

THE PUREST PEARL.

FROM THE GERMAN.

Beside the church door, a-weary and lone,
 A blind woman sat on the cold door-stone;
 The wind was bitter, the snow fell fast,
 And a mocking voice in the fitful blast
 Seemed ever to echo her moaning cry,
 As she begged her alms of the passers-by;
 "Have pity on me, have pity, I pray;
 My back is bent and my hair his gray."

The bells were ringing the hour of prayer,
 And many good people were gathering there.
 But covered with furs and mantles warm,
 They hurried past through the wintry storm.

Some were hoping their souls to save,
 And some were thinking of death and the grave,
 And, alas! they had no time to heed
 The poor soul asking for charity's meed.
 And some were blooming with beauty's grace,
 But closely muffled in veils of lace:
 They saw not the sorrow and heard not the moan
 Of her who sat on the cold door stone.

At last came one of a noble name,
 By the city counted the wealthiest dame,
 And the pearls that e'er her neck were strung
 She proudly there to the beggar flung.

Then followed a maiden young and fair,
 Adorned with clusters of golden hair;
 But her dress was thin, and scanty, and worn,
 Not even the beggar seemed more forlorn.
 With a tearful look, and a pitying sigh,
 She whispered soft, "No jewels have I—
 But I give you my prayers, good friend," said she,
 "And surely I know God listens to me."

On the poor white hand, so shrunken and small,
 The blind woman felt a tear drop fall,
 Then kissed it and said to the weeping girl,
 "It is you who have given the purest pearl."

—National Freemason.

The Grand Lodge of Tennessee has decided that non-affiliation does not deprive a Brother of his individual rights as a Mason, but only of such additional rights as are acquired by Lodge membership, while it urges affiliation as a duty. It also recommends that the Grand Master give his official opinion on no questions except such as actually exist before some Subordinate Lodge, and which has been certified to him.