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# TALKS ON PYTHIANISM

BY

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REV. S. L. HARRIS

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

HON. HAMILTON DOUGLAS

SUPREME REPRESENTATIVE FROM GEORGIA

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## PREFACE.

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It has been my aim and object in writing this little book, to lay before its readers the story of Damon and Pythias, and a few talks on the tenets of the Order in plain, simple language. In doing so I have had but two leading thoughts in my mind. In the first place, I have had the misfortune to lose my sight and am totally blind. Both myself and wife are growing old, having already passed three score years. It has been our lot to accumulate but little of this world's goods, and yet in our declining years we must live. It is needless for me to say, therefore, that the thought of securing these necessities of life from the sale of the book first prompted me to make an effort at book-writing.

The second thought was that of doing all in my power to promote the interest of our noble Order by placing within easy reach of every Pythian a little volume which would not only be interesting and instructive, but would be in part somewhat amusing, and would be read not only by Pythians but others as well. The need for such a book

has been for some time apparent to my mind. In my experience as a Pythian during years past, I have discovered that many of the members of our Order are not fully posted as to the details of the story of Damon and Pythias; many of them having never read the story except such little sketches as might be found in school-books, and I suppose I would not exaggerate were I to say that there are not only hundreds, but thousands among the nearly half a million members in the United States who know but little more of the story of Damon and Pythias than what they have learned from observation and lessons as they advance through the ranks of the Order. To this lack of information, more, perhaps, than any other cause, is due the inactivity of many of our members. I have endeavored so to arrange this book that it will give the true story, and at the same time serve to strengthen the membership in Pythian principles and act as a mirror into which each Pythian may look and see if he is lacking in true Pythian character or practice. It may also serve as a beacon-light to guide the worthy traveler as he journeys through this life into the golden harbor of Pythian fraternity. If, by my feeble effort, I shall have aided in the accomplishment of these results, then it is well.

In perusing these pages I trust that each Pythian will exercise that charity toward me which he would ask for

himself under the same circumstances. What I have dictated and my wife has written is the very best I can do under the circumstances which surround me. I realize the absence of that flowery touch in language which goes a great way in the make-up of any book. I hope, however, that what may be wanting in this respect may be atoned for by its simplicity of language and its faithful presentation of facts. I believe that it will serve to awaken a deeper interest among the members of the Order in real Pythian principles and practice; and, at the same time aid in imparting to the outside world a correct idea of the principles, aims and objects of our beloved Order. My fervent desire is that when I shall have passed from the stage of action, it may be said of me that, as a Pythian Knight, I did what I could.

Let me admonish you, my brother, to be faithful in the discharge of your every duty as a true Pythian Knight. As for me, my labors have almost ended, but I thank God and take courage that I can yet mingle with my Pythian brethren in the embrace of Friendship, Charity and Benevolence. What I fail to do by reason of my affliction, I trust may be done by this book—the slight offering of a feeble but true Knight; and may our loving Heavenly Father grant that it may speak to the Pythian world sentiments of simple but helpful truth when I shall have gone

hence, there to await the assembling of all true Knights, at the feet of Him who said: "Love thy neighbor as thyself."

Yours in F., C. and B.,

S. L. HARRIS.

# INTRODUCTION.

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Our brother, the Rev. Stapleton L. Harris, the author of this work, needs no introduction to the active Pythians of Atlanta. He is a charter member and Past Chancellor by service of Empire Lodge No. 47, whose meetings he constantly attends. We who know him best commend him to the Order everywhere.

For some years he has been failing in health and growing blind until total darkness has long since closed about him. Recently one bright thought has illumined his shadowed pathway: to say something helpful to his brother man, to do something helpful for his faithful wife; so he has talked and she has written. These pages are the fruit of his meditations.

Friendship is the epitome of Pythianism. In helping our dear brother you will help yourself, for these transcripts from his ripe experience may be of more value to you than much fine gold.

HAMILTON DOUGLAS,  
Supreme Representative of Georgia.





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# Talks on Pythianism.

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## I.

### THE STORY OF DAMON AND PYTHIAS.

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The author of this little volume has been an humble minister of the gospel for many years past, of the Missionary Baptist persuasion, whose work as a pastor has been among the country churches. It has ever been the custom, as it is to-day, of the country churches to hold their regular meetings on a fixed Saturday and Sunday in each month, and, in addition to these regular meetings, they hold each year a protracted meeting, usually lasting from three to ten days, which is held during the summer months, after the crops have been "laid by" and the farmers all have a little leisure.

In the summer of 1891 the author went to one of his country churches to hold the annual services. Here he met an old brother who had come to the Missionary Baptist from the old Primitive, or, as it is sometimes called, "Old Hardshell Baptist Church." The latter denomina-

tion, as every one is aware, entertain some ideas peculiar to themselves—such, for instance as opposition to the Sunday-schools and missionary work, as held by other denominations. They are also most strenuously opposed to all secret orders, such as Free Masons, Knights of Pythias, etc.; that is to say, will not tolerate in their members connection with any of the secret orders. The old brother in question, having become enthused with the missionary and Sunday-school spirit, had made the change from the Primitive to the Missionary Baptist Church, but still retained his opposition to secret orders.

In conversation with him, having discovered the existence of the latter peculiarity, I told him I would call him “Old Brother Hardshell,” and it was not long until he was known among the brethren by that name. He, in turn, honored me with the name of “Softshell.” These nicknames, however, were but pet names, for no two Christian brethren were ever bound together closer nor held higher esteem for each other than did “Hardshell” and “Softshell.”

On Monday, the third day of the meeting, a large congregation was present, and among them, as usual, was “Hardshell.” The day was warm, and old-time turkey-wing fans were in demand. The author, whose name had now been changed to “Softshell,” used for his text, at the 11 o'clock service, I. Kings, 6th chapter and 7th verse: “And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither; so that

there was neither hammer nor axe, nor any tool of iron, heard in the house while it was in building.”

During the discourse the preacher incidentally made mention of the fact that Free Masons looked with pride to the existence of their order in that day. Toward the close of the discourse he remarked, also, that he hoped to see the day when all Christians, regardless of denomination, would cultivate and practice a friendship as pure, as deep, and as lasting as that of historic Damon and Pythias. At each of these suggestions by the preacher he could but notice a slight frown on the face of “Hardshell,” accompanied by a slow shake of the head as though he meant to say, “I can’t swallow that.” However, the services were concluded promptly at ten minutes past twelve. Benediction was pronounced and the congregation dispersed.

“Hardshell” and “Softshell” stepped out at the side door together, where they were met by a good Methodist brother who insisted that they, with two other brothers whom he had invited, should accompany himself and family to his house for dinner. The invitation was accepted, as a matter of course, and in a few minutes we were *en route*, seated in chairs, in a double wagon drawn by a pair of as fat, saucy mules as ever pulled a plow. About a half hour’s ride brought us into a magnificent grove in front of a farmhouse. Here we alighted and were soon satisfying our thirst and bathing our heated faces with the deliciously cool water drawn from the bottom of a forty foot well which was located near the corner

of the front yard. Then the party proceeded to the front veranda, where they were comfortably seated. It was not long, however, until dinner was announced, and it was a dinner, too, of the right sort. The long table, with its snow-white cloth, seemed burdened under the weight of the rich viands which covered its surface. Oh, my! what a dinner! It would have tempted the palate of the most fastidious. Country-cured ham, baked chicken, old-fashioned chicken-pie, fresh butter, sweetmilk, buttermilk, coffee, fried peach pie, all kinds of vegetables, apple-dumplings with cream sauce, potato custard, half dozen kinds of preserves and jellies, and I like to have forgotten those big buttermilk biscuit and good corn bread. You may rest assured that we four guests rendered justice to the offering.

Dinner being over we, under the leadership of our host, repaired again to the front veranda. "Hardshell" suggested that we remove our coats, as the weather was very warm, which proposition was readily acceded to by all, and our coats were soon hanging to nails driven in the wall. "Each of you take a chair and follow me," said "Hardshell," as he led the way out to a point near the well, where the huge oak trees cast cooling shadows on the earth. Here the five friends were seated, and "Hardshell" drew from his pocket an old clay pipe with a reed stem, six or eight inches long, attached to it. Drawing his old pocket-knife from his pocket he began scraping out the bowl of the pipe; then removing the stem from the pipe, he ran a straw through it; replacing the stem, he

filled the pipe with tobacco which he cut from a piece of plug he had in his pocket. Striking a match and applying it to his pipe, the white smoke was soon seen curling above his head as it swept through his snowy locks. Reaching over and touching "Softshell" on the knee, he said :

"See here, 'Softshell,' I have a crow to pick with you, and you must furnish the sack to hold the feathers."

"All right," replied "Softshell," "I'll be at the picking; produce your crow."

"Well," said "Hardshell," "my crow is just this; when you were preaching to-day about Solomon's Temple, you said something about Free Masonry away back there. Do you think that is truth?"

"Why, certainly I do," replied "Softshell." "Any well-informed Free Mason will verify this statement, and there is no secret about it, either. And now allow me to ask you one question in all sincerity and honesty: What fault have you to find with Free Masonry?"

"I have no fault to find of them," said "Hardshell," "but I just don't like this secret business; they seem to know something which they will not tell to any one, unless he joins them."

"Ah, yes!" replied "Softshell." "That's where the shoe pinches. If you knew what they do you would not reveal it either. I see now, your crow is their secrets, and yet, to a degree, you are guilty of the same thing, for I dare say you have family secrets and you consider them sacred; and yet you seem to find fault with these



orders because they are doing precisely what you are, keeping their own secrets. And not only this, but I will cite you to something grander than this, the Great Creator has secrets which the world has never known. We are led to conclude from holy writ that myriads of angels and arch-angels attend the high courts of heaven, yet God has not revealed to man their occupation, nor even the location of His secret palace. This, it seems to me, would justify the conclusion, at least, that there is no sin in secret orders, while their aims and objects are always for the betterment of their members, as well as a blessing to the world. It is true there are some persons in all secret orders, just as you may find in all churches, who entered the order under disguise, and hence their acts and lives are not such as would be approved by the outside world; while the order or church would not only disapprove, but condemn.

