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### AN EMERGENT MASON.

SOME years ago, no matter how many, I was a resident in one of the little mining towns of California. One day there appeared among us a young man whose flushed cheek and nervous movements told the experienced eye that he had come too late for health. Deeply cultured, skilled in the arts and sciences, and master of literature, he was yet without business education, and had no longer the physical strength for manual labor. In that community there was nothing to do whereby he could earn his bread. Wearily, and more wearily, he walked the streets for a few days, and then failed to re-appear. I divined the cause and went myself in search of him. In a narrow dark and gloomy garret, where his necessities had compelled him to retire, I found him, too weak already to wait upon himself, but watching with patient serenity for the outgoing of the tide, which was ebbing now with terrible and accelerating speed. At first he was reticent and distrustful. But a few moments satisfied him that something better than curiosity merely had brought me there, and then he told the story of his life. It was the tale you have often heard before, of a widowed mother and an only son, of days of toil and nights of study, of struggles with poverty and broken health, and how, at last, with little left of strength or endurance, but rich in manly resolution, he had come out here in the double hope of regaining health and rearing a happier home for the mother who had borne and tended him. And then for the first time, and with evident reluctance, as if he feared I would regard the disclosure as setting up some claim upon my purse, he told me that on the eve of his departure from the East he had been made a Mason. "I suppose," he said, "that I am what you call an emergent Mason. But I don't know as I ought to be blamed much for it. I always wanted to be a Mason. But I was never able until that night. I shouldn't have been able then, but a friend gave me the money. I wonder," he added inquiringly, after a pause, "if I can be buried by the Masons?"

By this time I was too full of something besides censure, to think that the boy could be blamed for anything; and I presume I told him so.

But be that as it may, there was a hasty change in that apartment. We did not leave him long with his cheerless and uncomfortable surroundings. Gently and tenderly as ever young mother lifted and pressed her first-born to her heart, we lifted him up and bore him away from the gloom and desolation of his garret. The hand of Death was indeed already upon him, and we could not unloose its inexorable grip. But we could at least cheer and solace his descent to the tomb. We could open the shutters and let God's genial sunshine in to gild with mellow radiance his few remaining days. We could stand by his bedside and anticipate and minister to every want. We could receive his benedictions and his thanks, and that last look of ineffable gratitude, which transformed his face to heavenly beauty, when his lips could no longer utter what was in his heart.

And when the struggle was over, with reverent steps and slow we bore the stranger Brother away to his resting place, and dropped upon his coffin, with fraternal regard, the grateful evergreen—emblem of eternal life and love.

And then it seemed to me that I too was translated. I seemed to stand for a moment far away across the continent. Down the sloping mead I saw the humble home he