

**Grand Lodge  
Free & Accepted Masons  
Of California  
Grand Oration 1879**

**Grand Orator  
Lorenzo Sawyer**

MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND MASTER AND BRETHREN OF THE GRAND LODGE

My remarks on this occasion will be of an historical character, relating mainly to the rise, progress, and vicissitudes of our Craft, especially during the middle ages and more recent times: together with some reflections on its present condition and its relation to other organizations and to the general interests of mankind.

Masons need not be told that tradition carries the origin of our fraternity back to very early times, as early at least as the building of King SOLOMON'S Temple, and, as some maintain, to a much earlier period. Like that of other ancient human institutions its early history is, necessarily, obscure. That it is ancient none can doubt, and there is much to confirm the views of those who give it its earliest origin; and that there were associations of operative Masons at a very early period is clear.

Man is pre-eminently a social being. He craves companionship. He is endowed with affections and sensibilities, with emotional faculties, with a sense of the beautiful and sublime, with reasoning powers, with constructive and organizing capacities; all which are capable of unlimited expansion and development. He is also, naturally, an eminently religious being. There is implanted in his nature an innate sense of some superior, overruling power, which demands and receives his adoration; and to which, whether known or unknown, he bows with reverential awe. Man's social instincts find their first gratification and development in the family circle. The social field then becomes enlarged by the union of contiguous families into neighborhoods, hamlets, villages, towns, cities, and still larger aggregations of people of similar origin, language, tastes, and habits. Upon coming into these social relations with his fellows, man soon perceives his dependence; that he has occasion for assistance, for companionship, for sympathy; that to obtain these he must in turn yield aid, companionship, and sympathy; that there must be mutual forbearance and concession. He soon learns to recognize the principles of *meum* and *tuum*; to perceive the distinction between right and wrong; to appreciate the necessity of obedience to some fixed rule of action that shall equally protect and secure the interests of all, and the propriety of having some arbiter to ultimately determine disputed points and enforce the rights of &11 when duly ascertained. The result is that his organizing capacity is brought into exercise, and the people, thus aggregated in obedience to their social instincts, are moulded into civil and political communities governed by laws established by some authority recognized as entrusted with the duty, with something in the nature of a judiciary to ascertain the rights and duties of each individual, and an executive to enforce those rights and duties when thus ascertained. Society, thus organized, by combining the efforts of its individual members and systematically directing them to the accomplishment of some common object, produces vast results utterly unattainable by unorganized individual exertion.

One of the first wants of man, after food and clothing, is shelter—some protection against the heat of midday or midsummer sun, or the cold of midnight and mid-winter; or-against the piercing winds and the rains and snows of changing seasons. In his primitive state indifferent shelter is found in rude booths and huts constructed of the branches, leaves, and bark of trees; afterwards, as he progresses a step in information and experience, in tents woven of twigs and vines or constructed of poles covered with the skins of animals, and finally in tents of cloth woven from fibrous material which has come to his advancing knowledge. But, as he advances in civilization and, in obedience to his social instincts, congregates in hamlets, towns, and cities, something more substantial and permanent than tents is required; and he commences to build his more commodious and pretentious habitation of unburnt bricks, of wood, of stone, and finally of burnt bricks. The first object suggested in his building is utility, and this requires but the simplest

and plainest structure, involving nothing beyond the mere exercise of his constructive faculties, and little skill or other aid than that which is afforded by his own hands and the hands of members of his own family. As he progresses in civilization and refinement his aesthetical faculties come into action, and he begins to perceive that certain forms and proportions are more pleasing to his senses than others; that symmetry, variety, and ornamentation are more grateful to his sense of the beautiful than mere plain naked walls; that large and massive structures produce grander effects; and he begins to study how to enlarge his structure, how to so proportion and adorn it as to produce the most striking and most agreeable results. Thus architecture, as distinguished from mere construction, originates, and afterwards becomes gradually developed into an art, which, in its highest achievements, requires associated and organized effort, as well as a more remarkable combination of individual talents and more extensive and varied individual knowledge than any other human pursuit, and in which are found exemplified some of the grandest triumphs of genius.

