

of the fraternity, there seemed much that was inexplicable in the rebuff which it sustained. Here was Mr. Gresham, a conscientious and well intentioned man, who lamented, Sunday after Sunday, the prevalence of sorrow, care and suffering around him; who spoke, with tears in his eyes, of the apathy of the rich and the endurance of the poor; who deplored the selfishness of the age; who averred, bitterly and repeatedly, that "all sought their own"—here was he, withstanding to his utmost a brotherhood who declared—and none contradicted them—that their leading object was to relieve distress and sorrow. Of him they seek an audience. When gained, they use it to request the use of his pulpit, with the view of making their principles better known; of effacing some erroneous impressions afloat respecting them; in other words, of strengthening their cause.

That cause they maintain to be *identical with disinterested benevolence and brotherly love.*

Mr. Gresham declares "off," refuses them his church; and will have nothing to do with them! "They may solve the riddle who can," said I, as thoroughly baffled, I sought my pillow. "Each and all are incomprehensible. I don't know which party is the most confounding—the Masons, with their well-guarded secret, or Mr. Gresham, with his insurmountable prejudices!"

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## MASONIC CHARITY.

A STORY OF THE ANCIENT LANDMARKS.

(By Jefferson.)

"A look that is telling a tale,  
Which looks alone dare tell—  
When a cheek is no longer pale,  
And has caught the glance as it fell;  
A touch that seems to unlock  
Treasures unknown as yet,  
And the bitter-sweet's first shock  
One can never forget.  
The world is wide—these things are small,  
They may be nothing—but they are all."

It was on a palatial steamer, which was ploughing its way up the waters of the Potomac towards the capital of the nation, in the early winter months of 1861, when the incipient incidents of this story began. Seated around the stove of the ladies' parlor were quite a group of travellers, chiefly from the South. Conversation was brisk, and in a few minutes it was characterized by the most animated and marked earnestness. The subject itself was deeply—keenly exciting; and the full force of a previous determination was very perceptible in the tones and gestures of a number of the speakers. They had come from the land of the orange groves, where the sun holds its rule of almost perennial empire, and where the life blood of nervous power but seldom lingers in its dull supineness. They felt what they said and meant every word they spoke. With all of them, save one, the crisis of the hour demanded implicit devotion to the interests of the South, and in their view there was no room for hesitancy or indecision. In the crowd there was one who sat as a patient listener—so much so that his reticency might have been construed into a seeming indifference. Yet this was far from the fact, for his whole organism of thought was at work with the most solemn reflections, and with an interest that was unfathomable. He seemed to see better than they all the terrible fearfulness of the coming tempest, and the wide devastation it would bring. He saw around him among his travelling associates the representatives of the best families of the South, and among them several young gentlemen whose records of glory would probably soon be made in death. Sadness was depicted upon his countenance as upon one who was about to pass the ordeal of some terrible bereavement. He felt that he could not avert the calamity, and he resolved, whatever might transpire for the desolation of his country, that he would endeavor to be true to his Masonic charity which thus far in life had been the guide of his years.

Arrived in Washington, they soon scattered to different parts of the city of "magnificent distances," where, in a few brief hours, they were among their kith and kin, whom they had chiefly come to visit, in view of the impending national crisis. None saw the extent of the cloud which was gathering, and not one the fierceness and rage of the coming battle fields.

Party spirit, like the angel of death, was calling for its sacrifices, and nothing less than a *holocaust* of victims would glut its voracious jaws, or satisfy its insatiate appetite. The genius of liberty stood weeping in the halls of the capital, because of the