

he might with propriety refuse; and forgives, where he might with strict justice resent. Thus, virtue and honor united, have hitherto been, and, I trust, will ever continue to be, a distinguishing characteristic of every Freemason.

MERCY is a refined virtue, held sacred by all good minds. If possessed by the Monarch, it adds brilliancy to every gem that adorns his crown, it gives glory to his Ministers, and an unceasing freshness to the wreath which decks the warrior's brow; it is the companion of true honor, and the ameliorator of justice, on whose bench when enthroned, she interposes a shield of defence. As the vernal showers descend from heaven to enliven and invigorate the whole vegetable system, so mercy, resting on the heart of man when its vital fluids are condensed by rancour and revenge, by its exhilarating warmth, returns perverse nature to its original source in purer streams. It is the chief attribute of the Deity, on whom the best and wisest of us must rest his hopes and dependence, and it is a duty we even owe to our enemies. To shew mercy and forgiveness is highly pleasing in the sight of our great Creator, who has said, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy," not only in this transitory life, but at the final day of retribution when summoned to His tribunal, and the actions of our mortal lives are unfolded to view; although justice may demand the fiat, we hope His mercy will avert the awful doom.

Ladies and Gentlemen,—I thank you for your polite attention to my address, which, I hope, has not been entirely uninteresting. I am sure it cannot have lessened Freemasonry in your estimation; and if there be any present who previously have not thought well of it, I hope they will henceforth be convinced that its true principles are virtue and goodness in their fullest extent.