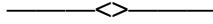


## CHIEF GLORY OF FREEMASONRY.



The chief glory of Masonry is that it levels all the barriers that intervene between individuals and communities, and brings together upon a plane of common equality persons of the most diverse opinions, occupations, and interests. Overleaping all the boundaries of selfishness and exclusiveness; overruling all social and class distinctions, breaking down all the partitions of bigotry and intolerance, it unites in common work and common object the good and true of all pursuits, opinions and languages. The Lodge can never become the exclusive creature of any social, political, or religious class or sect, because it is the joint possession of the best representatives of all classes and conditions. Here upon the level—the symbol of equality—the rich and poor, the high and low, the titled prince and the sturdy yeoman, forgetting all differences of rank and station, unite their best endeavours for the highest good of each and all. Here the best representatives of the various church creeds, and the most diverse theological sentiments stand side by side without a single test between them ! Here the leaders of opposing parties and rival factions forget their intrigues, and catching the spirit of loyal sympathy and philanthropy breathed from every lesson of the Order, their hearts are melted into responsive love and fraternal peace. Here nobility of birth and blood is superseded by that higher nobility which is disposition and life, Here the crown of loyalty and the sceptre of authority belongs to those most distinguished for virtue and honour. Here all languages are melted into words and symbols conveying the same meaning to all minds, and bearing the same significance in all circles. Of course, it is not assumed that these noble and honourable aims are never lost sight of by persons who have sought and obtained the fellowship of the Order. Bad men sometimes conceal their selfish designs so skilfully that the closest scrutiny may fail to unmask them.

But the object of Freemasonry to unite and harmonise in a benevolent work the best representatives of all theological and governmental opinions is not the less apparent on this account. And that its influence in this direction has been exceedingly potential and beneficent no one acquainted with the facts in the case will pretend to deny.

The most important incorrigible political zealot, and the most intolerable bigot meet in the Lodge-room, and heartily fraternise with others of the most dissimilar associations and convictions. Here upon the Level the antipodes of political and theological sentiment meet and join hands; and here the good and true of all classes and conditions have realised, in the fullest and sweetest sense, the Psalmist's words : " Behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." —" Masonic Selections."