

eternity in indescribable bliss. We only differ as to the means: one thinks he pleases God by one mode of worship; another thinks a different mode agreeable; but the meaning is the same—they wish to worship one Almighty Eternal God—to adore him, to bless him, to give him thanks for his goodness and his protection,—and then again, their pretensions towards their fellow-men are all for their good; they wish to act fairly by them—to assist them in distress and tribulation—to pity their weaknesses and help their infirmities. And so in Politics,—who does not *invead* the good of his country—who does not wish that his own actions at all events shall be for universal benefit. One proposes the extension, another the restriction, of popular power; but do they *mean* differently? No; all mean the greatest happiness for the greatest number.

Now, the object of Odd Fellowship is to bring together, under one roof, in one fraternity, the various religious sects, the various political parties of our ever-changing community. In these sacred walls, sects and parties are unknown, and the devout worshipper of his God—the lover of his fellow-men—the true Patriarch, and the benefactor of his fellow-beings—meet as they ought to meet, full of love to each other, of overflowing benevolence to all mankind.

And so, of course, no sectarian or political influence ought to have any weight in balloting for candidates for admission into this honorable and ancient fraternity; and if at any time such should have been the case, should any person have been rejected because he was of any particular sect of religion, any particular country, or because he might belong to any particular political party—the party of yesterday often changing place with the party of to-day,—if, I say, by any combination of circumstances, any one should at any time have been rejected on grounds like these, then the Lodge is bound to make reparation, or forfeit for ever their claim to impartiality, and their freedom from prejudices respecting country, politics, or creed.

Another object Odd Fellows have in uniting themselves into a Body, which consists in helping one another in times of danger, difficulty and trial. They profess universal benevolence to all mankind—universal charity they endeavor to follow up, but they also especially assist those of their own fraternity; and their reason for “preferring one another” is obvious—by so doing they escape the danger of being imposed upon by the vicious and designing; and their means being chiefly appropriated to a limited number, are of far more effective service, than they would be if so diffused as to be of little worth to any. They likewise, when applying their liberality to a Brother of the Order, by no means term it as Charity, but consider it a privilege to be allowed to give, what the Brother in need has a right to demand. We support the widows and orphans of such of the Brethren as may not have bequeathed them the means of support. We visit and assist the sick—we help to bury the dead—we condole with the afflicted; and to such works is the time of the Brothers devoted, when not occupied with the duties of their

private calling—one of the principles of the Order being, that none shall sacrifice to the Order the time that ought to be employed in the business whereby he gains his bread.

But then it may be asked, why exclude any from so universally benevolent, and so extensive an Institution? We reply, because all are not alike virtuous and benevolent—all are not alike temperate in conduct and in pleasures—all alike are not fit for the Society of those whose chief pleasures spring from the benevolence of the heart.

We reject the licentious followers of pleasure rather than of virtue—all those given to excess in food or drink—those forgetful of the truth—all those violent and offensive in speech, profane swearers and despisers of the ordinances of God! and all who forget the command to “do to others as we would be done by”—all fraudulent persons—all backbiters and slanderers—and all deceivers in word or deed—are excluded from our honorable body. As those who are dishonest in small matters, are likely to be so in greater affairs, we suspend those who neglect to pay their dues, and those who may have become intemperate; and we expel those habitually guilty of faults, which, if they had been condemned of, prior to their admission, would have caused them rejection when ballotted for.

Brothers are expected to be on good terms with each other; if they are not so, it is the duty of the Lodge to bring them together, and to expostulate with them, when, if they do not obey the Lodge, they must be expelled, as no feelings of anger—no contentions—no envyings—no strife—must ever be allowed in the precincts of the Lodge. Kindly feelings must prevail.

“Be to their faults a little blind,  
Be to their virtues ever kind.”

Nor should violent competitions for the honors of office, ever be allowed in the Lodge—no strivings—no envyings, should be permitted for an instant,—each should meekly and fervently undertake any duty to which he may be elected—preferring to execute a laborious office, rather than to procure such for another—preferring another to obtain an office of honor, rather than to endeavor to be chosen himself.

Bickerings, irritating and pungent remarks, angry words, recriminations, are contrary to the spirit of the Order; and out of the Lodge-room, perfect silence should be ever preserved as to anything done in it—its elections, its proceedings (excepting in cases of emergency) should never be given forth to the world—the Institution should be known only beyond its sacred walls, by its deeds of charity and love.

The secrets are enjoined on us for a two-fold purpose; first, that we may not be imposed upon as to who are really brethren, and may recognise them wherever they may be, so that we may know to whom we may safely confide in business and friendship, and to whom we may safely extend the fostering arm, of our benevolent Institution. The second purpose is, that we may learn to be silent. Secresy is the bond of friendship, and the pledge of honor; he who can keep the secrets