations after giving alms. But is it the less commendable and praiseworthy on that account? Benevolent and charitable institutions sustained by the fraternity, such as asylums for indigent, aged, infirm masons, their wives and widows, are not, it is true, very numerous, still, they are to be found in various parts of the world, sheltering, sustaining and comforting infirm, decrepit age; supporting, protecting, and training to habits of industry and virtue help-