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ODD FELLOWSHIP.

An Address delivered on the 26th day of April, 1867, at Odd-Fellows Hall, Montrose, Pa.

BY REV. JOHN E. BARNES, M. D.

N. G., Officers and Brethren—

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Nearly Nineteen Centuries ago, when Phillip of Bethesda informed his friend Nathaniel that he had seen Jesus of Nazareth, that friend, full of bigoted prejudice against the mean and insignificant village, with skeptical irony enquired: "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" He thereby evinced a pre-determined judgment against that of which he had no knowledge, a judgment based upon the mere rumor, or prevailing notion, of Nazareth being a place of unusual immorality and social degradation; and he was doubtless honest in the implied conviction that from such a place nothing ordinarily good, much less superlatively so, could possibly come. The ever memorable reply of Phillip at once rebuked the folly of Nathaniel, and pointed out the only wise course for rational beings to pursue with reference to any subject presented for their consideration: "COME AND SEE;" do not judge without evidence; do not condemn that of which you know nothing.

A class of men in every age are living illustrations of the same spirit which prompted the sarcastic and inexhaustible foolish enquiry of Nathaniel. Their preconceived notions are the test of right, and their prejudices the law by which every subject or object is condemned or approved. All arguments are lost on those who are thus encased in an impenetrable armor of ignorance, which their self-flattered minds mistake for uncommon intelligence.

To present facts for their consideration is like inviting a blind man to view the gorgeous beauties of a summer's sunset, when the heavens resemble a vast expanse of liquid flame with all the colors of the rainbow interspersed to heighten the grand sublimity of the scene.

Upon such we have no hope of making any favorable impression concerning the noble Order to which we are attached, and which is here, to-day, represented by us. And yet we would invite you to "come and see," and to "prove all things," and "hold fast that which is good."

There are many uninterested in our great and important work because they know little, if anything, concerning the principles and practices of Odd-Fellows. Whatever notions they do entertain are at best vague, most probably mistaken, and very often indeed ridiculous, if not absurd.

Nor are they indeed, my brethren, wholly at fault for this, for if we do not actually encourage them to believe these errors, we do fail to give the publicity we should to our principles, and such of their practical and impressive illustrations as it is allowable to make known.

By virtue of a resolution of the R. W. G. L. of the U. S., and proclamation of M. W. G. S., this day has been designated a national thanksgiving of our Order, and by advice and direction of the G. L. of Pa., we are here assembled; it seems, therefore, in every way, a fitting opportunity to consider

THE NATURE AND PRINCIPLES OF ODD-FELLOWSHIP.

Antiquity for our organization is not claimed by any intelligent member of the brotherhood, nor would the real importance or practical worth of the institution be enhanced an atom if such a claim could be sustained.

The mould of age is in itself no proof of inherent excellence; and besides, some of the most worthless and rotten systems of doctrine, and organizations for the perpetuation thereof, found among men, have the most of intracable antiquity. As an institution, Odd-Fellowship needs no such support as this; and although analogies may be traced between it and the mysteries of former ages, they had too much of ignorance, passionate ferocity, and lascivious idolatry connected with them to make any claim to relationship either desirable or creditable.

Recent, however, as our organization dates its beginning, its humble origin is involved in obscurity, and the first fixed point we have is near the close of the last century. In our own land its history dates back to the first decade of the present century; but the first successful establishment of the institution on this continent was in A. D. 1819, through the instrumentality of THOMAS WILDEY, of Baltimore, whose subsequent identification with Odd-Fellowship forms a large part of its written history. The name of Wildey in the history of Odd-Fellowship endears his memory to every true Odd-Fellow; and each member of the Order venerates him as a practical exemplifier of our principles and practices.

But while we surrender every claim to antiquity as an institution, while we even repudiate every attempt to identify us with the midnight orgies of the ancient mysteries, we do claim for our principles as such, a more than ancient origin. We claim them to rest on the broad foundation of God's eternal truth, and the most

rigid scrutiny is invited to ascertain whether this claim be valid. I am well aware that this announcement is calculated to startle the uninitiated whose only ideas of our Order are associated with the goat, greased pole, or some other fanciful or ridiculous notions of peculiar ordeals through which we pass, and, having passed which, we become entitled to pecuniary aid in times of need, and are assured of sympathy and assistance in seasons of trial. Some, indeed, ignorant beyond any excuse or palliation, add to these advantages, others supposed by them to result from connection with the Order, as immunity from punishment for crime, and general license for evil-doing, so far as the institution can secure these results.

