



at N. C. Bain

The Corner-Stone.

BY BRO. COL. ROBERT TAYLOR.

[Read at the Laying of the Corner-Stone of the New Masonic Temple, at Virginia, Nevada, October 12, 1875.]

Wisdom ineffable! we bow
In reverential awe
Before Thy holy throne, and vow
To keep Thy law.

We pour the Corn, the Wine, the Oil,
Upon this new-laid stone,
And ask no blessing for our toil
But thine, alone.

To Thee we build, in Thee we trust,
Thy glory we confess;
For Thou art God, and we but dust,
Whom Thou dost bless.

This is Thy temple; Thou our Guide—
Our "true and trusty" Friend;
Be Thou, O Father, by our side
Until the end.

The Plumb, the Square, the Level's test,
True "well formed" lines have shown;
And all is well, if God has blessed
This corner-stone.

Now may the building proudly rise
To be a stately fane,
Where souls are fitted for the skies—
Where peace shall reign;

Where Masons' hearts, attuned to love,
Shall join in sweet accord,
To supplicate the Throne above
And praise the Lord.

Mattie's Wish.

Mattie Everett was one of the prettiest girls in the city. She knew she was pretty when she looked in the glass—she saw the reflection of her rose-bud beauty in the admiring faces of chance passers.—And yet withal, Mattie Everett was not contented. She wanted to be rich. She yearned for a peep into 'fashionable society.' She was tired of the commonplace existence which she led every day, and longed for an adventure of some sort—a streak of romance to dapple her life! For Mattie was only a dressmaker's apprentice learning the trade under the auspices of Madame Genevieve. So matters stood, when Miss Bellefont's wedding order came in.

'Where's that little blue-eyed girl you sent to my house to alter my white cashmere morning robe?' said Miss Bellefont to Madame Genevieve. 'Let her come again. She has a capital idea of trimmings, and her fit is excellent.'

Augusta Bellefont was not unlike Mattie herself—a plump, fresh complexioned girl, with blue eyes and pale yellow hair—and after she was gone, Mattie heard the full particulars of the case—how Miss Bellefont was to be married the next month to Major Carlyle, and who had more money than he knew what to do with.

'She's a lovely girl. I'm sure,' said Miss Garratt, the forewoman, as she cut off yard upon yard of bias white satin for the trimming. 'And for all that they say there's a young fellow, without a penny

in all the world to bless himself with, that she loves to distraction.'

'Oh, how delightfully romantic,' cried Mattie, with sparkling eyes; and she worked away, thinking of Miss Bellefont and her two lovers.

'One has her heart,' she mused, 'the other will have her hand! Dear, dear, what a world this is!'

Two or three days afterwards, Mattie Everett took a big paper box of half completed dress bodices to the pretty little brown-stone house on Creusa Park where Miss Bellefont lived. The servant showed her into the library, where the beauty sat, picturesquely posed in a sleepy hollow chair, with her satin slippers feet on an embroidered footstool. And leaning against the opposite window stood a tall, handsome man, whom Mattie recognized at once for Major Carlyle.

'Hallo!' cried he, in his off-hand way, 'is that the milliner's little girl? Pretty as a daisy, isn't she?'

'I told you she was pretty,' said Miss Bellefont; and Mattie smiled and blushed and dimpled, and scarcely knew which way to look. 'Major, I shall have to leave you for a few minutes. I dare say you can amuse yourself very well with the books and magazines. Little one, come with me.'

And then Mattie was ushered into a satin-hung boudoir, of whose splendors she had never before dreamed.

'Oh, Miss Bellefont,' said she, 'I should think you would be so happy!'

'Happy!' said Miss Bellefont, carelessly. 'Which of us is really happy in this world? Come, let us try on the emerald green-satin, and then we shall be through.'

Day after day Mattie Everett came, until the wedding drew near. Sometimes she saw Major Carlyle, sometimes she did not. But the oftener she came, the oftener one fixed fact became evolved from her inner consciousness—that Augusta Bellefont was—or ought to be—the happiest girl in the world.

Yet there was an absent look in Augusta's great, blue eyes, a troubled expression of the mouth that forbade the inference of perfect bliss.

'I wonder what it is that is wanting in her life?' said Mattie to herself. 'O, if only I was in her place!'

Lights, and blossoms, and the shimmer of silk and satin ushered in Miss Bellefont's wedding evening; and Mattie was there, dimpled, smiling, and eager to help.

The bride's-maids were ready—all was ready but the bride. Augusta Bellefont had been strangely capricious, and full of vagaries all day. Sometimes laughing, sometimes almost sad.

