

Masonic Lodge.

Should the chances of life ever tempt me to roam,
In a Lodge of Freemasons I'll still find a home,
There the sweet smile of Friendship still welcomes each guest
And Brotherly Love gives that welcome a zest.

When I'm absent from Lodge pleasure tempts me in vain,
As I sigh for the moments of meeting again;
For Friendship and Harmony only are there,
Where we meet on the level and part on the square.

There the soul-binding union only is known,
Which unites both the peasant and prince on the throne,
There the rich and the poor on the level do meet,
And, as brothers, each other most cordially greet.

On the quicksands of life should a brother be thrown;
It is then that the friendship of brothers is shown;
For the heart points the hand, his distress to remove,
For our motto is "Kindness and Brotherly Love."

When the Master of all, from His star-studded throne,
Shall issue His mandate to summon us home,
May each brother be found to be duly prepared,
In the Grand Lodge above us, to meet his reward.

The Mason's Widow.

During the Mexican war, a lad of 16, a daring young Virginian, leaped a fence and climbed a parapet some hundred yards in advance of his company, and was taken prisoner, but not until he had killed three Mexicans and mortally wounded a Colonel. His mother, a poor widow, heard his fate, and as he was her only son, her heart yearned for his release. She went at the thought, but while the tears were streaming down her cheeks, suddenly she recollected she was a Mason's widow. Hope lighted up in her bosom at the thought—she dried her tears, and exclaimed:

"I will go and test the talismanic power of the Order my husband loved and revered so much."

She sold the few articles of furniture she possessed, and with the money reached the city of Washington on foot. In her dusty attire she entered the department of the Secretary of War, and with some difficulty obtained an interview. As she entered the apartment in which he was seated, and he saw her dusty attire, "Well, ma'am," was the salutation he gave her; but when she removed her veil, and he saw the visage of the lady, he half way raised himself in his chair, and pointed her to a seat. She told him of her son's capture, and her wish to go to him.

"I can't help you, ma'am," he replied, "a very expensive journey to the city of Mexico. Your son will be released by and by on exchange of prisoners."

"Sir, will you be so kind as to recommend me to the care of the officer in command of the regiment which is to sail in a few days from Baltimore."

"Impossible, ma'am," he replied.

"Sir," said the widow, "I have one more question to ask before I leave your office, and I pray you to answer it. Are you a

Mason?"

"Yes, ma'am, I am."

"Then, sir, permit me to say that I am a Mason's widow, and my son in prison is a Mason's son. With this declaration I leave your office."

That moment the Secretary's manner was changed to that of the most courteous interest. He entreated her to be seated until he could write a line to the Secretary of State. In a few minutes he presented her with a note to the Secretary of State recommending her to his sympathy and friendship. The Secretary of State received her most kindly, and gave her a letter to the commandant at New Orleans, directing him to procure her a free passage to Vera Cruz by the first steamer. Through the agency of the two Secretaries, the Lodges placed in her hands three hundred dollars, with a talismanic card from the Grand Master at Washington, and the widow left the city.

When she reached Pittsburg, the stage agent, seeing the letter she bore from the Grand Master, would receive nothing for her passage—the captain of the steamer on which she embarked for New Orleans no sooner deciphered it than he gave to her the best state room he had, and when she reached the Crescent City she had two hundred and ninety dollars left of her three hundred. She there waited on the General in command of the station, with the letter of the Secretary of State, who immediately instructed the Colonel in command of the forwarding troops to see that she had a free passage to Vera Cruz by the first steamer. By all the officers she was treated with the greatest politeness and delicacy, for they were all Masons, and felt bound to her by ties as strong and delicate as those which bind a brother to a sister, and rejoiced in the opportunity afforded them of evincing the benign and noble principles of the Craft.

After a passage of five days she reached Vera Cruz, and having a letter from the commandant at New Orleans to the American Governor, she sent it to him, enclosing the talismanic card she received from the Grand Master at Washington. The Governor immediately waited on her at the hotel, and offered her a transport to the city of Mexico by a train that was to start the next morning. The colonel commanding the train kindly took her in charge and afforded her every facility and comfort on her journey, provided her with a carriage when the country was level, and with mules and palanquins over the mountains. Within ninety miles of the city they were overtaken by a detachment of dragoons escorting a Government official to the general in command. Anxious to get on faster, she asked permission of the colonel to join the detachment, and though informed of the danger and fatigue of hard rides day and night on horseback, she was willing to brave all, that she might sooner see her son. The colonel then provided her with a fleet and gentle gaired Mexican pony, and she assumed her place with the troops, escorted by the officers, and never flagged until the towers of Mexico were in sight.

She reached the city on the second day's battle, and in the heat of it attempted to enter the gates. An officer instantly seized her bridle and told her she must wait until the city was taken.

"Oh, sir!" she exclaimed, "I cannot wait one hour in sight of the city that holds my son a prisoner—I must see him."

"The city must first be taken, madam," he again replied, with much emphasis.

"I cannot wait, sir," she replied; "my son—my only son—may be ill—dying—in chains—in a dungeon. One hour's delay may remove him from me. Oh! I must go to him—I will enter the city."

