

FUNERAL SERVICE

FOR THE USE OF ALL BODIES OF THE

A.: AND A.: SCOTTISH RITE,

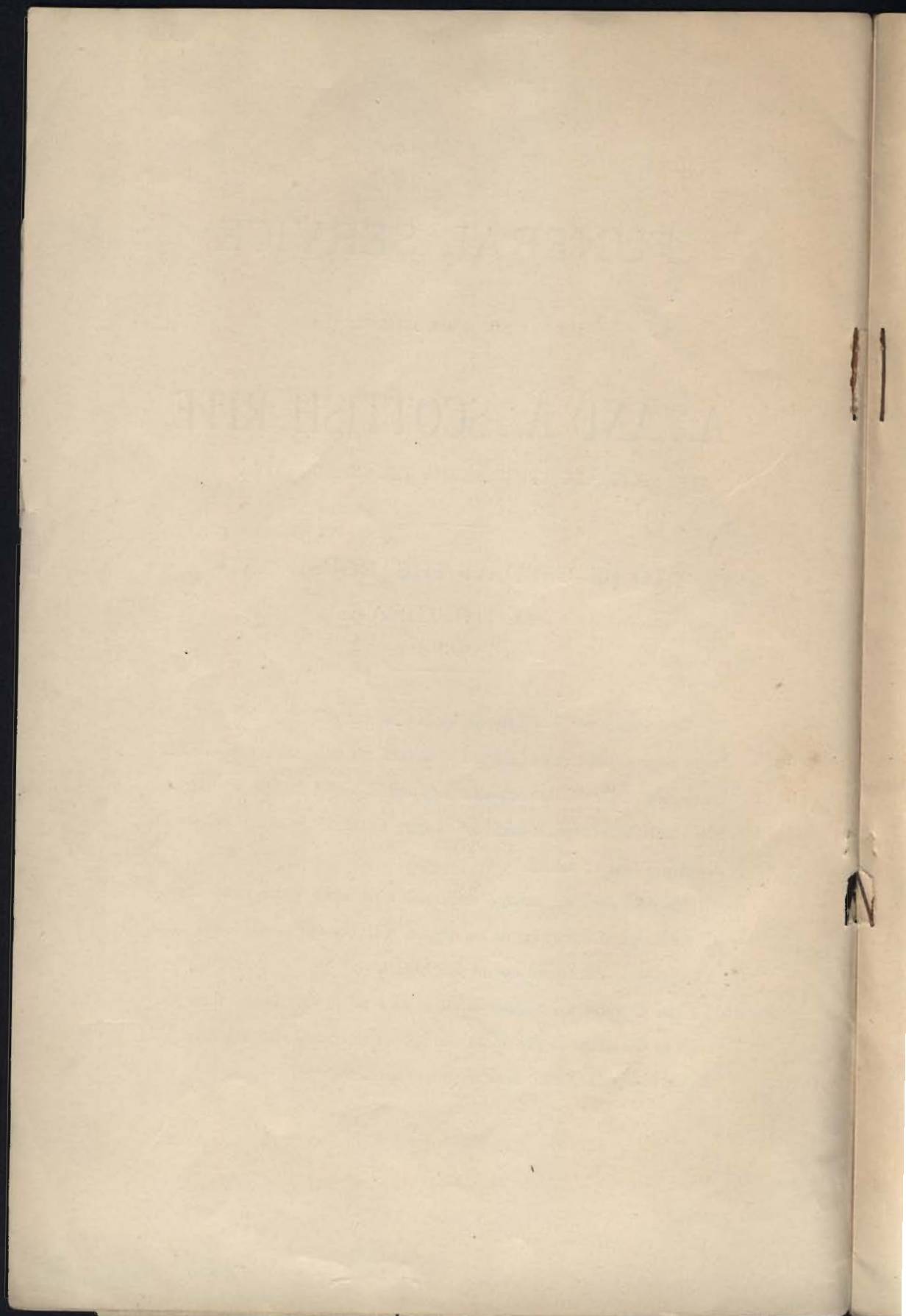
SOUTHERN JURISDICTION OF THE UNITED STATES.