I have referred to man as being not only asocial, but also, naturally, an eminently religious being. To his religious instincts, doubtless, is due much of his progress in architectural science. All the grandest achievements in architecture in all the earlier ages have been attained in the erection of temples for the worship of the Deity, palaces for kings, and mausoleums, memorials, and tombs for the dead. The religious and reverential tendencies constitute the basis of the sentiment which prompts the erection of all these classes of edifices; and their construction in all the earlier ages has been mainly under the inspiration and supervision of the priesthood.

The stimulus afforded by the desire to erect to the Deity some grand token of homage and appreciation doubtless contributed more than all other influences combined to the development and advancement of architecture as a science. We know very little of the domestic or private architecture of ancient times, even down to and including the earlier history of Greece and Rome; and what little we do know leads us to suppose that private buildings were comparatively mean. No vestige of any domestic or private structure of ancient Egypt, Nineveh, Babylon, or even of ancient Greece or Rome has come down to our times. To all ancient private, as well as to most public structures of these countries, the lines of SPENCEB forcibly apply:

High towers, faire temples, goodly theatres,  
Strong walls, rich porches, princelie pallaces,  
Largo streets, bravo houses, sacred sepulchres,  
Sure gates, sweet gardens, stately galleries,  
Wrought with faire pillowes and fine imageries,  
All these (O pitie!) now are turned to dust,  
And overgrown with black oblivious rust.

An able writer upon the subject observes that "Although it is very probable that men built houses to shelter themselves from the inclemencies of the weather before they constructed temples to the divinity, yet it must be obvious to all who have studied the early history of the human race in connection with its antiquities, and have considered the analogies afforded by the rude and simple nations of the world at the present time, and particularly by those who occupied the Western side of the Americas on the discovery of those continents, that, though the art of building may have originated in the personal wants of man, the science of architecture was the result of his devotional feelings and tendencies. In Egypt and in India, in Greece and in Italy, in Gaul and Britain, in Mexico and Peru, structures connected with the worship of the divinity existed and still exist, of the earliest date, or rather of dates beyond the range of positive chronological information—some evincing a greater and others a less advance in taste and refinement; but all retaining some analogy, bearing upon the same point, and tending to what may be called architectural arrangement. None of these countries, however, nor any other with which we are acquainted, present anything intended for the personal accommodation of man in the early ages; nor is there anything in the sacred structures that could for a moment induce the idea that the dispositions of architecture arose in the construction and composition of domestic buildings. Everything lends to the belief that devotion and superstition were the originators, carriers-on, and, it may almost be said, perfectors of the science." The same writer, speaking of the ruins of Thebes, the most ancient city of Egypt, says: "It is strange indeed, that a people who displayed

such energies in the construction of tombs, pyramids, and temples, should have left no work of any description that could be applied to any useful purpose." DENON, one of the French commission sent to explore the antiquities of Egypt, says of Thebes: " Still temples—nothing but temples—not a vestige of the hundred gates so celebrated in history; no walls, quays, bridges, baths, theatres: not a single edifice of public utility or convenience. Not with standing all the pains I took in the research I could find nothing but temples; walls covered with obscure emblems and hieroglyphics, which attested the ascendancy of the priesthood who still seemed to rule over the mighty ruins, and whose empire constantly haunted my imagination."

