

On the occasion of the death of Prince Leopold, I received several letters of sympathy from our Lodges, with the request that the same be forwarded to Her Majesty in the name of the Grand Lodge. I considered it best to lay this request over till the annual meeting for the consideration of this Grand Body.

Several dispensations for second Degree Charters, and dispensations for conferring the Degrees on Members elected to office have been issued under the seal of the Grand Lodge.

I desire now to call your attention to the statistics in Appendix B, which show the progress made during the year. These statistics are compiled with the greatest possible care and accuracy, from the returns sent in by the various Lodges. These give reliable information concerning the financial and numerical standing of each Lodge, though I cannot vouch for their entire correctness, owing to some Lodge Secretaries not fully understanding how to compile them, I refer with satisfaction to the fact that we now number 33 Lodges. Our present membership is 2332, or an increase of 442, over the corresponding month of last year, and an increase of 801 over the corresponding month in 1882, number of members in good standing 1809, an increase of 1107 over the corresponding month in 1882. Number of members owing six months 121, more than six months 83, a decrease of 99, over the corresponding month of last year. Number initiated this year 672 or an increase of 149 over the corresponding month of last, and an increase of 432 over the corresponding month of 1882. Number suspended during the year 204, or an increase of 30 over last year. Amount paid for sick benefits during the year \$2,578.28, an increase of \$275 over last year, and an increase of \$1428, over the corresponding month of 1882. Number of deaths this year 17, the same as last year. Amount paid for Funerals \$946, an increase over last year of \$135. Amount paid for Surgeons' Fees \$2227, or an increase of \$577, over last year. Amount paid for capitation tax \$673.70, an increase of \$142.50 over last year, and \$394.60, over the corresponding month in 1882. Number paying capitation tax this year 1684, an increase of 352 over last year, and an increase of 835 over 1882. Amount of cash invested \$15,004.02, an increase of \$2204.33, over last year, and an increase of \$8,235, over the corresponding month of 1882. Total funds of Lodges \$18,494, an increase of \$4,574.75 over last year, and an increase of \$11,187 over the corresponding month of 1882. It may be said that these comparisons are not fair on account of the increase in the number of new Lodges, but taking into consideration the increase of payments in every department, such as Sick, Funeral and Doctors' Fees, the comparisons are just. The last 10 new Lodges have not materially augmented the Finances of the Order, the total not amounting to \$500, the large and rapid increase of the Financial standing of our Order is due to the older and more settled Lodges. Albion has increased from \$1672 in 1882, to \$2721 in 1884, an increase of \$1049; Middlesex has increased from \$1401 in 1882, to \$3037 in 1884, or an increase of \$2636; Kent has increased from \$770 in 1882, to \$1200 in 1884, or an increase of \$430; Essex has increased nearly \$200; Sussex nearly \$300; York \$300; Brighton nearly \$100; Britannia from \$721 in 1882, to \$1728 in 1884, an increase of \$1000; Old England over \$100; Somerset over \$400; Surrey nearly \$400; Victoria \$100;