We certainly would not condemn a church because of the un-Christian deeds or words of some hypocrite who has deceived the membership, and thereby gained fellowship with them, nor should we condemn a secret order whose aims, objects and principles are not only moralizing but elevating in their every tendency, simply because they, like some churches, are so unfortunate, in getting in members, as to get an occasional black sheep in the fold. We should not judge the church, nor should we judge the secret organizations, by the hypocrites or the few black sheep that may be found in the fold, but by the acts and

lives of those who live up to the declared principles of such church or secret organization."

"Well," said "Hardshell," "this is half the crow; I will think more about it, and we will proceed to pick the other half. You remember you said something about the friendship of two men, Damon and Pythias were they not members of a secret order?"

"Oh, yes," replied "Softshell," "they were Pythagoreans, and the Order now known as the Knights of Pythias is builded upon nothing less for its foundation-stone than that friendship which bound Damon and Pythias even unto death."

"Well," said "Hardshell," "do you know their history and how it came about that one offered to die for the other?"

"Yes," said "Softshell." There are five different writers who have written the beautiful story of Damon and Pythias. In fact, there were more than these. One ancient writer, who lived contemporaneously with Damon and Pythias, was perhaps the oldest writer of this beautiful story. His writings, however, have been lost to the world for centuries. Others wrote the same story during the last century before Christ; and still others wrote the same story during the first century of the Christian era. All of the five stories now extant are in such perfect harmony, one with the other, as to leave not even the shadow of a doubt as to the reality of the almost tragedy."

"Tell us the whole story," said "Hardshell," as he knocked the ashes from his pipe and leaned his chair back

against a tree for a more comfortable position. This request was sanctioned by all.

“All right,” replied “Softshell.” “I will try to give you the sum and substance of the story, but before doing so I must exact the promise from each of you that I shall not be interrupted until I have told the whole.

This was readily agreed to, and a bucket of water was wheeled up from the well by Brother Methodist. Each of the party was served with an old-fashioned gourd full of cool water; then resuming their seats “Softshell” began his narration of the story of Damon and Pythias.

#### FIRST TALK ON PYTHIANISM.

The story of Damon and Pythias comes to us, as previously intimated, from back behind many centuries in the past, and in order to tell you something of this wonderful story, which would not only be interesting but at the same time instructive, I must first tell you something of ancient Syracuse—the home of Dionysius.

Something more than seven hundred years before Christ some Corinthians and Dorians in search of new territory had landed on the southeastern shore of the beautiful island of Sicily in the Mediterranean sea. Here they laid out and began the building of a city, which became what is known in history as ancient Syracuse, which within a half century was beginning to become famous among the cities of the old world for its beautiful situation, its tall mountains, fertile valleys with their rich foliage, its beautiful and picturesque natural scenery, its mag-

nificent vineyards and olive groves. Indeed, the city had grown to such proportions that many of the Greeks, becoming fascinated by its attractions, emigrated to and settled on the island. Many of the rich and influential settled in Syracuse. Among these Greeks were men of refinement and culture,—the Philosopher, the Scientist, the Artist, the Poet, as well as the Statesman and Philanthropist. As the years rolled by the city continued to grow. Grecian enterprise had taken hold among the people; large and costly public buildings were erected; magnificent temples were built; costly and elegant residences were completed; the entire city was built apparently with an eye single to beauty in architecture and permanence as to construction. The rich and cultured from other nations had flocked to Syracuse until, in its citizenship, it seemed a concentration of culture and refinement. It was not, however, exempt from the ravages of warfare, for early in its history other nations made war upon Syracuse. Among the most prominent of these enemies were the Carthaginians, who waged war at intervals through the lapse of many years, but almost invariably met with sad defeat.

The form of government of Syracuse was alternating; first, a democratic form, then a monarchy; again democratic, and again a monarchy. And so you see its form of government was not permanently established. What was meant in that day by a democratic form of government was claimed to be a government of, by, and for the people. The rich, influential and intelligent were ever the advo-

cates of a democratic form of government, while the poor, illiterate and vicious always preferred to follow and support any man of ability who would declare himself the enemy of the rich and friend of the poor. Such a declaration carried with it the idea or promise of despoiling the rich and dividing with the poor, which, as a matter of course, meant nothing more than a tyrannical despotism regardless of right or justice, and he who ruled under such circumstances was called a tyrant.

The democratic form of government had three departments:

The Senate, the Assembly, and the Justices. The Senate was a deliberative body, composed of the senators from the various precincts or wards, who were elected by the popular vote of the people. This body was in session almost the entire year. A proposition to make a law or to amend or annul any existing law, either civil or religious, had to be considered by the Senate. The Assembly of the people was called together, and the action of the Senate was laid before the Assembly for their adoption or rejection, which was final and irrevocable. The vote of the Assembly was cast by committeemen, elected from the Assembly. When this body had disposed of a matter it was then turned over to the Justices, whose duty it was to administer and enforce the law. These Justices were invariably elected from among the most honorable and influential of the rich. Their government had also, like our own, two general departments—military and civil.

The city had been enjoying a democratic form of govern-

ment for some time when the Carthaginians marched against it with an army of about three hundred thousand men. This calamity necessitated the putting into active service every available man in Syracuse, both rich and poor. Among them was Dionysius, who, although a young man, had gained considerable prominence as a brave and dauntless soldier who is known in the story as the tyrant **Dionysius**.

The contest between the two armies was bitter, but the Syracusans gained the victory in almost every battle. Dionysius being a man of marked ambition, determined within himself to make an effort to overthrow the government and become himself its absolute ruler and head. And, in order to carry out his purposes and gratify his selfish ambitions, he began clandestinely with some of his mercenaries, who were as devoid of honor and correct principles as himself, to formulate his plans through which he could accomplish his purpose by bribery and intrigue. He influenced a considerable number of his comrades to lodge complaint with the Justices against the generals of the army, claiming that they were inefficient, and urging their removal and the appointment of new generals in their stead. This scheme of Dionysius worked well, and he himself being called before the Justices, advocated the proposed changes vehemently, and so managed as to have himself appointed one of the new generals. Then, in a very short while he managed to have his colleagues removed also, and the appointment of some of his followers in their stead. In this way he had secured for himself the support and in-

fluence of all the generals who were secretly aware of his purposes. He had also secured a following from among the rich by marrying the daughter of Hermocrates who was a leader among the aristocrats.

So successful had he been in carrying out his plans thus far, that his selfish ambition prompted him to take advantage of the opportunity now offered, and press his designs to an early conclusion; so he at once publicly declared himself to be the enemy of the rich and friend of the poor. This declaration promptly brought to his support the entire poor population and threw the city into a state of extreme excitement. At a very early hour the following day the streets were thronged with the followers of the tyrant.

Here, now, we will introduce the two friends Damon and Pythias, who had met on the street, and grasping each other by the hand, had a brief conversation in reference to the unsettled state of public affairs. Damon himself, being a senator, and the very embodiment of honor, as a matter of course was feeling very great concern for the safety of the government; while Pythias was a soldier and a knight of prominence. Each expressed to the other his contempt for the tyrant Dionysius, in his unholy and unlawful course.

Their interview was soon ended as this was Pythias's wedding-day, and he must lose no time perfecting his arrangements for that occasion, and pressing the hand of Damon tenderly, he insisted that his friend, together with his wife and child, should be present at his marriage.

Damon suggested that it might be possible for him to attend alone, having previously sent his wife and child to their country home, some four leagues away.

Bidding adieu to each other, Pythias hurried away in the direction of the home of Calantha, his intended bride, who was a daughter of one of the most prominent citizens of the city. While Damon, seating himself on a stone near by, silently watched the movements of the people, occasionally burying his brow in his hands as if in deep meditation. Suddenly the sound of trumpets broke upon his ear from the corridors of the senate chamber. Springing to his feet, he asked a passer-by what the trumpeting meant. The reply was: "It is a signal, by direction of Dionysius, to call the Senate and the people together, in a body. It is said, also, that Dionysius will be King of Syracuse within an hour. He has already taken forcible possession of the citadel, where all the arms and ammunition belonging to the city are stored."

This news was a terrible shock to the noble-hearted Damon, who at once determined to go the senate chamber, assert his rights as a senator and citizen, and raise his voice in condemnation, not only of the illegal proceedings, but of him, also, who was the instigator of them. He felt that honor, liberty and justice were too sacred to be sacrificed to the selfish ambition of a tyrant, without resistance from those into whose hands the sacred trust had been committed. His mind was fixed. But before proceeding to the senate chamber he must have a word with Pythias, whom he found at the home of the fair Calantha. On



making known to Pythias his determination, Pythias endeavored to dissuade him from carrying out his purpose, but his pleading availed nothing. Then Pythias desired to accompany him, but Damon objected on the ground that his friend was but a step from the sacred altar where he could claim his beloved as his own. Securing the loan of Pythias's sword—having left his own at home—he bade adieu to his friend and hastened to the Senate. On arriving there he was met by rude soldiers, who taunted him with jeers and hisses, but pressing his way through the throng, he was soon in the senate chamber, and, to his utter disgust, argument was being made by traitor senators in favor of proclaiming Dionysius king.

At the first opportunity offered, the noble Damon rose to his feet and appealed to the Senate and the people in no uncertain language, urging them to be faithful to their constituency and to their government; and to unflinchingly oppose any and every measure which might, in any way, endanger the right and liberties of the people, or cast the faintest insinuation upon the purity of their democratic form of government. But this appeal was not heeded, except by three or four other senators who, either through fear or intimidation, sat speechless and silent. Finally one of the followers of Dionysius who, at the time, occupied the president's chair, called Damon to order, declared the Senate dissolved, and proclaimed Dionysius King of Syracuse. Whereupon, the exclamation, "Long live King Dionysius!" rang out from the

voices of three or four traitor senators, and it was then caught by the rabble in disgraceful, hideous howls.