Permit me to assure you that except so far as pecuniary aid and sympathetic acts of kindness are concerned, these notions have no foundation in fact. The advantages of Odd-Fellowship are the legitimate fruit of principles which are pure in themselves, and so acknowledged by the pure minded of every age.

The resolution of our highest body which set apart this day for its holy duties, expressly declares it to be in "grateful recognition of the unerring hand of God." I ask you, my hearers, does this savor of irreligious lawlessness or libertinism?

An institution thus recognizing God in all the perfections of his nature and attributes, may certainly claim a fair and thorough examination of its principles before the edict of condemnation is fulminated against it.

We claim this recognition of one self-existing God to be the corner stone of the great system of moral truths taught in symbolic language among Odd-Fellows. Upon this acknowledgment of God every one who would participate in the advantages of our Order must stand, before he can be admitted to its rites and privileges. Surely no one will withhold from us their hearty commendation thus far. When first introduced into our sacred retreat the candidate beholds striking and deeply impressive moral truths illustrated by that most eloquent of all languages, symbolism. He has set before him the true moral condition of his race, and in that his own condition with the chains of ignorance clanking about his soul.

He becomes forcibly impressed with a realization of the natural blindness and weakness of man, as well as of his general helplessness and proneness to evil. The brevity of human life, the absolute certainty of its termination, and the solemn realities of the dread hereafter are all graphically portrayed to his mind. He beholds that which is well calculated to humble human pride; to awaken sentiments of pity for those who stray from the paths of virtue; to excite deep feelings of compassion for suffering humanity; and to fill his heart with feelings of righteous indignation against sin, that hydra-headed monster which has dyed the earth with crimson, and submerged it with tears. When he has thus been instructed by mute, yet eloquent, symbols, and his heart filled with horror at the spectacle of sin and its dire consequences, then, and not until then, is he prepared to appreciate the worth of the three words which constitute the written language of Odd-Fellowship, Friendship, Love, and Truth.

The fatherhood of God, and brotherhood of man is the ultimate design of its teachings; for He "hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth."

This lesson thus taught to, and received by the initiate, he hears from the lips of venerable age assurances well supported by daily observation and personally realized by the truly good, that assimilation to God by virtuous conduct is profitable both in its present enjoyments and future hopes. He is also reminded of the attestation to this truth by David when he said "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." Furthermore he is admonished to cultivate Friendship, Love, and Truth because they are the best safeguard from all social and moral evils and the only remedy for them. This great and important lesson he is most solemnly enjoined to keep always before his mind, and under all circumstances to forget it not.

Midst these scenes, through which with feelings of anxiety, uncertainty, and hope the initiate passes, there is one symbol ever before him, and its lesson is now imparted to him—a lesson which all men everywhere would do well to learn—it is the All-seeing Eye, which is ever open, and to which the secrets of all hearts are manifest. Furthermore he is taught not to be influenced by mere externals in forming an opinion of his fellow men, for a rough and rude exterior often hides a tender heart, and is the habitation of a soul purified by truth and righteousness; so also does costly raiment and polished manners oft-times cover a heart fully compared to a sepulchre full of festering corruption. Thus are we taught to "judge righteous judgment."

More important truths than these, or a more impressive mode of teaching them, we cannot conceive; and these are the incentive lessons of our institution. Numerous emblems; each important; all relating to the cardinal principles of the

Order; by regular gradations unfold those principles and demonstrate their excellency and utility.

The heart in the palm of the open hand, shows how intimately conceptions of right and effort to do it should ever be connected, how the pressure of the one should indicate the feelings of the other. As expressed by a poetic brother:

"My heart and hand shall ever be,
Round firm with bonds of sympathy;
The heart shall prompt, the hand shall give,
Both act as one, while'er I live.
My heart and hand shall ever prove
Their acts of Friendship, Truth, and Love;
Bound firm with ties through life's endurance,

To prompt and act with motives pure.
My heart and hand shall ne'er be twain,
As one shall act, nor act in vain;
The willing heart, and ready hand,
Shall e'er be firm in Friendship's band.
My heart and hand, as one, a friend,
Shall be the same till life shall end;
Harmonious ever—ever true—
The heart to prompt, the hand to do."

The axe and triple links show us that as the woodman's axe levels the forest trees for the civilization's onward march, so must the natural passions and prejudices of man be subdued in order that Friendship, Love, and Truth may bind together the offspring of our Father in one fraternal band.

The Bee-hive, with its swarm of active, industrious workers, admonishes us to wisely improve our time in gathering from present opportunities the advantages which shall furnish sustenance and comfort in the winter of life, when the frost of age whitens our locks, and we are bowed down with the weight of years; it also teaches us to value associated effort as furnishing the most reliable assurance and largest aggregate of advantages at this interesting period of life's pilgrimage.

