

## XLV. BENEVOLENT AND FRATERNAL SOCIETIES.

With the advancement of civilization and the increase of population came the necessity for the organization of societies for mutual benefit and social enjoyment. The oldest of all the numerous secret organizations, of which there are scores now in existence, is that known as "Free and Accepted Masons." It being the oldest, and from which all other secret orders have sprung, it is proper to speak of it first in this historical review. The traditions in regard to the history of Masonry are numerous, and, so far as is now known, its origin was in the builders' associations of ancient times, which attained their greatest perfection at the building of King Solomon's temple. Since that time, perhaps about 200 years ago, it was changed into a speculative science, still retaining the working tools of operative masonry, and giving them a symbolic meaning, illustrating the erection of a human temple, complete in all its parts.

The first lodge of any kind after the county was organized was a lodge of Odd Fellows in Plymouth, March 4, 1851, but it continued to work only until July 22, 1855, when it ceased to exist by the surrender of its charter .

Plymouth Lodge No. 149, F. & A. M., was organized under dispensation April 2, 1853, and chartered May 23, 1853 Freemasonry was introduced into Plymouth mainly through the efforts of Rev. John G. Osborn, who died in this place thirty odd years ago. He was a preacher of the gospel, and came to Plymouth as the pastor of the Methodist congregation, occupying the little frame church building which stood on Center street, on the lot second door south of the Lutheran church. This was the second church building in Plymouth, the Presbyterian house of worship having been erected some time previous. At the time the dispensation was asked for there were but seven Masons in the jurisdiction, just enough to form a lodge, and two -of these resided in Bremen, fourteen miles away, namely, George Pomeroy and Jacob Knoblock. The other five petitioners were John G. Osborn, Henry B. Pershing, Y. T. Moore, Greenville P. Cherry and David Steel. The dispensation was granted and the lodge organized on the afternoon and evening of April 15, 1853. The first business transacted after the lodge was organized

was the election to membership of the following Masons who had settled in Plymouth after the petition had been forwarded: John Coleman, William J. Burns, John Hall and Wm. D. Moore. The lodge then elected the following officers for the ensuing year: Master, John G. Osborn; senior warden, G. P. Cherry; junior warden, H. B. Pershing; treasurer, George Pomeoy; secretary, Wm. J. Burns; senior deacon, Jacob Knoblock; junior deacon, Y. T. Moore; Tyler, Wm, K. Logan. All these ancient workmen on the spiritual temple have laid down their working tools and gone to their eternal rest.

June 26, 1860, the lodge had a public installation of officers in a grove near town. After the ceremonies were concluded, Mr. Osborn, master elect, delivered a Masonic address, after which the members of the lodge and visiting brethren from Warsaw; La Porte, Valparaiso and Columbia City were marched to the Edwards House, where a banquet was served; at the conclusion of which the lodge returned to the lodge room. The lodge was chartered May 23, 1853, as Plymouth Lodge No.149, F. & A. M.

In 1871 another lodge was organized called Kilwinning Lodge No.435, F. & A. M., Daniel McDonald being first master. This lodge continued until 1888 when, by mutual agreement, the two lodges were consolidated in the name of Plymouth-Kilwinning Lodge NO.149, and has continued as such to the present time. In 1902 the Masonic lodges of the city erected a Masonic temple at a cost of about \$6,000, which they now occupy, on the corner of Michigan and Garro streets.

Each of the lodges above named furnished a grand master, grand high priest and illustrious grand master, viz. : Martin H. Rice and Daniel Mc- Donald. Henry G. Thayer served as grand commander Knights Templar of Indiana, and all three were honored by being elected grand patrons of the Order of the Eastern Star.

The most noted event of a local nature the Masonic fraternity of Plymouth took part in was the laying of the corner stone of the present courthouse, August 25, 1870, a full description of which will be found under the article headed "Public Buildings."

The appendant order of Masonry are all represented in Plymouth.

Plymouth Chapter, Royal Arch Masons No. 49, was organized February 15, 1864, Abraham Reeves first high priest.

