

Infidel relative to Christianity. Thus does he distrust his own eyes, and declare, inferentially, from the predisposed baseness of his impure heart.

This dark principle has prevailed long enough. All associations which have stepped forth with an open hand and a generous heart, and labored to ameliorate human suffering, have been the objects of its hatred.

Cain hated Abel. The sympathy, affection and good will of Abel, was not possessed by Cain—who hated and slew his brother. Ignorance of the principle which lived in Abel's breast—together with its concomitant envy, gave birth to wrath; and then its offspring, murder, all hideous and blood-robed, appeared to shroud the trembling earth in gloom. We do not, however, claim that Abel was an Odd-Fellow, although he manifested the virtues of Odd-Fellowship; nor do we rank Cain with the opposers of Odd-Fellowship at this day. Yet we say, Cain was ignorant of the principles of Abel—he hated him for his gentleness and love. Odd-Fellowship is opposed by those who are ignorant of some of its forms; and who feel that its principles are too pure and holy to abide in whited sepulchres.

It is not my intention to detain you long with the antiquity of our Fraternity. I have no desire to claim remote antiquity for the organic structure of Odd-Fellowship. It matters not whether the fanciful idea so often put forth, that the foundation stone of Odd-Fellowship was laid by our forefather Adam—whether it was organized in the Roman camp, among the Druids, or Egyptians, or at a later period, be correct or not. We know that it has been organized as a system—that it is of human origin, based in principles which are coeval with the great Divinity. We know that it ranks among the most honored and useful of human institutions. It has withstood the assaults of its enemies. The unbridled fury of the ignorant, the more artful falsehoods and subtle insinuations of the demagogue have passed by, without scathing its pillars, or dimming the lustre of its chain. Idle and impotent are, and ever will be, the puny efforts of malice, or the strong arm of bigotry and superstition, against the inculcation and practice of those sublime virtues of our Order, which have a common God for their origin, and a boundless universe for their temple. Their efforts have been put forth against our Institution with a zeal worthy of a better cause,

“While like a sunny rill,
Silent, yet gaining still,
Deeper and wider our influence has spread;
Soothing the Widow's fears,
Wiping the Orphan's tears,
Strength to the weak—to the fatherless bread.”

It is, however, not surprising that the progress of the Order was opposed in Europe and America at an early day. Much of the prejudice that was aroused against it, was in consequence of its partaking of the character of a convivial association; for such was its character in both hemispheres. No wonder, then, that an enlightened and moral community would spurn the professions of the members of the Institution which, whilst it claimed to exert a moralizing and elevating influence among men, presented little if any evidence of the truthfulness of the profession, but rather evidence against the profession and the influence, in the custom which was known to exist, and the practice of conviviality in the recesses of the Lodge-Room. The public saw, indeed, a beautiful theory