

The Knights of Pythias will ever hold in remembrance the heroic death of Knight Samuel Holder Hines, whose spirit went out amid the charred and blackened ruins of the Spotswood Hotel, in Richmond, Va., on the morning of December 25th, 1870, in the vain and fruitless attempt to save the life of a brother Knight. He fully illustrated and vindicated the exalted principles of our Order, and taught us, by his sublime example, that "it is sweet to die for those we love." All honor and praise to the brave, heroic and courageous Samuel Holder Hines, who, having forced his way through the suffocating smoke and smothered flames that choked the passages and stairways of the fated Spotswood, to a point of safety, and then bethought him of a brother Knight, who was sleeping in an upper room, exposed to danger and death, despite remonstrance and entreaty, rushed back through the lurid flame and scorching fire, and perished in the chivalrous and Pythian effort to rescue and save the life of his friend, at the peril of his own. His was the first sacrifice in obedience to the principles of the Order.

The next in line was the brave, chivalric Peter Woodland. At the time of his tragic death, he was Assistant Superintendent of the Hudson River Tunnel, and was celebrated for his skill, energy and fidelity in the discharge of the varied duties imposed by the responsible position.

He was the man that coolly gave the order—"Break out the bull's-eye," knowing full well at the time that the release of air, which had been compressed by the force of water, while it would allow the escape of the men in that compartment, would utterly cut him off from any chance to escape, and thus perished, that others might live. On the 30th day of May, in the year 1883, the Knights in the Supreme Domain assembled at New Jersey to witness the unveiling of a fitting monument to his memory, on which was inscribed in large characters: "He Sacrificed His Life That Others Might Live."

Then we have the noble, manly, brave and unselfish Westemaken, Second Engineer of the ill-fated river steamer, R. E. Lee, who was on duty at the time the steamer took fire. The steamer had left Vicksburg bound for New Orleans, loaded with cotton, and was passing Crook's Landing, when the alarm of fire was given. The pilot, one of the coolest and bravest of men, rounded to, and headed his boat for the bank. In less than five minutes from the time the alarm was given the steamer was wrapped in flames. To understand the position of an engineer on a Mississippi steamer, loaded with cotton, one must imagine himself surrounded on all sides by an inflammable wall, with but few and difficult places of egress, and scarcely a chance to escape in case of fire, should he remain true to his duty, and stand at his post.

Thus it was with Bro. Westemaken. Whilst the unrelenting flames were hedging him in on all sides, he stood true to his duty and the teachings of his noble profession, evidently with the full consciousness that his life was required to be given, rather than his post deserted, and himself made a sacrifice that others might be saved. This becomes absolutely certain from the fact, that in the midst of flames and frenzy,

with a hideous death staring him in the face, he called through the tube to the pilot: "Tell them at home—Good-bye."

"Greater love hath no man than this—that a man lay down his life for his friends."

This is the friendship that we endeavor to cultivate among the members of our Order. Among those who deemed it an honor to be enrolled among the membership of the Order, Knights of Pythias, are some who are high in positions in the affairs of life. His Excellency, William McKinley, President of the United States, is an active member, as is also his late opponent, Hon. W. J. Bryan. It numbers among its members, senators, congressmen, judges, governors, members of Parliament, as well as those in humble stations of life, all brought together by the grand lessons it teaches, and all striving to make it a blessing to mankind.

To-day the name of the founder of the Order is so revered among the members, that the very mention of his name brings forth bursts of enthusiasm and reverence. On the 26th day of July last, a beautiful monument was unveiled and dedicated to his memory, at Utica, N. Y.

The funds for this monument were contributed by all the members, throughout the Supreme Domain.

Justus Rathbone died a poor man. His time was so taken up, alleviating the sorrows of humanity and seeking to uplift the fallen, that he had no time left to accumulate a competency. He left behind him hosts of sorrowing friends, and two daughters, who are wards of this great Order of ours, the Supreme Lodge paying them a yearly annuity.

Our founder builded better than he knew. The government of the Order is entirely in the hands of the membership, grand lodges being composed of representatives from the subordinate lodges, and the Supreme Lodge composed of representatives of the grand lodges. Meetings of the Supreme Lodge are held every two years. The Grand Lodge meets annually; three subordinate lodges in a jurisdiction are necessary to have a Grand Lodge.

The secret work of the subordinate Lodge consists of three divisions, called ranks, which are symbolical of the three principles of the Order, namely, Friendship, Charity and Benevolence, and are known as the rank of Page, Esquire and Knight, and a candidate must take all three to become a full-fledged Knight.

The lesson taught in each rank is illustrated, and the instruction given in language and form, appealing so strongly to man's higher nature, that a lasting impression upon the neophyte can not but result. The advantages of the Order are open to all worthy men, and a study of its lessons with their adaptation in the daily life, will result in more loyal and abiding friendships, in a charity, that while hating the sin, will yet deal gently and kindly with the erring, remembering the frailty of our common humanity, in a benevolence that sees the needs of a brother before our own; in short, the ranks of Knighthood teach fraternity in its deepest, tenderest, truest sense.