Plymouth Council No.18, Royal and Select Masters, was organized May 22, 1864, Martin H. Rice, first illustrious master. Plymouth Commandery No.26, Knights Templar, was organized under dispensation April 8, 1875, and under charter May 13, 1875, H. G. Thayer , eminent commander; Horace Corbin, generalissimo, and Daniel McDonald, captain general. The commandery now has a membership of 100, and is considered one among the best in the state.

Plymouth Chapter No.26, Order Eastern Star, whose membership is made up of Master Masons, their wives, widows, mothers, sisters and daughters, was organized October 4, 1875, and under charter May 12, 1876. It now has over 200 members, and is the fifth largest chapter in the state.

Bremen Lodge No.414, F. &A. M., was organized under the dispensation Issued by the grand master of Masons in Indiana, March 2, 1869, with the following as the first officers: Lewis Theobald, master; Jacob Schilt, senior warden; Moses Keyser, junior warden. A charter was granted at the May session of the Masonic grand lodge, the number attached to .it being 414. Under this charter it was regularly organized June 16, 1870, by Eli R. Shook of Plymouth lodge, acting as deputy grand master. Since then it has continued to work without interruption; it has a splendid lodge room of its own and a membership of sixty, composed of among the best men in the community.

Argos Lodge No.399, F. & A. M., was organized at Argos with ten charter members in October, 1869, and was given a charter at the May session of the grand lodge, 1870. It has gone along steadily and now has a splendid membership of about sixty. Within the last few years it has erected a lodge hall of its own, which is furnished with all the necessary comforts and conveniences for Masonic work. It is one of the prominent organizations in that place, and of which the membership are justly proud.

Bourbon Lodge No. 227, F. & A. M., was organized under a dispensation January 9, 1866. John W. 1-lagan, who had been master of Goshen lodge and had then recently located in Bourbon in the boot and shoe trade, was the moving spirit in the organization, and was selected to be the first master. Others who assisted were Rev. George H. Thayer, Lucius Caul, Milton M. Galentine, A. C. Matchett, Daniel McDonald and N. E. Manville. At the May meeting of the grand lodge in 1866 a charter was granted and the lodge given the number 227, the number of a lodge whose charter had been surrendered. Since then the grand lodge has ceased to assign the vacant numbers to new lodges. If this rule had been observed when the charter was granted its number would have been about 375. Mr. Hagan, the master during the first year under charter, failed in business, and removed from the town, leaving the lodge without a master . The members, however, went to work with a will, and the lodge moved along satisfactorily.

In the earlier years of the organization of this lodge several fine entertainments were given. On one occasion, the Rev. A. Merine, then of War- saw, delivered an address which was spoken of in the highest terms of praise. On another occasion Rev. Wm. Lusk, of Plymouth, performed the oratorical part of the program. A glee club furnished the music and the Bourbon band the instrumental music. Two banquets were spread at the American House, then kept by M, C. Henshaw, and one in the Masonic hall. These enjoyable occasions are recollected by all who participated in them with a great deal of pleasure.

Several years ago the Masonic hall was destroyed by fire, in which the lodge lost most of its furniture and fixtures, which cast a gloom over the members, and for a few years the lodge did but little work. New life and new blood has been infused into the lodge, and during the past few years it has regained its former vigor, and the rapid increase in membership has placed it as one among the most substantial lodges in this section of the state.

Henry H. Culver Lodge No.617) F. & A. M.-A dispensation for the information of this lodge was issued by the grand master November 10, 1897, in the name of Culver lodge. It worked under that name until the meeting of the grand lodge May 24, 1898, when a charter was granted and the name changed to Henry H. Cluver lodge, and as such it was given number 617. The first officers named in the dispensation and also in the charter

were as follows: Samuel C. Loring, master; John F. Behmer, senior warden, and Foster Groves, Junior warden. The lodge was instituted under charter, by Daniel McDonald, past grand master, June 8, 1898. The name was given to the lodge in honor of Henry H. Culver, the founder of Culver Military Academy, on the northeast shore of the lake, and for whom the town of Culver had been named, and for the further reason he was a member of the Masonic fraternity. Since its organization the following have served as worshipful masters: Samuel C. Loring, under dispensation, 1897; under charter, 1898 and 1899; Monroe C. McCormick, 1900; Al N. Bogardus, 1901-1904; Foster Groves, 1902; O. A. Rhea, 1903; George W. Voreis, 1905, 1906, 1907. The lodge has a total membership of fifty, and is in every way in a prosperous condition.