TO BE USED AT THE HOUSE AND
AT THE GRAVE.

This ceremony is prepared for a Chapter of Knights Rose Croix 18th degree, but can be adapted to that of any Body of our Rite. The mourning color of the Supreme Council is Violet on White; that of the Court of Honor, Black on Orange; those of all other Bodies of the Rite, Black on Red.

Each brother will wear a dark suit with white gloves, and appropriate badge of mourning of his degree, with the apron and jewel; also a red rose in full bloom on the left breast.

The Chapter will resume labor in its Hall in due form; then proceed to the house of the deceased. After the burial, the brethren will return to the Hall and close in proper form.

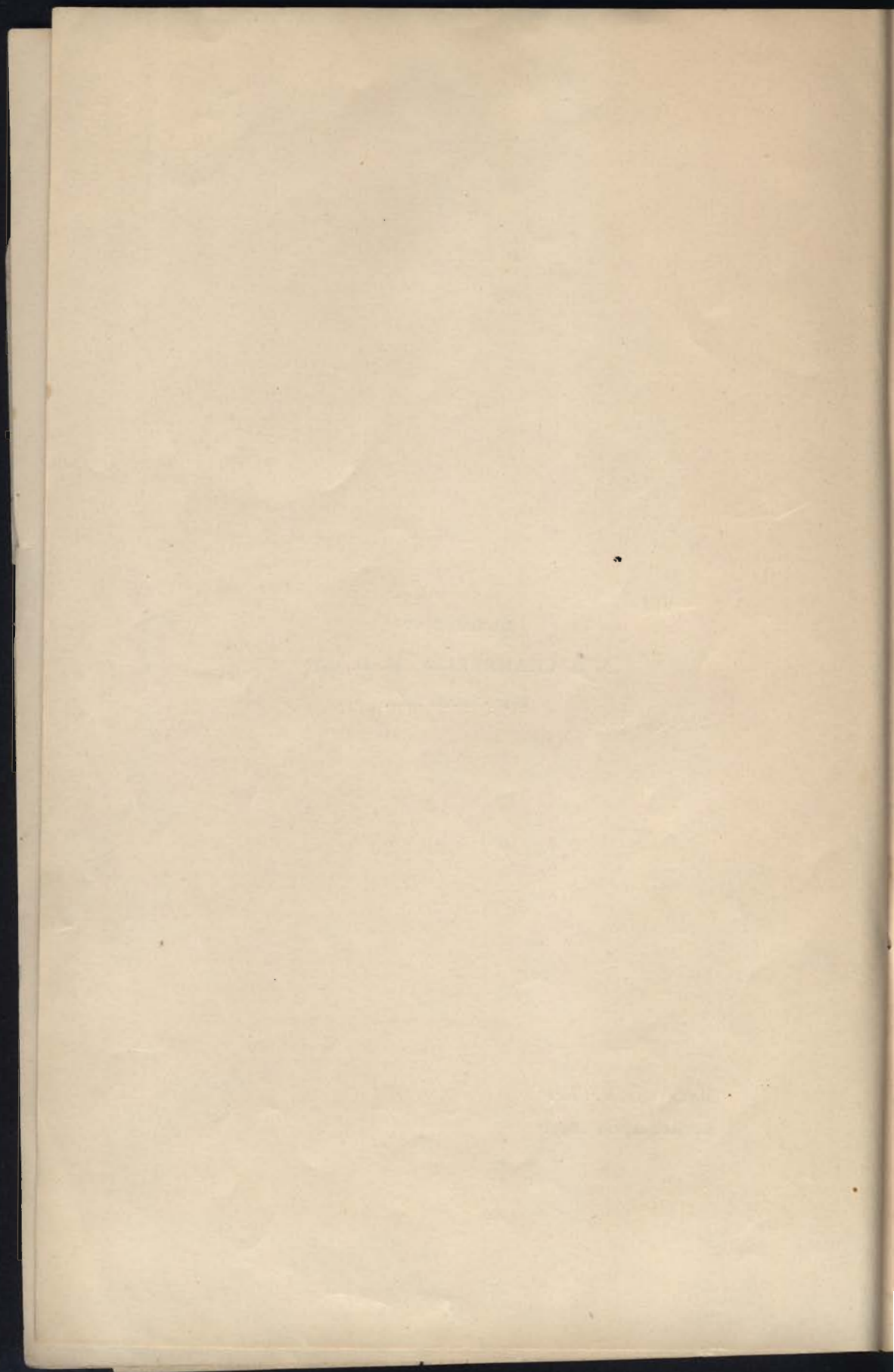


COMPILED BY
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Insp.'s Genl.'s in Texas.

MAY, 1892, V.'s E.'s.

Revised April, 1895.



At the House—M.: and Or.: at the head of the coffin; S.: W.: and J.: W.: at the foot. As they step to their places each officer lays a red rose on the lid of the coffin so as to form a cross. There must also be on the coffin a cross about a foot in length made of red roses.

M.:—Death and the dead are with us again, my Brethren, teaching us the brevity and uncertainty of human life and the instability of human fortune, and demanding of us the last sad offices of Charity and Brotherhood. Again we lament the loss of a Brother who sleeps the sleep that knows no waking.

Knights and Brethren, submitting to the will of God, adoring Him as our Creator and Preserver, and trusting in His mercy as our Father, let us proceed to do what duty demands. The dead body of our beloved Brother, _____, lies before us, overtaken by that relentless Fate, which is sooner or later to overtake us all; and which no worth or virtue, no wealth or honor, no tears of friends, or agony of loving ones, can avert or delay; teaching us the impressive lesson, continually repeated, yet always soon forgotten, that every one of us must ere long dwell in a house of darkness, and our body be the