

## THE SOCIAL FEATURES OF FRATERNITY.

A Paper Presented at the Canadian Fraternal Association, Toronto, March 23rd, 1894, by Rev. John Kay.

Frater, although a Latin word, has its counterpart in every language, especially in that which prevails in our Canadian realm. It recognizes the family relation and from its similarity of form and sound to that of Pater—father—describes a circle of relations both sacred and essential. The social relation is closest where the members of the circle are brothers. The admirable answer of the greatest of all teachers to the question "Who is my neighbor?" was to the effect that that man was the neighbor who could do good to his fellow man, when misfortune and disease had laid him out to die, when the proud priest and selfish Levite would pass by on the other side, the true neighbor, though of another, even a hated nationality, would overlook the boundaries of conventionality and at great inconvenience and expense of time, labor and money render him help.

The neighbor may do more than a brother the brother should be more than a neighbor. His ties are those of blood and the deepest fellowships of life bind together the members of the same family. To get at the root of the brotherhood we must go back along the lines of history to the one family and the original and essential Fatherhood. There we find even the first man a father to the race, a son of God, and so the good book says "Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God."

The universal brotherhood of man is essentially related to the universal fatherhood of God, and we are vain enough to assume that this great paternity and fraternity can be found nowhere taught essentially apart from that good Samaritan Neighbor, who found humanity on the roadside of life bleeding and dying of the wounds his enemies had made, and stooping to help him he poured into those wounds oil and wine, set him on his beast, bore him to the inn and said what more is needed I will pay again, and the echo of the incident is saying to us "go thou and do likewise." The example therefore is an unselfish one, with a generous overflow of blessings to man, a hearty, not a stinted, service. It has its source in kindness and faithful friendship, its happiness its real service—alleviating misery and promoting true pleasure everywhere. One may, therefore, be pardoned for believing that the fraternity of which we speak is not of the exclusive kind, narrow, proud, and haughty, but democratic, humble and inclusive, a brotherhood in a common cause and interest. Those orders that have been instituted for the sole purpose of promoting friendship, prosecuting learning and developing true character have also in their foundation principles, the true brotherhood aspects of fraternity. Some people contend that such orders as are represented in this fraternal association are circumscribed and narrow, if not selfish, in their objects, inasmuch as they are bound to help each other and no one else, and they do both faithfully. However this may seem to some, in actual life it works differently. That person who is educated to think of and help others, by the rules of his society, is more likely to exercise these qualities irrespective of lodge rules and society bonds, than the person who has been taught to pray

"Lord bless me and my wife,  
My son John and his wife,  
We four and no more, amen."

The Lodge with its fellowship, its covenants, its general business, its expenses, rules and regulations seems to have demonstrated its necessity as a part of the social system of mankind; necessary to the growth of the social idea, for it is impossible to promote the pleasure and welfare of the many without acquaintance with the individual and the interchange of social amenities. To remain in blissful segregation is not to know what real happiness is, but is like the oriental philosophy that posits the acme of felicity in unconsciousness. The birds of the air are not more true to their nature when mingling in flocks, than is mankind in seeking its purest joys in the family and the society. The cultivation and development of the individual is not more important than the proper organization of the multitude.

The whole structure of society is based upon these two principles, and in them lies the secret of man's highest good, his greatest usefulness and purest pleasure.

To neglect the individual and allow him to grow up in a selfish disregard of his social destination, is to make him less than a man. But to make all the educating forces of his personal life to have respect to his place in the social sphere is in the highest degree wise. The elevating moral actions of man find a theatre for proper work in organized society, hence the importance of correct individual culture for this higher sphere, as the errors and virtues of personal character are sure to project themselves into organized life. The selfishness and immorality that would ruin the individual will do the same in the enlarged association. Refinement and perfection in the one will give refined and elevated socialism.

All true business finds its secrets of success along the same lines. The selfish man thinks to enhance his happiness and possessions by ignoring the rights and interests of his fellowman, and by sharp dealing and dishonesty, seeks his own and not another's good. But such a life will set man at variance with his fellow man and ruin both. To make an honest and faithful business

man there must be intellectual refinement, business unselfishness, moral conscientiousness and social purity. With these he is fitted to take his place in the social and political conclaves of men who, seeking the greatest good to the greatest number, stand together and are true to each other. Is one in affliction and misfortune then all share them together, and being brothers bear each the others burdens.

