

yet I make mention of it because I deem it a most important addition to our Order. It has up to the present time paid in benefits to the relatives of deceased brothers about seven hundred thousand dollars.

One reason, if not the only one, that it has not grown more strongly here is on account of having to organize sections, which not only adds expense to it, but are also entirely useless. Every member should be able to enjoy the privileges of the rank, but under the present system those belonging to country lodges where no section could be supported, have either to go to the trouble and expense of travelling to where a section is located, simply to take an obligation, or do without the benefit of the rank. This is not only unfair, but also unjust, and is one of the principal reasons why our Order is not in a better condition to-day. P. G. C. King and myself have both written the Supreme Chancellor on the subject, urging him to have a conference with the Endowment Committee and the executive officers of the Supreme Lodge, and to see if they could not modify the law in our case; but he said he could do nothing until the next S. L. session. All that is necessary is that a member should pass a strict medical examination to be enabled to obtain an endowment.

#### THE LONDON DISASTER.

It is not necessary, I know, to remind you of this great disaster, whereby over two hundred of our fellow-beings were hurried into eternity, for no one is likely to forget, for many years to come, the Queen's Birthday of 1881; but considering it in the light of a national calamity, I deem it my duty to bring it before you, in order that an expression of feeling and sympathy may be given by this Grand Lodge on behalf of the Order at large. Under any circumstances, I consider it a just and proper subject to be officially laid before you; but in this instance it is one that possesses peculiar interest to us, and more especially to those who were at our last Grand Lodge session, held in the City of London. At that session our London brethren tendered us an excursion on the same boat which has just been lost, and I doubt if it ever carried a more jovial or happier party. We little thought at the time that before our next session we would be called upon to chronicle the loss of that vessel, with so many valuable lives on board, or that one of our own members, who was then with us, would be so soon carried off. It is my painful duty to record the loss, through this accident, of Bro. John Wall and his wife. He was a member of Mystic Lodge No. 1; and although he was not a member of Grand Lodge, yet I can from personal knowledge say that the Order has lost one of its most active and zealous members. He was, I understand, buried by our London brothers.