inheritance of worms, and our soul must be what we have chosen to make it, even as man makes it here, by living well or ill. The minutes of our time strike on, and are counted by Angels, until the period comes that must cause the passing-bell to give warning to all the neighbors that we are dead, and that they must sometime be so; and this nothing can excuse or retard.

S.: W.:—We, following our Ancient Masonic custom, and obeying the commands of duty, do now pay these last honors to his memory. Him they can not profit. He is beyond the reach of honors and censure alike. To us they may and should be profitable. They gratify those whom he loved; they show our appreciation of his virtues, they encourage others to labor and endeavor to deserve like honors, and they show to the world that the ties, sympathies and obli-

gations of Masonry can not be snapped asunder by the hand of Death ; for that man is esteemed to die miserable, for whom none save those of his own household shed a tear, or pay a solemn sigh.

J. : W. :—It is a great act of piety, and honorable to inter our friends and Brethren according to the proportions of their condition, and so to give evidence that we appreciate and desire to imitate their virtues. Solemn and appointed mournings are good expressions of our affection for the departed soul, and of his worth, and our value of him ; and they have their praise in nature and in manners and in public customs. Something is to be given to custom, something to fame, to nature and civilities.

Or. :—My Brethren, it is an act of grace and wondrous mercy that we are admitted to speak to the Eternal God to make plaint to Him as to a Father, to beg of Him remedy and ease, support and counsel, health and safety, deliverance and salvation. Wherefore, since this calamity has fallen upon us, and He hath commanded us in such cases to pray unto Him, let us ask of Him power and assistance to do our duty, and His favor for those who are afflicted in even greater measure than ourselves.

Let us pray.

Kneel on right knee.