Dionysius, rising to his feet, in a few broken sentences accepted the position, when all present bowed before him, except Damon and the few senators who were faithful. Then, turning to Damon, Dionysius branded him with treachery and tyranny. This accusation so incensed Damon that he told Dionysius that he himself was the traitor and coward. This so outraged Dionysius that he at once condemned Damon to death by the headsman's axe. The execution was to take place that day, and he ordered him bound in chains and placed in a dungeon to await the hour of execution. The order was promptly obeyed and Damon was hastened to his dungeon, to die as a culprit, while the tyrant held full sway over the city. As the moments passed swiftly by, Damon's whole soul and mind concentrated in one thought, one ardent wish, one sweet hope; and he exclaimed: "Oh, that I could see my sweet Her-  
mion (his wife) and my darling boy! and press them once more to my throbbing heart ere I die!"

Calling for a messenger he sent him to the Tyrant to make this last, this one, this only request: "Grant me a short respite, that my loved wife and child may be summoned hither, that I may see them once more before I die." This request was indignantly denied him by the Tyrant. As Damon hears this reply, the last fond hope of seeing his wife and child fades away, and he must spend the brief space of time allotted him alone in his dungeon. But; he must see Pythias, if possible, and to his care com-

mit his loved wife and child. And, as the time for his execution was near at hand, he dispatched his messenger to notify Pythias of his doom, and to request his immediate presence.

For two hours past Pythias had lingered at the home of his intended bride, and had sent several messengers to the Senate with instructions to watch the proceedings, and bring him word quickly if Damon's life should be in danger. Neither of the messengers having returned, his anxiety for his friend was the more increased, and he postponed his marriage to a later hour in the day. Indeed! Pythias was almost frantic with anxiety for the safety of his friend. He feared Damon had fallen a prey to the wrath of the Tyrant. He even condemned himself for not having gone with his friend to the Senate. And when the hour had arrived to which the marriage had been postponed, he could not get his own consent to claim for his own the fair Calantha until he knew the fate of Damon. Pythias paced the floor to and fro, anxiously awaiting some tidings of his friend. Finally Calantha, having grown impatient with the delay, came to him, in her rich and gorgeous bridal attire. When Pythias beheld her, so beautiful, so charming, so lovely, he was filled with admiration and delight. Approaching him, she inquired if he was ill, having perceived the troubled expression of his countenance. "My sweet Calantha," said Pythias, "I'm sick at heart. I've no tidings as yet from my friend. Oh, that the gods may brush away the dark forebodings that seem to hang about me!

Could I but know that Damon was safe, and all was well with him, then the nuptial tie would fill my cup of joy to the brim, and you and I would drink together."

Just as he completed this sentence, Damon's messenger summoned him to the door, unfolding to him the burden of Damon's message. Quickly turning to Calantha he imparted to her the sad news of the doom of his friend. Embracing her fondly, he told her the most sacred duty of his life demanded his immediate presence with Damon, and that when this duty was discharged he would return and claim her as his own. Calantha remonstrated with him, and looking through her tears, exclaimed: "Oh, Pythias! my Pythias! you must not go!"

But her fond entreaties could not hold him, and hastily leaving the room he joined the messenger, and the two hurried away in the direction of the prison. A few moments' walk brought them to the prison door, where he met Damon, already *en route* to the scaffold, in chains and under heavy guard. Halting the guard, Pythias demanded an interview with his friend. This, at first, was denied him, but finally, under the urgent entreaty of both Damon and Pythias, the officer yielded. The two friends fell into each other's arms in tears of bitterest anguish.

"Oh my friend! my brother!" cried Pythias "I feared this fate for you, and feel that I am more guilty than yourself, because I did not accompany you.

"My friend, nay, my Pythias?" said Damon, "the gods themselves cannot be truer than yourself. I care nothing for death when in defense of honor and right. But, oh,

my poor Hermion ! my dear, sweet boy ! Had the Tyrant but let me see them but once more ere I die ! But he refused my every plea, and I felt, Pythias, that I must see you and commit my loved ones to your care, for I know that you are true. And yet it was too cruel that I should have disturbed you thus, on this your happy wedding day."

Pythias, turning to the officer of the guard, entreated him that he should take Damon and himself before Dionysius. To this the officer reluctantly consented, and they took up their march in that direction, and were soon before the Tyrant.

Pythias, stepping forward and kneeling before the Tyrant, pleaded with him to grant a brief respite to Damon.

"As thou art a husband and father, hear me ! Let Damon go and see his wife and child before he dies ; for four hours respite him. Put me in chains, plunge me into his dungeon, as a pledge for his return. Do this, but this, and may the gods themselves build up thy greatness as high as their own heavens !"

This request was, to Dionysius, beyond any display of fidelity which he had ever witnessed in man. Such friendship as this, to him, was unknown. He was incapable of comprehending a friendship so deep, so pure, so lasting, as to prompt one man to stake his life for another. After a brief moment of a deathlike silence, the Tyrant inquired of Pythias :

"What if this traitor should not return ; will you die in his stead ?"

“Most gladly would I do so,” replied Pythias.

Then turning to Damon, he asked him if he, having been set free for awhile on a respite, would return to meet his fate.

“By the truth of the gods I will!” replied Damon.

“Then, Pythias, your request is granted, and I will see what will come of your folly,” said Dionysius.

Damon was promptly released, and hastily embracing Pythias, and securing a fast steed, soon disappeared in the distance, in the direction of his home and loved ones. The chains were placed upon Pythias, who was cast into the dungeon to await the return of his friend. Dionysius was buried in wonder and amazement at the apparent fidelity of the two friends. He could not believe that Damon would return, nor that Pythias would unflinchingly yield his life for Damon should he not return, and he determined within himself, to test this matter to the bottom, and see if, in reality, this Pythagorean friendship was really what was claimed. Under a complete disguise he visited Pythias in his dungeon and offered to aid him to escape, saying that he himself would bribe the guard. So complete was his disguise that Pythias did not recognize him, and flatly refused his offer—with contempt. This refusal on the part of Pythias, only tended to deepen the mystery in the mind of Dionysius, so, as a last resort, he sent for Calantha, who promptly obeyed the summons. Nor did she recognize him in his disguise. But feigning himself to be a secret friend of Pythias, he sent Calantha into the dungeon to see if she could influence Pythias to

escape with her. But her tender entreaties were of no avail. Pythias saying to her that "honor was more to him than life," "and besides this," said he, "I know my friend Damon will return, if not prevented providentially, or by force. Never will Damon prove untrue to me." And at his own solicitation, he was left alone in his dark dungeon, that he might engage in meditation and prayer.

Calantha paced the floor of the southern corridor, restlessly, wringing her hands in bitterest anguish, and wondering, as she took an occasional glance down the road, which led in the direction of Damon's home, if he really would return in time to save the life of her loved Pythias; while the Tyrant, seating himself in the hall just outside the dungeon, as if enchanted by some fairy god, in a spirit of profoundest meditation awaited the outcome.

The sun was fast bending towards the western horizon. The time appointed for the execution was near at hand. Motley groups could be seen here and there, excitedly discussing the folly of Pythias. The sun dial on the Temple hard by was eagerly watched by the passers-by. Only a few brief moments were left. The tops of the houses adjacent were crowded with lookers-on, while from the windows of the buildings might be seen women and children anxiously waiting to witness the execution. The dungeon door was flung open by the officer, and Pythias was brought forth by the guard. The disguised Tyrant rising to his feet, gazed upon him as if he would discover in his face emotions of regret, or if he might see the signs of a coward soul. But Pythias did not falter as the Tyrant

taunted him with the falseness of his friend, and the bystanders jeered and scoffed him for his folly. Pythias smilingly expressed his confidence in the promise of his friend, and lifting his eyes toward heaven, he called upon the gods to prevent the return of his friend, saying,

“It is better that Pythias should die wifeless and childless, than for Damon to die, leaving a widow and orphan to the world’s cold charity.”

Hearing these words from the lips of Pythias, Dionysius remarked, as he plainly showed some signs of emotion, “This man is like unto the gods.”

Here the officer turned to Pythias, and with an emotional voice, said, “Come with me, the hour is at hand for you to lay down your head for that traitor Damon.”

Slowly they proceeded through the prison hall, closely followed by the guard, Dionysius and the weeping Calantha, supported by her mother, out into the open plain in rear of the prison, where the scaffold had been erected for the execution. Here the brave Pythias mounted the scaffold, and asked permission to bid farewell to his friends and loved ones. As he did so Calantha ascended the scaffold and met his fond embrace.

Now let us leave the scene for a moment and turn our attention to the circumstances which had caused Damon’s delay. Near four hours since he had disappeared on the fast steed in the direction of his home, nor did he slack his speed until he dismounted in front of his own loved villa, where he was met by his faithful, trusty servant, into whose charge he gave his steed, with instructions to



carefully and hastily rub him down, and have him in readiness for his use at any moment; remarking at the same time, in a low and emotional voice, that he must return to Syracuse at all hazards before the setting of the sun. "For," said he, "my old true and tried friend and servant, I myself am to die, by order of Dionysius, at the setting of the sun, and Pythias is pledged for my return. There now, I have told you all, say nothing to the mistress till I am well on my way back again." And turning from him he entered the gate and was met by his much loved little boy. Quickly did he clasp him in his arms and press his little form close to his own fast throbbing heart, as he showered incessant kisses of tenderness upon his dimpled cheek. As he stepped upon the porch his own loved Hermion met him and embraced him. Entering the house together they were soon seated near the back entrance. Hermion, his wife, had discovered a troubled look on his manly face and inquired of him if he was ill. Compressing his lips tightly, in order to restrain his emotion, he slowly nodded his head, indicating that he was. He sent the child to the housemaid in an adjoining room, then turning to his wife he said :

"My own sweet Hermion, I have a sad, sad story to unfold to you "

"Ah!" said she. "My own noble Damon, your voice, your face, your every motion, have already intimated to me that some calamity has befallen you. Tell me, Damon, tell me all! Has our fair city fallen? Has Pythias been slain? O! what? Do tell me, keep me in suspense

no longer! For well do you know that the heart of your own Hermion would share with you your deepest sorrows."

