

It is well known that the contributions received last year for the three charities reached the very noble sum of £21,000; but as Bro. Watson truly says, "we have so far only reached probably the 'minimum' of relief, not the 'maximum.'"

When we remember that the annual grants from Lodge of Benevolence amount to not less than £2,800 annually, and the very large sum which is voted from our provincial and private lodges, we see what a constant claim there is on our Masonic Charity, and we may feel proud of that good old English Craft of ours, which so unostentatiously exemplifies what ever has been, and we trust ever will remain, the distinguishing characteristic of a true Freemason's heart—Charity.

We feel persuaded that 1874 will witness a notable proof, once again, of the never-changing sympathies and undiminished benevolence of our great and prosperous Order.

IN the foregoing article we have called attention to our great Masonic Charities generally, and we have now great pleasure in reporting to our readers the result of the first Anniversary meeting this year, namely of the Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution, on Wednesday, the 28th ultimo.

The gathering, which seems to have been most numerous and enthusiastic, and brilliant in the extreme—from the large attendance of our fair sisters, ever foremost in all works of benevolence and usefulness—was presided over by Lord Wavency, P.G. M. for Suffolk, and who made a thoroughly efficient Chairman. We refer our readers to the detailed report of the proceedings and speeches on the occasion.

We beg to congratulate the Order generally on the remarkable result of this most interesting anniversary of so valued and important an institution.

Bro. Terry announced—and his few simple words suggest countless, topics of thought and satisfaction—that the lists then handed in amounted to £5,063 11s., with thirteen lists yet to come in.

We shall not be far wrong probably in assuming, then, that the whole amount will eventually be nearer £6,000 than £5,000.

And even, if the amount announced is not very largely increased by the subsequent lists, it is, it appears, the largest sum yet subscribed at any anniversary of the institution, except the one presided over by our illustrious and R.W.P.G.M., H.R.H. the Prince of Wales.

This, then, is a good beginning, and reflects the highest credit on the liberal efforts and actual benevolence of our Brethren, and we trust, that at the Boys' School Anniversary, to be holden March 11th, and at the Girls' School Anniversary, to be celebrated May 13th, we may have happily to chronicle the same continued interest and the same unflagging energy, as have characterized this very successful gathering of the Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution.—*The Freemason.*

A HISTORIC BIBLE—In St John's Lodge No. 1, A. F. and A. M., of Newark, N. J., there is an old black letter Bible, printed in 1549. This Bible is of Thomas Matthew's translation, a folio in the Gothic letter, and was printed by "Ihon Day and Williams Seres." The title page to the Bible is gone, but the title-page to the New Testament is there, and perfect with the date 1549, and it is otherwise in good condition, having the last leaf with the colophon and printers' names. It was presented to the Lodge in the last century, by an emigrant from the mother country, the emigrant having previously affiliated with the Lodge. In the year 1825 it was stolen from the Lodge, and remained away for twenty-five years, and in 1850 was traced to Philadelphia, and finally recovered and returned to the Lodge in 1857. During the wanderings of these thirty-two years it lost its first title-page, but also gained something, in having pasted on the inside of the cover a rare engraved portrait of Washington, one which the writer, although having seen many collections of Washington portraits, never remembered seeing before. At the time Washington had his head-quarters in Morristown, N. J., a part of the jewels and furniture of St. John's Lodge was loaned to the "Travelling Lodge," formed in the part of the Colonial army then wintering at Morristown. Among the things so loaned was this Bible, and during the winter, General the Marquis of Lafayette, then with the army, was entered, passed, and raised to the sublime degree of a Master Mason. This Bible was used in ceremonies, and Lafayette took his obligations upon it. It is known that Washington officiated as "Master" on these occasions. The associations connected with this Bible make it an interesting object to all Masons, while its age and antiquity give it value to the book lover and antiquarian. Lowndes gives its first title thus :

THE BYBLE

Nowe lately with greate industry and Diligence
recognized

(by Edm. Becke).

Lond. by Ihon Daye and William Seres.

17 Aug. 1549.