

to the Craft in other branches of Freemasonry.

It will also assist to draw closer together those who are desirous of confining their pursuit of Masonic knowledge to pure Ancient Craft Masonry, of which the Royal Arch Degree forms the most essential part, and which "is more august, sublime, and important than any which precede it, and is, in fact, the summit and perfection of Ancient Masonry."

The large number of intelligent men, from every rank of life, who have during the present week withdrawn, for a period, from their several busy vocations, for the purpose of taking counsel together, in the interest of the fraternity, exemplifies in the strongest possible manner the powerful influence which Freemasonry has over its votaries. It points out to those who are skeptical regarding its usefulness, that unless the institution was founded on the purest principles of piety and virtue, and its members had an unswerving faith in the approval of the *Great I Am*, our labors would be in vain.

Inviting your earnest consideration to the business which may be brought before you, I shall proceed to report my official acts during the past year.

NEW CHAPTERS.

Applications were received, and Dispensations have been issued, for two new Chapters, viz: "Macpherson," Meaford, County of Grey, 31st December, 1879; "Wentworth," Dundas, County of Wentworth, March 6th, 1880. In each case the application was recommended by the Grand Superintendent of the District within whose jurisdiction the Chapter would be situated, and the Dispensations were not issued until the most careful enquiry had been made, as to the ability of the Companions who were to occupy the principal positions, and the prospect of suitable material being had to sustain the Chapters.

I have taken this precaution, as it is not in the true interest of Capital Masonry to permit new Chapters to be

opened where there is the slightest danger of injuring those already in existence.

SURRENDERING A WARRANT.

Keystone Chapter, No. 72, St. Thomas, made application for permission to surrender its Warrant, as the members desired to unite with De Warrenne Chapter, No. 54. After having obtained a petition, signed by the members, and being fully satisfied that all private rights had been protected, I accepted of the surrender, and the Warrant is now in the custody of the Grand Scribe E., awaiting your decision as to its further disposal. I would suggest that it be cancelled, as it is quite evident that one Chapter is sufficient, at present, for the requirements of the town of St. Thomas.

SPECIAL DISPENSATIONS.

As usual, numerous applications have been received for dispensations to permit companions to be installed as Principals without having previously served in the other offices required by the Constitution. As I understood the opinion of Grand Chapter to be unfavorable to the extensive use of this prerogative by the Grand Z., I have, in deference to such opinion, declined to grant several of these applications. The following, however, were issued:—

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I have insisted upon such applications being forwarded to me through the Grand Superintendents of the Districts, with their opinions thereon, as they are the proper parties to give advice as to the necessity which may exist for complying with the request of the applicants. In one case, I regret to say, an effort was made to induce me to alter my decision by re-electing a Companion to an office after I had declined to grant a dispensation to permit of his installation.

UNIFORMITY OF WORK.

Great differences exist in the ren-