DIDORUS SICULES, a Roman historian of the century before the Christian era, speaking of the comparative meanness of the houses of the Egyptians, as they then appeared, accounts for it by saying—" They call the houses of the living inns, because they stay in them but a little while, but the sepulchres of the dead they call everlasting habitations, because they abide in the grave to infinite generations. Therefore they are not very curious in the building of their houses, but in beautifying their sepulchres they leave nothing undone that can be thought of." These facts tend strongly to show that the development and perfection of the science of architecture in ancient times originated in, and was almost wholly dependent upon, the religious instincts implanted in our nature. Among the Hebrews the science of architecture does not seem to have made much progress till the time of the building of Solomon's Temple. Indeed, it could hardly be expected, under the circumstances, that it would. Although the Egyptians had reached a high point of their great proficiency in the science at the time of the exodus, and MOSES, the Hebrew leader, was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, yet, the children of Israel themselves had long been oppressed and little better than slaves, engaged in the lowest employments, of which making unburnt brick was one ; and they were not likely to have been in a position to acquire much practical knowledge of or skill in the science of architecture. So, also, their long sojourn and extensive wanderings in the wilderness, and their un-settled condition during the 480 years from the exodus till the time of SOLOMON, afforded no opportunity for developing a taste for architecture. Their habitations must necessarily have been rude and of a temporary character—probably to a great extent tents. There does not appear to have been any stable resting place, even for the Ark of the Covenant, until the building of SOLOMON'S Temple. Altars of stones were set up at various places during their wanderings, but these could make no pretension to architectural design. Even SAUL does not appear to have had any settled residence. Nor did the Hebrews, during his time, seem to have had a settled permanent capital. DAVID built himself a house of cedars, but in consequence of his wars he was unable to erect a temple, and that work was left to his son, SOLOMON. God directed the prophet NATHAN, to " go and tell DAVID, my servant, thus saith the Lord, thou shall not build me a house to dwell in, for I have not dwelt in an house since the day I brought up Israel unto this day, bat I have gone from tent to tent, and from tabernacle to tabernacle." When SOLOMON entered upon his work of building the temple he had no architect capable of erecting the structure, or even men competent to hew timber, at least, to his satisfaction, for, when he sent to HIBAM, King of Tyre, requesting him to furnish men " to hew him cedar trees out of Lebanon," he gave as a reason for the request—"for thou knowest that there is not among us any that can skill to hew timber like unto the Sidonians." He obtained from Tyre his chief architect, HIRAM, the widow's son, a man who " was filled with wisdom and understanding, and cunning to work all works in brass. And he came to King SOLOMON and wrought all his work." So, also, after the building of the temple, HIRAM furnished SOLOMON with cedar and fir timber to build his own house. He had before performed the same service for SOLOMON'S father. "Now HIRAM, King of Tyre, sent messengers unto DAVID, and timber of cedar, with masons and carpenters to build him a house." That tents were still used to a considerable extent, at least by the common people, is evident from the quotation already made and from the fact that, after the dedication of the temple and the conclusion of the attending festivities, SOLOMON sent the people away, " and they went unto their tents joyful and glad of heart."

Whatever may have been the state of the science of architecture among SOLOMON'S subjects, there can be no doubt that architects and artificers of the highest eminence in their profession were furnished by HIRAM, King of Tyre; and the result was the erection of a temple of unprecedented magnificence, though small in dimensions, compared with many other religious edifices, both ancient and modern.

Naturally the social instincts of men of similar occupations, tastes, and habits, even though of different nationalities, engaged in building the temple, would lead them to organize into a society of some kind; and, from the accounts of the work given in the Scriptures, there can be little doubt that the architects, masons, artificers, and skilled workmen engaged in the enterprise were go organized, with officers in due gradation to superintend their intercourse and their work; for there was a large number of men placed over the multitude of workmen, and every part of the work was carried on upon a perfect system and with the utmost order and precision. The stones were cut in the quarries; the timbers were hewn in the forests; and all the vast amount of carving and ornamental work was done before the material came upon the ground, " so that there was neither hammer, nor ax, nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was in building."

