



GRAND LODGE MEETING.

Twentieth Annual Session of the
S. O. E. in Woodstock.

20,000 ENGLISHMEN REPRESENTED FROM ALL
PARTS OF THE DOMINION.

The Society's Growth and its National Importance in Canada
and other Colonies.

Woodstock, Ont., March 12.—The twentieth annual meeting of the Supreme Grand Lodge of the Sons of England Benevolent Society convened in the Town hall at two o'clock. Supreme Grand President William Hancock (Hamilton) presiding. The other Grand officers present were: Supreme Grand Vice-President, George Clatworthy, Toronto; Supreme Past Grand President Thomas Elliott, Brantford; Supreme Grand Secretary John W. Carter, Toronto; and Supreme Grand Treasurer Ben. Hinchcliffe, Toronto.

Bro. Ald. Wm. Hancock, S. G. President, opened the Grand Lodge and at once appointed a credential committee as follows: Bros. T. E. Perry, Montreal; F. Ferguson, Toronto, and John Jackson, Hamilton. The Grand Lodge adjourned for one hour to give the above committee an opportunity to prepare a report upon the credentials.

THE CIVIL WELCOME.

During the adjournment Mr. R. W. Knight, reeve, was introduced by Bro. Thos. Elliott, P.S.G.P. Mr. Knight made a very interesting address in the absence of the Mayor, who was indisposed. In welcoming the Sons of England to Woodstock, he assured the delegates that the citizens appreciated the visit of such an honorable and loyal body to the town, a town, in his opinion, second to none in the Dominion, and he hoped in that of the delegates to the convention, which, by the applause given, was heartily concurred in. He expressed the hope that the brethren to the convention would so enjoy themselves that the time would not be far distant when they would return their visit to Woodstock. As an Englishman he could endorse the objects for which they were gathered to legislate and he hoped that the national aim of the Order would reach throughout the Dominion and the other distant possessions of the English.

Supreme Grand President Hancock replied, and said he felt safe in saying that the citizens of Woodstock would have nothing to regret from the delegates who were here from all parts of the Dominion, and that they would carry away with them fond recollections and kind regards of the citizens of Woodstock. As Mr. Knight retired the delegates rose and sang God Save the Queen.

The Grand Lodge then resumed business, appointing the following as Press Committee of the Grand Lodge; J. W. London, Belleville *Intelligencer*; E. J. Reynolds, *Anglo-Saxon*; and R. Patching, *Globe*, Toronto.

BUSINESS.

The Credential Committee presented their report, showing that 149 delegates had presented credentials, representing 110 lodges. A large additional contingent, however, arrived on the evening trains.

Fraternal greetings were ordered to be sent to the Orange Grand Lodge of British North America, in session at St. Catharines, and to the Sons of Scotland.

The General Purpose Committee reported to the Supreme Grand Lodge the officers' reports, which were adopted after considerable discussion and several amendments.

The Grand Lodge adjourned at 6 p.m. The evening session, which commenced at 8 p.m., was fully occupied by the Supreme Secretary's report until 10.20, when an adjournment was made.

In our next and coming issues we will quote from the officers' reports.

The Secretary's report showed that the membership of the Order was 12,546, exclusive of South Africa, which has five lodges and some 700 members.

The financial standing of the lodge is considered very satisfactory. Cash received by subordinate Lodge Secretaries, \$78,907.26; amount paid for sick benefits, \$21,983.38; for surgeon's fees, \$14,036.48; amount invested in Government and other securities, \$44,508.48; cash in treasurer's hands, \$8,434. Total cash to the credit of the Subordinate Lodges, after meeting all liabilities, is \$50,042.90, an increase over last year of \$8,354.04.

THE ORDER IN AUSTRALIA.

Bro. H. J. Boswell, P.S.G.V.P., who left for that colony in August last, has secured the first application for a charter with a list of 50 members. The name of the lodge is Southern Cross. Bro. Boswell says that inside of one year he will have 20 lodges instituted.

WEDNESDAY.

The Supreme Grand Lodge debated the revision of the new constitution all day. There were many amendments and suggestions made by the delegates, which required explanation from the officers and members of the revision committee. It is generally felt by the members of the Order from the distant parts of the Dominion that the remedial legislation of the Grand Lodge meeting in Woodstock will be of great assistance in spreading the usefulness of the Order to Englishmen throughout the world.

There were some good speeches made, which were worthy of the occasion, and the legislation for which

the brethren were contending would effect directly some 20,000 Englishmen. The whole debate was carried on in an animated and interesting manner. When the Grand Lodge adjourned at 6 p.m. many of the knotty and difficult problems had been straightened out, and the subordinate lodge constitution, as recommended by the revision committee, almost fully adopted.

THURSDAY.

ELECTION OF GRAND LODGE OFFICERS.

The Grand Lodge met in the Town Hall at 9 a.m. After routine work the election of Supreme Grand Lodge officers was proceeded with.

Geo. Clatworthy of Toronto, the present Vice President of the Order, was elected Supreme Grand President by acclamation.