Arising to their feet simultaneously, Damon caught her in his embrace, and fondly kissed her cheek again and again, as his own manly tears fell like raindrops upon her troubled brow.

"Oh, my Hermion! My beloved! My pet! Oh, my darling, only boy! How can I say farewell? I am doomed to death by the tyrant Dionysius, and must die ere the sun shall hide itself behind the western slope."

"But, my own Damon," said she, "you have no fetters on, no guard attended you hither. Are you not free? Haste, Damon, haste! Mount thy swift steed and flee to yon lofty mountain! Hide thyself in its dense foliage till the trouble be overpast."

"Would the gods it could be so!" replied he. "But, Hermion, it cannot be. I had but four hours' respite from the chains and the dungeon. Behold the marks upon my wrists. I could never have seen thee more but for our true and noble friend Pythias, who interceded for me, and now wears the chain and occupies the dungeon as pledge for my return."

At this declaration, Hermion sank back on the sofa, limp and faint. Damon dropped on his knees beside the couch, and for a moment poured out his soul in fervent, pleading prayer to the gods for their protection over his Hermion and his boy; and, imprinting a last kiss upon her pale cheek, and calling for his little son, tenderly em-

braced him. Beckoning the housemaid to his presence and pointing to Hermion, he said: "Let your every thought and care be for her."

Then, hastily, he left the house. When but a few steps from his own front door, in his flower yard, he stopped, and facing his house, took a last fond look at his once happy home. Then, with bowed head, he proceeded in the direction of the gate. As he stepped outside the gate, he was horrified to find that his swift steed lay dead upon the ground. A bloody axe near-by told him the story at a glance. His faithful servant had slain the horse to prevent his master's return to Syracuse. Glancing at the sun, he realized the time was short, the life of his friend was at stake. He knew it was impossible, without a swift horse, for him to reach the city in time to redeem his pledge and save the life of his friend. "What shall I do? What can I do? What must I do?" he cried piteously.

Just as it seemed to him the last ray of hope had faded, he espied a countryman on a swift horse, making towards the city. "This is my last and only chance," said he, as the countryman approached. Seizing the reins, he told the rider that he must have the use of his steed at any cost. "By fair means if I can, by foul means if I must." At this declaration, the stranger dismounted, and as his foot touched the ground on one side, Damon mounted on the other, and tossing the stranger a well-filled purse, and pointing to his home, said: "Abide there till your steed

is returned," and as quick as thought was on his way to Syracuse.

On, and on, he went, with the speed of the wind, eagerly watching the sun as it was sinking behind the western slope. With but one aim, one hope, one yearning desire in his heart: "Oh, that I may reach there in time to save my lifelong friend and thus preserve my own honor."

Let us now return to the scene at Syracuse. Two brief minutes are all that is left in which to hope for Damon's return. The officer, laying hold of Pythias, said: "Come, I take you to the block."

"Nay," said Pythias, "I am a man and not a dog! I can place my head upon the block."

And suiting the action to the word, he kissed Calantha a last good-by, and tearing himself from her embrace, he placed his head upon the block. Just at the last second, when the headsman's axe was already raised, a horseman was seen in the distance, coming at full speed, and waving his hand high above his head. His voice was faintly heard. "Hold! Hold! Damon is here!"

The disguised tyrant, hearing this, quickly tore the mask from his face, and ordered the headsman to stay his axe. By this time Damon had reached the scene. Dismounting, he quickly ran to the scaffold, as he cried: "Oh, Pythias, my friend! Have I been false to thee?"

Pythias arose, and he and Damon fell into each other's embrace, each contending he should die and let the other live. This scene melted the heart even of the tyrant

Dionysius, while many of the by-standers wept aloud. Dionysius, casting aside his entire disguise, drew near the two friends, and reaching forth his hand toward them, said :

“ I freely pardon both. Such friendship as this is becoming the gods, and now I ask in turn to be admitted with you in the golden bonds of friendship.”

His request, however, was declined, and, with joyous hearts, Damon and Pythias separated for the night. Pythias accompanied his faithful Calantha to her home, where they were promptly wedded ; while Damon, on tried steed, wended his way back to his home and loved ones, to gladden their sad hearts by his return as though alive from the dead.

“ Now,” said the narrator, “ I have given you the sum and substance of this wonderful historic story, to the best of my memory, having read it several times. What have you to say against the cultivation of such friendship as that of Damon and Pythias ?”

Reaching forth his hand, and grasping that of the narrator, “ Hardshell” replied with emotion :

“ My brother, you have never yet preached a sermon so interesting as has been this talk. Really, I have never heard a story so beautiful. It has melted my heart into perfect submission, and I say to you frankly that I, like that tyrant Dionysius, want to be one, possessing such friendship ; for I realize now, as I never did before, that Pythian friendship is, indeed, a priceless boon ; and if the Order of Knights of Pythias is builded upon such

friendship as this for its foundation, I shall ever pray for the prosperity of such a noble Order, that it may spread all over the world and bring a selfish human family into one grand Brotherhood, where each one will 'love his neighbor as himself.' "

And, as the afternoon had nearly worn away, each of the party greeted the other with a warm shake of the hand, expressing their delight at having listened to the story, and "Hardshell" and the two brethren left for their homes, while "Softshell" remained as a guest of the Methodist Brother, not, however, until he had agreed to dine the next day with "Hardshell," and had promised to make another talk the next afternoon on Pythianism.

## II.

### FRIENDSHIP, THE FOUNDATION-STONE.

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Having enjoyed a pleasant night's rest, as the guest of the Methodist Brother, "Softshell" was awakened the next morning just about good daylight, and told that breakfast would soon be ready. The summons were promptly obeyed, and in a few moments he was invited into the sitting room where the family had gathered for their usual morning devotion. A Psalm was read, an old-time hymn sung, and prayer offered.

Breakfast being in waiting, the family, with their guest, were soon busily engaged in satisfying their appetites with a first-rate country breakfast. This pleasant duty having been faithfully performed, members of the family went about their usual household affairs, and Brother Methodist, excusing himself, went out to look after the stock, leaving "Softshell" seated on the front veranda, where he busied himself in "searching the Scriptures" for a suitable text to be used at the eleven o'clock service.

It was a charming morning; the songs of birds could be heard from every direction; the refreshing morning

breeze was perfumed with odors of the variety of flowers which grew near the house, and from which the velvet-winged Ephemera was sipping its morning repast; while the rising sun shot its golden rays through the rich foliage of the surrounding trees. It seemed that all nature was arrayed in magnificent splendor to pay homage to the birth of a new day.

The hours seemed to fade away rapidly, and ere the sun had marked the third hour of the day, our host had made ready for our departure to the meeting-house, where, according to previous announcement, a prayer-meeting service was to be held at half past nine. The entire family, accompanied by "Softshell," were soon on the way, and were not long in reaching the meeting-house, where a considerable number of people had already gathered for the occasion. And, among them, as usual, was "Hardshell," who was seated on a bench in the grove adjacent to the house—a group of brethren surrounding him, to whom he was endeavoring to give a synopsis of the talk of the previous afternoon, and cordially inviting all present to meet him at his house that afternoon at three o'clock to hear "Softshell's" second talk on Pythianism.

The hour appointed being at hand for prayer-meeting, the people gathered in the house. The services were opened by Brother Methodist, and followed by various brethren in turn. About an hour was spent in this delightful and profitable service. After an intermission of fifteen minutes, the congregation assembled for eleven o'clock service. The preacher announced as his text 1st



John, 4th chapter, 8th verse,—“God is love” From this he discoursed about forty-five minutes. The sermon was one of plain, practical, common sense, and had the effect of awakening more than ordinary interest among the Christians, while the unbelievers were visibly affected for good. In fact it was one of the best meetings during the series, as there were a number of persons who confessed Christ; and five were received by the church for baptism. Among the latter were the wife and daughter of “Hardshell.” The service was brought to a close shortly after twelve o’clock, and the congregation dismissed.

The preacher, according to promise, in company with several others, accompanied “Hardshell” and his family to their home for dinner. We were not long *en route*, as the distance was only about two miles. By one o’clock the party had taken possession of “Hardshell’s” home, at his own request, for when we dismounted in front of his home the old brother exclaimed: “Now, brethren, here’s my house! Make yourselves at home, and understand me, I mean just what I say!”

And, taking him at his word, we at once raided his peach orchard, and satisfied our appetites with some of the best peaches I ever ate. It was not long, however, until the old brother called to us from the house, and said, “Get ready for dinner.”

His summons were heeded promptly, and we were soon enjoying a repast long to be remembered as one among the best dinners the country affords.

After rendering full justice to the offering, the men re-

paired to a beautiful grove in rear of the house (each one carrying a chair), where the party engaged in discussing the meeting and religious topics generally. It was not long until the people began to gather from the surrounding neighborhood, and by three o'clock, the appointed hour, there were a dozen or more persons on the ground. As services had been announced for that night at the church, "Softshell" entered promptly on his second talk on Pythianism. But, in order that the minds of all present should be somewhat prepared for the second talk, "Softshell gave a synopsis of the previous talk and then announced the subject of the second talk.

"FRIENDSHIP—THE FOUNDATION—STONE OF THE ORDER  
OF KNIGHTS OF PYTHIAS."

Yesterday afternoon I talked to a few brethren, giving them the story of Damon and Pythias. I propose to talk to you this afternoon on Friendship, the foundation-stone of the Order.

I am pleased to see in this little group several members of the noble Order—for it is written, "In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established."

The friendship of which I propose to speak is not that flimsy, shadowy pretense which the world calls friendship, and which may be subdivided into as many different classes as almost any other word in the English vocabulary; for, upon investigation, we find the word "Friendship" is very indefinite in its application, as used in the English language. We will quote from some authorities on the subject, viz.: "Mutual liking and regard between persons,

irrespective of sex ; mutual interest based on intimate acquaintance and esteem ; the feeling that moves persons to seek each other's society, or to promote each other's society, or promote each other's welfare."