Independent Order of Odd Fellows. There is quite a similarity in the work and teachings of this order to that of the Masonic organization. It differs mainly in the ceremonial ritual, the qualification of candidates for membership, and the manner of dispensing its charities. Each member disabled by sickness or bodily injury receives a stipulated amount per week, and in case of death a specific amount is appropriated for funeral expenses. Thomas Wildy, whose mortal remains lie buried in the city of Baltimore, was the founder of the order in America, about 1817. Within the past half century it has grown quite rapidly, its regulation for the admission of candidates being more liberal than that of some other orders. In Indiana it has about 700 subordinate lodges, and a membership in the state of over 50,000. Its motto is F. L. & T., signifying friendship, love and truth, and its badge is three links, linked together, and worn on the breast or on the left lapel of the coat or vest.

Americus Lodge No. 91 was the first Odd Fellows lodge organized in Plymouth, and also the first lodge of any kind in the county. It was instituted March 4, 1851. The petitioners were Wesley Gregg, W. G. Pomeroy, Gilson S. Cleaveland, William C. Edwards, Grove O. Pomeroy and Joshua W. Bennett. These were all prominent men in their day. They are now all dead. As the lodge worked along, discordant elements crept in and on July 22, 1855, the charter was surrendered and it ceased to exist. In the meantime a Masonic lodge having been organized, naturally enough it absorbed much of the material that would otherwise have gone to the Odd Fellows lodge. The lodge was again resuscitated July 14, 1859, but the trouble that had formerly existed soon showed itself again, and after continuing three years with indifferent success the charter was again surrendered July 18, 1862. After remaining dormant six years, on April 16, 1868, the charter was again restored. In the meantime those that had caused the disturbance had either died or removed, and peace and harmony has since prevailed within the walls of the lodge room, and the lodge has continued uninterruptedly to the present time.

A branch of the order is represented in what is called an "Encampment." It is composed of fifth degree members, and occupies the same position toward the Odd Fellows that the Knights Templar does to the Masonic lodges. Plymouth Encampment No. 113 was organized under charter May 24, 1872. Robert McCance, John C. Kuhn, John A. Palmer, Simon Becker, Sigmund Meyer, Henry Speyer, A. L. Reeves, and others,

eighteen in all, were the charter members. The encampment prospered and continued for several years, when for various reasons the interest flagged and the charter was surrendered. Attached to the Order of Odd Fellows is a woman's department called "The Daughters of Rebecca." This degree was originated by the Ron. Schuyler Colfax many years ago, and has become quite popular among the wives, mothers, sisters and daughters of Odd Fellows, and the Odd Fellows themselves, who alone are entitled to receive it. Plymouth has a branch of this order, also Bourbon and Argos, all of which are in a healthy condition.

Bourbon Lodge No. 203, Order OF Odd Fellows, was organized December 13, 1858, with six charter members as follows: R. S. Gordon, D. O. Beeman, B. G. Cosgrove, W. M. Cosgrove, R. Richard and J. R. Dodge. All these are long since dead. The organization, being the only secret benevolent order in that place for several years, was prosperous from the beginning, among the best citizens of the town uniting with it. No discordant elements crept into it, and so friendship, love and truth have prevailed to the present time. In 1867 the lodge purchased a building for its use, for which \$882 was paid. In 1877 ground was purchased for an Odd Fellows cemetery at a cost of over \$1,000. The lodge has, during its existence, had a number of festivals and social entertainments, and the large amount paid for benevolent purposes shows that it has accomplished great good within the circle of its work.

Bremen Lodge No.427, Odd Fellows, was organized November 20, 1873, with the following charter members: A. C. Holtzendorff, Andrew Berger, John Bauer, Gotlieb Rosenbaum and Jacob Walter .This organization continued its existence until about 1888, when it surrendered its charter and has not since reorganized.

