

by an election. Members failing to attend meetings may be removed by the Grand Master. The site of the Home is to be upon a farm of not less than eighty acres. No contracts or expenditure of money is to be made until at least \$20,000 has been accumulated by the Trustees.

**Kentucky.**—In this Grand Jurisdiction, for a number of years, a Masonic Widows' and Orphans' Home has been maintained under the auspices of the Grand Lodge. Since its inception, the subscriptions realized from Lodges and the Ladies' Aid Society, have been \$148,810.64. The endowment fund amounts to \$138,461.72, yielding an income of about \$10,000 a year. Since the doors of the Institution have been thrown open, one hundred and eighty-five widows and orphans of deceased Kentucky Masons have found shelter there. At present there are one hundred and twenty-eight beneficiaries in the Home, all that it can comfortably accommodate. The expenses for the year ending August 31, 1875, were \$39,800.30, of which the sum \$25,884.46 is embraced in the item "building expenses," making the actual current expense for the year \$13,815.84, or about \$107.84 per capita, for each of the 128 inmates. This is nearly 30 cts. per day. The Home is incorporated by the laws of Kentucky, and is governed by fifteen Directors, who hold their offices for three years, and are divided into three classes, of five each, a class being elected in May of each year. The officers are a President, Secretary, Treasurer, Agent and Matron, elected by the Board of Directors. The membership is comprised of life and active members, who must be Freemasons. Active members pay the sum of four dollars annually, and any Mason, or body of Masons, contributing one hundred dollars, or the multiple thereof, are entitled to one certificate of life membership for each one hundred dollars paid by them. Persons not Masons, may become honorary members by the payment of a sum not less than fifty dollars. Active and life members and bodies holding life membership are entitled to vote at all elections. An endowment fund is kept separate from the general funds, under the management of three trustees, who, subject to the instructions of the Board of Directors, make investments of this fund, the income of which, we believe, is transferred to the general fund. Beneficiaries are admitted only upon the recommendation of some body of Masons in Kentucky. The Institution met with a loss of about \$70,000 in the destruction, by a tornado, of one wing, and the towers of the main building, about two years ago; and its Directors have since that deplorable event found themselves greatly perplexed to raise the funds necessary to rebuild, and at the same time meet the current expenses. Grand Master Leathers, in his address to the Grand Lodge in October last, referring to the efforts then being made to raise a sufficient sum with which to rebuild the destroyed portion of the building, pleads in eloquent language, as the following extracts bear witness:

"It is not deemed inconsistent with the proprieties of this occasion to lay before you, and through you, to every Mason in Kentucky, the aims and hopes of our splendid charity and its present condition, with the confident belief that none can refuse to help a cause

which so eloquently appeals to every Masonic heart, a cause which has raised the standard of Masonry in our State; which has ennobled and dignified it; which has silenced the voice of Anti-Masonry in our midst; which has dried the tear of the widow and hushed the cry of the orphan, and which has brought untold honor and credit upon the noble Order which has founded it, and under whose loving care it shall dispense its blessings to all who by an afflicting Providence, may be compelled to seek its fostering aid.

" Oftentimes the Home has passed through seasons of gloom and discouragement; often, very often, the ardor, devotions and energies of the brethren into whose hands you have committed this charity, have been taxed to the utmost, yet, out of all the past difficulties the Institution has been safely brought to this hour. Now, however, the future is sadly foreboding, unless the Grand Lodge, by prompt and liberal legislation, rescues this most cherished Masonic enterprise.

"When the work of rebuilding the Home and repairing the damage done by the storm was commenced, it was a cherished hope of the managers that it would be pushed forward to a speedy completion, and that the work would not again cease until the capstone was seated, amid the rejoicings of the Craft at the completion of a temple even more magnificent than Solomon's, and more enduring in its benefits, for the *spiritual temples* we are rearing in that Home, shall have an eternal existence, when Solomon's Temple shall have been forgotten, and long after earthly gems and monuments and crowns are mouldered into dust. \* \* \* There can be no question, brethren, that we have reached the crisis in the history of the Home, and a failure to take proper action will not and cannot relieve us of our responsibility in the premises. We may as well look this matter squarely in the face.

"The architect estimates that it will require about forty-five thousand dollars to finish the building and fit it for occupation. The work is of too great magnitude to attempt to carry it on further by the voluntary contributions of the Craft. The Grand Lodge must now assume the responsibility of providing, by legislation, the means to complete and endow the great work, or bear the ignominy of its failure.

"If Kentucky Masonry is satisfied with what has been done, and can rest content to do no more, then discharge all the workmen now engaged upon the unfinished portions of the building, and there let it stand, its huge proportions, unfinished and desolate, and in sad contrast to the finished portion of the Home, with its one hundred and twenty-eight happy inmates.

