

the aims and objects of Freemasonry, we shall merit the denunciation so justly pronounced against those who assume duties they are not qualified to perform. It is not given unto all of us to accomplish some great work, by which our names shall be perpetuated after we are dead, but there is no man so humble or so devoid of talents, that he may not accomplish something to make the world the better for his having lived in it, and to impress

"Foot-prints on the sands of time,"

which even, although they may be effaced by the first rising of the tide, shall, while they remain, mark the path trod in the performance of duties rendered, not unwillingly and solely because they are duties, but because they tend to the accomplishment of a noble end, and some one, it may chance to be a stranger and an ingrate, is to be benefited thereby. It is said that a celebrated Egyptologist discovered a tomb of the god Apis, which had never been opened. On entering, he says, for the first time, he beheld distinctly marked on the delicate bed of sand which covered the soil, the impression of the foot-prints of the workmen who, three thousand seven hundred years ago, had placed the image of the god on his couch, and then retired. As no one knows, or cares to know the names of the workmen, who, nearly forty centuries ago, left this, the only record of their existence, so it may be that no one will know, or care to know our names; but it is possible for us to accomplish, in the few years which are allotted to us to labor in the lodge terrestrial, that which, forty centuries hence, aye, for all eternity, will work for good or evil, and thus it happens that our deeds are of more importance to those who shall come after us than we ourselves are. Men seldom pause to inquire whose hand traced or whose brain inspired a statute which confers a benefit, or works an injury, but the consequences

resulting from its enactment make the law itself the object of respect or denunciation. What we shall do here this year may be undone by those who shall stand in our places another year, but the consequence of our acts are for all time and cannot be undone. Thus it becomes us to consider well the results which are to follow our acts and judgments, lest we inflict an injury, where we intend conferring a benefit, or render a judgment which shall work an irreparable wrong where we design administering impartial and exact justice.

Viewed from the exterior, Freemasonry presents no marked excellencies which are not possessed in common with numerous other Associations. To the profane, it is simply an organization which proposes to practice virtues which all mankind are under like obligations to perform, but to those who have entered within the most secret apartments of the temple, and beheld the cherubim whose outstretched wings shield the ark of the covenant, and who have studied its symbols and read their hidden meaning it exhibits peculiarities which distinguish it from all other human organizations, and to him who has been so fortunate as to receive the true spirit of the inspiration which it breathes in its every teaching, it must always remain without a peer in his affections. We speak this in no spirit of self-approbation or of vaunted superiority, for while it must ever retain to itself the peculiar field it occupies, it also imposes a greater and higher measure of duties upon its initiates. This is not an occasion which calls for an exposition of the nature or extent of those duties. You would not be here if you did not already understand and appreciate them, and you also know whether it is worth the expenditure of time and labor which is demanded by the effort, to make it the means of doing a greater and ever-increasing measure of good, not only to ourselves, but to all mankind.—*M. W. Frederic Speed.*