

STATE OF THE ORDER.

3. Considerable difficulty is experienced in obtaining the lodge returns on time for the annual statements, owing to the fact that many of the subordinate lodges hold their quarterly meetings during the last two weeks of the December quarter. Their books and accounts having to be audited, it means a delay of from two to three weeks, sometimes four weeks, before the bulk of the returns are received at the head office, necessitating the leaving out of much statistical information. This difficulty would be entirely removed if the Supreme Lodge held its annual session in April or May. This would then give the Supreme Secretary's office an opportunity to compile the returns based upon the December accounts, and at the same time comply with the conditions of the statutes in making the usual Government returns.

NUMERICAL STANDING.

4. Number of members initiated during the year, 1,703, as follows : Two lodges in Newfoundland 79, seven lodges in Nova Scotia 93, four lodges in New Brunswick 23, eighteen lodges in the Province of Quebec 142, one lodge in Prince Edward Island 8, ten lodges in Manitoba 147, two lodges in Assiniboia 9, two lodges in Alberta 34, seven lodges in British Columbia 79 and 149 lodges in Ontario 1,088.

Number of financial members in good standing on December 31st, 1898, 12,292 or 411 more than the previous year ; honorary members, 264 ; number of members owing more than sixteen weeks dues, 1,100 ; number of members died during the year, 101 ; present membership, after deducting 1,026 suspensions and expulsions and not including South Africa, 13,556, or an increase of 605 over the year 1897. There are 250 members in Newfoundland, 168 in New Brunswick, 393 in Nova Scotia, 89 in Prince Edward Island, 1,187 in Quebec, 600 in Manitoba, 84 in Assiniboia,