

Right soon after the death of St Alban there was great war in England, so that the craft was almost lost until the time of Athelston a worthy King, and he brought the land to rest and peace: he builded many great works, as churches, abbeys, castles and many other buildings; he loved well the masons and he had a son called Edwin, he loved masons much more than his father did, and he was a great practicer of Geometry, using much to talk with masons and learned of them the Craft. Afterwards, for the love he had to masons, he was made one himself, and got of the King his father a Charter, and commission to hold every year, once, an assembly within the Realm of England, to correct within themselves defaults and trespasses that were done within the Craft, and he held himself an assembly at work, and made masons and gave them the charge and taught them the manners of masons, commanding that rule to be kept hereafter, and gave them the charter and commission to keep, that it should be preserved among them from time to time.

And when the assembly was met, he made a cry that all masons old and young that had any writing or understanding of the charges that was before in this land, or in any other, they should bring them forth, and there was some found in Greek, some in French, some in English, and some in other languages, the intent of them were all one; and he commanded a book to be made thereof, to testify how the craft was first found, commanding to be read when any mason or masons should be made, that so they might know their charge, and from that time to this, assemblies have been kept and certain charges have been given by masters and fellows.

Here follows the worthy and Godly Oath of masons; every man that is a mason take heed of this charge, and if you find yourselves guilty of any of those that you may amend and especially you that be charged now, to take heed that you keep it, for it is great peril for a man to forswear himself upon a book.

(OATH.)

The first is that you shall be true to God and holy church, and that you use no heresy, no error in your understanding or by the teaching of indiscrete men; also you shall be true liege men to the King, without treason or falsehood, and that you shall know no treason but that you warn the King or his council thereof; you shall be true one to another, that is to say, to every master and fellow of the craft of masonry, and shall do to them as you would they should do to you, and that every one keep true council of Lodge and chamber, and all other council that ought to be kept in the way of Masonry, and that none shall be thieves, nor in thievish company to his knowledge, but be true to the Lord and master that you serve and to see to his profit and advantage; and also that you call masons your fellows and brethren, and no other foul names; nor you shall not take your fellows wife to commit villainy with her, nor desire his daughter or servant to defile her, or them; you shall pay truly for your table where you board, that the Craft may have honour wherever you go. Those be the Charges in General, that belongeth every mason to keep, both masons and fellows. I will now rehearse other charges singular.

First, that no master shall take upon him any Lord's work or other man's, but that he know himself be able and sufficient in cunning to perform and end the same: so that the craft have no slander nor disworship, but that the Lord may be well served and truly. Also that no master take work but at reasonable rates, the master to live honestly and to pay his fellows truly as the manner is. Also that no master or fellow shall supplant other of their work, (that is to say) if he have taken work, or stand master of the Lord's work, he shall not put him out, if he be able in cunning to end the same. Also that no master or fellow take an apprentice for less term than seven years, and the apprentice be able of his birth and of his limbs as he ought to be, and also that no master nor fellow take no allowance to be made mason, without the assent of his fellows, at the least, six or seven. And that he that shall be bound and made mason be *audable and shires*, viz, that he be free born and

of good kindred and no bondsmen, and that he have his right limbs as a man ought to have. And that no work be put in trust with any that use to take journey, and that no mason give pay to his fellows but as they deserve. And that no fellow slander another falsely to the loss of his good name, and that no ungodly answers be made to any within the Lodge or without. And every mason shall prefer his elder before him, and that none shall play at hazzard nor any other play, whereby they may be slandered. And that no master shall be common ribald in lechery. And that no fellow go into the town on the night without a fellow that may bear him witness, that he was in an honest place. And that every master and fellow come to the Assembly if it be within 50 miles, if he have any warning, and stand there at the reward of master and fellows, and that every master and fellow if he have trespassed, should stand at the reward of masters and fellows to make their award if they may, and if not, then, go to the common law. And that no mason make mould square nor rule to any ruelle's. And that no mason set liver within a Lodge nor without to hew mould-stones with no moulds of his own making. And that strange fellows should be cherished when they come over the country, and set them on work as the manner is, (that is to say) if he have mould-stones in place he shall set him a fortnight at the least on work, and give him his hire; and if there be no stones for him, he shall refresh him with money to bring him to the next Lodge, and also, every and every mason shall serve truly the workers and truly make an end of your work, be it task or journey, if you may have your pay as you ought to have.

These charges that we have received and all others that belong to masonry, you shall keep, so help you God and hold me, and by this book to your power.

March, 1860

Copy of Masonic Charge, delivered "at Scarborough in the County of York, England, the tenth day of July, 1505—before William Thompson Esq. President at said Lodge and several others, Brethren Free Masons.