Argos Lodge No. 263, I. O. O. F. The dispensation to organize this lodge was issued August 2, 1866, and on the twenty-first of November 1866, a charter was granted to the following members: Hugh Bowman, Henry Krause, Gideon Wolf, James M. Wickizer, Thompson Cannon, W. H. Tuttle and Finley Stevens. This lodge has pursued the even tenor of its way for forty odd years, and during that time has contributed aid to many in need of assistance, and in the sphere of its work has been a controlling influence for good.

Maxinkuckee Lodge No. 373, I. O. O. F., was organized at the village of Maxinkuckee, on the east of Maxinkuckee lake, in the '70s, and has kept up its organization with regularity ever since. Mr. Eli Parker, the principal business man in the village for many years, was one of the petitioners and charter members, and it was mainly through his influence during his life that the lodge grew and prospered to the present time. The lodge owned the building adjoining Mr. Parker's business building where the meetings were held for several years, when it caught fire and was destroyed. It then was moved across the street, where rooms for the meetings were procured, and later the lodge erected a hall and furnished it with all the necessary paraphernalia necessary to do the work, and for comfort and convenience, in which their meetings are now held.

Ilion Lodge No.715, I. O.O. F., was instituted at Tippecanoe June 15, 1895, by Henry G. Thayer, of Plymouth, district deputy, assisted by brethren from the surrounding lodges. After the lodge was instituted

the following officers were elected and installed: Noble grand, M. A. Dilley; vice grand, Joseph H. Taylor; recording secretary, John Weber ; financial secretary, George W. Taylor; treasurer, W. H. Taylor. In the evening twenty members were initiated into the order, Rochester lodge doing the work.

Foster Rebecca Lodge No.546 I. O. O. F. Ilion, was instituted July 12, 1897, by E. J. Pascal, of Bourbon. The following officers were elected : Noble grand, Delilah Taylor; vice grand, Catharine Taylor; secretary, M. A. Dilley; treasurer, Amanda Taylor.

Knights of Pythias.

Lucullus Lodge No. 233, Knights of Pythias, was organized at Bourbon, December 18, 1889, with the first officers and charter members as follows: Past chancellor, W. J. VanVactor ; chancellor commander, J. W. Eidson; vice chancellor, J. H. Matchett; prelate, W m. H. Biggs ; master of exchequer, George D. Ettinger ; master of finance, Edward Brillhart ; keeper of records and seal, H. D. Thayer; master at arms, A. G. Fouts ; inner guard, J. F. Martin; outer guard, H. T. Steinbach. Other charter members: S. E. O'Brien, L. A. Minard, J. E. Erwin, B. S. Hamler, Wm. Bristol, H. F. Bowman, F. E. Bristol, J. W. Foster, Grant Beltz, M. W. Zerkle, C. W. Shakes, O. M. Unger, twenty-two in all.

The officers for 1907 are as follows: R. E. Cox, chancellor commander; Norman McKinzie, vice commander; C. E. Rivers, master of works; Wm. Biggs, master at arms; W. D. Parks, prelate; E. C. Shaffer, keeper of records and seal; S. C. Ferguson, master of finance; Wm. Bristol, master of exchequer; T. C. Dilley, inner guard; Bert Ames, outer guard.

The total membership at the close of 1907 is eighty-seven. The lodge does not own a hall, but has interest in some valuable real estate and a balance of nearly \$700 belonging to the lodge. The lodge is especially proud of its membership, being from among Bourbon's best citizens. The death rate is very low, only three deaths having occurred in eighteen years.

Hyperion Lodge No. 117, Knights of Pythias, was organized in Ply- mouth May 13, 1884, by Grand Chancellor E. G. Herr, of Goshen, assisted by Knights from Warsaw, Columbia City, Fort Wayne, La Porte and Michigan City, the total number of visiting knights present being about one hundred. In the afternoon the visiting knights, together with the new brethren of Plymouth, gave a parade headed by the Warsaw band, with the Plymouth band at the head of the new lodge. The work of initiation commenced at half past five, and was kept up continuously the greater part of the night, with the exception of an interval of one hour, which was devoted to the refreshment of the inner man, speeches, songs, etc. The lodge started out with twenty-nine charter members, all being first class, energetic young men. After the work of instituting the lodge was finished, the following, being the first officers of the lodge, were installed by the grand chancellor: Past chancellor, Ira D. Buck; chancellor commander, Will A. Bray; vice-chancellor, O. S. Covert; prelate, Jas. Vangilder ; keeper of records and seal, David McDuffie; master of finance, Calvin P. Klinger ; master of exchequer, Burt J. Gilmore; master at arms Fred H. Kuhn. Inside guard, Samuel Rosenfeld ; outer guard, Ed H. Soice. Since its organization nearly a quarter of a century ago the lodge has prospered in

