

The True Knight of British Columbia.

"The true Knight does no Man wrong."

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VANCOUVER, OCTOBER, 1898.

THE VALUE OF PYTHIANISM.

What is the value or worth of Pythianism? That is a fair question to ask, and it is one which every true Knight should be able to answer. To those who have been active and zealous in their efforts to increase the membership of our beloved Order, this is a question which must be asked again and again of them by those whom they desire to join us, and it is one which I am afraid a great many in our ranks can hardly answer with that intelligence which might reasonably be expected of them. Perhaps this is what might be expected, for the patent reason that a great many join our Order, as many join other societies, without any due realization of what they are doing, or of what is expected of them, or of what they are becoming, and thus their whole Pythian life is either of much good to themselves or to others.

To put the point more pithily, they are Pythians only in name. They move on from step to step from the lowest to the highest rank, but they really never enter into the sacred vestibule of Pythian teaching, whence the inspiration comes which enthuses a man to know all that he should know. Such are sources of weakness, and not of strength, and as we write with the image of the "True Knight" before us, we must keep before the eyes and the minds of our readers, not the worst, but the best Pythian example. Now with regard to this question, many know in a dreamy, hazy way that Pythianism must have some value, or else it would never have grown to the dimensions reached to-day, but what that value is, well that's the stickler. Let us briefly try to answer this question for the benefit of us all. First, let us look at the value of Pythianism to the individual. Taking man as he is, neither making him better nor worse, there is a bit of selfishness in him, and in a sense the very instincts of his being, and the conditions of his existence make it imperative that he should think of self. We are often reminded that "man mind thyself" is the Eleventh Commandment, and while perhaps we don't admire it, and teachers condemn it, yet there are many true voices whispering in his ear, man mind thyself. God has given him so many things, and has put the care of these things upon him, that as he hears and feels their imperative demands, and demands which, if not satisfied, will make him so much the poorer, he must at times devote his energies towards looking after this mysterious and wonderful thing called self. A man that fails here becomes a wreck, a good for nothing, and every man, even though he may detest and abhor the very appearance of selfishness, yet he feels he must in every way be true to himself. A man, therefore, wants to know from this selfish standpoint, what Pythianism can do for him, and it is right here that Pythianism has its benefits to confer, for it is intensely practical. Pythianism takes the world as it is. It is in a sense neither pessimistic nor optimistic. It has no theory of life. It does not bother itself about the struggle for existence, nor about the survival of the fittest, as these things are discussed by men who live more or less apart from humanity, but it sees certain things which are common to our common humanity, and seeks to enable a man to meet these as bravely and as successfully as possible. There is sickness. Every man is vulnerable. There is a weak spot about him which sooner or later disease gets hold of. So much so, we are able to prognosticate, that we are liable to get sick. Further, we are exposed to dangers seen and unseen. Accidents are the common happenings of daily life. Wherever we work for our daily bread, our body is more or less in danger. Every wise man knows these things. No one but a fool, would, like the ostrich, bury his head so as to be oblivious of these heritages. The wise man reasons with himself. I