"Madam," said the officer, "you cannot reach it but by crossing the battle field. You will surely be killed."

"Sir," said the lady, "I have not traveled from Virginia to the gates of this city to fear to enter them. Thanks for your kindness—a thousand heartfelt thanks for you and the officers who have been so kind to me. I shall always remember these officers with the most grateful feelings of my heart—but do not detain me longer. Yonder is a gate that leads to the city. I will enter it in search of my dear boy."

And on she sped, but ere she reached the gate another officer rode up by her side and admonished her of her danger and imprudence.

"Sir," she replied, "this is no time to talk of prudence and fear. My son—my only son—is a prisoner in chains. I am told that Santa Anna is in the midst of yon glittering group, I will seek him and place in his hand this talismanic card I bear. He is a Mason, and will heed me."

"War destroys all Brotherhood," said the officer, who was not a Mason.

She made no reply, but struck her pony and darted across the field of death. At that moment the masked battery that mowed down one half the Palmetto regiment, opened—yet right across the gory field she was seen galloping on her white pony, avoiding the retreating platoons by a semi-circle around their flank—the next moment she was seen coursing over the ground in the rear, the battery in full play.

Hundreds seeing her, stopped, forgetful of the storm of iron balls that howled around them, to follow with their eyes what seemed to be an apparition. All expected to see her fall every moment, but on she went with a fearless air.

"The woman's love for her son has made her wild," said the officer who attempted to arrest her flight.

"She will surely be killed," said another soldier.

"The God of battle will protect her," exclaimed a Tennessean; "she will reach Santa Anna as sound as a rock."

The soldier was right—she went over the field of death and reached Santa Anna unhurt. He received her politely, and when she told him her errand and presented her talismanic card, "Madam," said he, "I am a Mason, and know the obligations of the Order in peace and in war. When your son was taken prisoner he mortally wounded my maternal nephew, who is now dead. But he shall be restored; for I will not refuse your request in the face of the letter that you bear."

He immediately gave her an escort to the city, with an order to restore her son to her arms. The order was promptly obeyed, and that very day, as she promised, she embraced her long lost boy.

So much for a mother's love, and so much for the protecting arm and noble sympathetic heart which Masonry ever extends to lonely, hapless woman. Oh, if widowhood be the doom of women, who would not be a Mason's widow?—Who would not be a Mason's wife, mother, daughter or sister in the hour of peril and need?—*Canadian Teacher.*

What I Lost.

"I have been thinking, since I came into the meeting to-night, about the losses I have met with since I signed the total abstinence pledge. I tell you, there isn't a man in the society has lost more by stopping the drink than I have. Wait a bit till I tell you what I mean. There was a nice job of work to be done in the shop to day, and the boss called for me. 'Give it to Law,' says he, 'be's the best hand in the shop.' Well, I told my wife at supper time, and says she, 'Why Laurie, he used to call you the worst. You've lost your bad name, haven't you?' 'That's a fact, wife says I, and it aint all I've lost in the last sixteen months, either. I had poverty and wretchedness, and I've lost them. I had an old ragged coat, and a 'shockin' bad hat,' and some waterproof boots that let the wet out of the toe as fast as they took it in at the heel. I've lost them. I had a red face and a trembling hand and a pair of shaky legs that gave me an awkward tumble now and then. I had a habit of cursing and swearing, and I have got rid of that. I had an aching head sometimes, and a heavy heart, and worse than all the rest a guilty conscience. I thank God I've lost them all! Then I told my wife what she had lost. 'You had an old ragged gown, Mary,' says I, 'and you had trouble and sorrow and a poor wretched home, and plenty of heart aches, for you had a miserable drunkard for a husband. Mary! Mary! thank the lord for all you and I have lost since I signed the pledge!

There is no Place like Home.

This poetic phrase is no less beautiful than true. We find that the fond attachment of home pervades all ranks and classes of society. The wandering Scythians, with no abiding habitation, maintained great regard and veneration for the place where the bones of their forefathers slumbered. Even the rude and untutored denizen of the great American forests, whose dauntless spirit never quails before a foe, has, nevertheless, a heart which beats high with the warmest love toward his friends and for the spot where stands his wigwam. But, in civilized society, what is it that binds every sympathizing feeling of the heart around the cottage where our fathers dwelt? Is it because there is more intrinsic worth attached to it, or is it those heaven born associations which connect each brook or rill, each hill and dale, with some joyful recollection of happy hours spent in the company of a youthful friend, who now, perhaps, sleeps beneath the cold sod of the valley? Yes, it tends more firmly to rivet the ties of affection, to point to the imagination scenes which occurred at home, and to call up, from the wrecks of the past, hours sacred to memory. Yet these associations, joyous as they are, would sink into comparative nothingness if, from that circle, where we spent our youthful days in the sunshine of pleasure, was removed—a mother! Yet home, sweet as it is, would be like a temple stripped of its garlands, were it not for the sacred name of mother to consecrate its portals. Like the evening dew, which scatters its fragrance while all else is wrapped in the slumber of night, the mother, while every other ear is deaf, is attentive to our griefs, mingles her tears in the cup of our misfortune and soothes our dying agony.

What a solemn place for contemplation is the grave of our mother!