

words he offers, his own life as a pledge for the life of the man whom he loved, seemingly above all others. The request was granted. Damon walks out, Pythias walks into the dungeon, and is bound with the chains significant of death. We need not portray the parting scenes. These may be far better imagined than described. Suffice it to say that amid tears—bitter tears—he forced himself away from his loved ones, that he might keep his word with his valiant friend. We have nothing but praise for Lucullus his faithful servant, who did everything that human ingenuity and fidelity could invent to save his master's life, but Damon was a hero. He will not save his life and so he pushes forward with all the speed he can command. With Pythias, if he valued his life, and what true man does not love sweet life? the moments now were big with consequences, the hour is nearing when he must die, and Damon has not come. He does not murmur. He harbors no uncharitable thoughts against his friend. See yonder is the block, and yonder stands the executioner with his gruesome axe ready to deal the bloody blow. Forward walks Pythias. His not to reason why—his but to do or die. See his head is laid unflinching upon the block, his neck is bare, and the axe flashes in the sunlight. But what means that commotion in the crowd—that sharp piercing cry? Who is yon breathless runner? It is Damon! We do not wonder to-day that such friendship on one side and on the other struck all with admiration, that the life of Damon was spared, and that the tyrant begged that he might become the friend of both, but the lesson may be gathered from these words: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Here then we have a glimpse of what a true friend and true friendship is. You may ask what is it that makes this so praiseworthy? or wherein lies the excellence of this tribute and sacrifice? In order to understand this we must put forth some effort to understand what life is, and what it really means. A man's life! has't not a profound meaning for us all. To lay down a life, to offer up a life as a sacrifice, isn't that a sacrifice which the world has ever immortalized in deathless strains? And the reason is, that life is regarded by every noble man as a gift, the choicest gift which God has given to man. He breathed unto him the breath of life, and man became a living soul. How ever we may fail to understand the mystery surrounding its origin, yet the thing itself, though which, and by means of which man has attained to all dignity, glory and excellence, is justly deemed the noblest gift of God to man. Without it,

what is man? Dust. With it he may become the wisest of the wise, the greatest of the great, the noblest of the noble. Hence to save the life, preserve the life, develop the life, each of these phrases has become to us a sign of its dignity, priceless and worth. We can admire a man who scatters his possessions, disperses his broad acres, and lavishly of his gold for the sake of truth or principle, but when he will dare to give the best gift of all—his own life—the symbol of himself, isn't it true? "Greater love hath no man than this." He gives the grandest pledge of his sincerity and fidelity. Those who have read Virgil will remember his thrilling description of the adventures of Nisus and Euryalus. When retreating from Volscens they become separated, Nisus comes back seeking his youthful friend, only to see him struggling with his brutal captors. Unseen to the enemy, he hurls his dart, which pierced the armor of Salmo, and drank his vital blood. Another dart is dispatched which forced its way through the temple of Tagus. Volscens becomes infuriated, and looking at his youthful captive, cries, "But thou shalt pay for both" and at the prisoner flies with his drawn sword. Nisus seeing the fate of Euryalus, and as if to save his friend: "Me, me, he cried, turn all your swords alone on me." Greater love hath no man than this. He could not save his friend, but the poet tells us:

Dying he slew; and staggering on the plain.
With swimming eyes he sought his lover slain;
Then quiet on his bleeding bosom fell,
Content in death.

Pythias was no less a hero than Nisus, the valiant one whose soul is now enshrined, reincarnated and transmuted into our beloved order, was really in life, one with Damon. He permitted the galling chains to bind his limbs, and when the call came, go forth to die, he went willingly forth, to show to the world for all time what a friend will willingly do. He was not permitted to die, but all the same he died in intent and purpose. Noble, noble, friend! It is such men as thou that redeemest men from foul aspersions, brutal innuendoes, and the clap-trap talk of the mean and the selfish. It is such as thou that leadest men to think of what is chivalrous and knightly, and preparent the way for the performance of God-like deeds. And it is such as thou, Pythias, that revealest to men what wondrous riches are stored up in a faithful human heart. This is the man—and the deed that inspired Pythians. We are not old as an order, but Pythias

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