

ODD FELLOWS' RECORD;

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE,

DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF THE INDEPENDENT
ORDER OF ODD FELLOWS.

Vol. II.

MONTREAL, MARCH, 1847.

No. 3.

WHAT IS AN ODD FELLOW?

A SKETCH.

We are born to do benefits. And what better and properer Can we call our own than the richest of our friends? O, what A precious comfort 'tis to have so many, like brothers, Commanding one another's fortunes.

TIMON OF ATHENS.

"MR. ANDERSON, my dear!" said the spouse of a gentleman of that name, laying down a newspaper, over which she had been glancing, one morning just after breakfast, "I see here the description of an anniversary of a Lodge of Odd Fellows. Pray, my dear, can you tell me what an Odd Fellow is? Do you know that I've been very curious about this subject for some time!"

"That's not at all singular, my love!" replied Mr. Anderson, "curiosity, my dear, is a woman's failing, if that quality can be called a *failing* in a woman, which was never yet known to fail. However, I am not sure that I can satisfy you, for I hardly know myself."

"Mr. Anderson!" rejoined his lady, drawing herself up disdainfully, "I asked you a civil question, and if you could not answer it, it showed your ignorance; and I hope you'll allow that ignorance is a greater failing even than curiosity; or, at all events, that ignorance is a failing which curiosity soon removes."

"Why, my dear," returned Mr. Anderson, "I am clearly of a contrary opinion with you there; for I humbly conceive that in nine instances out of ten, curiosity is impertinence, and impertinence is the most convincing proof of ignorance. But, as you said, you asked me a civil question, and perhaps I was wrong to indulge in comment upon it."

"To be sure you were!" replied the lady, bridling up, "the men are always wrong."

"That, my dear," answered Mr. Anderson, slightly smiling, "is doubtlessly ordered so by Nature, that they may have, at least, an opportunity of emulating the virtues of women, *who are always right*. I dare say, my dear, it's the consequent effect of this principle that produces so much opposition between you and me at times."

As this speech was delivered in Mr. Anderson's blandest tone and manner, the slight irony which pervaded it, if meant, escaped the notice of his spouse, who, suffering a gracious smile to mantle over her countenance, answered, "Ay, that's something like now, Mr. A.; then you do allow that the men only imitate the virtues of the women, just in the same way (if I may be allowed to make use of the simile) as a monkey imitates the actions of a man?"

"Exactly so, my love!" returned Mr. Anderson, "exactly so! as you say, it is but an imitation, and a very awkward one too. I perfectly agree with you, my dear, in thinking, that for any man to imitate the actions of his wife, would certainly make him look more like a monkey than a man." And Mr. Anderson once more smiled blandly.

"Really, my love," exclaimed Mrs. Anderson, "your company is quite agreeable this morning, and so, now do tell me, for I am convinced you know, and know well, what an Odd Fellow is."

"My dear," answered Mr. Anderson, "as far as I know I will inform you; but you must bear in mind that my information is limited. An Odd Fellow, then, is one of an immense body of men, who, feeling and knowing the advantages of co-operation, have wisely united themselves for the obvious purpose of mutual assistance and support. They are governed by laws strictly enforced, and in no instance departed from: these laws are, as I have been informed, framed upon such just and equitable principles, that even the wish to break through them is seldom or never evinced; and it cannot be doubted, that inculcating as they do, the universal diffusion of peace and social agreement, they must have a sanatory influence over their private morals, and consequently tend by the growth of the principles which emanate from them, to render them estimable in their own little private sphere, and honourable and useful in their public life, let the station in life of the party be what it will."

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed the lady, "you surprise me indeed. You know, my dear, one never hears of anything out of the way, but one forms in one's own mind some sort of an idea of it—and what do you think mine was?"

"The idea was brilliant, if mistaken, I have no doubt," demurely answered Mr. Anderson, at the same time slightly bowing to his lady. "Pray, may I ask what it was?"

"Oh yes! to be sure! I had a notion that they were Roman Catholic priests, or in other words, monks."

"And what, for heaven's sake," queried Mr. Anderson, in evident amazement, "could have put such a ridiculous idea into your head,—or, I should perhaps say," he added, perceiving a slight indication of recurring wrath on the brow of his better half,—"what could have rendered your brain parturient with so unique and incomprehensible a conception?"

"Why, my dear," returned the instantly mollified Mrs. A., "I'll tell you how it happened. It was the name that set me to thinking; and when I do think, you know, my dear, I generally go pretty deep into a matter."

"The principles of reasoning, my dear, in the female mind," interrupted Mr. Anderson, though in a very quiet and mild way, for indeed he was slightly apprehensive that his "*cara sposa*" might some time or other stumble upon the latent irony which he was a little too apt to play off upon her,—"The principles of reasoning in the female mind, are often indeed so profound and unfathomable, that were Euclid himself to live over again, I think it highly questionable if he could solve them into their elements, without at any rate adopting the line of demonstration termed the *reductio ad absurdum*. But you were going to explain, my love?"