Such results as indicated could only be attained by skill, organization, and sub-ordination carried to the highest degree of perfection. It has been claimed, that our Craft had its origin at the building of King SOLOMON'S Temple, and that our ritual is founded on that idea. Others insist upon a still earlier origin. Grecian architecture had, doubtless, at that period, attained a high degree of development. As is well known, there was in very early times an order among the Greeks of Ionia, in Asia Minor, called Dionysiacs. An authoritative writer upon architecture, in speaking of this order, observes: " We know that the Dionysiacs of Ionia were a great corporation of architects and engineers, who undertook and even monopolized the building of temples, stadiums, and theatres precisely as the fraternity of Masons in the middle ages monopolized the building of cathedrals and conventual churches. Indeed the Dionysiacs resembled the mystic fraternity now called Freemasons in many import-ant particulars. They allowed no strangers to interfere in their employment; they recognized each other by signs and tokens; they professed certain mysterious doctrines under the tuition and tutelage of BACCHUS, to whom they built a magnificent temple at Teos, where they celebrated his mysteries as solemn festivals; and they called all other men profane because not admitted to their mysteries. But their chief mysteries and most important secrets seem to be their mechanical and mathematical sciences; or all that academical knowledge which forms the regular education of a civil engineer. We know that the temples of the gods and the theatres required an intense apparatus of machinery for the celebration of some of their mysteries ; and that the Dionysiacs contracted for the jobs, even at far distant places, when they had not the privilege of building the edifice which was to contain them. This is the most likely way of explaining the very small quantity of mechanical knowledge that is to be met with in the writings of the ancients. Even VITRUVHTS, the earliest Roman writer on architecture, does not appear to have been of the fraternity, and speaks of the Greek architects in terms of respect next to veneration." Ionia was settled by colonists from Greece long before the building of SOLOMON'S Temple; but whether the society of Dionysiacs had been organized, or, if so, whether HIRAM, King of Tyre, or his architects had any connection with them, or derived their architectural knowledge from them, or from the European Greeks, we do not know. Tyre, however, was but a few hundred miles distant from Ionia— about as far by water as from San Francisco to San Diego—and HIRAM might well have introduced the society from that country into his own, or might have obtained architects from that source. From the description of the temple, its architectural features seem to resemble the architecture of the Greeks much more strongly than that of the Egyptians, Assyrians, Hindoos, or any prior people of whom we have any knowledge. The ancient Jewish profane historian, JOSEPHUS, in describing King SOLOMON'S palace, says its "roof was according to the Corinthian order." If this be true, the builders must necessarily have been familiar with Grecian architecture; and this fact, in connection with the others already stated, renders it highly probable that the erection of both this edifice and the temple was under the supervision of the order of Dionysiacs. It is plain, therefore, that in very early times there were associations of architects, builders, masons, etc., organized upon principles very similar to that of the modern Craft of Freemasons, while Masonry was still operative; but whether there was in fact any connection between the ancient and our modern Order, we have no means of satisfactorily determining. There is a long hiatus during which history affords no definite information. Whether there was such a connection is not a matter of any present practical importance. It is only a question of historical interest, affecting our pride in the antiquity of our Fraternity. But, discarding all speculations on the subject, authentic history carries the existence of the Order back to a period which renders it sufficiently venerable on the score of age.

It is certain that, early in the mediaeval ages, associations were formed by architects masons, and builders, who were engaged in the construction of public edifices. They traveled from place to place, and wherever a church or public building was being erected, they collected together, camped around it in tents, established a regular government under a Master, and worked upon the structure. In order to make themselves known to each other among strangers, and to guard themselves against imposition, they employed a system of secret signs and symbols; and possibly, even probably, at first, the principles of their art were among their secrets. Again, as in earlier periods of man's history, the erection of edifices for the worship of the Deity became the great work of the times; and, strange as it may now seem, the association of Masons was highly esteemed by, and it enjoyed the favor, encouragement, and protection of the Roman Catholic priesthood. They were allowed to govern themselves, and were exempted by bulls issued by the Popes from many burdens imposed upon other workmen, and for this reason were called "free " masons. A well informed standard author observes that " The desire for pomp and ceremony displayed at an early day by the Roman Catholic priests in the exercise of their religion, introduced a corresponding desire for splendid monasteries and magnificent cathedrals. In order to encourage the profession of architecture, the Pontiff's of Rome, and the other potentates of Europe, conferred on the fraternity of Freemasons the most important privileges, and allowed them to be governed by laws, customs, and ceremonies peculiar to themselves. The association was composed of men of all nations—of Italian, Greek, French, German, and Flemish artists who were denominated Freemasons, and who, traveling from one country to another, erected those elegant churches and cathedrals which men still admire. The government of the association was remarkably regular. Its members lived in camps and huts reared besides the building on which they were employed. A surveyor or master presided over the whole. Every tenth man was called a warden and overlooked those who were under his charge; and such artificers as were not members of the fraternity were prohibited from engaging in the buildings which Freemasons alone had a right to rear. In the year 1140, wherever the Roman Catholic religion was taught, the meetings of Free Masons were sustained and patronized."