"Great as is the glory reflected upon the Order by what has been done, it were far better for Masonry in Kentucky that a stone had never been laid than to stop where we are. It is the great work of the Craft, and its proudest achievement. Completed, an imperishable monument of Masonic benevolence and charity; unfinished a shame and reproach to men who had the noble and generous impulses to devise a scheme which their indifference prevented them from carrying out. Its bleak, unadorned and tenantless walls cry out, at this hour, for the means to make it the habitation for those, who, by

the decrees of Providence are compelled to bear cheerless poverty and an unprotected and defenseless existence.

"From every part of the Commonwealth, almost from every Lodge, comes the plaint of the helpless infant or the wail of the broken-hearted widow, begging for bread to feed and a home to shelter. These cries come not from strangers; they are from the loved ones of our brethren who have been called to the Grand Lodge above, and who departed hence strong in the faith and hope that we who are left behind, when they are gone, would protect and defend their dear ones. These children, these widows, are the bequest to us of dead brethren, and mercy and justice, aside from the solemn obligations of our Order, call us, aye, demand of us, at this hour, to prove worthy of the confidence of our dead, and worthy of the sublime principles of Masonry."

**Missouri.**—This Grand Lodge once built and owned a Masonic Orphans' College, and fully equipped the same, but it was abandoned after a few years' trial, owing to the constant demand for large appropriations to meet current expenses, and the fact that it "cost about four times as much to educate each orphan in the school as it would to pay their tuition in the regular academies and public schools by the Lodges themselves near their own homes. The school was closed and the grounds and buildings presented to the Central Female College, which grants free tuition to thirty orphans if the Grand Lodge desires it, but the Lodges now attend to their own orphans, being excused from paying any charity fund to the Grand Lodge." It is to be regretted that R. W. Bro. Gouley, the Grand Secretary, to whom we are indebted for the foregoing information, should not have gone more into detail and given us the benefit of his opinion as to the cause of the failure of this enterprise. We are left to conjecture that mismanagement and the want of an adequate endowment fund were the principal causes of its failure. From Moor's Masonic Magazine, we learn that the Grand Lodge "with commendable liberty, purchased a large property, with suitable buildings and furnishings for a Masonic College. The prospects at the beginning were encouraging, but the final result was a failure;" but why, we are still uninformed.

**North Carolina.**—This Grand Lodge formerly appropriated \$2,000 each year for the support of two Orphan Asylums, one at Oxford and the other at Asheville. At its last Communication the latter was united with the former and the annual appropriation continued. From Bro. J. H. Mills, the Superintendent, we learn that the two institutions have fed, clothed and instructed 145 orphans, taken from the most needy in the State. A weekly paper is printed at the Institution at Oxford, called *The Orphans' Friend*, from a copy of which and a letter from the Superintendent, it appears the revenue, beyond the annual appropriation by the Grand Lodge, is derived from that fearfully precarious source—popular subscriptions, generally sent through committees of Subordinate Lodges. This Institution is a "temporary school"—not "a home"—where children from six to twelve are received, to be discharged at fourteen. The object is to furnish "a fair English edu-

cation." The female children are found homes in families, and the boys go to trades on being discharged. An effort is being made by the Grand Lodge to raise an endowment fund by popular subscription, and Orphans' Aid Societies are recommended to be formed all over the State to aid in its accomplishment, and it is proposed to ask the Legislature to make an appropriation.

**Nebraska.**—This Grand Lodge is raising a fund, the income of which is to be devoted to the education of indigent children of deceased Masons. It is under the management of a Board of Trustees, and a Standing Committee is appointed in each Lodge to solicit and receive funds, and Lodges are required to hold an annual festival, or entertainment, for the purpose of augmenting this fund. In addition, an annual tax of fifty cents is levied upon each member, payable as other Lodge dues. No portion of the fund is to be used until the sum of \$5,000 is raised.

**Scotland.**—From R. W. Bro. Geo. R. Harriott, 32<sup>d</sup>, Provincial Grand Master, we have received the prospectus of the proposed Royal Scottish Masonic Benevolent Institution, which contemplates two branches: I, for maintaining, clothing and educating the sons and daughters of Freemasons; and, II, the maintaining, clothing and supporting aged and decayed Freemasons and widows of Freemasons. The revenue to be derived from voluntary subscriptions and an annual donation by the Grand Lodge. The scheme contemplates an endowment of twelve or fifteen thousand pounds to be raised by subscription.

**Ireland.**—We have received the annual reports of the Masonic Female Orphan School and Masonic Orphan Boys' School of Dublin, which are supported by voluntary contributions of the Fraternity throughout Ireland. We have also received the third annual report of the Belfast Charity Fund. These Institutions are all maintained by voluntary subscriptions.

