

The great curse of the present age, is its utter and intense selfishness—its tendency to isolate man from his fellow—to destroy all those fine and tender and harmonizing dependencies which naturally grow out of our relation to our fellow-men—and to wrap man up in his own little individual interests, narrowing and belittling every generous impulse and emotion, till he is cold and insensible as the toad imprisoned for centuries in his rocky cavern. Smiles there are, and friendly greetings in plenty, but in the main as false in their seeming, as the painted bloom on the cheek of the superannuated coquette. Plenty of friendship when one is able to buy it—when he needs it not,—but when the storms and tempests of adversity come, it has flown away like the gossamer's web upon the first chilling breath of the gale. Who has not felt himself bought and sold like a piece of merchandise, for a most inconsiderable price, by pretended or apparent friends? and who has not bought and sold and dealt more or less in this miserable and heartless traffic? and who has not at some time felt his warm and friendly feelings repulsed and driven back upon himself, till his soul has shivered with the chill, and lost a portion of its generous sensibility? Aye, who has not felt his whole generous, trusting, and enthusiastic youth, to be but a gradual and painful awakening from a most delicious dream, accordingly as he has trusted and been betrayed, hoped and been deceived, wooed and been sold, in his intercourse with the world, till his whole being has become petrified and hardened, from the stony and heartless influences around him? Individual interest or aggrandizement is the cause of all this,—utter corroding, cankering selfishness, spreads like a moral leprosy—sets like an incubus upon the soul, chilling and freezing all its generous impulses. Exceptions there are, and glorious ones, but “like angel's visits, few and far between.” Now, it is a beautiful fact in the economy of the universe, that whenever any evil becomes extreme, that very extreme suggests and produces the remedy; and from such a chrysalis has sprung all the reforms of the age. From the ashes of wrong has sprung the Phoenix of the remedy, and mankind have gained in the aggregate by every continuous and aggravated outrage in the moral world. I have no doubt the very selfishness of which I have been speaking, has produced our beloved Order as a remedy. The very necessity of the case has called it into being, and the responsibility of those whose office it is to nurse the infant, looking to all the vast good it may and ought and can accomplish in the limitless future, is extreme, and must not be trifled with. Great caution should be used that those who are called to this office, should approach and enter upon their duties with clean hands, and with a proper appreciation of their duties. Many there are whose whole being is intensely wrapt up in the accumulation of dollars—who seem made for no higher or nobler aim, than to buy and sell and pinch paltry individual profit from pennies, till their very souls smell of copper, and to whom the music of heaven would be a discord, unless enlivened by the jingle of coin—men who deal in smiles and fawnings and friendly greetings and *outward proprieties*, as a mere matter of traffic. These are a kind of men who would buy and sell the glorious principles of Odd Fellowship in the same spirit, if they remain true to the instincts of their being. Now, Odd Fellowship cannot change all this at once, but if its friendly principles are duly appreciated and practised, it must ultimately be the instrument of the change; and to accomplish the object it

must commence the work, and not falter in the effort. On the other hand, where each atom—each member, seeks its own individual selfish gratification, irrespective of others—all is discord and disunion—little, niggardly, sordid, cold, gloomy and unlovely.

The duty of an Odd Fellow is to emancipate himself from all that belittles and narrows his nobler self, to attune his own soul into unison with all that is great and glorious and good in the universe—to assimilate himself to all that is generous and kindly and noble in the Lodge—and practically to exhibit in his intercourse with Brothers and all others, the beauty of his creed as an Odd Fellow.

What Odd Fellow has not felt his heart throb with kindly feelings,—has not felt himself irresistibly drawn towards his Brother, by a stronger and holier power, when he has listened to the beautiful truths embodied in our inimitable charges and lessons. How delightful, too, out of the Lodge, the friendly greeting—the warm brotherly grasp of the hand. How glorious to feel no distrust, to dread no treachery, to fear no scandal, to apprehend no uncharitable censure, no ungenerous sneer, no underhand advantages, no selfish coldness—to know that one generous and frank, and manly, and kindly feeling pervades every breast, and warms every heart with its common pulsations. To feel that we are Brothers (how holy a name!) Brothers in the Lodge—out of the Lodge—Brothers every where—destined to one common haven, and travelling one common road to get there—lightening each other's labours, and soothing each other's sorrows on the way. Could this picture be realized, how glorious the fruition—how grand the object, and how worthy the Order that brings us together!

Brothers, have we sufficiently cultivated this spirit? Have we done our part to forward this object? I will believe we have done much towards it—but we have fallen lamentably short of what we might have done—of what it was our duty to do. How many times have we retired from the Lodge Room, irritated and annoyed with some little discords—little, childish, petulant disputes—little, selfish slivers sticking in our hearts, which should have no place there. And have we not seen apparent coldness grow up between Brothers who were friendly before? I fear we have, many of us, been too deficient in cultivating that brotherly feeling, without which we had better not pretend to be Odd Fellows. Brothers! it is our duty to cultivate this brotherly feeling in all our intercourse—out of the Lodge, or in the Lodge—not only to cultivate the feeling, but to exhibit its effects, and cherish its every impulse,—and rich will be the result to us all—excellent its effect upon our characters, and profitable to the community in which we live. The receipt for the accomplishment of this object is simple:—Always to forget our little narrow selves, and think of the great family to which we belong, and the great objects for which that family has been organized,—and then shall we smother all tendency to partial cliques—all partizan projects—all selfish alliances, and remember we are not children quarrelling over our toys, but men, engaged in a great and holy exercise, the importance and grandeur of which consecrates and hallows every proper effort, however humble and lowly. When shall we remember, that in so large a family there must necessarily be great diversity of character, great variety of disposition, and difference in views and expression, and manner, and temper, all of which, more or less, requires the exercise of mutual forbearance and generous