From a more ancient authority we have it as follows : "True and perfect friendship requireth these three things specially: Virtue—as being honest and commendable; society—which is pleasant and delectable ; profit—which is needful and necessary."

Then, again from a later authority we have it thus : "Friendship—there are three senses in which the term is used. The friendship having its root in motives of what is agreeable, and therefore called the 'Friendship of Pleasure.' The friendship having its root in self-interest, and therefore called the 'Friendship of Utility,' And last, the friendship having its root in disinterested love, and therefore called the 'Friendship of Virtue.'" And therefore it is added, in reference to the latter, this is friendship "par excellence," and is possible only between the pure and the good.

We might give much more authority on this subject, but deem the foregoing amply sufficient to prove, beyond doubt, that the term friendship is so varied in its meaning, that it would be the sheerest folly for us to say: "Friendship is the foundation-stone of the order" unless we say what kind of friendship we mean. Look where we will among the nations of the earth we find among the people, from the most refined and cultured, down to the most uncivilized and savage, a something which is called friend-

ship, according to the way the term is understood by the human family ; but as a rule it is flexible and yields to circumstances. But when we look at the friendship which existed between Damon and Pythias and note its inflexibility, we must conclude that circumstances justify the declaration that the term friendship should be subdivided into Natural Friendship—which is common to the entire human family; and Sacred Friendship—which is possible only between the pure and the good.

Natural friendship, being so varied in its application, is like a pendulum, it vibrates between morality and extreme vice. Under the pretense of friendship many beautiful characters have been led to wreck and ruin, fortunes have vanished, and even lives have been lost through its treachery. Natural friendship is a ladder on which men of selfish ambition often ascend to positions of prominence. Natural friendship in many instances begins where self-interest begins and ends where self-interest ends. It usually reaches as far as convenience suggests and weakens before personal exposure to danger, like the courage of some in presence of their enemy.

The friendship of Damon and Pythias—which was Sacred friendship—was not merely in words but in deeds, exemplifying a friendship which bound them in mutual bonds of brotherhood ; thus linking their lives together and prompting each one to die for the other. Such friendship as this, and only such, is Pythian friendship. And unlike natural friendship, it has its origin deep down in the very heart of the individual ; bubbling up from the

very spring of life, not merely a passion or fancy, but a part of the very existence of him who enters into its fond embrace. It is not that mask which all men wear, sometimes called friendship, simply meaning acquaintance with or kindly feeling for a fellow-man, but a friendship which grasps the hand of a brother and recognizes a mutual interest with him, as strong as the pulsations of life itself and as lasting as his days; ultimately culminating in an eternal union of hearts before the throne of God.

When we glance back a moment at Damon and Pythias we recognize the existence of a friendship rarely known to the human family. We do read in Sacred writ of such a virtue, as for instance, the friendship which existed between Jonathan and David or, as manifested in the acts of Joseph toward his brethren after they had treated him with so much envy. But there has been no display of friendship between man and man, in the world's history, which has more charmed the intelligent human family and elicited greater admiration of the pure and the noble than that which shines down through the shadows of past centuries from ancient Syracuse, upon which our noble Pythian Order is builded.

The question very naturally arises in the minds of some of you as to whether ALL members of the Order are in possession of and practise such friendship as this? We could reply: The Order is builded upon THIS friendship, and while all Pythians may not possess this class of friendship, yet we know that some do, and all should, if they do not. There are many instances on record where

members of the Order have risked their lives in an effort to save their Pythian friends when in jeopardy.

Pythian friendship is like unto a tree bearing a variety of fruits; such as charity, benevolence, virtue, honor, brotherly kindness, relief for the widow and orphans, a balm for sorrow, succor for the distressed, comfort for the mourning, food for the hungry, etc. And, like the Tree of Life spoken of in Holy Writ, it yields its fruits every month, being refreshed by the beneficent hand of the Deity, from that fountain of perfect love which flows from the very throne of God. If Pythian friendship permeated every part of its possessor's being, and was practised by all Pythians as it was by Damon and Pythias, doubtless the host of Heaven would smile in recognition of Pythian Friendship. No nobler virtue ever warmed the heart of mortal man than true Pythian friendship, if practised from the right motive.

I want to say just here that I hope to see the day when, not only all Pythians, but all believers in God as well, shall possess and practice, *from the right motive*, a friendship as pure, as deep, and as lasting as that of Damon and Pythias; for then, indeed, will the mist begin to clear away and man begin to see and understand something of that which is written, "God created man in His own likeness and image." Then will darkness change into light, and man be brought to a realizing sense of his duty as designed by the great Creator. Pythian friendship is made the more sacred through that pledge of honor entered into by every one who enters the fold, which binds them in

honor and fidelity in that inflexible bond of unison which makes each one in reality his "Brother's Keeper"; for he who would enter the Pythian fold must first from out of his heart cast every personal grudge, put away every petty jealousy, banish every feature of prejudice which he may have entertained toward any member of the Order, so that he himself may feel a kindred interest in his Pythian brother; not simply to be manifested in expressions or words or sentiment, but in real, absolute deeds; for it is evident that real Pythian friendship cannot exist in him who would harbor such evils. The fountain must first be pure, and then will the stream flowing therefrom be pure also; for among Pythians no stronger bond is asked than the pledged word of a loyal Knight. Pythias demanded no bond of Damon other than his pledge of honor to return.

Natural friendship is content with a Dionysius to rule in selfishness and ascend to fame and prominence through intrigue and strategy. Sacred friendship demands a Pythias who will sacrifice every personal interest, and even dare to leave a fair Calantha at the altar and fly to the rescue of his friend; who will place himself in chains and in a dungeon in order to secure a respite for his friend that he may go unguarded, unwatched, as free as the eagle's wing, and commune with his loved wife and child ere he should die, reposing most implicit confidence in his friend's honor to return; a Pythias will mount the scaffold of death, if necessary, for his friend, and with face beaming in tranquil smiles still proclaim the loyalty of his

friend. And sacred friendship as vehemently demands a Damon whose regard for honor and right prompts him to face a tyrant mob in defense of the rights and liberties of his constituency, and who will even prefer death rather than dishonor; a Damon who will tear himself away from home and loved ones and sacrifice everything which is dear to him and fly to the side of his friend, and to death in order to maintain his honor and save the life of a friend who had done more for him than all Syracuse. Sacred friendship demands a Damon and Pythias who, in the hour of dire extremity and under the shadow of the headsmen's hungry axe, will grasp each other in friendship's fond embrace while each will contend that it is better for himself to die, and for his friend to live; a friendship which binds men one to the other in love, benevolence, charity and honor--that their every interest, both personal and general, becomes mutual; so that they share each other's joys and bear each other's sorrows as their own. Such friendship as this is the foundation-stone of the Order of Knights of Pythias. And whether all Pythians practice such friendship or not, does not change the foundation-stone in the least. The foundation is fixed. It is the standard, the "par excellence" of friendship between man and man, and has not only the sanction and support of nearly five hundred thousand Knights of Pythias, but we believe it also has the sanction of the God of the universe, and will stand until the end of the world. A sure and steadfast foundation upon which all worthy men of the human family, both Jew and Gentile, may be gathered in



fraternal bonds of grand and noble brotherhood, whose aims, objects and purposes have been and ever will be the betterment of mankind through the practice of that sacred friendship which binds man to man, Pythian to Pythian, in inseparable bonds of unity so inflexible in its character, that, like the sun, it shines on and on, and though clouds may arise and the tempest sweep across the horizon, yet it is the same in adversity as in prosperity, in sickness as in health, in sorrow as in joy—unbending, unswerving, unyielding through the days and years of life, and even unto death. Let it be remembered Pythianism is not a religion.

As the speaker closed the talk, “Hardshell” approached him and greeted him with a hearty shake of the hand, as he asked: “Where and how can I join the Knights of Pythias? For I am thoroughly converted to the beauty of Pythian life, and you can now change my name if you will and no more call me “Hardshell.” I turned him over to the three Pythian brothers present.

After the protracted meeting closed that year, I did not meet “Hardshell” for nearly two years, and when I did meet him he grasped my hand and greeted me as a “Brother Knight.” This ends the little story of the conversion of a Hardshell. We leave him in the ranks of Pythian Knighthood an earnest worker in disseminating the principles of friendship, charity and benevolence. I will now devote a few short talks more directly to the members of the Order.

### III.

## THE ORGANIZATION--ITS RISE AND PROGRESS.

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While the story of Damon and Pythias comes to us from behind many centuries in the past, it seems strange that such principles should have slumbered, unadopted by an intelligent human family so long; for it was not until 1864 that the grand organization, now known as the Knights of Pythias, was born to bless the human race. It was while the civil war between the States was at its height and mother's son was arrayed against mother's son, struggling in the battle of the most stupendous war that ever spread a dark blot on national history. Hundreds of American homes had been converted into houses of mourning because of the thousands of America's brave and noble sons who had fallen in battle.

The first lodge of the Knights of Pythias was organized in Washington, D. C., at Temperance Hall, on Friday evening, February 19, 1864. Justus H. Rathbone, of Washington, D. C. (who was the originator and sole founder of the Order), together with six other gentlemen

met, and held the first organized meeting of that Lodge. Justus H. Rathbone having been elected W. C. of that Lodge, took an active part in pressing matters to a more permanent and satisfactory organization. Each one present on that occasion seemed thoroughly enthused with the idea of making it the grandest fraternal order among men. With this object in view they pressed forward with the work, and the membership increased rapidly, and as the months rolled by, other lodges were organized, until to day every city, town and hamlet of any prominence in the United States has one or more lodges.

The first Grand Lodge was organized in Washington, D. C., April 8th, 1864. This was necessary in order that there should be an authoritative body to grant charters for the institution of Subordinate Lodges. The order has grown, however, during the last thirty-six years very rapidly, spreading over nearly all the States of the Union, until the majority of the States have Grand Lodges.

The Supreme Lodge was organized in Washington, D. C., on the morning of the 1st day of August, 1868, on which occasion Justus H. Rathbone was nominated and unanimously elected Past Supreme Chancellor, and Samuel Reed, of New Jersey, Supreme Chancellor. And from the body then assembled officers were elected for each station of the Supreme Lodge. This body, as its name implies, is the only recognized head and authority of the Order. It may be of interest to note that this noble Order, up to this time, being then not quite five

years old, had gathered into its folds forty-five hundred members.