The bundle of rods, that forcible illustration of a dying father to his sons, has been made a part of our symbolic language to teach the extensive power and increased ability of men in resisting evil and accomplishing good when united by love in principles, interests, and labors.

But time would fail us even to thus briefly notice our different symbols; and we have presented these few to your consideration for the special purpose of making manifest to your minds, that however Odd we may be, we are not as *Bad Fellows* as sometimes represented.

No, my hearers, I beg to assure you that calluminate as we have been or may be, our principles lift us above any wish to return evil for evil, and moreover they instruct us, that "Whosoever you would that others should do to you, do ye even so to them."

But here we are met by a common objection accusing us of restrictiveness in the application and operation of principles claimed to be wise in their nature, beneficent their character, and both socially and morally advantageous in their operations.

However plausible this objection may at first view seem, it will not stand the test of investigation. As Odd-Fellows we challenge comparison with those not of the Order in acts of general benevolence, and in the exercise of the virtues of social life. Our hearts are large enough to contain the whole world, but our ability is not commensurate therewith.

Our principles are universal in their nature and character, but we have special warrant for the particular exercise of them toward our own. The good Book enjoins us to "do good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."

Furthermore the portals of Odd-Fellowship are open to the worthy applicant, and certainly none can consistently claim participation in privileges which have corresponding duties and obligations that they are unwilling to assume and perform. And yet further be it remembered that the principles of our Order are not its secrets, but all who choose may know them through its manuals and magazines.

As I says the objector, it is not to these I refer, but rather to the secrecy which surrounds your meetings and the signs or tokens used by you for mutual recognition. Surely that which is good does not need to be kept among a favored few, and the fact that they are thus restricted is strong presumptive evidence that you are fearful they will not bear the test of investigation.

To this we briefly answer: First, the time and place of our meetings is no secret, but a well known fact in every community where our institution has an organized existence. The business transacted there concerns none but ourselves, and we certainly see no common sense reason why any one but ourselves should wish to be present at or deliberate in our councils.

You do not invite your neighbors to your friends' deliberations upon your family interests; on the contrary, when they inopportunely enter at such times, you drop the curtain, and hide family secrets from their gaze. Can you censure us for the exercise of that discretion which every honest, intelligent mind approves?

Surely it is of no less importance in associated bodies formed for mutual benefit, than families having a natural unity of interests. Secondly, these secret signs which

bring down on us severe censure and bitter opposition are simply family tokens by which we know each other, and by which important information is communicated to those who alone are concerned in it. If this be considered an evil for which condemnation is to be visited upon us, be it so. But we would have you keep in mind that when God made a covenant with Noah, He gave as a token of His faithfulness, the rainbow.

He gave also a sign or token to the covenant made with Abraham and his posterity.

Besides these, my memory reverts to a most beautiful incident recorded with full details in that good book, the Holy Bible, the beacon light which God has displayed on the shore of eternity, to guide and direct man in the voyage of life. You will find the record in 1st Samuel, chap. xx. It is a solemn covenant entered into by Jonathan, son of Saul, and David, afterward king of Israel.

This covenant included a sign by which knowledge of threatened danger was to be communicated. The celebrated friendship of Damon and Pythias in the reign of Dionysius did not exceed it even equalled that of David and Jonathan.

Jonathan conferred his friend, defended his character, and when the wrath of Saul could no longer be restrained, he risked everything to warn David of danger, and this warning was given by the sign previously agreed upon. The record informs us that "Jonathan's lad gathered up the arrows and came to his master. But the lad knew not anything; only Jonathan and David knew the matter. And Jonathan said to David; go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn, both of us, in the name of the Lord, saying, the Lord be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed forever."

The inspired history also informs us that David manifested his faithfulness to this covenant by giving to a named son of his friend a home in his own house, and also by bestowing upon him the inheritance of Saul.

Furthermore, David, with pathetic tenderness, and in a spirit of eloquent sweetness, after his friend's death, said, "I am distressed to thee, my brother Jonathan. Very pleasant hast thou been to me. Thy love was wonderful; passing the love of woman."

In this beautiful history of events, which transpired three thousand years ago, is presented a beautiful illustration of that friendship, love and truth, which Odd-Fellowship claims as the foundation of its principles and the essence of its practices.

But it is not alone upon these professions, nor upon recognized illustrations of our principles in either profane or sacred history that we rely. We appeal to the test established by Him who spake as never man spake, "By their fruits ye shall know them."