Our Father who art in Heaven, who givest Thy graces and Thy favors by the measures of Thine own mercies and in proportion to our necessities. It hath pleased Thee to call the Soul of our Brother from the prison of the body, and our hearts are sorrowful therefor, and very heavy. Look upon us, and upon those whom this Death has more sadly bereaved and distressed, in mercy and pity ! Support us and them by the strength of Faith in all calamities, and refresh us and them with the comforts of a holy hope in all sorrows ! Unto those who were of the household of our Brother and are not yet comforted, make good Thy promise, that those who sow in tears shall reap in joy. Strengthen them to bear this great misfortune ; and let Time, Thy great com-

forter, soon heal the heart-wounds that now seem unto them to be incurable. All help cometh of Thee ; for Thou preservest them that are true of heart. From Thee flow all comfort and consolation. Be Thou our strength and our guide. It is not for us, O, Our Father, to intercede with Thee for our Brother whom Thou hast taken from us. He also is one of Thy children ; and Thou wilt judge him tenderly and mercifully. Prosper our works to Thy glory, and to all our innocent purposes ; preserve us from sin, and keep us in peace and holiness, and help us to serve Thee in thankfulness and obedience all the days of our pilgrimage, and after death dispose of us according to Thy good pleasure. AMEN. [All] So mote it be. Amen. [All rise.]

M.:—Bro. Senior Warden, what is our first duty in this sorrow that has fallen upon us?

S.: W.:—Wise Master, to submit without murmuring to the dispensations of our Father who is in Heaven ; to pay Him the profoundest homage, knowing that all He wills is infinitely wise and just, and to trust implicitly in His inexhaustible mercy ; for we are assured that the dead shall live again. The seed that is sown is not quickened except it die ; and that which is sown in corruption and dishonor shall be raised in glory. Our Brother is not here. This body over which we mourn, is not he, but only that which was his human and material part, until God laid His finger on him and he slept. He was mortal ; but He has now put on immortality. In what state, and where he is, we do not know ; but only that he has not ceased to be, and that he is in the hands of his Father, who loves and pities him, as He doth all the children He hath made.

M.:—Bro. Junior Warden, what is the second duty which this misfortune imposes upon us?

J.: W.:—Wise Master, to inter the body of our Brother after the manner of Masonry, knowing that when we do this for our dead friends, it is not done to persons undiscerning as a fallen tree, but to those whose souls yet live and peradventure would perceive our neglect,

and be witnesses of our transcendent affections and forgetfulness; and if not so, yet God sees us, and solemn reverence is due the dead, who are now nearer God than we, that are yet for a little while imprisoned in the body. Death is that Harbor whither God hath designed everyone, that there he may find rest from the troubles of the world. And when God sends His Angel to us with the scroll of Death, let us look on it as an act of mercy, to prevent many sins, and many calamities of a longer life; and lay our heads down softly and go to sleep. For this, at least, man gets by death—that his calamities are not immortal.

Or.—Very eloquent, my Brethren, are the pale still lips of the dead! With a pathos and impressiveness that no living lips can equal or even approach, though these may have been sanctified and made prophetic by coals from the Holy Altar, laid upon them by Angels; these lips of marble preach to us sermons that cannot be translated into words. Most eloquently they tell us how vain and empty are all the ambitions, hatreds, jealousies, the disputes and rivalries, the struggles for wealth and place and power, for rank and reputation of human life. How indifferent now to praise or censure, to undeserved eulogy or equally undeserved blame, to all the prizes of human ambition, to all the glories of human greatness, to all the beatitudes of human love, is this cold and wax-like body—no longer one with a living soul! For it the sunshine and flowers, the green leaves and azure arch of Heaven, the stars that mysteriously glitter there in the wondrous beauty of their eternal calm and silence, and all else that everywhere makes nature beautiful and sublime, have no charm, and are naught.

M.—It is a trite thought, and yet singularly and sadly impressive, that in the grave all men are equal; the Prince, and the Beggar that crawled to his Palace gates, the Warlike and the Peaceful, the Fortunate and the Miserable, the Beloved and the Hated, the Honored and the Despised. There they mingle their dust, the atoms jostling each other as they hasten to enter into new forms of matter; while

God and the Angels only can distinguish their souls. Heavy are the griefs of our personal, mortal life. Health decays into sickness, Hope into Disappointment ; Death draws near to our little troop of pilgrims, and, when we pitch our tent, he takes away some beloved one.