At this period operative Masonry seems to have been in the zenith of its prosperity. The architects of Rome had long before discovered and developed the principle of the arch and the dome, and employed it extensively in their architecture. The principle seems not to have been known to the Egyptians, Greeks, or any earlier people, or, if known, it does not appear to have been much used. The Roman arch was constructed nearly on a semi-circle. The mediaeval architects developed the arch into the pointed or lancet form, and the result is the numerous specimens of so-called Gothic church architecture with which Europe abounds, and which excited the wonder and commanded, and still command, the admiration of civilized man. While thus under the protection and patronage of the Church, in 1150 Freemasonry was introduced into Scotland by the architects who built the Abbey of Kilwinning, and a Lodge was established in that town. Thenceforth till 1736 all Scottish Lodges received their charters from " Mother Kilwinning," who continued to exercise her prerogatives down to a period within the memory of Masons now living. Soon after this they constructed several celebrated church edifices—among these Melrose Abbey, the most beautiful specimen of Gothic architecture in Scotland, and which, even in its ruins, excites the admiration of all beholders. It was the East Oriel of this Abbey church which gave birth to the beautiful and celebrated poetical description by Sir WALTER SCOTT, in the Lay of the Last Minstrel, which I cannot forbear quoting in this connection:—

The moon on the Hast Oriel shone  
Through slender shafts of shapely stone,  
By foliated tracery combined:  
Thou wouldst have thought some fairy's hand  
'Twixt poplars straight the ozier wand  
In many a freakish knot had twined,  
Then framed a spell, when the work was done,  
And changed the willow wreaths to stone.  
The silver light, so pale and faint,  
Showed many a prophet end many a saint  
Whose image on the glass was dyed;

Full in the midst his cross of red  
Triumphant Michael brandished  
And trampled the apostles' pride.  
The moonbeam kissed the holy plane  
And on toe pavement threw a bloody stain.

About the same time, or more probably, as some maintain, at an earlier period, Freemasonry was introduced into England, and a Lodge was established at York; it being a disputed point whether it was brought from Scotland, or, at an earlier date, introduced directly from the Continent. However this may be, many of the finest specimens of church architecture in Europe, in the Gothic style, are the work of the Craft in England. To the introduction of Freemasonry into Scotland and England, is, perhaps, due the perpetuation of the Order to the present time; for it continued, to flourish, with some vicissitudes of fortune, in that more congenial soil long after it was utterly crushed out on the Continent by the unrelenting arbitrary power of its former patron, the Church of Rome.

When operative Masonry began to flourish in the earlier part of the middle ages, the learning of the times was mostly monopolized by the priesthood. The architects and superior builders and Workmen of the higher degrees of Masonry, however, must, necessarily, have been men of education and varied learning, well informed in mathematics and in all other sciences then cultivated, or they could not have constructed edifices requiring a combination of so many qualities of mind and so wide a range of varied information. There were, doubtless, some others, outside the priest-hood, well versed in the learning and sciences of the times. There would naturally be similar tastes and strong bonds of sympathy between scientific and learned men of all classes, which would bring them into association, whether within or without the Order; and such was, in fact, the case. Accordingly, we find that, in process of time, learned and scientific men, not architects or practical masons, were, by courtesy, initiated into the Order, and "accepted" as Masons; and thus the term "accepted" was introduced into the name of the Order—"Free and Accepted Masons."

While the Order enjoyed the favor and patronage of the Church, learned ecclesiastics were often admitted, and Cardinal WOLSEY even became Grand Master. Highly important consequences, naturally and logically, followed from this widening of the field of eligibility. Intelligence begets inquiry; and inquiry induces examination, and, in an association of inquiring minds, discussion, which, perhaps, leads to doubts. Dogmas, whether scientific or religious, are thus brought to the test of reason, and are accepted or rejected, as they stand, or fail to stand, the test applied. In an association of learned men of various professions and scientific pursuit, like the Masonic fraternity, especially after the admission of learned men other than architects and operative masons, there could not fail to be a spirit of free inquiry and discussion; and such was, doubtless, the result in this case. New discoveries were made in astronomy and in other sciences, which were, apparently, in conflict with many accepted dogmas of the Church. These, as they became developed and demonstrated, could not fail to be adopted by the intelligent and scientific men found in the Order, even though rejected by the Church. Free inquiry was encouraged by the Order, and the tendency of its principles was to enlighten the mind; while, at that day, both the tendency and policy of the Church was to keep it in ignorance and limit the sphere of its operation and influence. The principles of the two organizations, therefore, came into silent, but though silent, no less irreconcilable or effective antagonism; and the jealousy of the Roman hierarchy became greatly excited against its former protégé. The Order was accused of promoting the reformation, and otherwise interfering with the interests of the Church. The invention of the art of printing, by affording the means of multiplying books and disseminating ideas, rapidly extended and enlarged the circle of intelligence, the field of free discussion and independent thought, and consequently of independent action. With the rapid spread of knowledge, the number of competent builders, artificers, and other skilled workmen multiplied outside the Masonic organization, so as to render the Order less necessary for the construction of religious edifices, and for the other purposes of the priesthood. Finally the breach widened, and the whole power of the Church was brought to bear against the Order, and ultimately succeeded in practically suppressing it upon the Continent. In freer England and Scotland, however, the Order continued to exist, though it sometimes languished. Even here it some times encountered

