

representative, he ought, when applied to, to be able to dispense that assistance which in reality he is empowered by the Lodge to distribute, though for the sake of concentration and convenience there may be but one Treasurer. I do not think that it ought to be at the option of that Treasurer to comply with or refuse a demand made upon the funds by a representative. Our representative ought to be the Lodge Almshouse, but be placed under certain laws and regulations, say he have the power to draw upon the Treasurer for a sum from one, not to exceed five dollars, when a worthy case presents itself; thus giving more effectual relief to a brother whose case he is thoroughly conversant with and knows many things concerning him which delicacy or diffidence would prevent him from disclosing to a stranger, and while thus receiving relief be met with that kindness and sympathy which his heart craves as much as his body requires the welcome support. The brother who may fill the office of distributor, from the very number of applicants and from the nature of some cases, could hardly be expected to exercise that patience and sympathy which in solitary and exceptional cases may be expected. Let our charity be given sympathetically and cheerfully, for the Supreme Being himself "loves the cheerful giver." The Master of a contributing Lodge ought to have such powers and privileges as I have suggested. All brethren who have filled the position of Master know how often they are applied to for assistance, and have not the power to grant it but from their own private means.

To all worthy brethren requiring assistance, our duty is not one of choice but imperative. They must be assisted according to their necessities and our abilities. The bodies contributing to this fund ought to be furnished at least half yearly with a printed list, containing the names of all brethren assisted, the name of their Lodge, its number and register, that

all stockholders may know exactly how their funds are disposed of. By the adoption of some system of this character, benevolent committees would work more satisfactorily, and relief find its way to the most deserving and worthy, and give greater satisfaction to all concerned. The Lodges of this city follow the example of our primitive brethren, who gave a tithe or a tenth of their possessions for the support of those who received their offerings. We in some cases subscribe more than a tenth part of our Lodge income for the most praiseworthy of all causes, the relief of the destitute. Let us as Lodges be punctual in payments, keep the coffers filled, provide ample means for this holy use, deal out our charity with no grudging or niggard hand, that one of the *Grand Traine* of our fundamental principles, RELIEF, be not only a name, but a living actual reality. Thus by deeds of worth and goodness, let us magnify our time-honored and glorious institution, and work earnestly for its development and promotion. The financial prosperity of Masonic charity is an index to the rapid growth and extension of Freemasonry; it has grown everywhere during the last quarter of a century, and particularly during the last decade. It may be asked, what is the secret of this popularity of Freemasonry? What is the special influence at work which makes it now more popular than ever? A full answer to this would involve a long disquisition. Suffice it to say that in some cases it is curiosity, in some selfishness is the incentive, and men are and may be still influenced by these motives to join the Mystic Fraternity, as the unworthy were found in the ranks of purer beings and loftier intelligences, as one of the chosen twelve was unfaithful. So will they be found in the ranks of the good and true until the millennial glory shall dawn upon a regenerated earth; until the mystic tie and mysterious union of our great Brotherhood, which has adorned all ages, shall finally