Bro. Thos. Elliott, P.S.G.P., of Brantford, was nominated but declined to stand for election.

For Supreme Grand vice-president, J. W. London of Belleville and Jos. Hook of London were put in nomination.

Bro. W. London was the choice of the convention with a majority of 19.

J. W. Carter, Toronto, was elected by acclamation as Supreme Grand Sec., this being Bro. Carter's fourteenth term as Grand Secretary.

B. Hinchcliffe, Toronto, Supreme Grand Treasurer, was elected by acclamation.

For Supreme Auditor: Geo. Clay and T. P. Williams were elected, both of Toronto.

For Supreme Trustees—Thos. R. Sippin, Dr. J. S. King, and J. C. Swait, all of Toronto.

The Grand Lodge adjourned at 11.30 to enable the scrutineers to count the ballots for the committee on general purposes.

On resuming business, and immediately after the routine work, the scrutineers of the Grand Lodge announced the result of the ballot on the General Purposes Committee for 1896, as follows:—

Dr. J. S. King, E. T. Perry, Thos. Elliott, R. Patching, J. W. Kempling, S. W. Burns, J. C. Swait, R. Evans, W. T. Hollins, E. Parnell, T. Sargant, J. A. Edwards, J. Aldridge, J. Nettleton, E. J. Reynolds, J. Hook, J. Jackson, Rev. Wm. Craig, C. A. Hodgetts, W. Hearn.

The Beneficiary Committee will be composed of the following gentlemen for the ensuing year:—

Bros. T. Skippin, Walters, Patching, Hancock, Pritchard, Burns, Hodgetts, Swait, Evans, Riddiford, Fisher, Moore, Curton, Selwood, Cannon.

T. N. Dyer was re-elected Deputy-President for South Africa.

Bro. James Lomas, one of the founders of the Order, was by vote created a Past Supreme Grand President.

There was quite a rivalry shown in selecting the next place of meeting for the Grand Lodge. Some six places were put in nomination. After the ballots had been taken the choice was for Peterboro. Ottawa, Lindsay and St. Catharines came next, with Winnipeg, Man., a good fourth place.

It was unanimously resolved that the Order of S. O. E., should affiliate with the Canadian Fraternal Association, and that J. W. Carter, S.G.S., Toronto, and Thos. Elliott, P.S.G.P., of Brantford, be the delegates from the Grand Lodge.

The Grand Lodge then resumed business, discussing the new constitution in committee, with Bro. Thos. Elliott in the chair, and continued until the adjournment.

THE BANQUET.

The banquet held in the Hown Hall was a grand success. The large T shaped table was surrounded by about 300 people and covered with choice delicacies from Mr. Pett's establishment. An onslaught was made on the good things about 8.30 and it was about an hour after this that E. Blundell, who presided as the head of the local lodge, rapped his gavel on the table for order.

The toast to "The Queen" was drunk with the usual musical honors. "The Grand Lodge" brought S. G. P. Hancock to his feet. After a few preliminary remarks he said he believed he was at the head of the best order in either Canada or the U. S. The first society he ever joined was one composed of Englishmen, the St. George's society. He had joined the S.O.E. in its infancy, and he hoped he would die a member. He had travelled between six and seven thousand miles this summer and he

excellent opportunities of seeing the extent to which the Order had spread. He visited in all 130 lodges and from all he saw of the members, there was not a man in the Order to be ashamed of. He was indeed surprised at the growth of the Order. Twenty years ago the 12th of December last six Englishmen met in Toronto and organized the society; now there were 217 lodges and over 15,000 members, and it was still spreading. It has gone across the water to south Africa and also to Australia, where he hoped by this time a lodge had been formed.

S.G.V.P. Clatworthy also spoke to the toast. He was sure the delegates had had a very pleasant time in Woodstock. He thanked the home lodge for its hospitality and the whole convention for paying him the honor of electing him to such a high position. It was the first time on record that the supreme officer had been elected without opposition. He would not outline his work for the year. He would only assure his hearers that he would do everything to the best of his ability. His ruling principle through life was "Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might." The S. O. E. was the first society he ever joined and as it had ever been his first love it would continue so.

After Mr. Harris had sung "The Death of Nelson," for which he received an encore, S. G. S., Carter spoke to the toast. After thanking his hearers for their kind reception, he referred to the banquet as a very important occasion. The S. O. E. was a secret society but it had no secrets it wished to keep from the world. Their principles were wrapped up in "Love the brotherhood, fear God and honor the Queen." Their love to the brotherhood was demonstrated this year by the \$72,000 which they distributed to sick members. They took no second place in loyalty to Queen Victoria. The Society differed from some socialistic orders inasmuch as their aim was to build up and not pull down. Their training had a beneficial effect on the members both in and out of the lodge-room. It was a grand order, with a grand object, and achieved grand results. They advocated equal rights in everything. Every man should enjoy his own religion. This country was destined to be one of the brightest jewels in the British

Continued on page eight.

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