

will say, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungered and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger and ye took me in."
—*Freemasons' Magazine.*

CHARITY.

Charity is the brightest, purest gem in the casket of graces. Of all the gifts of a beneficent Creator, it is the most excellent. Its possession and exercise raises man above his fellows, and likens him unto his Maker. Its meaning is Love, yet not mere love abstractly considered, the attribute common to both Deity and Humanity.—Charity is love revealing itself in, and recommending itself by the act. It is love giving birth to holy desires and purposes—constraining to works for the happiness and good of others; to the practice of every virtue, to the defence of man against the assaults and seductions of vice; and the softening of its certain penalties, the alleviating of its attending miseries. It is the working out of the Golden Rule, not by the compulsion of command, but by love for the race.

The practice of this noble virtue is inculcated upon every Mason from the first step he takes in Masonry till his pilgrimage is over. By word, by example, by allegory, and by symbol, it is enforced upon all. And they learn its true meaning. How can it be otherwise when the Great Light upon the altar, always shining, is continually revealing Him, in His words and acts, whose name is Charity? It remains for Masons, then, so to live in the practice of this virtue as to commend it to the hearts of all men. It is for them to restore Charity to her true position; to reveal her in all her loveliness and grace, so that she may win to her refuge of peace and joy all the suffering in body, mind, heart and estate. Thus has she ever been accepted and revered in the Masonic household; so let the world receive and cherish her.

"Hail, balm-bestowing Charity!
First of the heaven-born;
Sanctity and sincerity
The temple still adorn:
Communing with Mortality,
The humble hut thou dost not scorn.
Thou act in bright reality,
Friend of the friendless and forlorn.
With joy-induced alacrity
Supplying want, assuaging woe,
To every home of misery
Thy sister-spirits smiling go.
Dispelling all despondency,
Their blessings they bestow—
Like angels in the ministry
Of holiness below."

SCOTTISH FREEMASONRY.

A writer in "Masonic notes and queries" in the *Freemason's Magazine*, thus discourses on Scottish Freemasonry:—

"Scottish Freemasonry may be said to exist (so does a torpid bat), but, as to signs of active life, where are they? What good does it do? The barren fig-tree existed, but for what end, when it produced no fruit? If we are to believe the writers in the *Freemason's Magazine* lately, Scottish Freemasonry, however, does produce something—apples of Sodom—lazy professional Masonic beggars.*

"Where are our Scottish Masonic benevolent institutions for worthy aged Masons and their widows?

"Where are our Scottish Masonic schools?
"Where are our Scottish Masonic Charities, worthy of the name?

"Where is there a Scottish Masonic Hall, worthy of the name?†

"Where are there signs of true Masonic life and work in Scotland?

To all these echo answers, 'Where—where—where?'

"So far as the production of good fruit shows us signs of life, Scottish Freemasonry may be said to be in a state of suspended animation. Should it be cut down therefore? No; spare it for a time yet. Give it a chance; there are some faint signs of life about it yet. Some seem determined to dig about it; and with sunshine and rain it may perhaps throw off its lethargy and produce fruit; but what keeps it or has hitherto kept it from doing so? Is it the do-nothingness at high quarters that is trampling down the soil hard around the roots, or what is it that keeps it back? Whatever it is that obstructs the nutriment from feeding the roots and thus nourishing the tree ought to be thrown aside. Those who ought to be the leaders and supporters of true Scottish Masonic life should be really so. Whenever they are not so they become mere dead weight, an encumbrance, and a hinderance. Wherever there is neglect of duty with those who ought to be examples, it tends to crush out all active life. Were there fewer leaves, there might, perhaps, be more fruit—certainly we can dispense with leaves if we get the fruit. For the honour of our country we trust there is hope yet for Scottish Masonry.

Wha'll for Scotland's honour rear,
True Masonic structures rear,
That will mak' its worth appear,
Forward let him stand.

EXCELSIOR."

* Which is certainly a great compliment to Scotland.
† Certainly there is the large room called the Grand Lodge Hall, with it, almost bare, four walls, of which, when I entered for the first time about two years ago, I was literally ast uncd. When I call it a large room, I do not mean to compare it to a barn—certainly not, because all must admit that it is better than that.

ANTIQUITY OF FREEMASONRY.

The system of religion and that of Freemasonry have a common origin, a common parentage. Of both we find their cradle in the ancient Egyptian mysteries, in that small company of men who were appointed to watch the rising of the Nile, to take observations of the various phenomenas in nature; and who, by various signs, communicated to the people the approach of the inundation.

Those magi who first instituted symbols, and with these the mysteries, who, gradually growing into power, became the rulers and lawgivers of the people, their observances being at first exclusively of an astronomical nature, assumed a religious phase, and resolved themselves into a regular system of worship. These two, the astronomical arrangement and the religious belief, like the Siamese twins, grew up indissolubly to completeness, side by side, and are far more ancient than any written book. Thus the sacerdotal order became gradually accepted as the mediator between God and man, to make known to him his duty and the form of worship most agreeable to Deity. From those magi sprang the various priesthoods and religious systems that have obtained a lodgment among mankind. From these also came the celebrated organization of Freemasonry. Both had