

MASONIC CHARITIES IN ENGLAND.

A VERY interesting *resumé* of the past efforts and present position of our Masonic Charities has recently been published by Bro. Henry Watson, S. W. 1386, Lincoln, which deserves to be read and thought over by the Craft.

According to Bro. Watson's calculations, the funded property of the Girls' School is as follows: Invested in Three Per Cent. Consols, £28,000; invested in Three Per Cent. Consols, as a Sustainment Fund and Improvement Account, £1,950; cost of freehold land and buildings (all which are paid for) £30,662—or in all, £60,612.

It would appear that the fixed income of the Institution is £840 per annum, and that the annual expenditure may be estimated at about £5,300 annually, leaving yearly a considerable sum to be raised from the benevolence of the Craft, which has always cheerfully and liberally supported this admirable Institution, of which, as Freemasons, we may be justly proud.

Probably before very long the increasing demands of our Order will require enlarged accommodation at the School, and we feel certain that when the time comes, the House Committee will be warmly supported by all the members of our Order.

Some alterations have recently been made to increase the accommodation, but we cannot shut our eyes to the fact, that, with our rapidly augmenting numbers, we shall eventually have more claimants on our fraternal sympathy; and if that be the case, unless, ere long, the accommodation at the Girls' School be increased, very many poor applicants must be "left out in the cold."

The Boys' School, which Bro. Watson next notices, will, in April next, accommodate 170 boys; but even this number cannot fail to be augmented before long by the constantly increasing demands for admission.

The Boys' School has been enlarged, as many of our readers will know, at a considerable cost, viz: £47,116 6s. 4d., the whole of which sum has been defrayed from the original funded property of the School, and from the liberal support of our brethren.

All honour to them!

But in consequence of this large outlay, the Boys' School has now no funded property at all—no certain income—and depends entirely on the voluntary efforts and liberal support of the brethren annually.

The freehold property may be estimated as representing, we think, about £50,000 in value.

The ordinary expenses of the institution may be estimated at £5,400, in round numbers annually, but there are as a general rule, extraordinary expenses, which may be estimated at £750 more, making in all £6,100.

There can be no doubt, however, that these expenses must somewhat increase, as the numbers of the School increase, and our own belief long has been, that, the School, if its present healthy and improving "status" continue, will before many years have passed away, owing to the wants of our numerous fraternity, have to provide for not less than 300 boys; indeed there is no reason why the School should not eventually take a very high position as an educational Institution in the country.

Recently a new Master has been elected, and we all, as Freemasons, earnestly hope that the School, under his "regime," will go on and prosper.

There can be no doubt, we are glad to think, that our ever-ready and large-hearted brethren will continue, as heretofore, liberally to support this very useful and needful Institution.

The two Benevolent Funds are lastly adverted to by Bro. Watson. The Male Fund has £23,700 invested in Government stocks. The expenses and annuities amount, in round numbers to £3,500, and as, therefore, its fixed income is in round numbers £700 a year, nearly £2,800 are required annually to keep this excellent Institution in working order.

In all probability, before very long, the number of annuitants will have to be increased, and the amount of annuities to meet the increased rise in prices of all kinds, and we have not the slightest fear, but that such increased expenditure will be at once provided for by the members of our kindly brotherhood.

The Female Fund it seems has £14,200 invested, which gives it a fixed income of a little over £300 a year. Its expenses amount to £2,786 15s. 5d. annually, so that £2,500 have annually to be raised from the lodges and brethren.

The asylum at Croydon represents about £5,000 in value.

Bro. Watson shews very conclusively, we think, that our Charitable Institutions are very economically conducted, and bear a favorable comparison with like associations.

He points out, that the whole freehold and funded property of the Order in these four charities, may be estimated at £149,912, which sum has been raised from the munificence of our brethren, in excess of the amount required for their annual maintenance.