the enmity and opposition of the Church. The Archbishop of Winchester, during the minority of HENRY VI, procured the passage of an act of Parliament forbidding the meetings of Lodges, but for some reason it does not appear to have been rigidly enforced; and six years afterwards, a Lodge was actually held under the auspices of the Archbishop himself. HENRY VI, after attaining his majority himself joined the Order; and HENRY VII became Grand Master. Queen ELIZABETH appointed commissioners for the purpose of suppressing the Order, but upon examination some of them joined it. WILLIAM III was also Grand Master. As the number of Masons received into the Order and accepted from among the learned men outside the profession of architects and practical Masons increased Masonry, by degrees, lost its operative character and became in a corresponding degree speculative; until at length it wholly ceased to be operative and became purely speculative. The change was gradual, and it is difficult at this day to determine the precise date when it was finally effected. In 1607 the celebrated English architect, INIGO JONES became Grand Master and under his auspices many men in England eminent for their learning were received into the Order as accepted Masons, and from that time the change was, doubtless, more rapid. Among those so received was ELIAS ASHMOLE, the distinguished antiquary, who was initiated in 1616. He afterwards revised and recomposed the ritual, giving it the form, substantially which it has retained until the present time. He thus, doubtless, did much to give direction to Masonic thought, and to stamp speculative Masonry with the characteristics which now distinguish it. In 1666 or soon thereafter. Sir CHRISTOPHER WREN became Grand Master. During the later years of his life Masonry declined, owing it is said to want of attention on the part of the Grand Master on account of the infirmities incident to old age; and it has also been said that, in the beginning of the eighteenth century, St. Paul's Lodge was the only one in England. It may have been the only one in Southern England, but it is believed that the Order was in a more flourishing condition in Northern England, as it certainly was in Scotland. However this may be the interest was revived in 1702, and in 1717 the four Lodges then in existence met at the Apple Tavern in Covent Garden, and organized themselves into a Grand Lodge and in 1723 the Grand Lodge adopted new constitutions framed by ANDERSON which have since been known as the ANDERSON Constitutions, and which are, substantially the same as those under which the Order is now working.

Whatever the character of Masonry may have been during the seventy or more years which may have been the transition period, from the time of the adoption of ASHMOLE'S ritual to the establishment of the ANDERSON Constitutions, there can be no doubt that from the latter date Masonry ceased to be operative and became purely speculative; and now, in the eloquent language of a former Grand Orator of this Grand Lodge, now no more, "The implements of our craft are no longer for operative toil. We do not now, as a part of our covenant, set fast the Doric pillar nor release from marble the ornament of the Corinthian Capital. We no longer sketch the complications of Gothic piles, and cement buttresses of haughty towers and carry up, course by course, the aspiring stones of pinnacles. The tools of our craft are representatives now of speculative truth, and speak to the inward eye of laws and duties that make life noble and character symmetrical and strong. Yet though we build no structures such as our ancient brethren reared; though the temples in which we meet are not the monuments of our own proficiency in the art whose instruments we cherish; we are builders and preservers in a richer sense for our Order itself grows stronger and more precious with years, and its uses are more varied and beautiful with the lapse of time; and the Masonic organization as now constituted, is far more remarkable and wonderful than the noblest edifice it ever added to the landscape of history."

