

THE ODD-FELLOW.

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"AMICITIA, AMOR,



ET VERITAS."

Devoted to Odd-Fellowship, Literature, Education, Temperance, and General News.

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Poetry.

From the Odd-Fellows' Record.
The True Odd-Fellow.

BY NEMO.

Behold the man whom duty calls,
To succor and relieve distress,
Sallying forth amidst the storm,
The sick and needy soul to bless.

His generous heart with love expands,
He feels a brother's woes,
And to relieve the heart that's sad,
The comfort of his home foregoes.

Should e'er the tongue of slander dare
Attempt to blast a brother's fame,
He foremost stands his cause to plead,
And shield him from its deadly aim.

Nation and creed's alike to him,
He scorns distinctions thus to make;
His love extends to all mankind,
He loves man for his Maker's sake.

Bound by the ties of brotherhood,
The link that binds both age and youth,
He proves that 'tis no empty sound,
The bond of Friendship, Love and Truth.

Odd-Fellowship.

History of the Order.

[From the Odd-Fellows' Record, 1846.]

CHANGE OF THE WORK IN ENGLAND.
In the course of the years 1830-1835, Odd-Fellowship was introduced, under very promising auspices, into Ohio, Louisiana, Kentucky, Virginia, Missouri, Iowa and Indiana; Grand Lodges were established in the three States first named, as also in the States of Delaware and New Jersey; and at the Annual Communication in 1835, the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of the United States comprehended ten Grand Lodges, and ninety-eight Subordinates, besides three Grand and ten Subordinate Encampments.

At the above Session, it was determined to urge upon the Order in England a discontinuance of the convivial practices in connection with Lodge Meetings, and in accordance with the Resolution then passed, the following letter was shortly after transmitted to Manchester.

"The M. W. Grand Sire of the Independent Order of Odd-Fellows, of the United States of America—the R. W. Grand Representatives of the Grand Lodge of the United States—Officers and Brethren—To the M. W. Grand Master, D. Grand Master, Officers and Brethren of the Manchester Unity, (England,) of the Independent Order of Odd-Fellows, in Friendship, Love, and Truth, greeting:

"Well beloved Brethren:—At the Annual Meeting of the Grand Lodge of the United States, of the Independent Order of Odd-Fellows, convened in the City of Baltimore and State of Maryland; present, a representation from Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, District of Columbia, Delaware, Ohio, New Jersey, and Louisiana; the following resolution was unanimously adopted:—That the Committee of Correspondence of this Grand Lodge, be directed to address a congratulatory letter to our brethren in Great Britain, upon the state of the order in that country, and respectfully to suggest to them the propriety of discontinuing all convivial practices in their Lodges, and to solicit from them a detailed historical account of the origin, rise, and progress of the Order; and to transmit to them (neatly bound) a copy of the Constitution and proceedings up to this Session, inclusive, of the Grand Lodge

* Continued from page 11.

of the United States, and the revised Work of the Order, as adopted at this Session: and most especially to request them to make no alteration whatever in the general features of the Order, without a mutual consultation on the subject—as uniformity of actions and principle is essentially necessary to the welfare of the Order."