The society life of men must proceed upon these principles, and where men meet for intellectual and social pleasures they can only find them upon a proper procedure in detail.

There must be the fitness of the one person, as the unit in the social scale, in order to the objects and results that are to flow from the organized company; and the intellectuality, moral goodness and social perfectness of the society cannot rise higher than those of the average members of the organization. It is true that this may become a school in which they may educate each other, the weariest may gain strength the lowest ascend, and all may be made better by association, or if unfortunately they be of depraved tastes and vitiated motives they will certainly contribute to pull down the highest standards that may be set or the noblest ideals aimed at.

No society can be perfect that ignores the family relations as the essential condition of the social entity, and the rights of the home must not be forgotten or neglected by those who would put their social meeting above suspicion.

In fact the members of the lodge should retire from its exercises having a higher estimate of the sacred place called home and a divine love for the dear ones who comprise its factors; then will they have a closer relation to citizenship and a deeper hold upon the lines of life in its braver and more generous significance. So the more exalted the idea of intellectual life the clearer and closer will become the affinities for home.

If the society produces a distaste for the duties and responsibilities to the state, the church and the home, there is something wrong with that social circle. If the convivialities that regale the appetite, the merry laughter, and the social mazes, make the member tired of the quieter refinements and pleasures of home; if they cause him to hide his face in shame to speak, in the family circle of the secret lodge and its doings, in nine cases out of ten those lodge proceedings are wrong. The exclusion of either sex can scarcely be considered where the higher conditions of pure society are expected to prevail, for it is difficult to conceive of any exclusive sex reaching alone any very high ideals of social life. If the language and spirit of the assembled members are found to be offensive to the pure tastes and nobler aspirations of refined womanhood it would not be a proper place for her loving presence, and the respectability and life of that society are doomed. Though it by no means follows that an exclusive society is necessarily improper.

The additions made to the social realm by the introduction of financial benefits, as in the friendly societies, enhance the importance of the organization. These, as a rule are called death benefits because they are made in view of the inroads which the dread monster is constantly making upon the ranks of mankind. He is sure to leave helpless women and children to suffer, and so, from humanitarian feelings and faithfulness to the most sacred of vows and affections the pleasures of social life become allied to a commendable beneficiary provision, and, while the law of averages holds its place in the realms of mind and matter these benefits will continue the product of benevolent, provident, economical and thrifty foresight. The joining of the two principles in a social order adds strength and usefulness to both.

Society has natural gradations the result of natural tendencies, tastes, idiosyncrasies, affinities, affections, passions, principles and all the forms of hereditary predilection. The tendency is to selections, rings, castes and unnumbered forms of social preferences, resulting, if not carefully guarded, in the most rigid exclusivism, the very opposite of that which a broad minded person seeks to accomplish by his efforts for the public good.

Nothing, perhaps, is narrower than the little coteries into which these natural affinities and prejudices would organize men. In fact it would be the very opposite of organizing. They would fall, without effort, into the most objectional sectionalism and bigotry; would forget the meaning of the word brother and would live on the narrowest and meanest lines of selfishness.

The great object of the true philanthropist will be to bring together the different lines into which natural selection leads and gets the best from each and all, to the discouragement and elimination of the worst, and thus bringing up the average of human usefulness and happiness to a much higher standard, according to the true law of the survival of the fittest. The beauty of this philosophy is wonderfully sustained by the teachings of that most unassuming, yet most philosophical, poetical and practical of all books—the Bible. Its teachings inculcate a respect for the brotherhood. "Love the Brotherhood." The fraternal idea is here encouraged, as by command, and from the highest motive is set forth as worthy of universal attention.

The bigot may narrow this down to his own church, party, or those of his own mental and sectarian stripe, but, like all roads leading to Rome, all these lines lead back to himself, a very narrow, little scrutiny specimen, whether viewed mentally or morally. Its inspiration is drawn from

such exalted and refined poetry as the following. I regret to say I have not been able to ascertain the poet's cognomen.

