

WEST VIRGINIA.—1888.

THE Twenty-fourth Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of West Virginia was held at Parkersburg, on the 13th November, 1888, Grand Master CHARLES H. COLLIER presiding.

An elaborate address of twenty pages was delivered by the Grand Master. Because of the eloquence which marks some of its passages, and because of the moral precepts which it so beautifully inculcates, we transfer from this admirable address to our own pages some of its most striking sentences. Speaking of his own jurisdiction, Brother Collier says :—

Our duties and obligations have been paramount to every other consideration, and our greatest power has been developed in the quiet retreats of the Lodge-room. Herein lies the great force that constitutes the wealth of Masonry. There is no Lodge-room within our borders where dissension has entered to disturb its peace and harmony. The first tenet of our profession has been fully exemplified. Masonry means brotherly love in its strictest sense,—that fellowship that counsels the erring, guides the tempted, succors the helpless, and establishes the feet of the fallen. It never betrays and never deceives. He who has not learned this has never learned the A B C principles of fellowship, and, therefore, knows nothing about Masonry. A selfish man can never become a true Mason, because he cannot realize the vital force of brotherly love. With him the soul of Masonry is left out. Its energy constitutes no part of his nature.

The truths contained in the above extract are worthy of being pondered by every Mason. Never, indeed, can a selfish man become a true Mason. The former seeks his own personal ends and advancement; the latter acts upon the principle, "In honor preferring one another."

Speaking of the necessity of supplying our members with Masonic literature, the Grand Master well and wisely says :—

We fall into error, and overvalue our machinery, when we suppose that the routine duty of the Lodge and the recital of the ritualistic work will meet the demands of our natures. The growing mind will seek other associations, and it will not be long before the many will be known as Masons by attendance at the annual meetings only. This is in great measure present experience. It is our work to develop the intellect as well as the conscience, uniting the two into one nature, so as to produce an unclouded mind with fidelity to principle which constitute the highest type of manhood.

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