Masonry, thus reorganized upon the speculative basis, and thus rehabilitated in a more liberal age, was soon transplanted from England into France, Ireland, Holland, Russia, Spain, Italy, Scotland, Germany, the United States, and finally into Africa, Asia and all the civilized parts of the world. In 1872 a Grand Lodge of the Order was opened in Rome itself, under the very shadow of St. Peter's and the Vatican, and in the very presence of its implacable foe, the Head of the Church. In the following year a Lodge was established by Americans in Jerusalem, almost within the purlieu of King SOLOMON'S Temple. During the last century Freemasonry has spread, and the membership of the Order increased with wonderful rapidity. There are now in the world more than ten thousand Lodges, having a membership of probably more than one million Master Masons; and it is highly creditable, both to the principles of the Order and to the members of the fraternity for the very general observance of those principles, that Masonry extends most

rapidly and flourishes most luxuriantly in those countries where knowledge is most generally disseminated among the people, and where civil, political, and religious freedom most completely prevail, as in England and her colonies, and in the United States of America. In the latter country there is, doubtless, a much larger membership in proportion to the population than in any other. In our own State of California the date of the charter of the oldest Lodge is April 19, 1850. As I learn from the report of the proceedings at the last Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of the State, there are now more than two hundred Lodges within its jurisdiction, -with a membership of more than twelve thousand. Of the character of that membership nothing more need be said than to call attention to the representatives of the various subordinate Lodges who constitute the Grand Lodge of California, now assembled in this magnificent temple, erected by and dedicated to the purposes of our Order. In all countries where there exists civil and political liberty and complete freedom of conscience, and where there is a general dissemination of knowledge among the people, Masonry has outlived its persecutions, if not all opposition. It has vindicated its character as an institution in harmony with true religion; an institution of patriotic impulses and tendencies; an institution promotive of subordination to good government and good order in the State, in the neighborhood, and in the family, and, by inculcating the practice of all the virtues, conducive to the best interests of man in all his relations, social, religious, and political.

Much use of the element of secrecy, by means of which brothers of the fraternity recognize each other among strangers and protect themselves from imposition, was formerly made by the enemies of the Order for the purpose of inflaming the prejudices of the ignorant and the jealous, and, doubtless, with some effect. The publication of the proceedings of the Grand Lodges authorized during later years has, however, tended largely to allay these prejudices. In these published proceedings the essential workings of the Order are laid open to public examination and criticism; and no one can read them, as they appear from year to year, without being strongly impressed with the good tendencies of the principles of Masonry in all their practical, as well as speculative, workings, as is there made known to all. We are no propagandists; We extend a special invitation to no man to enter the precincts of Masonry. If one seeks admission to our society it is unsolicited and of his own free, unbiased will, after a full investigation of our principles and their practical operation; and the fact that so many intelligent men, among the most orderly and worthy classes of society, seek association with us is ample evidence that our principles meet the approbation of good men, and that their tendencies are all to good order and to the highest interests of society at large. Speculative Masonry is not, and it does not profess to be, a religion or a substitute for religion; but it inculcates a system of the purest morals, which is an essential element and necessary concomitant of all true religion. There are certain elements or principles which are universally accepted as essential to all systems of faith worthy the name of religion—such as a belief in a Supreme Being; a recognition of the moral distinction between right and wrong; the obligation to recognize and cultivate the practice of all the virtues, such as temperance, sobriety, chastity, fortitude, prudence, justice, and, chief of all, charity. On these principles all must and do agree. There are other points of faith upon which the reason may and does pause, inquire, doubt; and yet it is upon these latter that zealots and enthusiasts dogmatize most confidently, dispute most furiously, and hate most implacably. It is upon these very points, where we should be most distrustful of the correctness of our judgment and most charitable towards the views of others, that man is most confident, most obstinate, most uncompromising; and it is upon these where he consigns his fellow-man to the dungeon, stretches him upon the rack, and burns him at the stake. Into that disputed territory Masonry does not enter. Its leading tenet, charity, forbids—all its principles prohibit it. It accepts and plants itself upon those self-evident and universally accepted principles which lie at the foundation of all true religion and all morality, and upon the recognition and practice of which all human happiness must rest. It earnestly and constantly inculcates those principles in its charges in the Lodge-room, its lectures, orations and writings, and in all its proceedings, published and unpublished. It admonishes us to seek after truth, and teaches that truth is an attribute of divinity and the foundation of every virtue. In the language of another, already familiar to you, which cannot be improved or too often repeated in your hearing—the Mason "is instructed to put a due restraint upon his affections and passions; to preserve a noble and steady purpose of mind, equally distant from cowardice and rashness; to regulate his life by the dictates of reason; and to render to every man his just due, without distinction. In short, the three great duties of life are impressed upon his conscience—



reverence to God, the chief good; kindness to his neighbor, as prescribed by the golden rule; and respect for himself by avoiding irregularities and intemperance, which impair the faculties and debase the dignity of his profession."

