

WEST VIRGINIA—1897.

The Thirty-Third Annual Communication was held in Charleston, on the 9th November, 1897, M. W. Bro. B. D. Gibson, presiding.

There were eleven Special Communications held during the year for the purpose of laying corner-stones, accepting and taking charge of a Masonic Room for charity and relief in a new hospital at Martinsburg, constituting of Lodges, and for the conferring of the three degrees *at sight* on Professor Abraham C. Kimler, at Shepherstown, President of Shepherd College.

The Grand Master in his address welcoming the members of the Grand Lodge, thus spreads himself:—

We come from the valleys exuberant in their matchless fertility; from the lofty altitudes of mountains teeming with the hidden treasures of Nature's mystic forces of light and heat; from quiet homes in hills and dales; from populous cities busy with the rushing tide of bread-winners and fortune-seekers. All stations in society, all vocations in life-work meeting on the level: the vigor of young manhood strong for action; the maturity of age ready for advise and wisdom in council. Wheresoever we come from; to whatsoever walk in life duty has assigned us, we are proud of our grand little State; we are loyal citizens faithful to her every command.

Other States may boast of imperial wealth and population; of tropical fruits and flowers; of broad rivers and inland seas; of snow-capped peaks and ice-bound shores; but in our Little Mountain State alone do we find in ever-varying panorama the peculiar golden mean of beauty and grandeur of scenery, where the azure skies give their tints to her mountains, and a softer sunshine seems to kiss the lingering shadows o'er the fragrant verdure of her verdant valleys. And amid the rising commercial greatness that is shaping the wonderful development of West Virginia, we are happy in knowing that our Fraternity is contributing its full share of glorious work in spreading the amenities of life and in perfecting that social intercourse, without which, mere financial prosperity is apt to fall dull and flat upon the better feelings of mankind.

He reported the Lodges in a prosperous condition, but regretted that in some instances there was more prosperity than there was harmony, as evidenced by several appeals for Grand Lodge to determine.

Charters were issued to four new Lodges under resolution of Grand Lodge at last session, and three Lodges were working U. D.