

nation. It weakens Masonry. It is contrary to the very spirit of its organization. A free man is the only constituency that Masonry ordains, or can directly or indirectly recognize. To make a sort of partnership with those who never can be Freemasons, by tolerating their pretensions, when coaxed and coddled, to be a secret society with which Masonry ought to fraternize, is testing Masonic courage to do right, and it would seem in some cases almost succeeding in overturning Masonic common sense.—*Richard Vaux, of Penn.*

I want to say something that I hope you will believe and never forget. It is this: Masonry is a helping hand to every woman that is akin, by any close relationship, to any of its members. It is a flaming sword of protection around any woman who has a right to call upon its help. Holy motherhood, helpless widowhood, devoted wifehood, loving sisterhood, and dependent childhood, are the special wards of our Order. Every strong right arm in this room to-night is sworn to be raised in defence of the body and character of every woman in this presence, if some craven should assail her, or some libertine attempt to sully her fair name. Let other women say aught they please against Masonry, but let every Mason's wife, mother, widow, daughter or sister, entertain for the Order the highest respect and profoundest reverence; for the Order has the highest respect and profoundest reverence for you; counting no task too heavy, nor any sacrifice too great, to relieve your burden and defend your unspotted name. Masonry is woman's fair angel, protecting her virtue, and granting her aid.—*Rev. Dr. Charles R. Mitchell.*

AUDI VIDE TACE.

This well-known Masonic device is, of late years, either not generally understood, or wilfully disregarded. In times gone by silence or secrecy was regarded as an essential attachment to

Freemasonry; that whatever else became public property, the transactions of the Lodge were confined in the breast of every Mason, and their lips sealed to silence. Dr. Oliver, in a lecture on the "Various Rituals of Freemasonry," thus refers to the subject:—

"This was a primitive observance among the Craft, for in the Constitution of Athelstane, the E.A.P. was solemnly enjoined:

His Master's Counsel to keep close,
Lest he his confidence should lose;
The secrets of brethren tell to none,
Nor out of the Lodge what there is done,
Whatever you hear the Master say,
Be sure you never do betray,
Lest it cause in thee much blame,
And bring the Craft to public shame."

And in the course of a categorical examination of what is known as the "Prestonian Ritual," our learned brother has the following:—

"Of all the arts which Masons possess silence or secrecy is that which particularly recommends them. Taciturnity is a proof of wisdom, and is allowed to be of the utmost importance in the different transactions of life. The best writers have declared it to be an art of inestimable value; and that it is agreeable to the Deity himself may easily be conceived from the glorious example which he gives in concealing from mankind the secrets of his providence. The wisest of men cannot pry into the arcana of Heaven; nor can they devise to-day what to-morrow may bring forth."

What apparently was a prominent and distinguishing characteristic of our ancient brethren, gives some promise of falling into disuse, and becoming a lost art with many modern Masons, viewed in the light of some recent occurrences, which, if not amended, will in the words of Athelstane "Cause in thee much blame and bring the Craft to shame."

The device, *Audi Vide Tace*, as of old, should still teach Masons to hear, see, and be silent. The principle inculcated in the lodge has not changed, and the last Charge, solemnly given by the I.P.M. before closing, specifically refers to the matter in which the pro-