

with Lodges here on earth, and their members as citizens of the world; and (2) as connected with Grand Lodge above, where the world's G.A. lives and reigns for ever.

In its lower aspect, it has three special claims upon our attention and regard, viz., as—

(a.) A bond of union and brotherhood between all the widely separated families and classes of humanity.

(b.) A neutral ground of meeting, for free and social intercourse, among less widely separated neighbours and acquaintances.

(c.) A universal letter of introduction to entire strangers; and a special medium for assisting the needy and distressed.

In its higher aspect, it is still more worthy of the eulogies and encomiums that have been lavished upon it by the brethren in every age. As one of our Fraternal Charges well expresses it,—“’Tis not mere blind fanatic zeal that prompts the brethren of the mystic tie to speak thus highly of the Mason's Craft. For well they know that it is the best and truest handmaid to religion that ever man devised, and admirably fitted to assist him in his search for light and knowledge, through all the various stages of this mortal life, from the cradled helplessness of infancy, to the final darkness of the grave. It is founded on a triad of deep mysterious truths, connecting earth with heaven,—the eternal existence of a Triune God, the resurrection of the body, and the Immortality of the Soul. It inculcates the purest principles of piety and virtue; and teaches plainly, in the First Degree, to measure all our words and actions by the gauge of rectitude and justice; to shape our conduct in the second, by the square of morality and honesty; and, in the third, to circumscribe our passions, with the compass of propriety, and keep them strictly within the limits of the circle of our duty to God and man. Hence we learn to be upright, just and true to our fellow men, humble, meek,

resigned to the will of God; so that the Mason, who has thus discharged his duty as a true and faithful brother of the Craft, may calmly wait that awful moment, when his heart shall cease to throb, and his soul released from the burden of flesh, shall wing its upward flight to the boundless unexplored expanse above.”

Truly then is Masonry a noble thing, and nobly should it be enshrined among us! It is a precious jewel, which demands a goodly setting. And we congratulate the brethrer of this Lodge upon the admirable hall which is consecrated to its use to-day, as our first Grand Master King Solomon congratulated himself and his people when his building at Jerusalem was completed; —“I was glad when they said unto me, we will go into the House of the Lord; for thither the tribes go up, even the tribes of Israel, to behold the fair beauty of the Lord, and to visit His Temple.”

Being, then, what it is, we might naturally expect to find Freemasonry everywhere held in the highest and most reverent estimation, and, like a powerful magnet, drawing into it irresistibly all that is great and good now, as it did in days gone by. But is it so? To some extent no doubt it is, and in proof of this we point with pride and pleasure to such an assemblage as is gathered here to-day. Yet is it not the case, that our influence and numbers are not nearly what they ought to be—that, in fact, they might, and ought to be far larger than they are? And, if so, where lies the fault? Have we any one to blame for it but ourselves? Speaking from my own experience, I should say, that Masonry is far from popular with women, as a body; that wives dislike it for their husbands, mothers for their sons, and that many men who take an independent stand in thought and action fight shy of it for themselves and their belongings. And why? Because there is a widespread feeling that men become Ma-