There is perhaps no fraternal, charitable order that can boast of a more rapid growth in the same length of time, and especially so when we consider that the Order was born while the nation was engaged in the most stupendous war that the world has ever known. It would seem as though this was the rising of the bright star of peace, to shed its silver rays over a mourning nation and dispel the clouds of gloom and animosity, and gather in friendship's fond embrace the true and noble from all parts of the nation into one bond of sweet reconciliation and peace. The hand which had borne the sword would now bear the olive branch, and the noble sons of both North and South would clasp hands over the dark scenes of warfare, and each declare, with joyful hearts, "Peace on earth, good will toward men."

On and on noble Pythians have pressed their way under the golden banner of Friendship, Charity and Benevolence, until now, in this the closing year of the nineteenth century, the records of the Supreme Lodge for 1900 show an aggregate of six thousand seven hundred and forty Subordinate Lodges, representing a membership of four hundred and ninety-two thousand five hundred and sixty-six, or an average of thirteen thousand six hundred and eighty-two per year since the date of its organization. What a grand army this is, to fight against vice and immorality! What a power in the land for good! How the loving hand of

Deity seems to have guided the efforts of the noble Pythian army from its very organization!

Let us pass now from the marvelous growth of the Order, and notice briefly what has been done from a pecuniary standpoint, as shown by the report of R. L. C. White, Supreme Keeper of Records and Seal, in a summary furnished the press, as follows: The appropriations at the Indianapolis Biennial, in 1898, were ninety-three thousand five hundred and fifty-six dollars, of which eighty-three thousand eight hundred and ninety-two dollars had been expended at the close of the fiscal year. There was a balance of seven thousand six hundred and fifty-two dollars, and there has since been raised sixty-five thousand four hundred and three dollars. Receipts of Grand Lodges were four hundred and eight thousand five hundred and ninety dollars. Disbursements were three hundred and seventy-three thousand five hundred and thirty-nine dollars. There has been expended for relief one million three hundred and thirty-five thousand five hundred and fifteen dollars, and Grand Domain had in hand December 1st, 1899, one million eight hundred and thirty-five thousand four hundred and fifty-one dollars. The total assets of the Grand Domains are nine million two hundred and forty-six thousand one hundred and thirty dollars. Lodges, outside of Grand Domains, have expended for relief, three thousand six hundred and fifty-one dollars; have cash on hand four thousand four hundred and eighty-five dollars, and assets of twenty-six thousand five hundred and twenty-four dollars. The

report of the Supreme Master of the Exchequer shows a total of thirty-one million three hundred and seventy-one thousand eight hundred and one dollars assets June 30th, 1900.

In addition to the immense amount of money which is annually being paid out by the Order for sick benefits, the endowment rank furnishes insurance to the members of the Order amounting in the aggregate to millions of dollars, and is, we think, the best and safest insurance on earth, and therefore the cheapest. Thus the families of vast numbers of Pythians are protected against suffering and want, when the head of the family "is silent in the tomb." We could not say too much in praise of this feature of the Order, for it furnishes to every Pythian an insurance upon which he can absolutely rely, as it is managed and controlled exclusively by members of the Order, and no Pythian is just to himself or his family until he has secured the protection thus offered.

And last, but by no means least, the uniform rank reflects high honor upon the Order which gave it birth. This military feature of the organization has sprung into prominence and power and reflects credit and honor upon the Order by which it is fostered, numbering, as it does, well up into the thousands, while among its members may be found many of the most prominent and influential men in the land.

Hence you may conclude from this little cluster of facts that the Order of Knights of Pythias is fast marching to the front, and is destined to become, if it has not already

done so, the foremost order among the fraternities. We think it is safe to say that the record of the Order, both in point of growth and material aid furnished, has no peer among the fraternal orders of the world, and with a continuation of zeal and energy which has marked the progress of the Order in the past, we may, with confidence, look forward to a day in the near future, when the ranks will have swelled to double its present membership, and when the grand total of assets will not only be thirty-one million three hundred and seventy-one thousand eight hundred and one dollars, but will ring out in clear tones a hundred million and more. Every true Pythian feels proud of the Order and of his membership with it.

And now in this, the initial year of a new century, let us each and every one form new resolutions, with a full determination to press on and on in sowing the seed of friendship, charity and benevolence, and bravely march on to the journey's end, where we shall lay down the weapons of this warfare, and with the sweet consciousness of having discharged the whole duty of a Pythian Knight, cast aside the well-worn armor and enter the castle hall of perfect peace.

## IV.

### PYTHIAN LIFE.

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If you, dear reader, are a Pythian Knight, you can more fully appreciate what I shall say on this line. If you are not a Pythian, I trust that this little talk may be the instrument to lead you into a proper conception of real Pythian life.

The Order is founded upon Pythian friendship, and, as you have learned from the Pythian story, this friendship is unlike the friendship of the world. The life of the Pythian should be such as to elicit the admiration and commendation not only of members of the Order, but of the correct thinking world. Friendship, charity and benevolence should not only be a claim but should be so fully identified with the make-up of the man as to become part and parcel of his very being.

Friendship in words alone is no friendship at all, but Pythian friendship is a friendship in deeds, in verity and truth. Doubtless there are many Pythians in the land who have entered the Order either under a misconception of its real aims and objects, or else they may have been fascinated by the outward appearances. But he who would



enter this grand fold should first study the friendship exemplified by Damon and Pythias. Investigate every virtue that shines forth from this Damo-Pythian episode and re-view it again and again, until its sacred memories become your own; for he who would enter the fold of this Order simply for pecuniary benefit or for its social features, will soon grow weary, and Pythian friendship becomes to him “as a tale that was told.”

The life of every true Pythian should be so characterized by deeds of friendship, charity and benevolence, as that he himself will shed a light on the pathway of fellow Knights, bring them into a mutual bond of union with him, and thus make each Pythian his brother's keeper, sharing with his brother his highest joys and bearing with him his deepest sorrows. Each Pythian should be as a great rock in a weary land, under whose shadows the wayworn traveler may rest from his labor and be refreshed. He should be as a fountain in a thirsty land, where the sorrow-stricken Pythian may drink deep from the waters of consolation. His breast should be a downy pillow, upon which the fainting Pythian may lean his head in comfort and encouragement.

A true Pythian should live not so much for self as for the betterment of the human family; indeed, every Pythian should be enabled to adopt the sentiment of the poet as he wrote:

“I live for those who love me, for those who know me true,  
For the heaven which smiles above me, and awaits  
my spirit, too,

For the cause which needs assistance,  
For wrongs which need resistance,  
For the glory in the distance,  
And the good that I can do."

Pythian life is exalted or lowered according to the real deeds of *each* member of the Order. A man who has a low conception of Pythian duty will make but little advancement in Pythian life, but he who feels the full measure of Pythian obligation must advance, step by step, higher and higher in the scale of Pythian life, until he shall find himself engrossed in the joys, sorrows and cares of each and every member of the Order, and thus his life will reflect credit upon the Order which has given him his prominence. There is a place for every Pythian by the side of his unfortunate brother, to comfort him in his sorrow, to counsel him in his adversity, and to point him to the better way; and when the grim monster Death has claimed for its victim a brother Knight who has left behind him sorrowing ones, the vacant chair thus left around the fireside should ever be filled by some true Knight, to aid by his counsel and to assist by material means the sorrowing widow and orphans, and thus may he be instrumental in pointing the children of the departed brother to the grand and noble Pythian Order as a shelter in the time of storms.

We should not lose sight of the fact that there can be no real Pythian life, nor Pythian charity, without Pythian honor. As we look back on that ancient Grecian scene, we there behold Pythias in the dungeon. We hear the

fair Calantha as she entreats him to fly with her where dangers cannot come. We hear the noble Pythias as he replies: "I will not go, for honor is more to me than life." His honor was at stake. He was in the dungeon as a pledge for Damon's return, and he would prefer death rather than dishonor. We see, too, the noble Damon, as he hurries from the embrace of his wife and child back to Syracuse, to save the life of his friend and preserve his own honor. Thus we may see the strength of our assertion that without Pythian honor—which is co-equal with Pythian charity—Pythian life is but a farce.

If you, my brother, are a Pythian, and have entered the organization prompted by mercenary motives, or through a misconception of its real aims and objects, let me admonish you to examine your own heart, review your own life, as a Pythian sum up your deeds of charity, and see if you have bent your nature beyond your own selfish designs. See if you have cast out from your heart every unkind thought, every personal prejudice, every petty jealousy, as against a member of the Order. See if you have conquered that spirit of selfishness which characterizes, naturally, every man. Take your own life and life-work, and stand it out alongside that of Damon and Pythias, and see if they seem one and the same. If so, then I bid you Godspeed. But if, on the contrary, you find you are lacking in these things, let me admonish you, as a brother and as a father, strive to free yourself from all these objectionable features, and stand out boldly and honorably a true advocate of Pythian principles and

practices. Carry the banner of Friendship, Charity and Benevolence in spotless purity, and thus lend your aid, yea, your very life, in perpetuating the grand and noble principles which should characterize every member of this Order. Be true to yourself, to your Order, to your principles, and thus true to your God.

The life of every true Knight should be such that every member of the Order can look upon him as a friend indeed. Pythian life, too, is a life of watchfulness. He should ever be watchful, not so much of co-members of the Order, but watchful of himself; watchful of his deeds, his words, and his conversation. He should exercise caution in every footprint he makes through life. He should exercise care, watchfulness and caution, that every footprint shall point in the right direction, and thus aid in perpetuating a pathway through life, which will be known and read of all men as a pure Pythian walk. We are too apt to spend our time in watching the acts of others. This is unnecessary, if every Pythian shall watch his own footprints and see that they are made in friendship and honor, and in the direction of right.

