

I. O. F.

ANNUAL STATEMENT.

THE GREAT WORK DONE.

1897 A Record Breaker,

To the Executive Council:

BRETHREN,—Twelve months ago we were congratulating each other and the officers and members of the Order upon the phenomenal achievements of the I.O.F. during the year 1896; and it was generally conceded that we had abundant reasons for such congratulations, for the record was in every respect in advance of that of any of the past years, howsoever successful some of these years have been. With so marked a success standing to the credit of the I.O.F. for 1896 the officers and members generally would have been entitled to congratulations had they made the record of 1897 only the equal of 1896. But that would not have been in accord with I.O.F. ideas. The spirit of jubilee abroad in the world in 1897, due to the benign reign of one of the wisest and best sovereigns that ever graced a throne, seems to have been upon every loyal Independent Forester, and right manfully have the rank and file of the Order, together with the officers of every grade and degree, backed up the efforts of the Executive Council to extend the beneficent work of the Independent Order of Foresters, and the result is that if we take a retrospective view of the year just closed we shall find 1897 to have been a veritable jubilee year for the I.O.F., and the work accomplished surpasses the expectations of even the most sanguine, and of which we may all feel justly proud, thus demonstrating anew that "nothing is impossible with the I.O.F."

Beginning first with the membership results, it will be gratifying for you to learn that during the year 1897 no less than 37,457 persons made application to the I.O.F. for membership or for increased benefits, and that these applications involved no less than \$44,906,000 of assurance. In the exercise of that wise discretion, to which the Order is so greatly indebted for its favorable death-rate, the Supreme Physician accepted only 33,528 of the applicants, for \$39,521,500 and rejected 3,929. Of those whose applications were accepted 30,137, representing \$35,224,500 of assurance, were new members. Adding these to the 102,838 on the roll at the beginning of the year, and deducting 632 losses by death and 7,633 by lapses, the membership was increased, on the 31st of Dec., 1897, to 124,685, carrying \$154,510,000 of assurance, being a net gain during 1897 of 21,847 members, and of \$25,819,000 in the amount of assurance carried. The increase in the new membership during 1897 as compared with 1896 was 6,013, or 24.92 per cent.; the increase in the new assurance taken during 1897 was \$6,366,500, or 22.05 per cent. It will therefore be seen that the percentages of gain during the year 1897, in respect of the membership and of the assurances taken, has been of an exceptionally satisfactory character. In this connection it may not be amiss to add the gratifying statement that the average

age of the membership, which stood at 35.49 on the 31st December, 1896, was reduced to 35.40 on the 31st December, 1897, thus proving that the I.O.F. is younger to-day than it was a year ago. The death-rate continues most satisfactory, being for the year only 5.56 per thousand. These figures may be slightly modified by claims from the distant jurisdictions which have not yet had time to reach the Head Office. The following tabulated statement of the membership and assurance will show at a glance the result of our year's work:

TABLE No. 1.

NEW MEMBERS ADMITTED.

LOCATION.	MEMBERS.	ASSURANCE.
Canada	10,107	\$10,965,000
United States	19,180	23,262,000
Great Britain and Ireland ...	850	997,500
Totals	30,137	\$35,224,500
Increase	6,013	6,366,500

THE TOTAL MEMBERSHIP.

LOCATION.	MEMBERS.	ASSURANCE.
Canada	57,680	\$ 68,750,000
United States	63,265	81,130,000
Great Britain and Ireland ..	3,740	4,630,000
Totals	124,685	\$154,510,000
Increase	21,847	25,819,000

The number of new Courts instituted during the year 1897 was 453, or an average of over 38 per month.

The results of the year's operations in the financial department are equally gratifying. On the 31st of December, 1896, the surplus funds of the Order amounted to \$2,015,484.38; on the 31st December, 1897, the figures were \$2,553,332.78; thus the increase for the year was \$537,848.40, being at the rate of 26.95 per cent. The mortuary premiums collected during the year 1897 amounted to nearly a million and a half of dollars, the exact figures being \$1,462,237.71. This was \$251,475.92 more than was received from the same source during 1896. The mortuary benefits paid during 1897 amounted to \$817,647.95; the total and permanent disability benefits to \$43,500, and the old age benefits to \$2,000.00. The aggregate of these payments was \$863,147.95, as against \$712,507.76 paid during 1896; the increase being \$151,640.19. While these figures standing by themselves are exceedingly gratifying, they are rendered even more so when we turn to the account for management expenses of the insurance department of the Order and find that it was only \$171,219.85 for 1897, as compared with \$164,254.36 for 1896, the rate of increase being only 4.24 per cent., while the increase in the benefits paid amounted to 21.28 per cent. The payment of the above-mentioned benefits absorbed 59.02 per cent. of the gross mortuary premium receipts, while \$73,111.89 of the premium receipts (being 5 per cent.) were devoted to the payment of management expenses, the balance of the expenses being derived from general fund revenue and the profits on supplies sold. The amount expended in management expenses, which of course includes the care of the old business, to each new member secured in the mortuary department was only \$5.68, as against \$6.81 in 1896. It will thus be seen that while in several important particulars the ratios of income and new business secured show