

principal actors, and so tend to relieve the monotony which sometimes prevails in the transactions of the various Grand Bodies. We quote his introductory remarks:—

"BIOGRAPHICAL.

"At its last Annual Convocation the Grand Chapter instructed the Grand Secretary—

"To bind the Transactions of this year with those of 1873 and subsequent years, as volume III., and that he be directed to prepare a general index for the volume 1873-'77, and be authorized to print with the volume such biographical sketches and historical matter as he has prepared or collected since the publication of volume II.; and that he be authorized to distribute the volume."

"Following these instructions, that officer presents the following pages. In their preparation he has, so far as possible, availed himself of the assistance of friends more or less intimate with the Companions whose biographies are sketched; where he had not the good fortune to find such assistance he has endeavored to supply the deficiency by doing the work himself. The name of each writer, in the former cases, he has given. For those not thus credited he must himself be held responsible, with the regret that some abler hand did not hold the pen; and that his knowledge and ability have not equalled his desire to do justice to the 'lives' he has 'taken'."

"More than one of the Companions among the 'press of knights' who so delight to couch their lances in the 'gentle tourney' of correspondence reports, has fiercely scouted what he has been pleased to term 'the Iowa and Massachusetts fashion of publishing ante-mortem obituaries.' If any answer were needed to these criticisms, it would be sufficient to say that as the fashion suits Iowa and Massachusetts, it is therefore right, and also, that for these critics we have neither prepared nor procured them. Our object has been less their satisfaction and applause than to 'observe and preserve' such items of personal history as might be obtainable for the satisfaction and enlightenment of future generations, collecting and preserving them as we do photographs and portraits, 'seizing the shadow ere the substance fades.' There are few books more interesting than personal ones, and no Masonic book which is so satisfactory in many respects as the 'Revelations of a Square,' apocryphal though many of its stories are supposed to be, and this interest lies greatly in its personal character. To preserve the lineaments of our Companions we engrave their portraits; for the same reason we collect the attainable facts of their personal history and 'bury them here.' Nor do we think it necessary, as we speak only truth of them, to wait until they are dead, or until those who know them are gone, to do this, and we are only ashamed to publish to the world the history of those whose lives are unworthy of public record."

"Without sympathy for prudery or mock-modesty, and asking a suspension of the judgment that would 'alay to the uttermost' for giving these glimpses of personal history to the world, we submit these brief and imperfect sketches, only sorry that they are not fuller, and sure that we shall all be soon enough forgotten, in spite of our own best works and of the most earnest efforts of our friends to preserve the memory of our lives."

"THE GRAND SECRETARY."