The Mason who cherishes these principles, and in all his daily walks conforms his conduct to them, cannot fail to be an honest pure man, and in all respects a worthy and highly useful member of society. And the tendency of the constant inculcation of these principles in the Lodge, in its published proceedings, and in all the social intercourse between Masons, cannot fail to have a beneficial influence upon the members of the Order, and, through them, upon society at large. Masonry, therefore though not a religion, or a substitute for it, is not antagonistic to true religion but on the contrary, by teaching its essential and universally accepted principles, it is a powerful auxiliary in its work of improving the condition of man: and he who would reject its aid, as some are disposed to do because the Church covers the same ground and more, would act upon the fanatical principle of the Caliph OMAR, when he burned the great library of antiquity at Alexandria, giving as a reason for his barbarism that, " if the writings of the Greeks therein contained agree with the Koran they are useless, and if not they are pernicious and ought to be destroyed." The fact that the teachings of the Church embrace the same fundamental doctrines does not, therefore, render the Masonic Order useless. It may be true that if all men, in every particular, lived in strict accordance with the doctrines of the Church, so far as they are really essential to the well-being of man here and hereafter, there might be no occasion for Masonry as now organized. So also, if every human being was a perfect Mason in theory and practice, there would be little need of the Church. But human nature is not thus perfect; and so long as it is constituted as it now is, there is ample room for all organizations, founded upon the generally accepted principles that lie at the foundation of all true religion and constitute the basis of all real happiness, to exercise their proper influence without jostling each other. The Supreme Architect of the Universe never made two objects exactly alike. Of the myriads of leaves in the forest, of grains of sand upon the seashore, or spires of grass in the field, no two will be found to precisely correspond in all their parts. So no two minds are cast in the same intellectual or moral mould. Each views objects and principles from its own standpoint. Different circumstances and surroundings often produce different impressions. One mind may be reached in one organization, and another by another. The Lodge may take hold of some that the Church cannot, or does not, reach. However this may be, if the inculcation of the fundamental principles of true religion is useful in one place, or organization, it must, also, be good in another. The constant contemplation of truth, of justice, of temperance, of charity, whether in the Lodge or elsewhere, cannot fail to elevate the thoughts and ennoble the character of the individual subjected to the influence; and it cannot do otherwise than lead, in a greater or less degree, to the practice of the virtues so contemplated.

Having thus briefly sketched the supposed origin, and the progress, vicissitudes, and present condition of Freemasonry, and made some reference to its principles, to its relation to other organizations, and to the interests of humanity, I shall conclude with an exhortation to the brethren to so conduct themselves as to afford to the world a perpetual living illustration of the principles which we inculcate and the virtues which we cherish. I find the precise idea which I desire to present, in conclusion, so aptly and beautifully expressed by Grand Orator DOLPH, of the Grand Lodge of our neighboring State, Oregon, that I shall not hesitate to appropriate his language : " Let the consciousness that the eyes of the world are upon us stimulate us to live up to the sub-lime principles of our Order. Become perfect Masons and you will become perfect men; you will be true to your country; you will be just, faithful and fraternal to your fellow-man; your characters will be adorned with all the virtues; you will act well your part in the age in which you live; you will walk humbly before God; and death to you will be but the joyful summons to present the work of your lives before the Orient for the inspection of the Master. Let us, also, remember that our work is to be tried by the unerring square of eternal justice. The light of God's eternal truth will discover all the elements of pride, vanity, and selfishness which have escaped the eyes of the world; and which will be found in that light to disfigure the sublimest displays of conduct, heroic in the eyes of men, and the brilliant performances of many whose names are reechoed from age to age. Happy indeed shall we be, if not only our foundation stands, but if the superstructure of individual character which we have reared proves acceptable to the Grand Architect and is found worthy a place in that temple not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."