

THE FAIR REBEKAHS.**Officers of the Provincial Convention
DEGREE OF REBEKAH.**

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**THE REBEKAH "OPEN-DOOR"
LAW.**

Notwithstanding the bold and determined opposition to some of the provisions in the Rebekah Code adopted by the Sovereign Grand Lodge in 1894, the net increase in this branch of the Order in the past year has been a surprise to many, and satisfactory to all. It was predicted that many lodges and members would be lost to the Order by the enforcement of the provision for the admission of eligible ladies who were in no way connected with the brothers of subordinate lodges by blood relationship; also of that which abolished the payment of stipulated weekly sick benefits by Rebekah lodges.

These two features of the code were the most objectionable, and their repeal at the session of 1895 was demanded by several jurisdictions. After a year's trial, the result shows a net gain in lodges, 335; in membership (brothers 8,385, sisters 14,362), 22,747. The decrease occurred in Georgia, Kentucky, Lower Provinces, Nebraska, Utah, and Washington, opposing jurisdictions.

December 31st, 1894, the Rebekah branch reported 3,627 lodges, 225,189 members (brothers 102,215, sisters 122,974); \$337,600.40 receipts, \$45,313.94 relief. While the Rebekah lodges increased 335, and gained 22,747 members, the Encampments added 53 subordinates, and decreased 1,772 in membership.

That the code was defective and not properly digested with the existing laws, was apparent to every one who attempted to divine its true intent and meaning. As to how much of the previous legislation had been repealed, and what provisions of law had been retained, were matters of uncertainty, and led to numerous questions and a variety of opinions. As the code was in force from the date of its adoption, lodges were in doubt as to whether they should revise their by-laws in accordance therewith, or continue to work under the constitution provided for their government by their respective Grand Lodges, until the latter amended their Rebekah constitution to conform to

the code. Hence there was no uniformity nor consistency in the placing of the legislation of 1894 in the Rebekah lodges, and the object of reform measures was defeated in many instances, to the detriment of the best interests of this branch, in the past year.

At the session of 1895 many changes and amendments were submitted; notably from Colorado, Kentucky, New York, Pennsylvania, Washington, Wyoming, Nebraska, Rhode Island, Minnesota, Utah, Wisconsin, and Massachusetts. Nearly the whole line of propositions were either indefinitely postponed or rejected on a direct vote, by a large majority. The Sovereign Grand Lodge, apparently, was in no mood to retrograde in its action of 1894. Where the code had been fairly tested, in the true spirit of progress, it was found to supply that which the previous system lacked—a new field for recruiting the lodges. Where it was condemned without trial it resulted, of course, in a failure. Had the Rebekah lodges in the large cities of each jurisdiction employed the same means of ascertaining the practical advantages of the new code that those in the out-lying towns and small villages did, the opposition in a measure would have subsided, and fewer complaints, in the line of amendments, would have been submitted to the grand body.

In districts where Rebekah lodges are dependent upon one or two subordinate lodges for their supply of members, their resources are too limited to maintain a successful Rebekah lodge. The open field will add interest in the lodge, make the Order and its principles better known outside, and increase the membership in the subordinate lodge. Heretofore the Rebekah lodges have depended upon the male members for introducing their qualified female relatives. Under the new law the subordinate lodge will undoubtedly gain membership through the influence the Rebekahs will bring to bear upon their male relatives and friends who have kept aloof from the Order—good men who cannot be reached through other solicitations. It was a capital stroke of good policy on the part of P. G. Sire Nicholson, in submitting, as he did, the "open-door" proposition to the committee last year; and every Rebekah lodge in the Order should be thankful to him for the service he has rendered this branch.

Many lady organizations succeed and prosper without dependence upon male societies, and draw their membership exclusively from among their lady friends and neighbors. Why not the Rebekah lodges also? With an intelligent code of laws, and freedom from the dictation and control of boorish male members, the Rebekahs are capable of managing their lodges and transacting the legitimate business for which they were instituted.

When they err in law, the error can generally be traced to the erroneous advice or influence of some over-zealous brother.

With another year's trial, and a generous and hearty yielding to the best tests of the new provisions of the code, it may find favor with the opponents of last year. If it fails to meet the wants of the Order, and proves to be a detriment to progress, harmony and prosperity, the Sovereign Grand Lodge may accept the convincing proof, and repeal or modify the present Rebekah law.—*Medole in The Popular Odd Fellow.*

BELLEVILLE.

At a largely attended meeting of Mizpah Lodge, held last Monday night, the following address and presentation took place prior to the departure of Dr. Walker for California.

To A. D. Walker, Esq., M.D.

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER,—It was with great regret that we were obliged to accept your resignation as Physician of our Lodge, and the more particularly so as the cause was not only so imperative, as to afford us no opportunity of asking you to withhold it, but to necessitate your removal from amongst us—from the loved city of your birth wherein you had established a pleasant home, acquired by your ability a large and lucrative practice and won the esteem of the whole community—to a more genial clime, where, we hope, health and happiness await you and yours. The demands of your profession have left comparatively little opportunity for fraternal meetings with you in Lodge, but we have ever found you loyal to and active in support of the grand principles of our Order. It is, however, of your services to the members of our Lodge, who have found it necessary to seek your aid as their physician, that we desire most strongly to express ourselves—to voice our appreciation of your skillful diagnosis and successful treatment of their cases, your faithful and unceasing attention to their requirements when danger threatened and your unvarying kindness and brotherly feelings. These are matters which none of those who have come under your charge will ever forget, and in token thereof we ask your acceptance of this locket, which we trust you will ever wear as a testimony of the regard of your brethren of Mizpah Lodge. Our best wishes will follow you to your new home, and we trust that we may have the pleasure of again meeting you at an early date fully restored to health and vigor.

Signed on behalf of the Lodge:—Casper Wills, N.G., A. H. Thompson, V.G., J. T. Osborne, R.S., R. S. Bell, P.G., R. H. Ketcheson, P.G.

Belleville, Nov. 25th, 1895.

The Doctor was taken completely by surprise and made a very feeling reply. He said that so long as he lived he would ever remember the members of Mizpah Lodge. Several of the members spoke very feelingly at the departure of Bro. Dr. Walker. Among these were Bros. P. S. Bell, E. J. Mills, G. S. Tickell, S. Burrows, Hugh Walker and others. An invitation was extended to all to adjourn to the banquet hall where oysters and other good things were provided. The company then dispersed at a reasonable hour.

J. T. O.