The Pythian's life should also be characterized by noble deeds, deeds of bravery. He should exercise confidence in himself and in his friends, and exercise that brave, manly spirit which belongs to every true Pythian. He who is equipped with Pythian principles as his armor is prepared to fight life's battles successfully, and if, perchance, he should lack moral courage, then let him reach up his hand to God for help, and press forward daily to victory in the

end; for he who would achieve great victories, as a Pythian must be brave indeed, a valiant Knight, at all times an enemy to the wrong, and forever the friend of the right. He should ever strive to “*do noble deeds, not dream them all day long, and thus make life, death, and that vast forever, one grand, sweet song.*” His motto should be “Onward and Upward,” and the foremost thought of his life should be, “I live to bless mankind.”

If every Pythian's life was modeled after that of our prototypes the world would be the better that we have existed therein, and the golden bonds of Pythian brotherhood will have cemented together all of the best men of the human family, with but one aim and object: the upbuilding and betterment of the human family.

In conclusion, I suggest that when each and every Pythian guards well his own life-work, and strives to elevate and uplift the Order, then shall we see the light of divine approval, shedding its sunbeams of glory on this noble Pythian Order, and all the hosts of heaven shall smilingly say, Amen.

## V.

### PYTHIAN DUTY.

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When we speak of Pythian duty, we touch the chords of a harp of a thousand strings, for the duties of a Pythian are so numerous that it would require hours of thought and pages of reading-matter to enumerate them. Therefore, in this article, we will only speak of some of the more important duties, which are but suggestive germs, from whence innumerable duties spring forth.

The first we will mention is duty to our God. All true Pythians recognize the existence of a Supreme Being. They also recognize the fact that He is supremely good and merciful. We learn from Sacred Writ that good deeds in men are well-pleasing to Him. Therefore, we conclude that, as man is created after the likeness and image of his God, and as all men during this life are but travelers through time towards that vast eternity where we shall meet Him face to face and receive from Him the reward of our life work, the highest and most sacred duty of a Pythian is to so shape his course that, when the race has been run, he shall have no compunctions of conscience for having failed in dispensing good deeds in obedience to the

will of our great Creator; for good deeds among men are but the promptings of the Spirit of the great Author of our being.

The second duty which I will mention is that of a Pythian to himself. As no Pythian can be true to his God without being true, also, in his duties to himself and his family, each Pythian should strive to be the peer of every other true Pythian in the land, and hence, his duty to himself demands a close examination of his own daily walk in life. He should endeavor to free himself from every practice which savors of immorality, selfishness or hypocrisy, and thus so shape his life-work that none may point at him the finger of scorn, but, on the contrary, his fellow Knights may speak for him words of highest praise, while his home-life should ever be such as to elicit the admiration and praise of his own family, as it is a well established fact among Pythians that the first duty to human kind is to the loved ones at home; indeed, the family circle of each Pythian should be but a miniature lodge for dispensing deeds of Friendship, Charity and Benevolence.

The third duty of which I will speak is that of a Pythian to his Lodge. A neglect of this duty becomes apparent to all members of the Lodge, and is a natural result when the two duties previously mentioned are neglected, for while duty to God and to self are sacred and, we might say, secret duties, of which the Lodge cannot judge, the duties to the Lodge are such that they may be classed as mutual duties with co-members of the Order, and a fail-

ure to discharge these latter at once becomes apparent to all, and serves usually as an index to the private life of each individual member, for the popularity and prominence of a member in the Order depends almost entirely upon his association with and labors of love among his fellow-members. I believe it to be as much the duty of one Pythian as another to attend all the conventions of his Lodge, and participate in its work, and he who fails to attend his Lodge meetings, without a legal excuse, is just as guilty of neglect as any officer of the Lodge would be under the same circumstances, for there is no known law which would compel the elected officers of the Lodge to do the Lodge work alone; in fact, there can be no Lodge work transacted, with any degree of satisfaction, if none but the officers should be present. Really, the officers are but the elected instruments through which the membership at large can legally transact business.

Another much-neglected duty to the Lodge is the failure to keep our dues paid up. It should not be the duty of the Master of Finance to chase members down, in order to collect their dues, nor should the Lodge be compelled to pay such officer to discharge the neglected duties of its members. If every member will discharge his duty in this respect by regularly attending his Lodge and keeping himself clear on the books, the success and prosperity of the Order would be doubled and the social feature of the Order greatly advanced.

It is also a special duty, which every Pythian owes to his Lodge, to take an active part in all of its workings,



voting promptly on all questions put before them, and thereby shouldering with his brother the responsibility of every measure. When a candidate is being balloted for, it is the mutual duty of every member to promptly cast his ballot in accordance with his convictions. This duty is too often neglected.

And now we come to consider the most important duty, doubtless, to the Lodge yet mentioned. It is the investigation of the character of an applicant for membership. When this duty is imposed upon a committee, they should not stop, or be satisfied, when they have ascertained from one or two persons that the applicant is a good, clever fellow, but they should search out the true character of the man in every detail, and see what his life is outside of the Order. If his character is found to be soiled—outside of the Order—it is reasonable to suppose that it may continue so if he is admitted inside. We should never report favorably on the application of any man until each of the committee is fully and unquestionably satisfied that, if admitted, the candidate will bring with him into the Order a good name and spotless character. We should remember that the Order does not make the true Pythian Knight, but on the contrary, men of noble bearing and lofty aspirations make the Order whatever it is. True, the Order confers the ranks, and thus clothes him with the honors of Knighthood legally, and places within his hands the golden keys with which to unlock the various palaces of Pythian duty, but it remains for the member so equipped to unlock and enter these various palaces of duty, where he may

ascend, step by step, until he shall have reached the highest pinnacle of prominence in the Order. So, in building this grand Pythian structure, we should be careful in the selection of the material to be used, for not only the prominence but the permanence of a Lodge is dependent upon the class of material of which it is constructed.

I also believe it to be the duty of every Pythian to secure a personal acquaintance with each and every member of his Lodge, when possible, for in this way he may greatly enhance the social feature of the Lodge.

It is also a duty, as sacred as the secrets of Knighthood, which each member of the Lodge owes to each and every other member, to visit the sick and distressed, not only of his own Lodge, but of the Order, when he can do so. Pythian duty calls us especially to the bedside of every dying Knight, that, as he wrestles with the grim monster, he may still be enabled to exercise confidence in the Pythian fidelity of those about him who have pledged friendship through life even unto death; and when the end has come, and the mantle of mourning is cast about loved ones left behind, none more willingly than Pythians should breathe in the ears of the bereft ones tender words of condolence and comfort; and in the funeral march to the last resting-place Pythians should not be lacking, remembering always that Pythian duties are never fully discharged until this mortal coil lies cold and chill in death's embrace and the voice is forever hushed to the world.

Again, when the character of a Brother Knight is assailed, we should not be hasty in adding words of hot con-

demnation until we have probed to the very bottom and ascertained the guilt or innocence of the brother in question. If innocent, stand by him in all that is true, and right, and honorable. Vindicate his innocence with all vehemence and persistence. If we find he is guilty, go to him in Pythian fidelity, remonstrate with him; advise, persuade and encourage him. Never condemn him until all efforts have proven futile.

Last, but not least, we owe a duty to the world in helping to gather up from among the human family all worthy men into the Order. Have you worthy friends whom you would like to see members? Then seek an opportunity, when you can sit down and quietly lay before them the beauties and benefits of Pythian life. Tell them the story of Damon and Pythias; or, if you think best, loan them this little volume, request them to carefully peruse its pages, and to drink in the full measure of Pythian friendship, life, duty, etc.; and, nine times out of ten, you can lead them to the Pythian Altar; for, after all,

Would we scan this Order to find its beauty,  
'Tis in these words: Pythian Duty.

There lies burning in the hearts of all true men a yearning desire to do good in this life, and connection with the Order simply opens the way through which, in loving cooperation with other members of the Order, bound by the sacred Pythian pledge, one can put in truthful practice these pent-up heart yearnings. Let me draw you a little picture, showing a result of neglected Pythian duty. There may be found in almost every lodge members who pay

their dues promptly, and whose names appear on the roster as Knights, and yet they are unknown to a vast majority of the Lodge, because of their failure to discharge their duty in attending the Lodge meetings more than once or twice each year, and, when one of such members sickens and dies, and a notice of the funeral is placed in one of our daily papers, Knights of the same Lodge are astonished to read that the deceased was a member of their Lodge. In consequence of this the funeral is slimly attended by the Order, and the finger of censure, under such circumstances, may be pointed at the Lodge for neglect of duty. Now, in the picture drawn, who would be at fault? Surely we could not say it was the Lodge, but the member himself who had, through his own neglect of duty, woven his own burial robe; for, in fact, the member in question was a dead Knight all the while, and has simply now quit breathing.

In concluding this little article, let me admonish you, my brother, to be faithful in the discharge of every duty incumbent upon you as a true Pythian Knight. Remember that life is but a span, and in that span the whole of Pythian duty must be discharged. Let your life-work be so decorated with dutiful deeds in the golden bond of Friendship, Charity and Benevolence, that, when the last sun of your life is fading into night, and you stand beside the river of mystery and wrestle with the grim monster, to whose conquering power frail mortality must succumb, your last sweet comforting thought may be: I have lived to bless mankind.

## VI.

### SNAP-SHOTS FROM ANCIENT SYRACUSE.

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No man who is capable of appreciating the noble, the pure, and the true in man, can read the story of Damon and Pythias without being charmed by the beautiful lessons of matchless friendship which it teaches. With the casual reader the Damo-Pythian episode is to him the only attraction in the story, but, to the true Pythian Knight, there are the thousand other minor charms which cluster around the scene like curtains of gold, beyond which, on the stage of life, the two friends manifest to the world that matchless friendship which has become the main feature in the Order of the Knights of Pythias.

Syracuse itself, its geographical situation, its tall mountains and fertile valleys, its olive groves and fruitful vineyards, its concentration of wealth, refinement and culture, its conquests and its victories, and even its Dionysius, in its day, each of these, to a Pythian, has its peculiar charm and becomes sacred to his memory. In fact, there is nothing connected with the story or its surroundings from which we may not gather lessons of interest, and perhaps profit.

