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RULES & ORDERS

TO BE OBSERVED BY THE

MARCHIONESS WELLESLEY

FEMALE

FONTINE SOCIETY.

RIA

Acadamh Ríoga na hÉireann
Royal Irish Academy



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(NEAR QUEEN-STREET.)

1838.

Bridget Keegan,
Alicia Thynne,
Dennis Morrisson,
George Lumley,

MISTRESS.
} STEWARDS.
SECRETARY.

INTRODUCTION.

The true design of this society, setting forth to each and every particular member, the rules which were made and agreed upon by all and the major part of the sisterhood, and after made a law by the council, whose judgment, by virtue of a voluntary oath and power reserved in them, is to decide all disputes and controversies which may at any time arise in said sisterhood, by their not knowing the rules whereby each subscriber belonging to this sisterhood, may behave herself to each other in sisterly love, and lay aside all needless disputes, envy, hatred, malice and evil speaking, for as we have the name of charitable subscribers, so let us put on the bowels of compassion one to another, and live in unity, peace, and concord, and we shall have wherewithal, to maintain the fund without grudging it, and to pay all our dues in proper time according to our rules and orders, and live up to the same, we need not have one angry word among us, and then we may with one heart glorify God, and return him thanks that he has and will give us grace so assemble in such a charitable design, which we pray God may continue for ages to come, which is the prayers of the well-wishers of this charitable sisterhood, and affectionate sisters.

RULES, &c.

That the true intent of this Society is to promote harmony, love, and industry, and support each other in sickness and distress, and that we may be able at all times to relieve each other in death and sickness, we have entered into those rules agreeable to the Sisterhood of said Society.

1.—That this Society shall meet at the House of EDWARD BYRNE, No. 6, Capel-Street, on every Tuesday evening, from the 29th of September till the 25th March, from 7 o'Clock till 9 o'Clock; and from the 25th March till the 29th September, from 8 o'Clock till 10, for the purpose only of transacting the business of the Society, until there shall be sufficient cause for removing the Society elsewhere; the Landlady to be a member, and to take care to furnish every necessary such as pens, ink, and paper, time-piece, fire and chamber conveniently, under the penalty of 6d. for each article neglected.

2.—That any sister inclined to enter this Society, shall be proposed by a sister one week before she can be admitted, and that the mistress shall cause the lady proposed to leave the room until the ladies present are satisfied whether she is a fit member of society or not, and if admitted, to pay 5s., entrance, and 6d. for a Rule book, and in two months after her first payment, to be entitled to all benefit arising from this society, provided she is clear on the books; and that each sister shall bring her husband to the table in one week after her entrance (or not to be admitted,) and each sister to give in her number and place of abode, or be fined 2s., and any sister coming intoxicated to the table, to be fined 6d, and if she use any improper language to be fined 1s. and ordered out of the room, and on refusing to leave the room, to be fined 3s. and turned out of the room; and any person going intoxicated to a sister or brother's funeral, to be fined 2s. 6d. and be out of benefit until paid. And if the mistress do not see these rules enforced, she shall be fined for such neglect 1s.

3.—That in future no dockets will be taken in Society as payment, or as security for payment on any account; and that no money shall be lent to any person out of the

send, any mistress so doing shall be fined 10s. and be liable to be excluded, and forfeit all money she may have paid into this society.

4.—That no person whatsoever can or shall be admitted into this society, but a person of good and fair character, not belonging to or discarded from any other society, for any fraud or misdemeanour committed thereon; and no watchman, constable, or labourer's wife to be admitted into this society on any account. That any person admitted contrary to the intent and meaning of the foregoing rules, upon proof thereof, shall be excluded from this society, and her voucher also, if it can be proved she had knowledge thereof.

5.—That the secretary shall read the fifth rule to each candidate previous to the entering of a sister, and also put the following questions, viz.—Are you married? Do yourself or your husband exceed forty years of age? What trade? Have you or your husband any complaint or disorder so as to be likely to become a burthen to this society? Are you in any other society? And any person who shall give indirect or evasive answers to any of the above questions, she, (if admitted) shall, on discovery, be excluded, and forfeit what she had paid into this society.