Loyalty to the government under which we live; obedience to its laws; and submission to its constitutional authorities, are prominent requisitions enforced by our organic law upon every member of the order, and every true Odd-Fellow is a living illustration of the practical character embodied in the name of a good citizen.

The cultivation of moral and social virtues, and the careful avoidance of everything tending in an opposite direction, is most impressively taught in our Lodges, both by precept and symbols of striking significance, thus impressively fixing truth in the mind. The fruit we bear must be our testimony of the practical worth of these lessons.

The benevolent professions we make as characteristic of our institution, can be seen daily in practical operation: We speak not boastfully, nor in a spirit of self-commendation, but in honesty of heart.

At the bed-side of a sick brother, with a woman's gentle tenderness, in anxious vigils, and assiduous attentions, it is our melancholy pleasure to show the strength of our friendship and the ardor of our love. And when the powers of nature fail and the resources of science are unavailing, when the mournful prospect of separation from our brother with its attendant sorrows is presented to the minds of the loved family who stand weeping in unspoken agony by his couch, then the brethren of the mystic links come near, with saddened countenances and tear-moistened eye, pointing the finger of hope to glorious immortality in the ledge of the blest on high, and assuring the bereaved ones of their tenderest sympathies and of all needed aid or assistance in the future.

Nor is this a vain promise soon to be forgotten, for when Odd-Fellows fail to regard the widow and orphan as their special care they cease to regard their avowed principles—friendship, love and truth.

Fraternal love supplies the widow's need and educates the orphan. To do these so far as possible is the pride and glory of Odd-Fellowship.

Thus hurriedly and briefly we have presented our institution before you, and we urge upon you a further examination at your convenience.

Truly, my brethren, we should lift up our hearts to God with anthems of praise for His great goodness and mercy in pre-

serving "the genius of Odd-Fellowship from the ruin which desolated so many of the charitable and benevolent institutions of our common country" during and as the effect of the late civil war.

"When brother, brother fought, and sire met son
In deadly grapple: when whoever won
Sorrow was victor: when the Church was rent
And the state cloven; when were torn
In twain
All tender ties: and each on ruin bent
Urged on the fight without remorse or ruth;
Even in that hurricane of civil war,
One snow white dove, with olive branch
in bill,
Fluttered its wings fearless o'er the wreck;
One band of brethren kept their purpose
still
Of friendly words and deeds; within the track
Of fire and carnage as a unit moved,
Made by example hate itself abhor,
And to the awed profane its mission
proved
Of Friendship, Love and Truth."

"It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto Thy name, O most High. To show forth Thy loving kindness in the morning, and Thy faithfulness every night. For thou Lord hast made me glad through Thy work: I will triumph in the works of Thy hands."

Let us, my brethren, to-day, in recognition of God's great goodness and mercy, in gratitude for His tokens of favor and manifest approval of our work, lift up to Him hearts full of holy thanksgiving: let our songs of praise be more fervent than ever before; let them ascend as the humble offering of hearts truly sensible of the greatness of the benefits received.

And while we thus render thanks to God and offer Him our heartfelt homage, let us in holy expectation look forward to the time when through the universal prevalence of friendship, love and truth all the tribes of earth "shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

Let I tire your patience I am admonished to bring my remarks to a close, and I know not how better to do this than by reciting a beautiful poem written by a lady who exhibited the pure refinement of her mind and the gentle kindness of her heart by this poetic gem in honor of our principles:

I.
Three golden arrows in the quiver,
Filled also with darts of strife;
Three sunny islands in the river,
The rapid stream of life—
Three stars in heaven's gem deck'd attire,
That never fade or dim;
Three harp notes in the spirit-lyre,
Notes angels love to hymn.

II.
Three charms to guard the heart from sorrow,
To keep aloof life's woes;
Three whispers of a brighter morrow,
The morrow of repose—
Three links amid the golden fetters
That heart to heart entwine;
Upon life's scroll three mystic letters,
Placed there by hand divine.

III.
Three watch-lights on the stormy highlands,
Of earth's wave-beaten strand;
Three harbors 'mong the rocky islands,
Begirt with treacherous sands—
Three life preservers on Time's ocean,
With dangerous reefs below;
Three voices mid the heart's commotion
To hush its strains of woe.

IV.
Three blossoms from the land of flowers,
To cheer the fainting soul;
Three rays of beauty from the bowers,
Beyond life's utmost goal—
Three strains of rapturous music swelling
Around the burial sod;
Three pillars in the holy dwelling—
The Temple of our God!"