membership and financially. During this time it has built and paid for an elegant hall of its own in the main part of town.

Marmont Lodge No, 231,, Knights of Pythias. This lodge was organized November 29, 1889, with twenty-two charter members. The first officers were as follows: O. A. Rea, chancellor commander; F. L. Carl, vice-chancellor; Ed Morris, prelate; W. H. Porter, master of exchequer ; M. F. Masher, master of finance; J. H. Koontz, keeper of records and seal; G. A. Williams, master at arms; A. J. Kimball, inner guard; William Swigart, outer guard; trustees, L. C. Dillon, H. M. Speyer and D. G. Walter. The lodge has a present membership of fifty-eight.

The lodge some years ago erected a two-story brick and stone building in the center of the town for its own use, the lower story being used for commercial purposes. The money was raised by a stock company composed of members of the lodge, the lodge itself subscribing for a large share of the stock.

Improved Order of Red Men.

This organization gained a foothold in Indiana about the time of the breaking out of the war of the Rebellion. The ceremonial ritual of the order is founded on the old Indian customs of adoption and aims to bring the novitiate from a supposed low and degraded state to an improved and perfect condition of manhood. Its system of fees, dues and benefits is similar to the Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias, etc. It has a system of dates peculiar to itself. The months beginning with January are called Cold, Snow, Worm, Plant, Flower, Hot, Buck, Sturgeon, Corn, Traveling, Beaver and Hunting moons. A day is called a Sun; a year a Great Sun; a night a Sleep. Money is called Wampum, and is divided into fathoms, feet and inches. The officers are designated sachem, senior and junior sagamore; chief of records, keeper of wampum, prophet and sanaps.

The first tribe organized in the county was Pottawattomie Tribe No. 16, at Bourbon, May 22, 1870, with twenty charter members, by P. S. Hoffman, of Richmond. It has continued to the present time, and has a membership of about fifty.

Shawnee Tribe No. 19 was shortly after organized at Argos, but was afterward removed to Walnut, where it flourished for a time, but finally ceased to exist.

Aubbeenaubbee Tribe, under dispensation, was organized at Plymouth October 30, 1871. Daniel McDonald, who was great sachem of the state at that time, in his report to the great council in 1872 made the following mention of its condition:

"The gentlemen who procured the names of the petitioners for this tribe selected for the most part members of the Order of Odd Fellows and Masons who were actively engaged as officers of those bodies. Before the tribe was organized the prime mover in getting it up left for the west and has not since returned. The tribe lingered along for some time, but, notwithstanding the efforts put forth by myself and a few others, it finally ceased to work at all and in the early part of January I arrested its charter, and took possession of its books and papers, which I have placed in the hands of the great chief of records subject to the order of the great council."

There is a ladies' degree belonging to the Red Men called the Pocahontas degree. Bourbon has the distinction of having organized the first Pocahontas council in Indiana, No.1. There are now in this state about 150 councils, and a total membership of over 10,000.

Massasoit Tribe No.206, Improved Order of Red Men, was instituted at Tippecanoe, May 27, 1895, with the following officers for the first term : Sachem, L. D. Eley; senior sagamore, J. H. Patch; junior sagamore, C. A. Smith; prophet, Charles M. Walker ; chief of records, C. E. Shoemaker; keeper of wampum, Benjamin Harmon.

Allatah Council No. 75, Degree of Pocahontas, was instituted in Tippecanoe, January 25, 1896, with the following chiefs: Pocahontas, Mrs. C. E. Shoemaker; weona, Mrs. J. H. Patch; prophetess, Mrs. L. D Eley; powhatan, Mrs. C. E. Shoemaker; keeper of records, Miss Grace Eley; keeper of wampum, Mrs. C. M. Walker .

