

The Boy's School, unlike its sister institutions, i.e., that for the Girls, and the Widows, and Aged, has been able to lay by but little for its own support, its income from that source being not more than £300 per annum, but it is now out of debt, thanks to the munificence of the Brotherhood, so that by the time it, in its turn, celebrates its centenary in 1898, we may hope that it, also, will have its sustentation fund. In the meantime, as heretofore, it must depend for its maintenance on the liberality and voluntary contributions of its friends and patrons.

Recently a new fund has been started to assist those leaving these two "Homes" to make an opening for themselves in their chosen trades or professions. To this new Assistance Fund we wish every success, as, in our opinion, the time of a person's entry into the business of the world is the most critical period in his or her career.

But we must now turn to the Widows, Aged and Distressed Masons. This institution is of more recent origin. In 1842 Grand Lodge voted the sum of £400 a year to the granting of annuities to Aged and Distressed Freemasons, and on the 19th May, 1843, fifteen brethren were elected to receive from £10 to £30 per annum, according to age. In 1849, after considerable discussion, a fund was established for Widows of Freemasons, to which Grand Lodge contributed £100, and Grand Chapter £35 per annum, the said Grand Chapter having previously, in 1847, granted £100 per annum to the Aged Mason's Fund. The M.W.G.M. the Earl of Zetland presided at the first Festival of the institution, which produced the sum of £819 16s. To the united institutions the Grand Lodge now contributes annually, £500 to the Male Fund, and £500 to the Widows' Fund, while Grand Chapter gives £100 to the former and £50 to the latter. Previous to 1860 the Festi-

vals had been triennial, since that period they have been annual. In 1867 the system of annuities according to age was done away with, and now each Brother receives £40, and each Widow £32 per annum. Since the formation of this institution, 487 Brethren and 260 Widows have been elected annuitants. The Male Fund has some £20,000 invested in Government Securities, and the Female Fund some £15,000. The Asylum at Croydon accommodates some 40, the other 250 annuitants residing with their friends. The receipts this year at the three Festivals have been, for the Girls' School, £11,678 8s.; for the Boy's School, £10,584 3s.; and for the Widows and Aged, £13,926 8s. Since the Festivals have been held further contributions have been received, and it is confidently anticipated that at least £40,000 will be raised this year for the maintenance of these valuable and philanthropic institutions.

It will be seen from the above that each one of these institutions was commenced on a small scale, and has been gradually developed to its present state of usefulness. The good that they have done, and the misery they have relieved, cannot be denied. It behoves us, then, to emulate the good deeds of our own neighbour, and seriously to busy ourselves in caring for our own sufferers. Brethren, we entreat you to come forward and do your duty, as Masonry commands you. You cannot say that the Scottish Craft has no orphans, widows, or aged and distressed Brethren, calling to them for aid! You cannot deny that much misery exists in the land! You cannot deny that the "Essence" of Masonry is Charity! Why then do you hang back, and defer till the morrow the work of to-day? Rather be earnest to make up for lost time, that you, too, may feel the delights of a good conscience—"that whatsoever you have done for these little ones you have done it unto God.—*Scottish Freemason.*