

"BE YE TEMPERATE, ETC."

The Masonic virtue so often neglected, and so solemnly impressed upon us in our lectures was the most striking feature in the character of John the Baptist. Seeing, with prophetic vision, the important station he was to occupy in accomplishing the designs of his Master, he possessed a moral courage that raised him to an elevation of soul equal to the task. He appeared in the world among a people adverse in their habits to the abstinent, self-denying life he lived. The long and well established reign of Polytheism brought the united religions of Rome, and all the tributary States, to oppose the peculiar doctrines he was commissioned to usher into the world. Rome, herself, at this period, was rapidly marching to the full maturity of national sin. The laurels that bloomed round the tombs of her early heroes, were forgotten for the inhuman sports of gladiators and frivolous public shows. Her triumphal arches began to droop and the stern integrity which characterised her early days had now expired in the sensual delights of the bath. Yet, in the midst of these allurements to luxury, his food was locusts and wild honey. Surrounded with obstinate bigotry, at the peril of his life, he marched with steady and fearless step, to the fulfillment of his Master's will, and when the arm of power was outstretched for his destruction, he boldly proclaimed the weakness of Herod, and foretold, in the startled ear of the tyrant, the coming vengeance of God. Chains and imprisonment had no terrors for him, for integrity of heart brought unconquerable fortitude to his aid; and when his work was finished, disdaining that sycophantic spirit that might suggest a compromise with his oppressor, with dauntless confidence he met the blows, and like one of the Grand Masters of our Order he sealed his fidelity with his blood.

In the address of the Grand Master of Michigan, at its recent session at Grand Rapids, we observe a generous recognition of the *Michigan Freemason*, as the organ of the jurisdiction. He says: I desire to call the attention of the Worshipful Masters here present to the importance of sustaining this organ of our Fraternity. I am pleased to learn that it is entering upon a new year with greatly improved prospects. This magazine should be cheerfully and handsomely supported by the lodges of this State, as only by a liberal support can we expect it to maintain a creditable and valuable table of contents. As a means of communication between the Grand Master and the subordinate lodges, of keeping up with the current decisions in masonic law, it should be in the hands of every officer of a lodge. During the past year, by the courtesy of its editor, my decisions have, from time to time, appeared therein, and if its circulation had been more general, I would have been saved the necessity of deciding the same questions a great number of times, and the lodges would have been saved the annoyance incident to a controversy which always accompanies the submission of any question to the Grand Master.

CAUTION.—The following, from the *London Freemason's Chronicle*, has as much significance in this country as it has in what is known as the "Old World." "Each day serves, only more and more, to convince thoughtful brethren that the strictest caution is necessary in the admission of candidates. If ever Masonry stood in need of recruits, it certainly stands in no such condition to-day. We are at liberty, more than ever, to pick and choose from among those who aspire to a participation in our mysteries, and it is more than ever necessary that we should exercise a spirit of caution."

Charity is the strong gravitation which binds the moral universe together, and which unites all spiritual intelligence to the Almighty Author of their being. It dwells, in its purity, and richness and fullness in the Great Jehovah, before whom all true Masons bow in humble adoration. And as we practice this virtue of all virtues, so shall we clothe ourselves in our limited sphere, with the perfections which dwelleth in God, and become in that sphere "perfect, even as our Father in Heaven is perfect." Yes, by practice of this charity we shall become charitable in spirit, and beloved of God and mankind. By such practice shall we be Masons indeed, and in our lives will shine the spirit of the craft, and seeing this, the profane even will say, "By their fruits ye shall know them." *So mote it be.—Michigan Freemason.*