

And the word went up to the lodge above,
And the word was right, for the word was LOVE.

And here to-night we stand, our trestle-board outspread;
The work marked down is goodly work, to the Master overhead,
Ar ' the word goes up to the lodge above,
And the word is right, for the word is LOVE.

MASONIC RELIEF.

" The quality of mercy is not strained,—
It droppeth as the gentle dew of heaven
Upon the place beneath ; it is twice blessed ;
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes.
It becomes the throned monarch
Better than his crown."

The hand of assistance in times of emergency is as the visitation of the Divinity. It imparts life to the soul of the desponding, gives *light* to the mind of the forlorn, and makes the world itself look more lovely and beautiful. The instances are innumerable and everywhere constantly occurring where the life of some one is made sorrowful by misfortune or adversity.

The mishap of doing wrong brings many to suffering, and to them the penalty seems to be just, because they know they are guilty. But where the good are left destitute, or the innocent are made to suffer, the mystery of the providence confounds us, and our philosophy only finds relief and comfort in the superior wisdom and beneficent economy of the higher and eternal Ruler.

The results of *Fate* must be the legitimate action of law, both in the natural and moral universe, or else the Government over us is but the capriciousness and whim of an irresponsible power. This we do not believe, and therefore when plagues, or famine or war come upon us we know that the "higher law" has been violated, for nature, when left to its own laws takes care of itself, and though we may not see it, the greatest good of the greatest number is always intended.

Scientists, even with the light of theology, are not able to read all these laws, so as to reduce them to a system of intelligent philosophy. They have tried their best and done all and what they could to confront the popular ideas of Providence, but up to the present hour their bark is on the ocean billows subject to the winds and waves of the old uncertainties.

In 1874, the dark calamities of a wide-spread famine came upon tens of thousands of families in Kansas and Missouri, and many of the best families of the land were reduced to the very borders of starvation.

Grasshoppers came by the millions and devoured everything before them. Grain fields were swept as with the besom of destruction, and the very ground was left bare as the roads of beaten travel. The blight of desolation passed over the land, leaving behind it only the track of the destroyer. The inhabitants stood speechless and helpless, because they were totally unable to stay the strides of the all-devouring army. Thousands of them fled as from below the Destroyer, to find protection and relief among their friends in the Eastern States, while many remained to fight the battle with hunger and famine as best they could, because they were left without means and had no power to remove.

One family remained which was once well known in our own State. The head of it was a minister who had given his life to the service of the Master, and who was then laid up with the torturing agonies of rheumatism. His family consisted of his wife and widowed daughter and a grand daughter. They were poor, and under the circumstances utterly helpless. What to do they knew not. The resource of devout prayer was all that was left them, when one morning after breakfast their fast on a dish of bran bread and water, he took hold of his pen and addressed a letter to one of his old *mystic* friends, living in one of our Wabash cities whom he had not seen for years. We can only give an extract of the deeply affecting letter :

—, MISSOURI, Dec. 27, 1874.

Dr. S—,

MY DEAR BROTHER,—Long years have passed since last I saw you, but all these years I have given to the service of God and humanity, through many trials and tribulations and personal sufferings. I have lost two sons-in-law and a daughter from my family, and all I have left now is my dear wife, a widowed daughter and a little grand daughter. We are left to battle with famine, which is in our very door. This morn-