

energy, heartiness, and life. Indeed, it is very wonderful to realize the calm, steady progress and manifestation of English Freemasonry year by year, as it pursues the even tenor of its way without ostentation and parade, least of all with 'sounding brass or tinkling cymbal.' Never at any time were its great Institutions better supported, or that golden word 'charity' more truly understood. Let us hope that any tendency to make Freemasonry partake of a 'benefit order' may be carefully avoided, and zealously eschewed. It will be noted that the grants of the Lodge of Benevolence have been very great, too great in our opinion, inasmuch as during the twelve months they have reached the large sum of £9637, £1937 in excess of income. Much has been said recently in respect of too large grants, and we feel sure that a safe and sensible reduction can be made in this respect, bringing about a needful equilibrium without having any recourse to increased capitation payments. The contributions thus far announced to the Charities amount to £37,282 17s. 7d., but by the close of the year they will probably show a still higher figure. In Scotland and Ireland, Freemasonry has progressed and increased, though the latter country especially lies under difficulties, from which we are as yet happily free. Let us all hope that 1883 may witness the revival of order, law, peace and confidence for that beautiful but ill fated land. In France, Freemasonry is in a very critical position, owing to the unfortunate 'proclivities' of the ruling faction. 'Facilis decensus Averni' is, we know, though 'old as the hills,' still true, and hence a common expression; having once departed from the landmarks of Cosmopolitan Masonry, the French body has gone from bad to worse. There seems nothing left of old French Masonry but a sort of simulated resemblance, and it would appear as if it must ere long forfeit every right to be considered a living

Masonic jurisdiction. It is losing members and prestige rapidly, and though at present the outlook is dim and dark enough, we still cling to the hope, that the Grand Orient may emerge from its 'Sommeil,' and its deliberate repudiation of the ancient and fundamental principles of true Masonry everywhere. The Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite in France seems still by a manly struggle to adhere to order and prescription, and to seek to uphold the unchanging tenets of vital Freemasonry. In Germany, under the wise and friendly patronage of the great family of Hohenzollern, as with us under the House of Brunswick, Freemasonry seems to hold its own, and to evidence that it has attraction for zealous supporters and cultivated minds. In Denmark and Sweden Freemasonry is in active life and good repute, and we trust that the Dutch Freemasons will not desert their old colors, while we wish we could speak more decisively of Belgian Freemasonry. In Roumania and Hungary Freemasonry appears to be moving on; and in Italy there are some signs of life, but not to our mind as satisfactory as such might be. In Spain, the 'cosas de Espana' are still the 'cosas de Espana,' and it is almost impossible for us outsiders fully to realize the state of things Masonically in that remarkable land. In Portugal Freemasonry seems progressing now in a right direction. Freemasonry is also active in the Mediterranean, in Egypt, in India, in Bengal, and China, and all our Colonies and Dependencies, and especially active just now at the Antipodes. Peru seems to be organizing, and there are even hopes of Mexico. Perhaps the most wonderful sight, as regards Freemasonry, is that presented by the prevalence of our Order in the United States and the Canadas. Certainly not less than 700,000 Masons are there, exhibiting a very remarkable evidence of the real value of true Masonic principles, and as Freema-