

A hearty vote of thanks was proposed by Bro. Hobson, C.R., to Bro. Gerring for presiding, and to the distinguished guests, Bros. Marshall and Wilkinson, for their presence. He paid a high tribute to Bro. Wilkinson, who had visited Court Ireton frequently since its institution in April 1898, and had always been so ready to give the members of this young Court counsel and advice whenever they had sought it of him. Bro. Astill, F.S., seconded the proposition, which was carried unanimously. A vote of thanks to the artists who had done so much to add to the enjoyment of the evening was cordially passed, and after singing the national anthem a most enjoyable and eventful evening in the annals of Court Ireton was brought to a close.

W. H. PRATT, R.S.

SOUTHERN ENGLAND.

Southampton.

The regular meeting of Court Test, No. 2042, in November, proved the most enthusiastic and successful in its history so far, though "the prophets" say it was nothing to what is to be. In the first place, the Court was occupying for the first time its most comfortable new quarters at Wight's temperance hotel, 25 Above Bar, and the change was highly appreciated by a full Court, only two members being absent. In the second place, there were five new members to be initiated and welcomed. Bro. C. E. Price, H.C.R., presided, and appointed Bro. E. A. Lisle, V.C.R., Bro. A. Curtis, H.S.B., P.C.R., Bro. Evans, S.W., and Bro. Rendall, S.B. The five candidates initiated were Messrs. R. W. Denness, W. J. Feltham, A. J. V. Bagshaw, Geo. Lisle and J. D. Ramsay, who, with the old members, showed keen interest in the items of business which were brought before the Court. The regular night of meeting was fixed for the third Thursday in each month at 8.30 p. m. The reading of official circular No. 8 was received with much satisfaction, and the announcement by the H.C.R. that a fund would at once be opened for subscriptions by members to provide for the payment of the premiums of such members as may be called upon to serve their country in the war in South Africa, and thus give them free insurance, met with unanimous approval. Bro. E. A. Lisle proposed a hearty vote of thanks to the H.C.R. for the manner in which he had presided and conducted the business of the meeting, and welcomed him as a resident in Southampton. The Court had needed some assistance, and now that Bro. Price had come to live among them he was sure Court Test would very soon rank with the strongest Courts in the country. This having been carried, Bro. Price said it was always a pleasure to him to do anything he could to help the Order forward, and he was certain that if the members gave him the same support that they had done since he had been among them, there are plenty of men in Southampton who would be only too glad to avail themselves of the benefits of the I.O.F., and Court Test would rapidly advance. Equal benefits could not be obtained anywhere else, and all he asked of the members was that they should give their friends a chance to share them. Bro. Evans moved that the thanks of the Court be given to Bros. Lisle, Curtis, Hitchcock, F.S., and Durkin, R.S., for their services since the Court was inaugurated, saying that but for them the Court would not have reached its present position. Bros. Wilcox and Randall sup-

ported Bro. Evans, and the motion was carried with applause. The four brethren replied that they were quite ready to do as much again. The Court closed at 10.30, after which much-needed refreshments were passed round, and just before 11 o'clock each member was homeward bound, resolved to be there again in December.

IRELAND.

Annual Social Meeting at Belfast.

The annual social meeting in connection with the Belfast Courts, under the jurisdiction of the High Court of the North of Ireland, was held Dec. 12th, in the Young Men's Christian Association Hall. The entire membership of this branch of the Order numbers about 1,100 in 47 Courts. The local Courts were largely represented at the social gathering last evening. Amongst those present were: Bros. Rev. James Cregan, H.C.R.; John McCaughey, J.P., H.V.C.R.; Rev. T. R. Ballantine, H. Chaplain; Rev. B. Banks, M.A. (Lisburn); R. J. Dawson, William Bell, P.H.C.R.; James Wilson, High Treasurer; Dr. A. A. Ferguson, Dr. R. J. Munn, J. Gregg, V.S.; Dr. W. Gibson, J.P., High Secretary; D. L. Cottrell, D.S.C.R., (official organizer); S. Cuthbert, R. Semple, G.S., I.O.G.T.; S. M. Emerson, A. A. Shaw, W. J. Adje, S. Cunningham, J. S. Broly, J. McComb, S. M'Millan, J. Cooke, A. Barr, R. S. Bailie, R. Crinks, S. R. Howard, J. L. Carruthers, S. Reiney, J. Boyd, J. J. Wilson, H. S. Yuile, Dr. J. Morrison, and Charles Robinson.

After an enjoyable tea, on motion of Bro. Wm. Bell, seconded by Bro. Dr. Gibson, the chair was taken by Bro. John McCaughey, J.P., H.V.C.R.

The Chairman said it was very pleasant to preside over a gathering like that, because he took it that they were all friends of the Order. He saw stated on the programme the information which he had meant to convey to them that evening—the fact that the funds of that society were £761,000, and also an explanation of the aims of the Order. He thought they would see by the figures before them that the Order was in all respects on the progressive. Their membership was rapidly increasing, and they seemed to have a very substantial balance to their credit on their banking account. Therefore, it would seem that notwithstanding all that had been said against them, they were living inside their income. (Applause.) A great deal had been said against them. Some stated that their existence as an Order would only be a question of time, but, in spite of that, they found that the balance to their credit kept growing at a remarkable and comfortable rate. None of the prophesied evils which had been spoken of had come to light during the seven years that he had been connected with the society. Since he had joined he had found that the members were a decent sort of fellows, and the more he had seen of them the more the Order had grown in his estimation. There was one thing which was characteristic of the society, and that was the fact that the claims were always promptly paid. (Applause.) Before he concluded his remarks he wished to speak particularly in regard to a gentleman whom the Order liked to honor; he referred to their High Secretary, Dr. Gibson. (Applause.) His services were indispensable, and he was glad to have that opportunity of paying him that tribute. (Applause.)