J.W.—Our life is but a span long, and yet very tedious, because of the calamities that encircle us on every side. The days of our pilgrimage are few and evil ; and he that liveth longest becometh most familiar with disappointments and sorrows. We live but to lose those we love and to see our friends go away out of our sight. Everywhere around us, as we look out into the night, we can see the faces of those we have loved, and who have fallen asleep before us, shining upon us like stars.

S.W.—While we think a thought we die, and the clock strikes and reckons on our portion of Eternity. We form our words with the breath of our nostrils, and have the less to live upon, for every word we speak ; and those things that can survive us, our works, our words, our immortal thoughts, our influences and the effects of our good deeds, are more to the world that survives, than we ourselves are. We pass away and are forgotten ; but these continue and live. Let selfishness, and especially the selfishness of vice, learn this lesson, and changing, endeavor to leave something to live beyond their funeral.

Or.—We dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, which are crushed before the moth. Our days upon the earth are a shadow. Soon we go whence we shall not return, to the land of darkness and the shadow of death ; let the proud and the vain consider how soon the gaps are filled that are made in society by those who die around them, and how quickly Time heals the wounds that Death inflicts upon even tender hearts ; and from this let them learn humility, and that they are but atoms in the great mass and drops in the immense ocean of humanity.

Junior Warden takes in his hands the Cross of roses and lays one hand on the lid of the coffin, says:

J.: W.:—All animosities and unreconciled differences among Masons cease at the dark river of death, over which our Brother has gone. If any Brother here hath suffered wrong at the hands of him whose lips can no longer utter words of regret, or make atonement; if any Brother hath felt toward him dislike, ill-will, or jealousy, I do by this Holy Symbol of the Rose Cross adjure him, and these pale cold lips, do eloquently entreat him, to forgive the wrong, and cast away the animosity forever, that our Father who is in Heaven may forgive him his debts and trespasses as he forgives those of his dead Brother.

Hands the Cross to Senior Warden.

Senior Warden takes the Cross in his hand and lays one hand on the lid of the coffin, says:

S.: W.:—The memories and examples of the good and true Knights who leave us these as legacies, are the precious treasures of Masonry. Our praises of them ought to be preserved like laurels and coronets, to reward and encourage the noblest things; and it is an office and charge of humanity to speak no evil of the dead. Promises made to them are inviolable oaths.

By this Holy Symbol of the Rosy Cross [kissing it and pressing it to his heart] all the Knights and Brethren here present do by my lips solemnly promise to speak hereafter only of the virtues and excellencies of him whose body we are about to commit to the earth, and to be silent as to his errors, his failings and his faults, lest we ourselves should be spoken ill of by men after we are dead, and be unentitled to the charitable mercies of God.

Lays the Cross on the coffin.

Orator—Stepping to the side of the coffin so as to look at the face.

Or.:—Brother! We mourn for thee; we call upon thee to answer us. Dost thou hear our call? Brother! Dost thou hear our call? Brother! Dost thou hear our call? [Returns to his place] Our

Brother answers not our call. Once he lived and labored ; but now his star is set in this world, and he has passed into the light that lies beyond the darkness of the Valley of the Shadow of Death. In vain we call upon him here. We shall no more hear his voice, until we also have awakened in another world. Let us, then, not mourning like those that have no hope, pay the last offices of pious duty to the dead, since he, like one who sails slowly away from the shore of a dear land, a little while ago familiar to him, and hears in the stillness of the night, the murmur of the waves among its cliffs, may still hear the murmur of our voices, and see, as the Angels do, these obsequies, and the evidences of our affection or neglect.

