

by the knowledge that the payment of her board would in a small degree benefit the old man, but mostly from his contiguity to the Lodge room.

Never before had Kingville Lodge been so thoroughly swept and garnished. The weekly school holiday had been devoted to sweeping the room, washing it, airing it, decorating it with evergreens, washing the instruments, polishing the jewels, putting things to rights. On the days of meeting (for like very many Southern Lodges twenty years ago, Kingville Lodge held its regular meetings in the afternoon,) she had each station profusely glowing with flowers in the season of flowers. She was the first in the ante-room. Had a hand-shake and loving word, and a kiss for every "brother." Strangers who saw her sprightly little form there for the first time, went away with new ideas upon the beauty of the Masonic system.

In 1850 she was twelve years of age. It was the cholera season, and many fled, and many sickened, and some died. Then the merits of this precious little woman began to appear. From house to house she went fearless. At the bedside of the sick, at the grave of the dead she stood fearless, ever fearless. Her cheery look was medicine, her cheery voice better than medicine. She paid with interest now every debt she had incurred; and he who had invested the most in her support, her clothing, her board, her education, her little trinkets of jewelry, for which she had a woman's taste, felt the most in arrears to her. Never had that little watch which the Lodge gave her on her last birthday been put to its proper use till she used it at the weary bed-sides, to tell the weary, groaning patients how pleasantly the night was passing on, and how surely they would be well by morning. Never had the elegant cloth cloak, sent her by General Quitman, "as a special mark of pleasure at hearing of the good conduct of his dear little sister;" never, I say, had the elegant cloth cloak made by Past Grand Master Stephens, at Vicksburg, and gorgeously adorned—never, I say, had that beautiful cloak which she had always refused to wear to the Lodge meetings, for fear of soiling it, been so appropriately used as when she walked with it in the driving rain at the funeral of the genial old Tyler, who was the first to succumb to the terrible epidemic.

Cholera time over and forgotten, who so popular as Sister Winnefred? Money was no object now in her raising. She had learned all she could learn in that country; she must go North to a first-class boarding school. This cost something, but General Quitman sent another hundred dollars, with a letter to the president of the Northern school and the Lodge agreed to contribute enough by subscription to make up the remainder, and so with many a tear the little woman, almost grown, though only thirteen years of age, said good-bye. That day, it was positively declared, that the Lodge was not even "called off" when she was invited in. Brother George Hildebrand, the Worshipful Master, being brought to the torture for this by somebody (in a jocular sense, of course,) declared he *forgot*, and then made the matter worse, yea, quite unpardonable, by saying it made no difference, anyhow; if she isn't a good Mason, there are not any made, which shows how miserably Freemasonry had degenerated at Kingville Lodge; and proves all that the *Cynosure* has ever said about the rottenness and secret unrighteousness, and esoteric licentiousness, etc., etc., of the Masonic institutions in general.

Yes, in she came, the Lodge not even being "called off." Did she experience the terrors of a Mehitable Byrde? Was that chair made of human bones? Was anybody about to sink in a "fiery hole?" Did anybody thrust up there "a pair of paws," and "seize the unhappy candidate," as the poet has it? Probably not. If so, the young maiden had got accustomed to those things during the long afternoons she had sat in the ante