6.—That each sister's weekly payment be 1s.—10d. stock and 2d. spent. Any sister six nights in arrears, paying same, shall receive one ticket.

7.—That any sister in town who shall be four nights in arrear, shall be fined 3d., for five nights 6d., for six nights 1s., and on the seventh excluded, and forfeit what money she may have paid into this society; and any member in the country or confinement for debt, shall be allowed three months to pay her arrears, in default thereof to be dealt with as above, and any member that does not pay off all arrears the Tuesday night before the drawing of the money, shall forfeit all money she has paid into said society. That any absent sister shall be exempt from serving in office, provided she sends a written notice to the landlord of such absence, and she shall on sending sufficient proof, be entitled to every benefit arising from this society.

8.—That the officers of this society shall consist of a mistress, one man-steward, that he is to be the husband of a sister, one woman-steward, and a Secretary, the old stewards to reckon the mourning and society property carefully, and deliver the same to the new stewards, or be fined 1s. That any of the officers coming intoxicated to the table, shall be fined 2s. 6d.

9.—That the man-steward do serve in his office for the space of three months, the mistress and woman-steward to serve for four weeks, the mistress to be chosen from the alphabetical book, that the mistress, man or woman-steward who shall be elected, and shall refuse to serve or fill their offices, shall be fined 2s. each, and any sister that shall be appointed and shall refuse to stand their office, as stewardess, shall be fined 1s. and be out of benefit till the same be paid.

10.—That in case any sister or sister's husband should die suddenly or by sickness, the surviving sister or husband or next to kin to the deceased, shall be paid by the mistress out of the fund, the sum of four pounds, to be laid out on the decent interment of the deceased, and on the next sitting night there shall be paid 1s. from each member, or drawn from stock by the mistress, and delivered as above, provided that the deceased person's death was not occasioned by unlawful practices, that is to say by drunkenness quarrelling, the venereal distemper, or in any manner wantonly bringing on their own death. And with respect to persons dying without kindred, &c. that the mistress and stewards shall see same decently interred; but if any person shewing proper cause to receive the mortality money to the society, shall receive same.

11.—That any sister whom it may please the Almighty God to visit with sickness, disorder, or accident, the venereal excepted, that prevents her following her usual employment, provided she is not the cause thereof, shall receive 6s. per week, for seven weeks, if her sickness continues so long, and if her sickness should continue, she is to receive 3s. per week, for six weeks, and no longer: and, any sister sending in her claim, shall send in the Doctor's report or receive no benefit.

Inns

ROLL,

RS,

12.—That in future any sum exceeding four pounds that is to lie in the chest to guard against death, shall be lodged in the Savings Bank by the mistress, stewards, and landlady, on every Wednesday after the sitting night: that the cards shall be kept as follows, that is, one by the mistress, one by the steward and one by the landlady: and for security, the mistress and steward's cards to remain in the chest, but to take care to produce them and the bank book, every Tuesday night, under the fine of 1s., and the landlady to leave her card on the table every Tuesday night under the penalty of 1s.: that the mistress, stewards, secretary, and landlady, shall draw the money from the bank one week before the dividend.

13.—That any sister after receiving her four pounds, and her mortality money for the death of her husband, if she puts herself out of benefit, or leaves said sisterhood, without sufficient cause, that then the society considers it a fraud on society, and any sister so offending, when proved and her accounts examined from her entrance into said society the money she paid into said society and what she received for the death of said husband, the overplus to be recoverable according to law, to said sisterhood.

14.—In case of funerals, that the mistress, together with each member of this society shall attend the funeral of a sister or sister's husband as far as the Circular road, and that the secretary calls the roll there and any sister not answering her name, shall be fined 1s. and the secretary for not calling to be fined 1s. Any sister creating a quarrel at a funeral shall be fined 1s. The mourning and funeral necessities to be for the use of a sister or sister's husband, Uncle or Aunt, nephew or niece, or first cousin. The mistress and woman-steward, shall see 3s. 6d. stopped out of the mortality money, that is, 2s. to the secretary, and 1s. 6d. for putting up the mourning.

