

[Oct.,

1881.]

SUPREME COUNCIL.

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To the Supreme Council 33°, Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite for the Dominion of Canada :

The Special Committee to whom was referred so much of the address of the Sov. Grand Commander last year as refers to a sick fund, beg to report :

That during the recess of the Supreme Council they have given the matter much consideration, but are unable to suggest any plan by which effect can be given at the present time to the humane and benevolent ideas of the illustrious head of the Supreme Council.

With our limited membership such a fund must for many years be very small, while the administration of a small general fund over a country so large as ours must involve practical obstacles that would prove almost insuperable.

For the present, therefore, the Committee are of opinion that the matter must remain in abeyance, so far as the Supreme Council itself is concerned.

There is nothing, however, to prevent each Lodge of Perfection in its own locality establishing such a fund, and administering it itself, either according to the rights or the needs of individual members.

As a rule, the Masonic fraternity has not incorporated into its system of relief and assistance any regular plan of sick benefits, which members must draw in case of sickness, whether they need it or not. The theory of our Society is—and its practice is, your Committee believes, largely in accordance with its theory—that its worthy distressed members are entitled to receive at the hands of those who are able to give, all the assistance they may require in time of need, trouble and distress.

The establishment of a permanent sick fund should never be allowed to interfere with the individual brotherly duty of ready and prompt assistance to the fullest and freest extent of the resources at our command.

Many modern Societies have adopted a kind of principle of insurance, by which a member or subscriber on payment of a certain regular amount weekly or monthly, becomes entitled to receive in case of illness a sum previously agreed upon.

Such an idea as this, excellent as it is, is not in accordance with the idea of assistance and relief as taught in Freemasonry. No Masonic sick fund should be founded on that basis alone.

Respectfully submitted,

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