

hood, fear God, honor the King," may be taken as the summing up of a Mason's profession. They "honor and obey" the Queen and all that are put in authority under her. They are enjoined never to countenance or support, much less propose, any act which may have a tendency to subvert the peace and good order of society. They are ready to defend their sovereign and their country "from sedition, privy conspiracy, and rebellion." They are bound in one holy bond of brotherhood to maintain and support those institutions of our land which have made England so great, so glorious, and so free, and it is a speaking testimony to the loyalty of our Order that kings and princes have been from time immemorial promoters of the art, and "have not thought it derogatory to their high dignity to exchange the sceptre for the trowel," and happy we are in having as our Grand Master one so worthy of all honor and respect as H.R.H. the Prince of Wales. Again, Masonry is the greatest charitable institution in the world, and when I speak of Charity I do not mean almsgiving alone. It is not a benefit society. No man joins, or ought to join, in order to benefit himself—but others. It abhors selfishness in all its forms, and we declare that a wish to render ourselves more serviceable to our fellow-creatures is the sole motive by which we are influenced in seeking to be admitted to the Order. A Mason's Charity should know no bounds, save that of prudence. Such in belief is Freemasonry in its principles. It insists on a belief in the Great Architect of the Universe as an essential condition of membership—it recognizes God in all its proceedings, it accepts the Volume of the Sacred Law as its rule of life. By the doctrine contained in that Book of Books we are taught to believe in the wise dispensations of Divine Providence, which belief confirms our trust, strengthens our hope, and enlarges our Charity, for Charity is the greatest of all virtues, indeed, it comprehends the whole, for when faith is lost in sight, and hope is

realized to the full, still Charity has a work to do—a work which will never end, but only be fuller and brighter and more perfect, for it will live on and on to the countless ages of eternity in the Grand Lodge above, where the world's Great Architect lives and reigns for evermore. But now comes the question: How are these grand principles, this pure morality, these noble sentiments, this exalted piety, being carried into practice? I have said that Masonry is a religious institution, hence our presence here in God's House today. I have told you its basis is the teaching of the Bible, where we read—"Pure Religion and undefiled is this: To visit the fatherless and widows, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." This holy, this practical definition of religion is exemplified by Masons in their practice. That Masons do "visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction" is no idle boast. As a body they exemplify their profession by their practice. I am unable to give you even an approximate estimate of the amount of money raised by the Masons alone for Charitable purposes, but one institution, and it is only one of many, the Royal Ben-volent Fund, dispensed £16,140 last year in grants to aged Freemasons, their widows and orphans. In the Girls' and Boys' Schools 540 children are boarded, fed, clothed, and educated, at a cost of over £12,000 a year. Coming to our own Institution in East Lancashire, it contributes nearly £800 a year to the same laudable objects. From these instances may be formed some idea of the extent of good which is done—and done unostentatiously—by Masons to their fellows in need through the thousands of lodges established in the world, and each lodge is a dispenser of Charity. I must now, my brothers, bring the matter more closely home, and give my remarks a more personal application. I earnestly appeal to you, my brethren of the Craft, to see to it that you ever bear in mind your solemn obligations to maintain in your own person, by your character, life, and conduct, those