

that the approaching meeting in August was causing him great uneasiness of mind, and by postponing the same it might be the means—by removing the anxiety—accelerating his restoration to health. Out of consideration for the eminent services rendered the Royal Craft by our lamented Companion, and of my own high personal esteem for him, I decided to postpone the meeting of the Grand Chapter until the second Wednesday in October, well aware that in so departing from the constitutional period of assembling for so desirable a cause, it would not only meet with the unanimous approval of the Grand Chapter, but also be deemed a well merited tribute of consideration towards the suffering companion, and the distress thereby entailed upon his afflicted family.

Having thus explained the reason for not meeting in August, my first duty will be to read the loss the Royal Craft has sustained by the death of our late Grand Scribe E., R. E. Companion Thomas B. Harris, who died on the 18th day of August last, and was buried with Masonic honors on the 21st of the same month, the Grand Lodge of Canada having been summoned for that special purpose, the M. W. the Grand Master, W. M. Wilson, conducting the ceremonies attendant on the solemn occasion. I availed myself of the mournful privilege of being present in my official capacity, and assisted in paying the last sad tribute of respect to departed merit.

In recounting the valuable services of the deceased R. E. Companion to this Grand Chapter, I feel that no language I can use will adequately convey a just sense of the loss it has sustained by his melancholy decease. Elected to the responsible position of Grand Scribe E. at its formation in 1857, each successive year witnessed a renewal of his term of office, with the warmest cordiality, until death deprived us of the privilege of again tendering him a fresh mark of the confidence felt in his painstaking energy, and unselfish devotion to the interests confided to his trust. Ever prompt and attentive in the discharge of his duties, it was also a distinguished trait of his character to be affable and courteous to all with whom he had business relations; and whether in official or private correspondence with his Companions, his views and opinions always breathed that true spirit of Freemasonry which showed how thoroughly his head and heart were imbued with its exalted teachings. His unassuming disposition, his generosity of nature, his cheerful readiness at all times and frequently under trying circumstances, to perform acts of substantial kindness towards those requiring such offices at his hands, deservedly won for him from the Royal Craft its highest measure of regard; and now that his period of usefulness on earth has terminated, I doubt not that this Grand Chapter will heartily unite with the other Orders of Masonry—in whose service his best days and energies were spent—in erecting an enduring monument to perpetuate his memory to succeeding generations.

The reports of District Superintendents will doubtless supply you with the obituary record of the past year. I cannot, however, pass over without some notice the loss which the Grand Chapter has sustained in the demise of R. E. Comp. J. V. Noel, Past Grand Treasurer and Past Grand Superintendent for Manitoba, and R. E. Companion Thomas Duggan, P. G. H., and P. G. Supt. Hamilton District. Both of these Companions were zealous Masons, and upright and honorable men, and Grand Chapter will willingly extend its tribute of respect to the memory of these Companions who have done so much to advance the interests and promulgate the genuine tenets of R. A. Masonry.

Once more we are permitted to assemble in annual convocation to consult together, and endeavor to promote the best interests of the Royal Craft.

Grand Chapter now meets for the seventeenth time, and I am sure we have good reason to congratulate ourselves on the sure and steady progress of the Order.

It affords me a great deal of pleasure in being able to state that during my term of office no complaint for unmasonic conduct has been laid before me, and I am led to believe that peace and harmony prevail within our borders.

#### DISPENSATIONS.

I have signed Dispensations for the following new Chapters, viz :

"King Hiram," Port Colborne, Ontario; "Pembroke," Pembroke, Ontario; "Sussex," Brockville, Ontario; "Doric," Newmarket, Ontario; "Granite," Perth, Ontario; "York," Eglinton, Ontario; "Havelock," Lucknow, Ontario.

I believe that they have all been properly organized, and as the several petitions came before me duly recommended, I advise their confirmation by warrant. I also received applications for new Chapters at Rondeau and Guelph, Ontario. The one from Rondeau lacking the recommendation of the Grand Superintendent of the District, I declined to grant the Dispensation asked for. In the case of the application for another Chapter at Guelph, it reached me so near the meeting of this Convocation that I deemed it inadvisable to issue my Dispensation. The acting Grand Scribe E. will present this latter petition to Grand Chapter, and if approved, of course a warrant can issue at once. I have granted several Dispensations authorizing the installation