

sick, comforting the sorrowful, and raising the dead, but most chiefly we learn it as we gaze upon the Cross, and behold him hanging there in agony indescribable. Verily, according to his own words, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend." Can we follow him in these things? Can we empty ourselves of our riches, that we may become humble and poor, for our brethren's sake? Can we spend our time in consoling the mourners, and in ministering to the sick and suffering? and can we lastly reach to such a height of love as this, to lay down our lives for the brethren? How blessed to follow Him!—and think not that it is impossible. In apostolic times, "those that were possessors of houses and lands, or other goods, sold them and parted them to all men, as every man had need." There are multitudes of others who have consecrated their whole lives to works of charity and benevolence, and many a living Christian spirit who has counted neither life nor comfort dear, has gone forth into the very depths of heathen darkness, ignorance and superstition, to make known the unsearchable riches of its salvation. I have been speaking of the religion of Jesus Christ—a subject however near akin to Freemasonry, may by some be deemed totally distinct from it. "Masonry is not religion," is a stereotyped remark of many. My brethren, if religion is to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly before God and man, then we say Masonry is religion of the purest kind, because it inculcates primarily love and obedience to God and his holy laws, and love to man, and reverence and humility. The religion of Masonry is not a system of abstruse metaphysical dogmas peculiar to any or particular church, but its tenets are plain, practical, and of universal comprehension. The highest aspiration of the soul cannot go beyond a sincere love and veneration for Him who created all things, and to love God with all our heart and soul, and our neighbor as ourselves, is the highest manifestation—the very highest—of devotion. This Masonry teaches us in all its degrees, not as abstract theories, but as realities evinced in the life and conduct of its disciples. Yea, much more than this, the religion of Masonry constructs no wall to separate one portion of the Craft from the rest; there is no sectarianism, no party spirit, no division of thought or practise; but within its spacious temple all with one heart and without any violation of their principles or profession, worship at its altars as one loving brotherhood in harmony and peace. It selects for no man the mode or manner in which he must worship his maker, designates no peculiar church in which he must offer up his devotions, directs no form of altar on which he must make his obligations, and institutes no liturgy for his form of prayer, but leaves the religious tenets of each member as a matter for his own conscience to prescribe. It simply teaches us how to live as immortal beings during our tent life here in the wilderness. It points us to the celestial canopy above us as the eternal lodge in which our Grand Master presides. It instructs us in the way to reach the portals of that distant temple, and reminds us of that *faith* which should never doubt, that *hope* which should never sicken, that *charity* which should never weary in well doing. I congratulate you, my brethren, and I do so with feelings of gratitude to the All-wise Disposer of events that you have been enabled since your last celebration of this festival so nobly to carry out the main object of our Order, which is to bind men closely together by the golden chains of love, by the happy fellowship which has been brought about among all members of the Craft in this Northern Canadian Land. To the peculiar merits or demerits of the differences existing between you I need not allude; suffice it to say that by the exercise of sound Christian judgment and due care, a final settlement has been reached for any possible cause of dispute or disagreement. Be it your aim now to forget all past troubles, and to heal effectually the breach which once appeared so horribly wide, by inserting the cement of true brotherly affection, which is the only bond of peace. May the Most High richly bless both Grand Lodges, and impart to all the members the grace whereby they may so "let their light shine before men that they may see their good works, etc." But, brethren, if you can look back to this event as a truly bright and happy one, and conspicuously so in the course of your past year's history, is not some of the pleasure somewhat chastened by the recollection of the blank caused by the removal of one in particular—a well-known, tried and worthy brother from among you? I can well understand with what mingled feelings of pleasure and sadness, you review the course of the past year. It is so, however, with every year of our lives, and in whatever relation of life we stand. But remember—"the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth." What you have lost in the decease of your late Grand Secretary has, doubtless, proved his everlasting gain, and it may be that to-day as we are gathered within the walls of this sacred temple, he from his throne in the Grand Lodge above, is looking upon you, and delighting in the holy incense which ascends before God's throne from the devout hearts that are worshipping here. Be it yours, my brethren, to imitate in all virtue and moral excellencies, him who is gone before. Be followers of those who through faith and patience now inherit the promises. Be true and loyal to the principles of your Order, and you will then be true and loyal to your God, and He has said, "Those