

must likewise be an individual recognition of the varied claims of morality and beneficence which Masonry asserts, to the end that there may be some willing performance of duty in those fields where each soul walks by itself, having its special opportunity of work and sacrifice. If in anything Masonry has deteriorated in these latter times, it is by the growing disposition to merge individual responsibility and duty into organized movement and endeavor. It is by no means an auspicious sign that brethren seem so much inclined to make the system and the institution responsible for the expression of Masonry and the performance of its work. Certainly it is a departure from the original purpose thus to set aside the direct and personal force of obligations taken—to put forward the organization instead of the individual when any ministry of good work is to be undertaken.

In the matter of Masonic charity and helpfulness, the prevalent idea is that lodges are to perform such services. If a brother pays his dues and contributes to the relief fund, he assumes that he has performed all that is required of him in the way of benevolent endeavor. He forgets that he has pledged himself to an individual ministry at the call of his needy brethren, and that it is not possible to put the whole work of beneficence upon the lodge or other organization.

Masonry is more than a mutual aid society organized to receive and pay out funds according to specified rules. It is a system of moral teaching and obligation that appeals to the mind and conscience; a great brotherhood wherein the conditions of related life are recognized, and the obligations of an individual helpfulness declared. In this personal relation brethren are to sympathize with each other, are to render aid when assistance is required, thus illustrating the character of the association in which they have membership. It makes no difference how strong the lodge is—how fruitful the organization is in works of bene-

volence—there is still a duty for the individual Mason to perform towards his distressed brother, and he may not always discharge the duty through the instrumentality of the lodge. Sometimes he must give of his own means, extend the hand of helpfulness to a distressed brother, and, by a direct personal bestowment of goods, afford the proof that he realizes the character of the vows he has taken, and has the disposition to be faithful thereto. The true Mason will show forth love and charity in his daily life. He will manifest a practical adherence to the injunction: "Do all the good you can and make no fuss about it."

Masonry thus illustrated may well stand forth in its pride, taking to itself in the way of an individual application the language of the patriarch: "When the ear heard then it blessed me, because I delivered the poor that cried, the fatherless and the widow, and him that had none to help. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.—*Freemasons' Repository.*"

Bro. W. J. Hughan's Letter on Quebec and the English Lodges in Montreal.

Had I known that my endorsement of the "leaderette" in the *Freemason* of Oct. 29 would have resulted in my receiving so much correspondence on the subject, I should have done well to think twice before embarking on such an enterprise. As it is, I must ask the favor of replying to the several letters from the Province of Quebec and elsewhere in this general manner. The kind remarks of the editor have, I understand, been duly appreciated, though several correspondents wish he had gone a little farther, and advised the Lodges to at once join the Grand Lodge of Quebec. I cannot take that view myself. The brethren in Montreal must be left to please themselves. We in this country can only hope that what they decide on in 1881-2 will be for the best. I think