The several persons whose names are hereunto subscribed were then admitted into the said "fraternity."

ED. THOMPSON
JO LAMBERT
ROBT JOHNSON
THOS LISTER
SAMUEL W BUCK
RICHARD HUDSON

Clinton, C. W., }
Mar. 10th, 1860. } J. WILTON KERR.

NOTE.—Before the words, "at Scarborough," (written above) the words held thus—"We deem that at a private Lodge held"—(then continued, "at Scarborough" &c) Such is the indorsation on the Parchment, as above. J. WILTON KERR, Chap.

The motto of the seal at heading is,
"In the Lord is all our trust."

HASTE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

MANY judicious Brethren regard with anxiety, mingled with serious apprehensions, the present popularity of the Order and the consequent rapid increase of members in the Lodges. They cannot forget that it was mainly to this cause, added to a want of proper care in the selection of candidates, that our Brethren, a quarter of a century ago, were indebted for the persecution which for ten years swept over the country like a tornado, prostrating the Lodges, and scattering their members to the four winds of heaven,—many of them so far indeed, that to the credit of the Institution and the relief of their Brethren, they were never able to find their way back again. And although such might, and doubtless would, be the result of another similar outbreak, and however desirable some such purifying process may be, the recollections of the past are not sufficiently agreeable to induce a wish for a repetition of it. Nor do we

fear any such result, even though it should be true that like causes are in operation. The state of society, and the common sentiment of the people in relation to such subjects, have undergone radical changes since the period referred to, and the politicians of the present day would find it a difficult matter to re-enact the tragic scenes of 1830, should they attempt it. Our danger lies in another direction. Whatever of difficulty may be in reserve for us as a Fraternity, is to emanate from among ourselves, and as the natural result of gross negligence of duty. If the doors of our Lodges are to be thrown open to the indiscriminate admission of all persons who may apply for initiation, no power on earth can save the Institution from degradation, and preserve it from those internal dissensions and strifes which, as an unavoidable and natural consequence, would deprive it of the presence and support of those whose connection with it is no less essential to its rank among kindred societies, than promotive of its usefulness. This is the true source of our danger, and the consequences we have to fear and guard against. We do not believe that a large increase of members necessarily implies a corresponding increase of danger. But we do believe, that in a time of such unequalled prosperity as the present, there is more danger that improper persons can gain admission, than in seasons when a less amount of work is done by the Lodges; for the very plain reason that the members in the former case are over-crowded with business; while in the latter, ample time is allowed to committees to make up their reports,—fewer dispensations are asked for, and the work is better and more satisfactorily done. This, however, ought not to be so. Pressure of business ought not to be permitted to make any difference in the duties of the Lodge, as it is no justification for the neglect of them. In matters of so much importance to the whole Fraternity as the admission of new members, especially, there should be no haste, no omission of any of the forms, no over-riding or evasion of any of the requirements of the by-laws of the Lodge, or of the usages of the Institution. The candidate should be required to stand the full probationary term, and the ballot should not then be taken, under any circumstances, except on the report of at least a majority of the committee. All doubts should make against the candidate, and for the security of the Lodge. There is no safety in any other rule. If the applicant cannot present a positive character, which shall be satisfactory to the Lodge, he ought not to be admitted. Negative qualities are no recommendation, and cannot be received as any guaranty of fitness.

Another loose practice has obtained in many of the Lodges in some parts of the country, which should be corrected as speedily as possible, for nothing but evil can result from it, namely, the rushing of candidates through the ceremonies with locomotive speed. The accredited rule of Masonry is, that the candidate shall stand at least one calendar month before taking a superior degree; and in addition to this, and in conformity also to ancient practice, he is, in our best Lodges, required to make, and exhibit in open Lodge, a certain measure of proficiency in the lecture and essentials of the preceding degree, before advancement. And in those Lodges where this rule is in force, and carried out in the fullest extent, we find our most reliable, intelligent and zealous Brethren. The ceremonies and lessons being better understood, their teachings and beauties are more justly appreciated—the officers of the Lodge are more readily obeyed,—order is more easily preserved,—the members are harmonious and happy, and the Lodge is united and prosperous. In Lodges of this character,—stimulated to duty by love for the Order and a proper self-respect,—there is very little chance for improper persons to gain admission. They are not very likely to escape the scrutiny of a committee who feel the importance of the duty committed to them; and the personal responsibility which necessarily attaches to their report.—*Freemasons' Monthly Magazine.*

To forget and forgive is the good man's revenge.—Schiller.