

taken their seats in silence, feeling has seemingly quivered on every lip, has beamed or flashed from every eye, and while the people have been crowding to suffocation and peering over the galleries to catch every word, look and gesture, the reporters have been at work with lightning speed, transmitting the condition of affairs, printers rushing off the matter and scattering it broadcast throughout the length and breadth of the land; the whole country has thus been lashed into the agitation of that ocean of feeling which the master spirits of the storm had lifted by their stirring and brilliant speeches. Here we have seen men struggling for important principles, bold and brilliant advocates of certain rights of vital importance in their judgment. But when carefully examined it will be found that in proportion as the politicians drew near the great questions of civil and religious liberty—the principles which lie at the very foundation of our Order—in that proportion do the questions become those of vital importance and deep earnestness. There are some persons inclined to make parliaments responsible for every evil or irregularity under the sun. I am not so disposed to look on the representatives of the people. There is a sense of the term in which it devolves on us, the people, rather than on our representatives, to advocate certain principles, which, from the very nature of the circumstances, can be more effectively developed by us than by our representatives in parliament. True, we read the speeches of great Christian statesmen in Christian countries, and see how strongly they assert that it is not so much the form of government as the character of the government that gives permanency and power to the state, but we are to bear in mind that they almost universally hold the people to be the government rather than their representatives. Living in these days, persons in the most remote rural parts of our country can converse with the inhabitants of our cities through the medium of the press, as easily as could the old philosophers of Athens in their portico, or the politicians of Rome in the Forum. By our great modern boon of representative principle—a principle unknown and impracticable among the ancients—the whole mass of society is brought to operate in constraining the action of representative power, and in the conservation of public liberty. Brethren, remember that in the Book we read “Ye are the salt of the earth.” Everything of a progressive nature has been wrenched in instalments of long deferred justice, but perhaps wisely delayed. Looking at the conditions of society and the governments of the world, we are inclined to think there is a grand philosophy running through all, and, amongst other things, society has, so to speak, to force law makers to reconstruct, develop or modify as the case may be. Some say, “Why keep up this agitation by the meeting of your Grand Lodges, and the consequent July and other gatherings?” If it be true that the character and genius of men had an acknowledged influence in bringing about, shaping, and moulding the Revolution of 1688, does it not follow that the same advocacy, the same boldness of invectives, the same impressive vehemence with which wrong principles have been attacked in the past; that in the same way among others we may inflame the zeal to animate the resentment of liberty-loving people, so that the principles of the Revolution may be sustained and healthfully developed. Livy records a Roman legend concerning a Sibylline woman coming from the East, and appearing before King Tarquin, the Proud, offered him nine books for sale. He refused to purchase, the price seemed so exorbitant. She went away, destroyed three; and returned, and then asked as much for the remaining six as for the nine. This refused, she destroyed three more, and returning with the remaining three, once more offered them for sale, but without any