M.—Dead persons have religion passed upon them and a solemn reverence ; and whatsoever is matter of duty toward our dead, God doth exact. What we do to the dead or to the living for their sakes, is gratitude, and virtue for virtue's sake, and the noblest portion of humanity.

I lay upon this heart, now still and cold, the jewel [doing so] which our Brother, living, always wore with honor, and may all the influences of our Brother, for good, that do survive him, be continually expanded and increased, to benefit his fellow men ; and may our Father who is in Heaven, in His Wisdom, counteract and annul all those that tend to evil. Amen.

[All] So mote it be. Amen.

My Brethren, join me in the expressions of our sorrow and regret.

Each lays his right hand on his heart ; then extend it to the front. Do this three times, each time saying, "Woe unto us."

Let those who wish, look on the remains of our Brother before they are carried to their last resting place. [After this is done] Let the face on which we have looked for the last time be now covered from our sight.

Let the Knights now prepare to convey the body of our Brother to its last resting place.

SECOND PART.

M.: and O.: at the head of the coffin. S.: W.: and J.: W.: at the foot.

M.:—Since it hath pleased our Father who is in Heaven, to relieve from duty in this life of discipline and trial, our Brother, the good Knight, —————, and to leave in our charge this untenanted body, which was, only a little while ago, a part of him, it hath become our duty sorrowfully and reverently to commit it to the Earth; as after a little while it must come to pass that others shall do the same for us.

S.: W.:—This body, which is now mere lifeless and dead matter, soon to be resolved into atoms and particles, and form part of the air and the water, of men and women, or animal and bird and reptile, and of the grass, the flower, the fruit and the tree, was but a few short hours ago a Temple, in which, mysteriously coalescing with it into one being, dwelt a living soul, like the Divine Presence in the Holy of Holies.

J.: W.:—In and with and through it, that soul revered God, and endeavored to serve humanity. Now it lies before us, awful and majestic in its repose (for it was more than the house or clothing or prison of the soul), preaching to us with mute eloquence its solemn lessons, so often heard, yet so little laid to heart.

Or.:—Yesterday, or a day or two ago, it was instinct with life and power, and the soul, which could only through it make its thoughts effectual in action, could not conceive of itself as isolated from it, or as possessed of a separate identity; but saw only with its eyes, heard with its ears, and spoke with its tongue.

M.:—His warfare with the calamities and sorrows, the reverses and disappointments, the wrongs and oppressions of this world, is

over, and the arm that wielded the sword will soon be but a little dry dust.

Then the Master takes the Rosy Cross from the coffin, and holding it in his right hand, says:

M.:—I adjure you, Brethren, by this Holy Symbol of the Rosy Cross, the emblem of Faith, Hope, Loving-kindness and Immortality, not to permit your duties to the dead to cease with these sad ceremonies. I adjure you to right his cause, to do justice to his memory, to defend his reputation. Thus let us all prove ourselves good Knights and true Masons. Take back this jewel to his loved ones [handing it to an officer], that they may keep it as a precious souvenir of our Brother.

Place gently now the body of our Brother in its resting place.

The body is now lowered into the grave, and as it reaches the bottom the Master says:

M.:—Requiem, æternam dona ei Domine, et lux perpetua luceat ei!

The Senior Warden takes the vessel of salt and advances near the grave and says:

S. W.:—By the covenant of salt, God gave the Kingdom of Israel to David and his sons; and in the law it is written, "Neither shalt thou suffer the Salt of the Covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy offerings of flesh; with all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt." I sprinkle salt upon this grave [suiting the action to the words] in renewal of our covenant with him of whom this body was a part; and also in token of our belief in the resurrection of the dead and of life eternal. We shall see our Brother again. That which is here sown in corruption will be raised in incorruption; and that which is sown a natural body will be raised a spiritual body. Our Brother still lives, though the Breath of his life has returned to God that gave it.