These poetic Three are the motto emblazoned upon the unfurled banner of Odd-Fellowship—F. L. and T.

"Dear badge of our Order! Proud floating on high!
We'll stand by that motto 'till in death we shall lie."

Destruction of Sheep by Dogs.
The March report of the Commissioner of Agriculture dwells upon the ravages committed by dogs among the sheep in the United States.

In 1865 five hundred thousand sheep were killed by dogs, and their value was \$2,000,000. The number injured was three hundred thousand, and the loss is estimated at \$600,000.

The number of dogs in the country is computed at five millions, their annual expense ten dollars per head, and the sum total of their subsistence fifty millions of dollars—an immense sum to bestow upon a class of animals, the most of which are worthless, and many of them causing great mischief to the farmer.

What was thought of Railroads Fifty-six Years Ago.

The following letter, in reply to a suggestion about railroads, written over fifty years ago, by Chancellor Livingston, who had been associated with his brother-in-law, Robert Fulton, in application of steam to vessels, shows the state of improvement in that day:

ALBANY, March 1, 1811.

Dear Sir:—I did not till yesterday receive yours of the 25th of February; where it has loitered on the road I am at a loss to say. I had before read of your very ingenious proposition as to the railway communication. I fear, however, on mature reflection, that they will be liable to serious objection, and ultimately more expensive than a canal. They must be double, so as to prevent the danger of two such heavy bodies meeting. "The walls on which they are placed must be at least four feet below the surface, and three above, and must be clamped with iron, and even then would hardly sustain so heavy a weight as you propose moving at the rate of four miles an hour on wheels. They must be covered with iron, and that too very thick and strong.

The means of stopping these heavy carriages without a great shock, and of preventing them from running on each other—for there would be many running on the road at once—would be very difficult. In case of accidental stops, or necessary stops to take wood or water, &c. many accidents would happen. The carriage of condensing water would be very troublesome. Upon the whole, I fear the expense would be much greater than that of canals, without being so convenient.

R. R. LIVINGSTON.

The Senate and the Fenians.

The rejection of General Sweeney's nomination as Major in the regular army, by the Radical Senate, shows exactly how much sympathy Republicanism has for the Fenians.

For some time Congress and the Jacobin newspapers have affected an overwhelming regard for Fenianism, and oppressed Ireland. Resolutions of sympathy have been passed in the House, and propositions looking to the repeal of the neutrality laws have been introduced in order to affect the Fenian vote.

The action of the Senate in the case of Sweeney shows exactly how much reality underlies this pretended regard for the Fenians. Sweeney's offence is, that he was engaged in the movement against Canada. It is not that he is lacking in courage or ability. He left an arm in Mexico; and there was scarcely a batt' field west of the Alleghenies, during the war, that he cannot recall by some honorable scar. The only possible objection to him is that he is a Democrat and a Fenian.

It is not a wise policy to attempt to secure the vote of any class by flattering and cajoling them, or pretending an earnest sympathy where none is felt. Such, however, has been the course of Republicans towards the Fenians. The fact is very apparent in the rejection of the gallant Sweeney.—Chicago Times.

—Sanford Conover, alias Charles A. Dunham, convicted over two months ago, in the Criminal Court of the District of Columbia, on the charge of perjury, in giving false testimony before the Judiciary Committee of the House, tending to implicate Jefferson Davis in the assassination of President Lincoln, has been sentenced by Judge Fisher to ten years imprisonment in the Albany penitentiary.

—The Tremont Mills and Suffolk Manufacturing Company, of Lowell, Mass., have given notice that at a given time half the workmen in their establishments will be discharged, and the manufacture of woollen goods will be suspended. Other companies are expected to follow the example.

—Rev. Mr. Petty, an Iowa clergyman, who wanted every man hung who refused to vote the Radical ticket, recently eloped with another man's wife, leaving Mrs. Petty and six little Pettys behind. He is a petty fellow.

—The Bergner-Cameron organ is about the only organ in the State that attempts to white-wash the last Legislature. A clear annual profit of from ten to fifteen thousand dollars, however, will purchase much lime.

—The radical leaders have commenced to clamor for a "reconstruction of the Northern States." Let them wait till the fall elections. The people are preparing to reconstruct the Northern States on a Democratic basis so effectually that Radicalism will never more raise its head.

—Henry Ward Beecher ran as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention, for Brooklyn, at the late election, but was badly defeated—running behind the radical ticket.

—The Mississippi negroes are leaving the plantations, in violation of their contracts, in order to work on the levees, where the pay is a little better. Much loss in crops will result in consequence.