"The undersigned, being the Committee to whom the duty enjoined in the resolution was confided, avail themselves of the opportunity presented to congratulate the brethren of our Mother Land, upon the prosperous and onward march of Odd-Fellowship in that great and absorbing kingdom; and while we are thus truly gratified that we are permitted to tender you our congratulations, it is a source of most unfeigned pleasure to ourselves to inform you, that Odd-Fellowship seems indeed to be a plant peculiarly adapted to the soil of our own happy country. Scarcely has one score of years marked its existence in America, and behold its banners unfurled, and its temples erected in every valley, on every plain, and upon every mountain-top, of this immensely extended domain; numbering among its votaries, tens of thousands of the choicest sons of the Republic, everywhere visiting and comforting the sick, burying the deceased, succouring the disconsolate widow, and educating the orphan. Nor is this an ideal picture, but the rigid truth, as you will observe from a perusal of the documents accompanying this communication. Next to religion, we believe Odd-Fellowship the best institution which Providence has given to man for the amelioration of his moral and social relations. Prizing it thus sacredly, a pious regard to the purity of its purposes has been most religiously inculcated with us; and in the attainment of this desideratum, anxious efforts have been made from time to time to lop from it every extraneous branch, and disengage it from all extraneous habits and customs which were not strictly auxiliary to its benevolent purposes, and more particularly to divest it of all practices which were at war with its first principles, and were calculated to bring it into disrepute and odium. Among the first of the improvements to the Order in America required by duty and a decent respect for the opinions of mankind, was the abolition of all social and convivial practices at Lodge meetings; since when it has rivetted the respect and esteem of the virtuous of all classes, and augmented our numbers almost incredibly. This subject, as commanded by the resolution of the Grand Lodge of the United States, we most earnestly and affectionately submit to your early consideration. As uniformity and harmony in the work of the Order throughout the globe is so obviously essential to the universality of Odd-Fellowship we do not deem it necessary to enlarge upon this part of the resolution, confident that in so important a matter as any alteration in the work, no definite action will ever be made by the brethren in England without our knowledge and assent. We are charged to solicit from you a detailed historical account of the origin, rise, and progress of the Order; and this part of the resolution we desire complied with literally and promptly. No matter how humble or obscure may have been its beginning—no matter for what purpose instituted—let us have the period and circumstance of its origin, that it may be preserved in the archives of the Order in America. We are neither ashamed nor unwilling to expose to the public gaze what we have been, since we are prepared to exhibit what we are; and thus, by instituting the comparison, claim the rank among the benefactors of mankind to which our works justly entitle us.

"With our fervent prayer that Providence, who has thus blest our joint labors in the cause of Humanity, Benevolence and Charity, will continue his outstretched care and guardianship over our devoted institution,

"We remain, your brethren, in Friendship, Love, and Truth:

"JAMES L. RIDGELY, Rep. of Maryland.

"CHARLES MOWAT, Rep. of New York.

"HOWEL HOPKINS, Rep. of Pennsylvania.

"THOMAS WILDEY, P. G. Sire."

The request thus preferred that the uniformity and harmony of Odd-Fellowship should be preserved by making "no alteration whatever in the general features of the Order, without a mutual consultation on the subject," was so moderate

and reasonable, that our only surprise is occasioned by the fact that such a request should have been rendered necessary. That it was, however, by no means uncalled for, is sufficiently evident from the change in the working by the Manchester Unity, in the years 1826-7, as recorded in our last number. The reply to this communication consisted principally of the apocryphal account of the origin of the Order, which we have given in the first of this series of papers; and the occurrences of a few years afterwards shows that the request for mutual consultation, previous to any change in the work of the Order, was altogether disregarded.

P. G. M. Thomas Wildey having filled the office of Grand Sire, from the first establishment of the Grand Lodge of the United States till 1833, had been succeeded in that year by P. G. M. James Gettys, of the District of Columbia, who was followed, in 1835, by P. G. M. George Keyser, of Maryland, who died in September, 1837, previous to the expiry of his term of office. P. G. M. James Ridgely, of Maryland, was chosen as his successor, but having declined the office, P. G. M. Samuel H. Perkins, of Pennsylvania, was elected in his stead.

During the incumbency of Grand Sire Perkins, the Order in the State of New York had for some time been in a disorganized state in consequence of dissensions between the Lodges in New York and those in Albany, was again placed on firm footing. The location of the Grand Lodge was fixed in the City of New York, a new impetus was given to the energy of the Brethren, and New York, which was at that time one of the least considerable of what may be called the original Grand Lodges, in a few years shot far a-head of all her Sister States.

