

the manner and form in which the Deity shall be worshipped. Again, by its persistent refusal to recognize any political faction or creed, it holds itself aloof from the petty aspirations of political schemers; and by so doing it more closely unites its members with the cement of brotherly love and affection.

Our opponents see fit to accuse us of being bound together by oaths which no Mason dare, as he values his life, deviate from, but must, under all circumstances and conditions, live up to, right or wrong. To a sober-minded, candid, thinking mind, such wild-cat assertions must be the very height of folly and nonsense, as they indeed are. It is an undeniable fact, and every member of the Fraternity will bear me out in it, that such assertions are absolutely false and have not the least semblance of truth in them, but they are prejudicial nothings of an imaginative brain. I will admit that we are bound together, but it is most firmly by the sacred ties of brotherly love. I knowingly say that the obligations the Masonic Fraternity does impose upon its members contain not the least word or sentence that can, in any way, manner or form, conflict with our duties to God, our country, our neighbors, or ourselves. Not one single clause can be found whereby we are even asked to countenance wrong, or to uphold anyone in a course of wrong and sin, even if he be a Mason of the highest grade.

Now, what is Practical Masonry? I answer, that Practical Masonry is the exercise of brotherly love towards each and every one of the human race but more especially towards his Masonic brethren. It is relief, because it attempts to relieve suffering humanity, in whatever form it may be found. To "relieve the distressed is a duty incumbent upon all men, but particularly on Masons, who are bound together by an indissoluble chain of sincere affection;" while "truth is a divine attribute, and the foundation of every virtue." At the very com-

mencement of a Mason's career, he is taught to be truthful, to be good and true in every thought and action of his life. In obeying the lessons laid down by the tenets of his profession, he is not only obeying the commands of the Higher Power, but the command that Masonry imposes upon all of its followers.

She, by her laws, teaches temperance and moderation, not only of our appetites and passions, but of our purposes in life. Temperance means something besides a due restraint upon the appetites of man; it adds to that the principle that we should be temperate in all our dealings with our fellows; that we should curb all the baser passions of our nature, holding them always under control. Fortitude enables us to submit to the attacks of our enemies, and not let our tongue betray our purposes by argument or loud boasting; it "is that noble and steady purpose of mind which enables us to undergo any peril, pain or danger when prudentially deemed expedient." Prudence teaches us to weigh our words carefully before we speak, and not to bring reproach upon our institution by words spoken which had better been unspoken, and to "think twice before we speak." Justice, the last, but by no means the least of the cardinal virtues, is that which teaches us to "render unto all men their just due without distinction," and, that which is paramount of all, to temper every deed of our lives with justice and mercy, ever remembering that we "should do unto others as we would have others do unto us."

Practical Masonry is founded upon Faith, Hope and Charity, and it is displayed by every word and act of the fraternity. Let the opponents of the institution say what they may, it is a fact that cannot be denied, that the charity of the Mason means something beside empty words; it means deeds performed to as great, if not a greater, extent than by any other known institution. Should