

in former times the neophyte had to undergo a great many hard and trying tests. In those days, the newly-admitted had to give proof of his courage and heroism. Even his physical strength had to be shown, to overcome the manifold obstacles, which had been put in his path; but in our day, we consider only the moral qualities,—as moral strength, moral courage, are the necessary qualifications of a Freemason, who fully and properly understands the important duties and teachings of Freemasonry.

It is no difficult task to take part in such benevolent duties, as to clothe poorly-clad children; poor, hungry people, to provide with strong, nourishing food; or to provide a night's lodging, or even a temporary home for a stranger. Dear brethren, I do not wish to be misunderstood. I appreciate in the fullest measure the merits of those who, with unabating energy and self-denial, sacrifice their valuable time in the management, administration and support of such well-meaning institutions, and who expect no other thanks than the consciousness of having done their duty. They only carry out the kindly dictation of their own hearts, and their views of Masonic charity, avoiding publicity as much as possible. I should not like to see the honors of such noble, self-denying men undervalued; but "Courage and Strength," the symbol of the first journey, even in a moral sense, would I not consider as a condition by all those who, in their humane endeavors, are about to fulfill great expectations.

The road is smoothened, and the candidate feels good-will, and an active, warm feeling towards his fellow-men. Zeal and perseverance will find gradually the path where co-adjutors are to be found. A few are more than one; a few become many; the realization of the object contemplated is sure, and possible injurious consequences are lost to sight.

It is hardly imaginable that one would draw upon himself enmity in

consequence of his philanthropic endeavors, and suffer loss. But another, a not less Masonic problem, yes, perhaps Masonic work in the strongest sense of the term, is to champion the rights of the oppressed, no matter how powerful or influential his opponent may be. It is one main and great aim of a Mason to endeavor to fight against prejudices which might lead to the injury of his fellow-beings; it is his duty to oppose intolerance with all his strength and energy. It is a Mason's duty to hold high the torch of truth and enlightenment, so as to enable him to let the reflection shine forth in all its splendor, far-reaching over the four divisions of the globe, to burn brightly in those regions, which, by a forest of intellectual stupidity are divided from the rest of the world, where the benign rays of the sun have not dried up the plague-spreading swamps. To do this, you must possess courage, my dear brethren. As the faithful workman who is about to clear the track of smothering brush and mouldy stones, may easily be attacked by poisonous serpents, caution is therefore necessary under all circumstances; but fear does not become a man, neither does he know such when he honestly endeavors to do his duty, which he has freely and willingly taken upon himself. He knows no fear, as he has the sweet recollection that he, as a zealous Craftsman, has added a stone to finish the Temple for the improvement of mankind.

It is easy and pleasant, my dear brethren, to swim with the current of the stream, and be borne on by the strong waves. It is very easy to fall in with the views of the majority, even if they are wrong and false; yes, even unjust; but a Mason has a moral duty,—in a manly way, even when danger menaces him, to oppose and correct error; to assist Truth to victory, even when, by asserting his free Masonic ideas, he would make enemies. Even then, when recognized by others as a Freemason, he would