

Report of the Supreme Chief Ranger.

CHAMBERS OF THE SUPREME COURT,

TEMPLE BUILDING, TORONTO, 25th August, 1898.

To the Officers and Members of the Supreme Court:

BRETHREN:—1. Once again in the dispensation of a kind Providence it is my privilege to open the Session of the Supreme Court and to renew the fraternal ties which bind together the veterans in the Order, and to extend the right hand of fellowship to the recruits who for the first time will take upon themselves the duties and responsibilities of Legislators for a great international Order like the Independent Order of Foresters.

Before entering upon the work of the session let us one and all unite in returning our most hearty and devout thanks to an All-Merciful Father for sparing so many of us once more to take part in the deliberations of our Supreme Court, for the many mercies vouchsafed to us as individuals, and for the great prosperity which has attended the work of our beloved Order. Let us all pray that we may be endowed with wisdom from on high so that the acts and the legislation of this Supreme Court may redound to the benefit of humanity and to the glory of our Heavenly Father.

THREE YEARS' WORK.

2. On the 1st July, 1895, we had a membership of 80,765, and our accumulated funds or "surplus" amounted to \$1,346,426.58, showing that we had \$16.67 for each member of the Order in good standing.

On the 1st July, 1898, we had 135,962 members, and our surplus stood at \$2,856,613.68, giving us a little over \$21 for each member of the Order in good standing. We have, therefore, gained in membership over all losses by deaths and lapses, during the last three years, no less than 55,197, or a net gain of 68 per cent. While this is in a measure satisfactory, our financial gains have been even greater, viz.: \$1,510,187.10, or a net gain of 112 per cent., the rate of increase of the surplus being almost double the rate of increase in the membership.

We have instituted, since our last session, or rather during the three years ending 30th June last, no less than 1,203 Subordinate Courts and 7 High Courts. During the same period we received 99,037 applications for membership, and for increased insurance benefits, of which 88,491 were accepted and 10,546 were declined by the Medical Board. We also enrolled 15,568 new members in the Sick and Funeral Benefit Department.

During the same period we paid in benefits as follows:

Mortuary Benefits.....	\$2,241,657 29
Total and Permanent Disability Benefits	115,843 00
Old Age Benefits	9,948.30
Sick Benefits.....	332,464 61
Funeral Benefits.....	22,631 71

Total Benefits paid during the 3 years ending 30th June, '98. \$2,722,544 91

In Europe, as in America, we are advancing apace. Through the indefatigable efforts of our European Manager, Bro. James Marshall, we have crossed the German Ocean and planted the Order on the Continent of Europe, by the organization of a sufficient number of Subordinate Courts to justify the institution of the first Continental High Court, which notable event took place at Christiania, Norway, on the 7th July last.