

A CHRISTMAS HYMN.

By Alfred Dommett.

It was the calm and silent night!
 Seven hundred years and fifty-three
 Had Rome been growing up to might,
 And now was queen of land and sea.
 No sound was heard of clashing wars—
 Peace brooded o'er the hushed domain;
 Apollo, Pallas, Jove and Mars
 Held undisturbed their ancient reign,
 In the solemn midnight,
 Centuries ago.

'Twas in the calm and silent night!
 The senator of haughty Rome
 Impatient urged his chariot's flight,
 From lordly revel rolling home.
 Triumphal arches, gleaming, swell
 His breast with thoughts of boundless sway:
 What reeked the Roman what befell
 A paltry province far away,
 In the solemn midnight,
 Centuries ago?

Within that province far away
 Went plodding home a weary boor;
 A streak of light before him lay,
 Fallen through a half-shut stable-door
 Across his path. He passed—for nought
 Told him what was going on within;
 How keen the stars, his only thought,—
 The air how calm, and cold, and thin,
 In the solemn midnight,
 Centuries ago.

Oh, strange indifference! low and high
 Drowsed over common joys and cares;
 The earth was still,—but knew not why;
 The world was listening, unawares.
 How calm a moment may precede
 One that shall thrill the world forever!
 To that still moment none would heed
 Man's doom was linked, no more to sever,—
 In the solemn midnight,
 Centuries ago.

In the calm and silent night!
 A thousand bells ring out, and throw
 Their joyous peals abroad, and smite
 The darkness,—charmed and holy now!
 The night that erst no name had worn
 To it a happy name is given;
 For in that stable lay, new-born,
 The peaceful Prince of earth and heaven,
 In the solemn midnight,
 Centuries ago.

ENDOWMENT RANK.

From the last quarterly report of the Board of Control of the Endowment Rank, covering the three months ending September 30th, 1899, we take the following summary of the business of that department of the Order:—

Reviewing the results of the work accomplished during the second quarter of the present fiscal year, it will be seen that the Insurance Branch of the Order is making steady and satisfactory progress. A considerable increase over the corresponding period last year is shown in

the new sections organized and in the membership admitted, while the forfeitures for non-payment have perceptibly decreased.

Since July 1st, 1899, seventy-five new Sections have been established, twenty-four hundred and forty-three members admitted, and certificates issued amounting to three million five hundred and sixty-three thousand dollars.

During the quarter one hundred and forty-three death claims were paid, three hundred and six thousand three hundred and six dollars being disbursed to the beneficiaries.

At the close of the quarter September 30th, 1899, the Endowment Rank has thirty-seven hundred and ninety-four sections in active operation, a membership of fifty-eight thousand four hundred and eighty-two and insurance in force amounting to one hundred and five million six hundred and ninety-six thousand dollars.

The cash on hand and investments aggregate four hundred and eighty-six thousand five hundred dollars.

The total paid for death claims to date amounts to thirteen million nine hundred and seventeen thousand two hundred and fifteen dollars.

Considering the Summer months embraced in the last quarter, a period of vacations and general inactivity among lodges and sections, the organizers for the Rank, most of whom continued actively in the field, are deserving of much credit for results obtained.

The quarter upon which we are now entering is promising of largely exceeding in new work that of the last. Your Board will, as heretofore, put forth every effort in that direction and ask of the membership generally, the continued aid and assistance so cheerfully rendered in the past.

"THE TRUE KNIGHT."

We have to apologise to the readers of "The True Knight," for the late appearance of this issue. Our reasons for delaying the issue were two-fold, first our worthy Editor was regaining his health so rapidly we wished his article to appear in this number; secondly, as the holidays were so near we intended to make this issue a souvenir number, but unfortunately our plans did not materialise in this respect.

REV. G. R. MAXWELL, M. P.

It is with pleasure that the Committee are able to announce to their Brother Knights, the convalescence of our worthy Brother and Editor, G. R. Maxwell. It will cheer the hearts of many to read once more the editorial from the able pen of our beloved brother, and it is with feeling of gratitude that our Brother has been spared to us to continue the good work of his life in the aid of fallen humanity.

The Endowment Rank has already paid, during the few years that it has been in existence, \$14,000,000. This money has all gone for the benefit of the widows and orphans of deceased Pythians, solely and wholly for their benefit.