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MASONS AND MASONIC BODIES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

BY BRO. HANS MATTISON.

I have met with many Masons in Masonic Bodies in Northwestern Europe, and will only say for them that they are enlightened men of high standing, very courteous and hospitable, and always show those traits to an American Mason. They are very much like us, imbued with the same civilization and consequent toleration. Thinking of them as well as of ourselves, it has often occurred to me, as it has doubtless to the older among you, that Freemasonry does not quite satisfy our longings and our desires; that there is much in it which seems trifling and not enough of that which we expect to be higher and better than what the rest of our neighbors and friends (not Masons) have and profess. And so it is, but I did not fully understand the cause until I landed on the dark continent, a few years ago, and met native Masons on the banks of the Nile and at the foot of the pyramids. Our Western civilization has developed man nearly up to the standard of Masonry. It is on the dark continents, as it was in Europe a hundred years ago, that Masonry looms up above all other human institutions as the champion and teacher of equality, brotherhood, love and toleration.—Next to the

Christian religion, Masonry is entitled to the highest credit for raising man upwards, to encircle the human family into one loving brotherhood; to dispel the dark demons of superstition, ignorance and intolerance.

When once I stood beside a dark Arab, in the valley of the Nile, and exchanged with him the mystic grip, and read in his wrinkled countenance the emotion of his heart at the recognition of that sign, a new light dawned upon me, and I never will again complain of Masonry. To this poor oppressed Brother of the desert, groping after light and liberty, the little he did know of Masonry was like a celestial light leading him onwards and upwards. He would have been considered a poor Mason so far as ritual was concerned; he knew but little of this or that jurisdiction or system, and probably cared less; but he did know and realize that in a Mason from a happier land—from the great continent west of the Atlantic, he had found a Brother with all that that dear word implies. Masonry to him was like the morning sunbeam which dispels the darkness of the night.

But it was particularly of the Masons in a still more distant land that I wish to say a few words. It has been my good fortune to spend some time in British India, in my opinion the most interesting country in the