'Ready?' she cried, glancing at the little malachite clock on the mantle, as the last summons came. 'Surely it is not time yet. I won't dress until I am obliged. See here, little one,' to Mattie, 'I've an idea of seeing what I am like in this fine bridal garb of mine. You are about my height and build. You shall put on

the wedding-dress and veil, the white satin slippers, and the wreath.'

'I, Miss Augusta?'

'You. Why not? Quick! Off with that sober brown gingham, that makes such an insignificant brown sparrow of you!'

And half laughing, half reluctant, Mattie Everett obeyed, not altogether averse to decking herself, even though it was in jest, with the brilliant robes and resplendent pearls of the heiress.

The reflection in the mirror brought the rosy carmine to her cheek. Involuntarily she drooped her eyes.

'You are charming, ma petite,' cried Miss Bellefont. 'But stay—the bouquet from the other room. Wait half a second and I will bring it.'

'Oh! Miss Bellefont, let me go.'

'No; I'll get it in a minute.'

And away she flitted.

One minute went by—two, three, four and five, and still Miss Bellefont did not come back. Mattie began to grow uneasy, and ventured to peep into the room beyond. No one was there.

The girls heart gave a great jump—at the same moment the bevy of bride's-maids fluttered into the room.

'Come, Augusta, are you ready? The groom is waiting—the clergyman's come, and—Why, Miss Everett?'

Mattie grew scarlet.

'She made me put it on!' she faltered, conscious of the awkwardness of her position.

'And where is she?' demanded indignant Mrs. Bellefont.

'Gone for the bouquet.'

They made immediate search for her, but, as the reader will probably conjecture, Miss Augusta was far enough away, and only a note, which Clara, Mordaunt, the second bride's-maid, found slipped into the window casing, gave any idea of her whereabouts.

'Good-bye,' it said, debonairly. 'I love Harry Fiske, and have gone to marry him.'

A. B.

And in the midst of the melee, Major Carlyle's tall head was seen, towering over the rest, like Saul above his fellows.

'Gone has she?' said he with a composure which was quite wonderful under the circumstances. 'And I am left to wear the mitten. But who is this little ghost in the wedding robes?'

Mattie Everett lifted her pleading eyes to his,

'I don't mean to do wrong,' said she.

'Oh, believe me sir, I knew nothing of all this.'

Major Carlyle looked gravely at her.

'Here is a bride,' said he. 'And here is the wedding feast, the clergyman and the guests—and, last of all the groom! So I think it would be a pity to lose the wedding. If Miss Bellefont does not care for me, that is no sign that others may not.—Come here, little Mattie Everett—will you be the bride?'

Mattie looked in his face a minute, and then she said, 'Yes.'

It was a strange wedding, but it was a

wedding, after all!

And Mattie is happier now, than she ever dreamed it possible to be.

She has gained her wish—she is a rich and fashionable lady now, and orders all her dresses from Madame Genevieve.

Mr. and Mrs. Fisk are living in Paris, happy and impecunious—and Major Carlyle is just as devoted to his pretty young wife as if he had never had any other love.

The Progress of Masonry.

The London *Freemason* of a recent date speaks encouragingly of the growth of the Masonic Order, and goes so far as to say that at no epoch of our existence since the Revival of 1717, has the spirit of Masonic propagandism been so active or so successful as now. In so far as this country is concerned, our English contemporary is right in claiming that much progress has been made. The same may be said of the United States; and we believe that every civilized nation of the world has witnessed the most remarkable increase in the growth of Masonry within the past year or so that has been known in the history of the Order. Even in countries where the spirit of persecution has been rampant, and where, everything that was possible has been done to crush it out, there has been a wonderful exemplification of the onward progress of Freemasonry.

The increase in the number of members and Lodges in England and America has been unprecedentedly great; but that has been as nothing compared to the growth of the Order abroad, under the most adverse circumstances. The spirit of intolerance was invoked to such an extent as to give reason to fear that much harm would be done; but it seems to have had a far different effect, for we learn with satisfaction, that even beneath the shadow of the Vatican Freemasonry flourishes and has become a power in the Eternal City. When the march of progress is so unmarked, there is ample room for congratulation, and we scarcely wonder at the enthusiasm of the *Freemason*. The extraordinary growth of Freemasonry under such apparent adverse circumstances affords the best grounds for believing that the world is beginning to appreciate its value. It is no longer regarded with the suspicions that formerly surrounded it; on the contrary its benefits are being felt and its teachings better understood; hence there is hope of a speedy squelching of the intolerance and bigotry with which the Order has so long been assailed. May the time soon come when the principles of Masonry will be rightly appreciated, and its opponents cease to worry themselves with an agitation that can be of no avail. Anti-masonry has done its worst, and we presume we shall soon hear the last of the attempts that are being made to mislead the public mind on a subject which they neither do nor can understand.—*The Craftsman*.