15.—That any sister or sisters in this society shall not have any benefit for miscarriage, but if said sister

or sisters should continue for the space of nine calendar months in the society from the date of her entrance to the time of her delivery, said sister shall receive on report of her delivery, 10s. 6d. Any sister whom it may please God to visit with sickness, shall send her claim in writing the third day of her illness, and no sooner, specifying what kind of sickness she is afflicted with, and with her name and the date of the month, and her place of abode, said claim to be directed to the mistress of this society, who shall visit said sister as soon as possible. The mistress shall cause a visiting roll to be sent to the six next sisters to the sick person, specifying the place of abode, and they are to visit the sick sister, and any woman neglecting to visit as ordered, shall pay as a fine 1s., and for not bringing a report to the table, 1s. fine, except said sister is in a fever or other malignant disorder in which case no sister, shall be obliged to visit the sick. The mistress is to pay said sick money in five days after the report, before two o'Clock. or be fined 2s. 6d. If said sister be in arrears, there is 6d. per week out of the same, and 1s. weekly payment.

16.—That if any sister or sister's husband of said society shall happen to strike any of the sisters during the time of meeting, upon just complaint made thereof to the mistress or stewards for the time being, each member so offending shall be expelled the said society, without receiving any benefit of the box.

17.—That any sister of this society who does not leave the visiting roll with the next visitor, the same day that she visits shall be fined 1s.

18.—That any sister who falls sick and owes five nights, shall not receive any benefit from this society.

19.—That any sister of this society who claims benefit for any slight ailment, or any complaint that does not hinder her of doing her business, shall receive no benefit from this society, and be liable to be excluded, and forfeit what money she paid in.

20.—That if any sister of this society should bring herself to any sickness, disorder or accident, by her own abuses. or any other unlawful action, whereby she was the promoter or instigator thereof, and if the same be proved before the mistress or stewards, she shall not receive any benefit from this society.

21.—That any sister of this society, receiving benefit makes use of spirituous liquors, which is improper for her disorder, and persists in it after being cautioned against it by the mistress or stewards, she shall not receive any benefit from this society.

22.—That any sister of this society who knows of any imposition practiced on this society, and conceals the same, she shall on proof thereof be excluded forfeiting what money she paid in.

23.—That no person whatever, can or shall be received but a woman of good character, not belonging to, or discarded from any other society, for any fraud or misdemeanour committed thereon, nor no person can be received into this society who is not proposed by a member, one week before she is admitted.

24.—That if at any time the mistress or stewards suspect any sister receiving benefit from this society, is imposing on it, it shall be in the power, by and with the consent of the body at large, to employ a physician to give his opinion.

25.—That these rules shall be in full force, virtue, and power without change or alteration; and in order that no sister of this society, shall have it in her power to plead ignorance of these rules, it is ordered and agreed, that each sister shall pay 6d. for a printed book of these rules.

26.—That the secretary shall summon any sister in arrear, who owes five nights, and for every such neglect shall be fined 1s.

27.—That the secretary be chosen by a majority of the body and to be the husband of a sister, his duty shall be to keep the books and accounts of the society under the directions of the mistress

and stewards. he shall summon the members when regularly required, and perform every other part of his duty as hereafter mentioned. with zeal and activity, he shall remain in office during his good conduct, and shall when called upon give a just account within the space of fourteen days, under the penalty of 10s. 6d. to this society. He shall receive as recompense, 1s. 6d. from each member at the division of the fund. and be exempt from paying drink money throughout the year. And if any sister or sister's husband should be so minded as to call a council, in such cases, said sister to pay the secretary for his trouble of writing and serving summonses, 2s. 6d. and if the mistress should call a council, the body to pay on the next meeting night out of the stock, 2s. 6d.

28.—That each member neglecting to pay quarterly dues, the 25th of March, 24th of June, 29th of September, shall be fined for every such neglect, 2s. 6d. for each and the every night.

30.—That any sister conveying any information of any business transacted in the society, on any night's meeting out of the society room, shall be fined 5s. on it being fairly proved.

The foregoing Rules were agreed to by the majority of the sisters.