

# ADDRESS UPON THE SUBJECT OF ODD FELLOWSHIP,

*Delivered before the Members of Oriental Lodge, No. 7,  
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A MEMBER OF SAID LODGE.*

**MOST NOBLE GRAND, OFFICERS AND BROTHERS.**—It is with much pleasure, I respond to the call of \* \* \* \* \* to deliver to our Brothers present, a few ideas on the sublime and beautiful subject of Odd Fellowship.

To a man endued with the powers of oratory; and the facility of collecting and arranging his ideas; it opens a wide space for a fertile imagination; but as the subject is of such magnitude, such beauty, and of such vital importance to the well being of the Order, and the community at large, I feel quite inadequate to do it the justice it requires; and I regret, that a more able person than myself, has not come forward to perform so pleasing a duty. But, as I have already observed, I feel much pleasure in setting an example which I am confident will be followed by those Brothers, who, by their experience and abilities, are far more competent than myself to expatiate upon, and point out to the Brotherhood, the various duties which are incumbent upon them, as members of this noble and useful institution.

It is now some sixteen or eighteen months, since I had the honor of becoming a member of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. Prior to that period, I had not the most distant idea of what Odd Fellowship meant: I had occasionally heard there was such an Order in existence, but I supposed it to be a sort of jovial or bacchanalian association.

It was by mere accident that I met at a friend's house, a small pamphlet on the merits of Odd Fellowship; written, I believe, by Father Wildey; as also a copy of the constitution and by-laws, of an Odd Fellow's Lodge. I read these with much pleasure—I read them twice—thrice, and the more I read, the more was I struck with its moral worth and excellence. I found it replete with sentiments in perfect unison with my own; I found there existed, and within my reach, a society for which I had long sighed—a band of Brothers, whose hearts were cast in honor's mould—whose practice was mutual support and benevolence, and whose great aim was the amelioration of mankind in general. I made application for admission, and thanks to your good opinion, Brothers, I have become one of this great and happy family.

Brothers, I have said we are a happy family; and I trust and feel confident, you will agree with me in this assertion. To continue so we must be cautious, prudent and attentive to our duties—we must always have before our eyes, those beautiful precepts which are laid down for our guidance in the different charges, and lectures, which we so frequently hear repeated, and we must firmly grasp the link that binds us together in Friendship, Love and Truth.

As our family grows larger, little differences may arise between two or more Brothers, which for a time, may mar the comfort of the whole; but let us always

bear in mind, that no man can be perfect—to “err, is human—to forgive, divine.”

Every man's feelings and sentiments, are not alike; and if at any time, all our opinions are not congenial, let us never forget, that by a solemn obligation, we are bound mutually to support, to assist, and aid each other in all good works.

Brothers, the institution of our Order, is not of recent date. We may trace its origin to the remotest antiquity: and although not under the same name, still its principles, intentions, and in a great measure, its constitution, were the same. I allude to an association for mutual support, assistance and protection, which took place among the primitive Christians, after the birth of Christ.

We read, that during the siege of the Roman Emperor Trajan; the Christians were persecuted and hunted like wild beasts, for their strict and persevering adherence to that beautiful and sublime doctrine, which was given to the world by the Saviour of Mankind. “Honor God, and do unto each other as you would they should do unto you.” United together as one family in Friendship, Truth and Love.

Those great and virtuous men, bearing in mind these divine precepts; undismayed by the persecutions in force against them; united together in a regular organized body—having their form of initiation—their signs—pass-words and grips—their regular nightly meetings, where they enacted laws and regulations, not only for their own good, but for that of mankind in general. Neither were they dismayed by the fear of detection—the penalty of which was death. The secrets of their Order were never divulged: and it is this steadiness of faith and principles, which has preserved the Religion of Christ, pure and unsullied, and caused it to spread over the whole world.

Let us, then, my dear Brothers, endeavour to imitate these good and venerable Fathers of antiquity. We have now no persecutions to fear for our opinions, or the charitable works we may perform. Let us not, then, be ashamed to proclaim loudly to the world that we are Odd Fellows. Let us show by our brotherly union, and the deeds we perform, that we are worthy of the name we bear, and of the Order to which we belong.

I will take this opportunity to recommend to the Brotherhood, a few remarks on the duties which, in my poor opinion, are incumbent upon us as good Odd Fellows.

I have observed, that out of the Lodge, and particularly at a distance from it, there are some members who are diffident of recognizing a Brother: as if they were ashamed the world should know they belonged to the Sacred Order. Now, with all due deference to the opinion of the Lodge, I would recommend that the cold and formal salutation of Sir or Mr. should be entirely discarded from the vocabulary of Odd Fellowship—that the Fraternity should invariably when, and wherever they meet, hail each other by the endearing name of Brother; and that in the ordinary mode of shaking hands, they should, with caution, always use a