J. W.:—This is our Faith, our Hope, and our assurance. Let us endeavor so to live, my Brethren, as to deserve to have our life continued, after this life in the body shall have ended; since otherwise it

can not but be punishment and the weariness of misery, and not a recompense and a blessing. The Wise and Good who die, do leave their relics in the land, in influences and examples, in noble thoughts to be remembered, and heroic deeds to be imitated; and though no shrine is carved about their dust, nor any fragrant lamp is burned before their bones, they are enshrined in many hearts, and the gratitude and veneration of men shed inextinguishable light upon their memories.

“When they are gathered to the glorious band
Of those who lived to benefit their race.”

Or.—My Brethren, let us devoutly ask the assistance and support of our Heavenly Father.

Stand with arms crossed; left over right.

PRAYER.

Our Father who art in Heaven, it has pleased Thee to take away from this world our beloved Brother, and to leave us in his stead only this mortal and decaying tenement, which we do now commit to Earth. Enlarge and increase, O, God, our Father, all his influences for good that do survive him, and in Thy Wisdom, and by meet instruments, counteract all those that tend to evil. Let us not forget the lessons again taught us by Death, but, remembering the uncertainty of life, and the little value of those things for which men do most strive, incline us more earnestly to endeavor to obey Thy laws, avoid dissensions, hatreds and revenges, and labor to do good to our fellowmen; that so it may be desirable for us and profitable to us to live beyond this life, in the spiritual existence for which we hope. Console his relatives in their affliction, and sustain them in all the adversities and trials which they may have to encounter in this world; and may they and we, loving and serving Thee, and trusting in Thy Infinite Beneficence, be in Thy good time gathered in peace unto our fathers, and again meet our friend and Brother, nearer to Thy Throne of Glory! Amen!

[All] Amen! So mote it be! Amen!

The Experts bearing the basket of flowers, one standing on each side of the grave, strew them over the coffin, Master saying:

M.—It is a natural wish that sweet flowers should grow upon the graves of those we love. In Paradise, we think, they never wither. God has written manifold and wondrous truths in the stars; but the revelation of His love is not less plain in the flowers that are the stars of earth.

“Emblems of our own great resurrection,
Emblems of the brighter, better land.”

We strew them on the body of our friend, as an apt expression of our affection, and equally of hope and of reliance on that beneficence of which they are the unmistakable and eloquent expression.

Takes the rose or other evergreen from his coat, presses it to his lips and drops it into the grave, saying, “*Requiescat in pace!*” or “*Rest in peace!*” The other Officers and Brethren do the same.

The Master again steps forward and throws earth three times into the grave, saying, “*Earth to Earth!*” “*Ashes to Ashes!*” “*Dust to Dust!*” The other Officers and each of the Brethren do the same.

My Brethren, join me in paying the last honors!

All together give the funeral honors. They are as follows:

Cross the arms on the breast, the left over the right, palms open; raise both hands above the head; then, dropping the arms, extend them horizontally toward the grave, palms open and downward. Do this three times; then cross the arms again on the breast, bow low, and say: “*Farewell! . . Farewell! . . Farewell!*” The grave is then filled up.”

M.—My Brethren, the duty we owed the dead is performed. It remains that we who are alive should so live, and by our actions attend the coming of the day of Fate, that we neither be surprised nor leave our duties imperfect, nor our sins uncanceled, nor our persons unreconciled, nor God unappeased; but that when our bodies in their turn descend to their graves, our souls may ascend to the regions of Eternal light, wherein is the Holy House of the Heavenly Temple of the Lord.

BENEDICTION.

Or.: or Chaplain.—May the blessing of our Father who is in Heaven rest upon us all, now and forevermore ! May Brotherly Love increase among us, and the remembrance of our Brethren who have gone away from among us make more dear unto us those who remain ! And may all those virtues which Masonry inculcates be continually and faithfully practiced by all of us, and cement us and all good Masons closely together ! The peace and blessing of Almighty God descend upon us and abide forever ! Amen !

[All] So mote it be ! Amen !