At the Annual Communication of 1837, Past Grand Sire Wildey was appointed Travelling Agent of the Grand Lodge, for the purpose of visiting the Lodges and Encampments already established in distant parts of the country, and with authority to grant Dispensations for the opening of others, wherever necessary or expedient. By his Report submitted at the Annual Session of the following year, he seems to have performed the duty assigned to him in the most zealous and indefatigable manner; having visited every Lodge under the direct jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of the United States. Besides this Subordinate Lodges had been opened by him, in Mississippi, Alabama, Missouri, Illinois, Iowa, and Texas; * Grand Lodges in the three first named of these States, and Encampments in all except the last.

About this time it was found that Brothers of the Manchester Unity, arriving in America, conversed in a symbolic language altogether different from that formerly in use in England and still employed in America. Brothers from the United States, on the other hand, when visiting Great Britain, found themselves unable to gain admittance to the Lodges there, on account of this change of working. This matter was brought under the notice of the Grand Lodge, by Past Grand Sire

* This was the first Charter granted by the Grand Lodge of the United States, for the establishment of a Lodge in any foreign country.

Wildey, at its Annual Communication in 1837, and after investigation of the subject by a Special Committee, the following Resolution was adopted:—

"Resolved,—That the Committee of Correspondence be, and they are hereby, directed to open a Correspondence with the proper authority in Great Britain, for the purpose of ascertaining what alterations, if any, have been made in the work of the Order."

No satisfactory reply was returned to the communications forwarded in accordance with this Resolution, and the subject again engaged the attention of the Grand Lodge at its Annual Session in September, 1838. The result of their deliberations will be found in the following letter:—

"To the A. M. C. Manchester Unity, Independent Order of Odd-Fellows, of Great Britain.

"M. W. Grand Master, Officers and Brethren—

"For a few years past, from unknown causes, the interchange of civilities between your M. W. Body and the R. W. Grand Lodge of the United States, I. O. of O. F., having been unfortunately suspended, we have mutually been prevented from being officially apprised of each others acts; the consequence resulting from which have been injurious to the benevolent objects of the institution, and in a great degree destructive of the social bonds, by which the members under your jurisdiction are united to those under ours.

"From credible sources we learn that members in good standing in your Lodges have visited England, and that your Brethren, and

the want of uniformity, &c. On the one hand, brethren in England, who call on us in large numbers, are excluded from entering our lodges, by reason of their not being correct in the signs, &c. &c., as known to us. And in many instances where relief has been necessary, the funds intended for such purposes could not, it was thought, be applied; and in some cases, suffering brethren have only been able to be assisted by the aid of private donations.

"These and other circumstances, assure us that great and important changes have been made in the secret language, signs, &c., of the Order under your jurisdiction, by the authority or sanction of your R. W. Body. Such changes having been made, and not officially communicated to the Order in the United States, the two great branches of the Brotherhood have been effectually for the time, alienated from each other.

"The Right Worthy, the Grand Lodge of the United States, at its Annual Session in October, 1838, held in the city of Baltimore, State of Maryland, had this subject under consideration, and unanimously adopted the following, viz:—

"Resolved,—That the Committee of Correspondence be discharged from the further consideration of the alterations, if any, that have been made in the Order in Great Britain, and that the same be referred to P. G. Kennedy, of New York; P. G. Sire Wildey; and P. G. M. Neilson, of Maryland.

"In pursuance of the above cited resolution, the committee thereby appointed respectfully present the subject to your serious attention, as one worthy in importance of your first consideration, in the full hope that by timely and wise action, the Brotherhood may be bound together more closely than at any former period. "It is expected that if changes have been made, full and complete intelligence will be communicated, as well in regard to the alterations themselves, as to the cause which have led you to adopt them.

"While addressing you on this important matter, permit this Committee also to suggest the propriety and necessity of establishing a regular interchange of yearly passwords. The advantage of such an arrangement is so manifest, that it is not deemed requisite to offer evidence. And its practicability is easy by means of a concerted alphabetic key.

"These highly important subjects are now submitted to you with entire confidence that you will so act on them as to ensure the advancement and prosperity of the best interests of the Order; that in future, uninterrupted fellowship may be maintained between the membership of the two supreme jurisdictions.