It is true, I may deal in some speculation in this article, but, if in so doing, I may bring out light and beauty, then it is well. Let us take first, the geographical situation of Syracuse. We are told that the city was situated upon an island, and if we will go back to our school-boy days and remember our first lesson in geography, we are taught that an island is a body of land entirely surrounded by water, and hence not connected with any other body of land, and so our noble Pythian Order stands alone among the fraternities of the world, independent, having no connection whatever, directly or indirectly, with any other secret order on earth. It is neither a part of nor a derivative from any other Order—a fact of which every Pythian is justly proud. It is true, the little island of Ortygia lies hard by and in close touch with Sicily, but it is a distinct and separate body of land nevertheless. This little island, we would suggest, might be typical of the little Order known as the Pythian Sisters, which lies in touch with our noble Pythian Order, yet is distinct and separate.

In the next place the island upon which Syracuse was situated is the largest island in the Mediterranean sea, and, as Pythians, we would claim for our Order that it is the largest fraternal Order on the American continent; possibly not so numerically, but in the purity of her principles, aims and objects, and perhaps from a financial standpoint. When we take into consideration the enormous amount annually expended by the Order in caring for the sick, in burying the dead, in caring for the widow and orphan, and in the insurance furnished by the Order to its mem-

bers, we would not think it unjust to claim that we stand abreast with any Order, in this particular, on the face of the earth, and therefore, as Pythians, we feel that we are not encroaching upon the liberties, claims or rights of any kindred Order when we say that we believe we are the largest, in many respects, of any in the great number of fraternities

The island had its mountains also, rising high above the surrounding country; so, too, among the members of our Order we have our men of might, such as Rathbone, Cowley, and many others of like prominence.

History tells us of the Olive groves and vineyards in that land, and our knowledge and practise of the principles of our Pythian Order teaches us that every true Pythian bears in his hands the olive branch of friendship to every worthy member of the Order. While within the embrace of this Order every true Pythian finds the grapes like the grapes of Eschol, sweet, luscious and refreshing, and of which each member of the Order may partake to his full satisfaction.

Syracuse was also noted for its accumulation of the refined and cultivated; and so our Pythian Order has within its fold its thousands of the most refined and cultivated men of the present day. And, as Syracuse had its conquests and its victories, so this Order has had its conquests and its victories, and will continue to press on, battling for right, for truth, for good, waging warfare against evil and immorality in every form, and achieving victory after victory, until the last battle of life shall have been fought.

and the great victory won, and its numberless thousands of worthy members shall stand before the great King as a great army, unto whom he shall say : “ Well done, thou good and faithful servants.”

Last, but not least, we will view the tyrant Dionysius, bold, brave and determined, but steeped in selfish ambition. He had pressed his way to a throne, through intrigue, bribery and chicanery. A stranger he was to friendship, an enemy to right and justice, and yet, notwithstanding his strength of character, when he put to test the friendship of Damon and Pythias, his heart melted down ; he was a changed man, in heart and mind, and so fascinated was he by that pure and matchless friendship between Damon and Pythias, that he vainly sought fellowship with them in the bonds of their friendship. Thus may Pythians of to-day learn the lesson from that long by-gone circumstance, that true, unalterable Pythian friendship, when practised and carried out fully between members of the Order, will have the effect of subduing the spirit of selfishness in others, and bring them to see, as perhaps they never have before, the beauty, the grandeur, and the sublimity of real Pythian friendship. If you are a Pythian knight, then, my brother, review this little lesson, and, from these simple suggestions, though drawn somewhat from imagination, learn that in true Pythian bonds everything connected therewith is beautiful, profitable and sublime, and will aid us in more properly appreciating the privileges and advantages of true Pythian knight-hood.



In conclusion, my brother, let me admonish you to endeavor, each and every day of your Pythian life, to discover the thousands of charms as they cluster around everything pertaining to Syracuse and the grand lesson of friendship given to the world by our noble prototypes, Damon and Pythias.

## VII.

### ECHOES FROM THE GREAT BATTLE.

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In this talk I desire to present to the mind of the reader a few random thoughts, gathered from reflection on the scenes and circumstances surrounding the Damo-Pythian episode.

A group of golden gems cluster around the lesson of friendship given to the world by the two friends, rich in material for thought and profit. A great moral battle is to be fought, and a victory to be won. Arrayed on the one side is honor, truth and friendship, clothed in sacred power; on the other, tyranny, oppression, selfishness and wrong, clothed in the power of demons. In the unlawful step taken by Dionysius, in the early part of the day, right, justice and benevolence had been silenced, and unrighteousness, tyranny and oppression reigned and ruled supreme. While the tyrant is the champion of many hard-fought battles in warfare, Damon is the champion in the senate chamber in the defence of right and justice. The first official act of the tyrant king was the first blow of this great battle between right and wrong, and, being clothed with absolute power, he had not a doubt of ultimate victo-

ry, while his enemy, largely in minority, must rely entirely upon the strength and power of invisible righteous principle, born of high heaven.

We see, in our imagination, the tyrant as he stands beside the scaffold, lost in profoundest wonder, as he sees the brave and fearless Pythias bare his own head upon the block for his friend, and the faithful Damon rush to the rescue and to death. Many thoughts, foreign to his corrupt nature, prey upon his troubled brain, while, in his imagination, a group of hideous pictures dance before his vision like the ghosts of martyred virtues from the by-gone ages, as he hears the two friends, lingering in each other's tender embrace, contending, each with the other, "Let me die." A crisis has been reached—a victory must soon be won. As the last moment of allotted time is ebbing, a thousand family altars in Syracuse are bathed in anxious, loving tears, a thousand fervent petitions are ascending to the Throne of Justice for righteous victory. The sun seems to linger in its course, bathing the western slope in its golden rays as though a Joshua was there and had commanded it to stand still until the battle is finished and the victory won. The hosts of heaven seem to smile in sympathetic recognition of struggling virtue. The swift-winged Angel of Charity, as a messenger from the great white Throne of Justice, invisibly sweeps down upon the scene and directs the victory, and with the finger of love writes upon the pages of time, "Babylon is fallen; righteous principle hath prevailed; henceforth friendship shall rule and reign supreme in Syracuse"; and the hosts of heaven shouted,

“Amen!” The battle is ended the victory won. Righteous principle is the champion, while tyranny, oppression and wrong is the conquered foe. This victory was made the sweet song of ancient Greece, and its sweet notes echoed over mountain and valley, over sea and ocean for more than twenty-five hundred years, and finally, in 1864, broke upon the ears of some of America’s noblest sons, who, with eager delight, caught up the sweet song and sang it anew. Its vibration reached every city, town and hamlet in our fair land, and to-day there are half a million true and appreciative Knights to join the grand chorus of Pythian Friendship, Charity and Benevolence.

From the foregoing thoughts we gather two golden lessons—the power of righteous principle over vice in every form, and the force of true Pythian character in individual effort. The two principles involved still exist in every land. Wherever the foot of man treads the earth the battle between virtue and vice must be fought, and the victory is sure, as it is not to the strong but to the vigilant, the active and the brave. The giant Goliath is yet in the land, and we should remember that in the person of every true Knight of Pythias we have a conquering David.

Would we see true Pythian principle spread out, until it gathers into its warm embrace the noble and worthy from the human family; then let every Pythian first be true to the principles to which he has pledged his honor, and then put forth personal effort in practising these principles in every-day life, remembering always, that every honest

effort is not only approved by all right-thinking men, but is sanctioned by high heaven.

The display of friendship by Damon and Pythias was not for the purpose of influencing the Tyrant's course, nor was it to convince him of the existence of such a friendship as they claimed, but they were simply acting in the discharge of duty under their Pythagorean pledge. Nor should we, in the discharge of duty, under our Pythian pledge, anticipate a desire thus to sound a trumpet to attract the attention of the outside world, but let us faithfully discharge our duty as Pythians, and the world will judge the tree by its fruits. A city built upon a hill cannot be hid; neither will the fruit of honest Pythian labor be hid from the world.

And now, my brother, pardon me for introducing a closing thought. We are standing in the dawning light of a new century. Behind us lies the only century that you and I have known. It gave us our birth; the happy days of innocent childhood; the expanding days of youth; the responsible days of manhood, and, to some, it has furnished the hoary mantle of age. Many thousands of life-records have been written on its pages. To some it has given fame and fortune, and to others penury and obscurity. It has given to the world many of the fraternal orders. Prominent among these is our beloved Pythian Order, born in the early days of the latter half of the century. This Order has prospered and expanded until its membership almost covers the land, as the waters do the mighty deep, and, while many thousands of Pythian records have

been completed during the century just past, beneficent Providence permits you and me to step out into a new century in which to finish our life-work. Beyond the confines of this new century doubtless not a single living Pythian will be permitted to go in this life. It is of vast importance, therefore, to each member of the Order now living to give earnest heed to the fact that we have entered upon the duties of the new century in which our life-record must be completed, and in which we must bid adieu to this world, and pass into that vast eternity from whence no traveler returns.

The old century has passed over into the hands of the new a grand army of Pythian Brothers, five hundred thousand strong. Now, let each one of us ask himself, as we journey between the twentieth and twenty-first century posts: Should we not redouble our energies, and, following the footprints of noble Pythians gone before, press onward and upward, sparing no pains, lacking in no effort to achieve greater victories and do nobler deeds during the remnant of our days than has crowned the efforts of our noble predecessors, in gathering into one grand brotherhood true and noble men from the human family? Every Pythian in the land to-day will have finished his labors ere the century closes, and the fruits of his labor must be left as a legacy to those who are to follow in Pythian bonds. What shall the harvest be which is to be gathered by them as the fruits of our labors? Shall you and I go down to the tomb with bitter regrets for having left undone Pythian duty? Or shall we lay this mortal casket down, wreathed.

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in smiles of sweetest delight, and be able to exclaim with the last expiring breath, "I have lived for the betterment of mankind, and now shall rest from my labors"? May these simple thoughts be chambered in every Pythian heart is my prayer. Amen.