

paring timber; in the quarries, digging out, squaring, and fitting great stones. These again were to be transported a greater or lesser distance and constructed into buildings—all requiring much rugged exposure and great physical labor. Would it be proper and suitable for women to engage in such a calling? They would be as much out of their natural sphere of action as rugged men would be in superintending the refined and delicate arrangements of the household. Hence, from regard for her natural physical weakness and refined sensibilities, she was exempted from the severe and laborious duties of the ancient Craftsmen.

Again: the rituals and ceremonies of the Order forbid the presence of women. And though there be nothing in them improper for men of the most refined sensibilities, yet the nature of woman, and the relation she sustains to the other sex, render it improper for her to mingle in the mystic labors of the lodge room. Her relations to man as wife, mother, sister, or daughter would forbid her presence. The place and the occupation are both unsuited to her nature. And as Masonry can not be changed to accommodate itself to her condition, the law proclaiming her exclusion is as un repealable as that of the Medes and Persians. If these reasons are not sufficient to satisfy the objection, we must recur to the fact that the *law* excludes her, and that of itself is enough. It may be retorted that the above reasons are not sufficient—that there is no reason for it; but the answer still holds good—*the law forbids it*. The law was made for us, not we for the law; we are compelled to take it as it is, and abide by it.

They must not be “immoral or scandalous men, but of good report.” This is a plain and sensible requirement, and one that commends itself to the judgment and approval of every well meaning and reflecting man. To admit men who are immoral in their conduct, would be introducing antagonisms into the lodge. It would bring together discordant principles, that, instead of perpetuating peace and harmony in the Craft, would produce confusion and discord. The lodge is no place for an immoral man. The Holy Bible is there as the rule of faith and practice: prayer is heard, and God is recognized there: the most important and sacred duties of life are inculcated; and the glorious doctrines of the resurrection by a redeeming power, and an immortal and ever blessed existence in a future world are taught and enforced there. The solemn responsibilities of man as a social being, and his still higher responsibilities to his Creator, are the themes of the lodge room and the subjects of illustration. The spirit of purified affection and brotherly regard—of charity in its broadest, deepest, highest sense, which ought always to pervade that sacred retreat of disinterested friendship, would repel immorality from its very threshold. Let it never be forgotten, then, that *no immoral man* must ever be admitted.

Nor “scandalous.” This is simply a deeper degree of immorality. Men who are not only immoral, but who glory in it—make their boast of it—before the world, and thereby are properly termed “scandalous,” should have no place in the Craft: they are intellectually, morally, and socially unfit for it. “*Must be.*” Reader, the requirements and prohibitions in this Charge are not optional with us, to observe or violate them. They are imperative—they *must* be observed, for such is the language used.—*Masonic Review for July.*

FESTIVE.

ABOUT this time the weather may be expected to be warm, which is good for the hopes of the husbandman, and suggestive of well-garnered basket and store, when in a few weeks nature once more puts off the livery of rejoicing, and paterfamilias become anxious about the price of coal. Meanwhile, humanity, cooped up between endless rows of seething bricks and mortar, sighs for a lodge in some vast wilderness, and bethinks itself of the poet who said:

“The sun’s perpendicular height
 Illumines the depth of the sea,
 And the fishes, beginning to sweat,
 Cry, hang it, how hot we shall be!”

The most energetic may be excused if now they lose somewhat of their ardor, and turn their faces toward the mountains or the sea. An invitation to assist in conferring the third degree is tantamount to expecting a man to be fire-proof, and competent to rival Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, for, in addition to the vagaries of the thermometer, we have the certainties of sixteen-candle gaslight—be the same more or less—liberally laid on. Albeit there are plenty whom no excess of the mercury can affect to the melting point, men who could sit unmoved by the furnace door within which iron had yielded to the fervent heat, and being given the chance, would pour forth as living water from a fountain. They will be found at work even when the dog-star rages, and men less firmly constituted are ready to exclaim with