"I said to myself, as I walked by myself,  
And myself said again to me,  
If you would be happy take care of yours; if,  
For nobody careth for thee."

Let the poor, mean, stingy, little weakling walk by himself until he tires. He will most likely go down to a narrow grave unheard of only for his selfishness, and, devoid of virtues, will soon be forgotten. "Love the Brotherhood!" of pure, peaceable, patient, perfect men, in the pursuit of the highest good for others, for their fraternity is world wide. He hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on the face of the earth. A common paternity, materials, and destiny make all the world akin. The brotherhood, therefore, is wide and far reaching. It does not follow, however, that every man must change himself to suit all his associates. This would be impossible, and is wholly unnecessary, but it does follow that he should have an exalted ideal of character and, reaching after it, should aim to lift others to the higher level. Character, therefore, and not mere gratification will be the pursuit of the ideal society. People may seek after an object, definite and immediate, but the search after it should always be attended with exercises that daily put them on a higher altitude, strengthen their ability, and widen the scope of their influence. To quote again from the truest philosophy we find a stimulus in the language, "But desire earnestly the greater gifts, and still a more excellent way show I unto you. If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels but have not love I am become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. Love never faileth; now abideth faith, hope, love, but the greatest of these is love."

The excellence of true life is in a loving regard for others, and that implies the perfect outworking of the divine passion.

Attendant upon the mission of such an agency is nothing of low degree. All is aspiration toward a true perfectness as the unit of society, and progress for the organized forms of it. With such an uplifting force in the fraternities of men, as they seek their lawful affinities, nothing can keep them on the barbarian levels of a selfish life. The individual will seek the family life, the family the neighborhood group. This group will come together in a citizenship as wide as the town or the nation, and, marching still forward, will form a congress of the world, a fraternity of men. In this idea we find a counterpart of our Canadian Fraternal Association. Composed of representatives from different society forms and objects we recognize a common purpose, and in seeking it acknowledge that it reaches much higher than any personal pleasure in those immediately concerned, even that of the ever-widening circle of friendship's chain, lifting each other, and so far as influence extends, the world into loftier conceptions of truth and nobler forms of duty and service.

"Fraternity," says Mazzini, "is the reciprocal affections, the sentiment which inclines man to do unto others as he would that others should do unto him."

"Of a truth," says Carlisle, "men are mystically united; a mystic bond of brotherhood makes all men one."

Cherishing such sentiments and cultivating the corresponding habit not only the respective social realms where men may move in their pursuits of happy usefulness, or useful happiness, but the wider circles where the surging masses of restless humanity push and jostle each other, shall be helped, greatly helped, and Tennyson's poetical forecast shall become a wonderful reality.

"For I dint into the future, far as human eye could see,  
Saw the vision of the world and all the wonder that would be;  
Saw the heavens filled with commerce, argosies of magic sails;  
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bales,  
Till the war-drum throbb'd no longer, and the battle-flags were furled  
In the parliament of man, the federation of the world.  
There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful world in awe,  
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law."

The junction between the ornamental and the useful, the necessary and the affluent in nature or the heart of man suggests more as the outcome of his social intercourse than mere scientific gratification. Pope has said,

"Heav'n forming each on other to depend,  
A master, or a servant, or a friend,  
Bids each on other for assistance call,  
Till one man's weakness grows the strength of all."

And so we must find strength, beauty and usefulness in interdependence, and by individual weakness grow the strength of all.

Who does not know that in these days of political contention, of personal ambitions, ferment and strife, that one of the richest legacies to the body of toilers is found in the work done by the benevolent societies? Who can estimate the good done to the state and the individual by the tens of thousands of dollars paid from beneficiary orders to the stricken ones in the hour of their peril and supreme wretchedness, when the toiler has fallen under the stroke of death and dependents are face to face with want and woe, the Poor House or the Prison. "Over the hills to the Poor House" is robbed of its terrifying distresses, for it is, by the societies cheque—a provided right for the time of need—not a charity, transposed into over the hills from want to plenty, and to them the house of poverty is gone, perhaps forever. The