#### The Sons of Malta.

This was the name of a secret order organized in Plymouth in the summer of 1858. The mission of the order was to "sell" all who applied for membership, and in doing so those who had previously been initiated into this ancient and honorable order invariably had a good time at the expense of the candidate. The order sprang up suddenly prior to 1860, and spread like wild fire until there was not a city or town of any considerable size in the United States where there was not a lodge, or at least a number of members to be found. It was simply a burlesque on the initiatory ceremonies of the secret societies then in existence, particularly the Masons and Odd Fellows, and the candidate was initiated into the several degrees in the most solemn manner possible, and invariably before the ceremonies were concluded he was most egregiously "sold." It was full of fun from beginning to end, and that was all there was of it. Plymouth had a large and prosperous lodge of near one hundred members, in fact about all the prominent men in town at that time were "sold." It was made a part of the duty of every candidate after he was initiated, whenever he found a friend desirous of becoming a member, to "take him in," and as a matter of course the membership increased very rapidly. Plymouth lodge was organized by John W. Dawson, editor of the Fort Wayne Times, and for many years territorial governor of Utah, and about twenty other "sons" of Fort Wayne who came along to see the fun, and George Moon, of Warsaw, as grand chancellor. Col. O. H. P. Bailey, Alf Morrison, and Seth Edwards, of Plymouth, were the charter members, having previously taken the degrees at Fort Wayne. The party came with fife and drums and Maltese banners flying, and a more dignified and solemn looking set of men it would be hard to find. They preserved their dignity exceedingly well under the circumstances, and left the impression on the people who thronged the streets as they marched from the railroad station to the lodge room ( in the second story of the building on the east side of Michigan street, on the corner across the street opposite the then Edwards House) that they belonged to one of the most ancient and honorable orders the world had ever seen! The charter members had been busy several days getting the lodge room prepared for the reception of candidates, and when the grand conclave arrived everything was in readiness, even to "the wet

sponge" and "the grand tank!" Twelve candidates were "taken in" that evening, and the visiting brethren, being "of sound mind and in good condition" made a night of it and had more fun than they knew what to do with.

A year or so after Plymouth lodge was organized, Frank Leslie's New York Illustrated Weekly published the ritual in full, illustrating the scenes through which the candidate seeking to penetrate the arcana of mysteries, or "powers of numbers," had to pass, giving all the signs, grips and passwords and everything else connected with its secret workings. This was the death knell of the order, and the members of Plymouth lodge decided to surrender the "charter," and close up the affairs of the lodge. There was in the treasury about \$150, and it was decided to invest it in provisions and other useful articles and distribute them to the needy of the town. The money was so invested and the membership was ordered by the lodge to appear at midnight on a certain evening named, and go in solemn procession to the houses of the different families where provisions, etc., were to be left. The matter was kept a profound secret from all in town except the members. At midnight the members quietly assembled at the lodge room and clothed themselves in the regulation uniform black cambric gowns, with a cap of the same material that covered the face, holes being cut for the mouth and eyes. The officers wore shields and helmets of extensive dimensions and elaborate workmanship, with swords and bucklers and other claptrap to give them a military appearance. The procession was led by Dr. T. A. Lemon (long since deceased), mounted on a white steed. He wore a long, flowing white beard and wig of long white hair, and carried a huge torch. Then followed the martial music-fifes and drums. Then came the members in single file, to the number of about fifty, each carrying some of the articles to be distributed. No member was allowed to open his mouth and not a word was spoken, except by the commander, who gave directions as to the movement of the procession. The time of night, the dress, and the "awful mystery" surrounding the procession gave it a solemnity never to be forgotten by those who witnessed it. The procession had not gone far until the whole town was aroused, and such an exciting time was never seen in Plymouth before or since. The goods were all finally distributed and about three o'clock in the morning "The Ancient and Honorable Order of the Sons of Malta " in Plymouth was disbanded, and the members, after securing such pieces of furniture and fixtures as they could lay their hands on to be kept as relics, in solemn reverence bowed their heads and "departed."