

songs become mute, and sounds pass away; only that which Freemasonry created and creates—souls that are free, purified and inspired by that which is true, beautiful and sublime, will never perish; the temple of Humanity will never fall into ruin, so long as men exist upon this earth, and so long as the breath of God does not permit the holy fire of love towards Him and towards their fellow men to become extinguished in their hearts.

The materials which we as Freemasons employ in the erection of our grand spiritual edifice are of the grandest, noblest, and most sublime kind. The foundation consists of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth; the superstructure is raised by the practice of the four cardinal virtues: Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence, Justice. Its three grand supporting pillars are Wisdom, Strength and Beauty. The ornaments are the chief attributes of a noble mind, Virtue, Honor and Mercy. The furniture is formed by Music, Poetry and Eloquence. Among its valued treasures are Fraternity, Liberty and Equality. That stupendous edifice is crowned with the theological virtues, Faith, Hope and Charity. Charity, my brethren, in its most comprehensive application; not only in the sense in which it is kind,—that is, in the practice of benevolence; not only as applied to matter, but also in the sense in which it is just, as applied to opinion and to the mind; and in that sense Charity embraces tolerance and education, as also every quality that is essential in man to promote the welfare and happiness of mankind.

The sublime principle recognized and maintained by our fraternity is Love. Love is the incentive that animates us in all our acts, and from doing that which might in the least tend to injure ourselves or others. It is love which teaches us to conciliate and tame our passions; to establish among men a spirit of peace and concord which may render them impervious to feelings of hatred and re-

venge—those bitter enemies which poison the best of our days; to inculcate sentiments of honor and probity which may render men more attentive to their respective duties; to support towards each other the tender relation of brothers by which we as Freemasons address each other; and, in a word, to form an admirable fraternity whose aim is Love, Liberty and Equality.

Whence must arise that comely order,
That delightful self-complacency,
Which nothing earthly gives or can destroy—
The soul's calm sunshine and the heart-felt joy.

Brethren, whosoever is possessed of pure love is in possession of the true Masonic faculties and virtues; it is he who is in possession of the real secrets of our noble order; and it will be readily conceived that these grand and sublime secrets cannot be acquired by purchase, by gift, or by theft, but that the only means of acquiring them is by constant study and unremitting practice.

It is, my brethren, because love is the sublime principle which we recognize and maintain, that we so readily, whether as individuals or as a lodge, contribute to relieve the wants and distress of our poor and needy brethren, their widows and orphans, even without the existence of any written law in our Constitution requiring us to perform these acts of charity. Freemasons do not require any such special enactment. They, being true to their Masonic principles, perform their duties towards their neighbors readily and cheerfully, without any coercion from without. But not only do we readily and cheerfully contribute towards the relief of those in distress and in need—we do it in a manner that the recipient shall not feel as if by that aid we place him under any obligation or confer upon him a favor. On the contrary, we endeavor to impress upon his mind that we give for the pleasure of giving pleasure, and not in any way as a favor or obligation. Another peculiarity in