relief that comes to the high minded family is only equalled by that which the state realizes when the prospective dependent turns out a citizen fairly well provided for. That is one aspect of it, another rises in the breast of the man when he feels his independence assured by securing his relation to an interdependent fraternity. He stands in the line with his thousands of fellows in a common provision and sees how his small outlay may make a sufficient provision for loved ones in the event of his being taken. He feels his manhood rebound with conscious joy that, although not born to wealth, he is preparing for those he loves the home and comforts which shall not be taken away from them. There is still another feature of the case worth mentioning. It is that of the refined affections and tender memories of surviving friends who see in every dollar received in beneficiary blessings evidence, yea, substantial proof, of more than brotherly kindness on the part of the society and friends, and of his deep and abiding love—a love that lives and ministers its gifts long after he has gone.

The insurance of co-operation is, after all, not the selfish investment but the bond of fellowship and the product of love.

Love! Love is the mother watching over the cradle of her sleeping child!

Love is the father guiding the footsteps of the boy for his future welfare!

Love is the strong young man bearing up the tottering form and strengthening the faltering footsteps of his aged mother on her homeward way!

Love is the form of plenty feeding the world's want. It is the young and beautiful watching by the side of misery and disease; the societies committee seeking out the solitary and lone survivors of the departed brother to leave a benediction; it is the hand of beauty, though it may be the horny hand of labor, carrying the cheque to the somber sadness of a home where only a few short hours before the last rites had been said over departed worth; it is the softened heart of the pure minded seeking to lighten the burdens of life, and to shed a ray of heaven's sunshine to scatter the gloom; it is the man likest to the Son of Man who "went about doing good." Love, the guiding star from earth to heaven, for it is true as Schiller says:

"Love, only love, can guide the creature  
Up to the Father fount of nature:  
What were the soul did love forsake her:  
Love guides the mortal to the Maker."

## OUR ROYAL ARCANUM MEMBERSHIP.

A Magnificent Record!! Who Can Beat It!

YEARS 1877 TO 1893 INCLUSIVE.		
Year.	Gr. Councils.	Sub. Councils. Members.
1877-1878	3	82
1878-1879	6	308
1879-1880	12	470
1880-1881	12	28,000
1881-1882	13	672
1882-1883	13	735
1883-1884	14	824
1884-1885	15	939
1885-1886	15	1014
1887	16	1068
1888	16	1126
1889	16	1220
1890	18	1326
1891	19	1408
1892	20	1487
1893 July 1	20	1521

## The R. A. in Gananoque.

On Wednesday evening, April—Grand Regent Hickson, of Toronto; Bro. Morgan Shaw, D. D. G. M., of Kingston; Bro. J. K. Dowley, Grand Guide, of Prescott, and Mayor Herald, of Kingston, paid Gananoque Council, No. 917, a fraternal visit. After some interesting work in the Council room the party adjourned to Gamble's International Hotel, where a banquet was held, when the following dainty bill of fare was served in Mr. Gamble's well-known perfect manner:

SOUP—Tomato.  
Fish—Boiled Salmon, Anchovy Sauce.  
Entrées—Giblet Stew, Partridge Pie.  
Boiled—Fairman's Ham, Corned Beef, Tongue.  
Roast—Prime Ribs of Beef, Yorkshire Pudding, Fillet of Veal, Lemon Sauce.  
Turkey, Cranberry Jelly, Chicken, Bread-crumbs.  
Vegetables—Boiled Potatoes, Sweet Corn, Tomatoes.  
Pastry—English Plum Pudding, Brandy, Sauce, Apple, Lemon, Pumpkin Pie.  
Creams and Jellies—Vanilla Ice Cream, Lemon Jelly, Sherry Wine Jelly.  
Fruit, &c.—Oranges and Bananas, Raisins, Nuts, etc.  
Tea and Coffee.

At the conclusion of the repast the tables were cleared and then followed a couple of hours of jovial brotherhood, speech, song and story following each other in rapid succession until train time, when the visitors left for their respective homes well pleased at the reception given them by the local brethren. During the latter part of the proceedings Bro. Carroll had charge of the toast list, and performed his duties in good form.

## Brockville Council No. 901.

Brockville Council No. 901 R. A., now numbers 80 members, with two applications on hand, and pretty good prospects for the future. We congratulate the officers and council.