



A Monthly Journal devoted to the interests of the Anglo-Saxon race in Canada.

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PROSPERITY OF THE ORDER.—A REVIEW.

We experience sincere gratification in reviewing the history of the Sons of England Benevolent Society for the past year—as contained in the reports presented at the Grand Lodge meeting in Toronto in February last—and we are sure that it must be a source of pleasure to every individual member to note the rapid growth of the order, both numerically and financially, and also in the regard of those occupying the loftiest positions within the power of the government and the people to confer. It is now not merely a mutual benefit association of those seeking to insure themselves and their families against want by sickness or death, but partakes largely of a national and religious character, enrolling among its members only those possessing that sterling quality of love for home and its associations; men, in fact, who are the more loyal to Canada in being true to Great Britain and the Protestant faith. Although many of them are in no wise in need of pecuniary assistance at any time from their respective lodges, they do not for a moment lose sight of its fundamental principles, but their exertions are the most strenuous to extend its usefulness in a benevolent capacity, and their efforts are everywhere crowned with success.

As a clue to the secret of the vast strides made by this society, we here quote a sentence from the address of the Most Worthy President of the Grand Lodge, T. R. Skippon, of Toronto, delivered to that body while in session: "May our heavenly Father so guard, guide and govern your words and actions that they may redound to the honour and advantage of our beloved society." With such maxims for its guidance, what may not be expected of it in the future? Is it not well that by our Constitution all infidels and athe-

ists are refused admission into our ranks, for who can think that those who are false to their God to the extent of repudiating every proof of His existence will ever be true to themselves and their brethren, or regard their pledges when it is politic to ignore them? Therefore we admit no one into our lodges who does not believe in an almighty and beneficent Father of the universe; who does not recognize the command of our Saviour, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye also unto them."

Is an inquiry made as to what are the aims and objects of this association? We answer, the furnishing of bread to the hungry and the cup of cold water to the thirsty, watching by the sick bed, comforting the afflicted, cherishing the stranger, succouring the enfeebled; how sadly are those duties neglected by a large portion of the human race. Englishmen need a closer bond of friendship with their fellow-countrymen all the world over, and it was to attain this object that the order was first founded, and its course has been cheered by smiles of gratitude from those who have been benefited, the consciousness of duty performed, and the blessing of God.

We do not claim this to be a charitable institution; we only attempt to do our duty to one another, in the performance of which, however, no one in need of our assistance appeals in vain. A brother of our order can never become a pauper; he will never suffer honest poverty without alleviation; his wife and children are not obliged to ask charity when he is sick; in old age he is never forced to seek an asylum in an alms house, and he is never left to die alone. Brothers stand beside his bed in the final hour, and the pang of separation is mitigated by the thought that brothers will follow him to the grave; that his widow will be cared for and his orphans protected. He is a man to the last. This is not limited to the poor man, for who among us has so much wealth that he may not lack bread in the future; who of us has so many friends that he may not be deserted; while his children are sure at some time to be orphans. It is no mean praise of our organization to say that it multiplies a man's friends, and in such a world as this who ever had too many?

The growth of the Sons of England has been unprecedented during the past year, eighteen lodges having been instituted during 1887, as against four in 1886; while already this year ten flourishing lodges have been organized with bright prospects for many more—without the aid of any salaried agents or canvassers. By the Grand Lodge reports we see that 1,368 new members were initiated during the past year, being nearly one-third of the whole number, while the net gains of the society amounted to \$10,000 for the same period.

What a just cause for pride have that little band of true hearted Englishmen who, on the 12th day of December, 1874, met in a cottage on the banks of the Don, Toronto, and instituted Albion Lodge, No. 1, when they review the grand record of the past, or meet with their brothers in the elegant rooms of Shaftesbury Hall, Toronto, one of the finest buildings in that city of magnificent structures, and now purchased as a Sons of England Hall by the enthusiastic members of that body. It will be a lasting monument to the memory of those earnest pioneers of friendship and fidelity when they have been laid to rest by the kindly hands they have so often grasped in life, and which they first caused to be employed in the brotherly labour of the fraternity.

Not in Toronto alone is the work progressing, however—although at present it can boast of eighteen lodges in fine working order—nor in the Province of Ontario, where our record is too well known to need much comment, but in our sister province, Quebec, the society now has a steady and healthy growth and is proving itself to be able to counteract the adverse surroundings, and can be relied upon to still further increase in strength and usefulness.

In British Columbia, to which our attention has been