

HOME CIRCLE LEADER

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A periodical devoted to the interests of the Order of Canadian Home Circles.

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TORONTO, APRIL, 1890.

EDITORIAL.

MEDICAL ATTENDANCE

In guarding the Order from abuses and unnecessary risks something should certainly be done in the line of medical attendance. We hear sometimes of persons presenting claims upon the Sick Benefit Fund who have refused to obtain proper medical treatment. Who, is qualified to determine whether the sickness constitutes a proper claim or not? The Relief Committee and the physician required to certify will doubtless satisfy themselves thoroughly before signing the application for the weekly claim. At the same time one can tell whether the sick member has not been ill a much longer time than he should have been because of his not having proper and timely medical treatment. Then, in the case of those whose only claim is upon the Beneficiary Fund, they should understand that by such refusal they expose themselves to dangers which are likely to do an injustice to the whole Order by leading to a claim unnecessarily. Only the other day we heard of a death that occurred where the member refused medical treatment and followed the directions of some advocates of a so-called "Christian science" cure. The officers of the Order would, we believe, be perfectly justifiable in contesting such a claim, and in prosecuting the ignorant impostor, who in the sacred names of Christianity and Science, claimed to perform some sort of miraculous cure, and thus duped the poor ignorant man who trusted him. All this kind of thing must be stopped short. If the members when sick refuse to have proper medical treatment they are, by so doing, imposing upon the Order and indulging in a system of dishonesty which must be stopped at once or there is no telling how many thousands of dollars may be misplaced by such persons. Every dollar paid in consequence of sickness or death that might have been avoided is equivalent to a fraud and should be so considered. We do not presume to say what kind of views our members shall hold on religion and politics, or on business and a thousand other things, but we must interfere to prevent or punish any line of procedure likely to endanger the life or health of each other. It is by no means fair when we start out to furnish a Death or Sick Benefit at cost that we should tolerate anything likely to make these unnecessarily heavy.

The drinker and intemperate generally will be complained of, how much more those who outrage and slander both religion and science by yielding their health and life to the quacks and humbugs who are every where imposing upon the ignorant and unwary.

This is strong language, but none too strong to characterize what amounts to a calamity to some family and a fraud upon the Beneficiary Order.

We do not assume that the physician can and will cure every case, but that is no reason why all proper efforts in this line should be discarded and some form of unjustifiable quackery should be indulged to the danger of both health and life. Something must certainly be done to prevent a recurrence of such cases.

So soon as it is discovered that the death returns contain the statement that no physician has been employed we are sure that here is a case of poverty or one of fraud and while the former seldom prevails the latter may.

An honest and fair consideration for the whole membership should lead any sick member to apply at once for some form of proper medical treatment. It is no answer to this to say that all diseases are in the mind and have no real existence in the body but by sympathy.

Any person of ordinary intelligence and education knows that the volitional power of the mind is a tremendous force and may do much to help or hinder the cure of disease, but the best and most skilful physicians and philosophers agree that it is little less than a slander upon our common humanity and may involve a fraud of immense proportions to substitute the quack nostrums of the day, or the pretentious incantations of modern faith cure, Christian science and similar witcheries to effect the removal of inflammatory and febrile conditions from the human body. We do not wish in any of these cases to charge an intentional fraud, but there may be such a thing as an unintentional injustice which, if persisted in, becomes the greatest of all impositions and, as in some cases we could name, involve an expenditure to an Insurance Company or a Beneficiary Society of thousands of dollars and all the sad consequences of death in the home and community. Every member of the Order should look into this question and note the importance of guarding every point that is likely to involve an imposition upon the body or an injustice upon any member thereof.

OUR SUCCESS

Since referring to the most satisfactory success of the Canadian Order of Home Circles in the March number of the LEADER, attention has been called to one of the Beneficiary Orders that at the time of our organization had 150 councils in operation.

The February number of the official organ of that body has reached us and the list of councils published therein for Ontario 131, New Brunswick 3, Quebec 8, British Columbia 4, Manitoba 4, Assiniboia 2, making a total of 152. Our organization took place October 3, 1884, six years next October, during which time we have secured more than 5,000 members, giving about \$7,000 at one assessment. The Society referred to has gained in the whole Dominion, by its own showing, only two councils. That Order is said to be in a healthy condition. They have \$20,000 Beneficiary surplus on hand, and assess every month whether required or not to meet death claims. If therefore theirs is sound and satisfactory how much more so should such an organization as ours be; their growth, in five years, scarcely any, ours, 5,000 members.

The rapidity and healthiness of our progress should be highly satisfactory to any reasonable person. The spontaneous and unreasonable growth of a boom is not what we want. We want and are realizing steady growth which is going to give us satisfaction all the way through.

Compared with societies that make a death claim assessment and provides for no reserve we have become, with one exception—that of the A.O.U.W.—the strongest in Canada. In making this statement it should be remembered that we confine as yet our operations to Ontario. We have the other provinces of the Dominion to work up after a while. Entrance upon that work will occupy our attention almost immediately.

The Supreme Organizer will visit the eastern, northern and western parts of the province at an early date and appoint such helpers as he can secure for this work. He is very particular as to the kind of men he puts into the field, and when the right man is obtained he tries to make it worth that man's while to give attention and time to the work.