**Independent Order of Beni Berith.**—We are indebted to Bro. Jos. L. Herman for copies of the annual reports and other useful information pertinent to our inquiries concerning the Orphan Asylum of this Order at Cleveland, Ohio, and New Orleans.

**Michigan.**—Although no institution of a public character has been established in this Grand Jurisdiction, your Committee have been greatly favored by R. W. Bro. Foster Pratt, late Grand Secretary, who has given us, at some length, many wise and valuable suggestions upon the subject of our enquiry, and for which we desire to make acknowledgement.

From various Masonic periodicals and other sources, it appears that many attempts have been made to establish in the various jurisdictions throughout the United States, schools and colleges for the education of Masonic youth of both sexes. We are not aware that full success has been attained in any instance. Large sums of money have been expended, we dare not say wasted, because we trust that some good has resulted from them, in the establishment and effort to secure the success of these enterprises. All of them have been abandoned, at least we cannot call to mind a single exception. It is hardly to be supposed that this general failure is solely attributable to mismanagement, or incompetency, upon the part of those entrusted with their management. The fact is that mere schools where pupils are taught elementary or even higher branches of an ordinary English education are better and more economically conducted under the free school system, which prevails in all our States, than similar enterprises can be under denominational or fraternal patronage.

There ought not to be, and probably there is no necessity for a Masonic school in a community where all concede that it is as much the duty of the State to provide for the education of its children as it is to preserve the public peace and promote the general welfare of the people, and where all classes of citizens are required to contribute, according to their ability, to a common fund devoted to the education of all who choose to avail themselves of the benefits it confers. In our own State the public school system is as satisfactorily conducted as the general impoverishment of the people will permit. The system may not be as perfect as it is to be desired and hoped

that it will be in time, but it is so far effective that none who have the opportunity of availing themselves of its privileges need be without a fair English education. And as for those who have the means and inclination to pursue a collegiate course, the numerous and rapidly increasing State and denominational colleges and universities furnish all the needful facilities without the necessity of going a great distance from home.

But, we must not lose sight of the fact that while the mind is being educated it is necessary to train the hands to labor and to feed and clothe the body. To the child, whose necessities compel it to labor for its daily bread, no system of public education can, save in exceptional cases be of any great benefit. Under the inscrutable decrees of our Heavenly Father, there are large numbers of children who in infancy are deprived of their natural guardians and thrown upon the world, objects of charity. Left to themselves they perish either from want of food and raiment, or become moral and social wrecks. The children of the poor greet us upon every side, confront us at every turn; escape them we cannot, dare not, even if we would.

The duty of providing for the children of our brethren who have passed on before us through the veil which hides from our sight eternity and the better life, is scarcely less sacred than that of providing for our own offspring.

Every where around us as we look out into the night, we can see the faces of the dead. We never meet here in Grand Lodge but we miss the presence of some one whom we have known and loved, some one whose wise counsels and benevolent purposes have made our meetings joyous seasons. Our Lodges seldom meet without an appeal for charity by the widow and the orphan, and we are almost hourly reminded that our duties to the dead cease not with the sad ceremonies of their interment. To watch over and give protection and assistance to those whom our brethren have bequeathed as sacred legacies to our care is not only a duty, but a privilege. If we fail to perform this duty, we prove ourselves false men and false Masons. There are none of us who dare to say that the provision we have made for those we must leave behind us is secure from the danger of being lost. To most of us death is a calamity, only because our work is not finished. We build and plant and adorn and beautify a little spot of earth, hoping hereafter to sit down and enjoy it, and we toil and struggle through years of anxious care and solicitude, denying ourselves the luxuries and even the comforts of life to accumulate a competency, but some misadventure sweeps all away, when it is too late for us to begin anew, and we go down into the grave with a heavy burden upon our hearts, knowing that those we love best will henceforth be dependent upon the cold charities of the world to be reluctantly bestowed. This is the experience of our daily life, and there are none of us who cannot count, by scores, the widows and orphans of our brethren, whose only legacy is the precious memory of the loved and lost. The Kentucky Asylum gives food and shelter and protection to the widow and children of a former Governor of that proud State, and that, too, without any fault of his or theirs. Who of us can say that our children may not be the first to knock for admission at the doors of the Home—dare we indulge the hope—which your forethought shall build?

It needs no argument to convince any Mason, who is not dead to all his obligations, that Masonry has some higher and nobler mission than the mere conferring of degrees; that the work of the Lodge room has a greater scope than the repetition of ceremonies, be they ever so venerable with age or beautiful in sentiment; that the records of a Lodge which do not tell us of some good deeds performed, some acts of charity, done for charity's sake, are but the mementos of wasted hours, of vain pretensions, of solemn promises broken, of duties neglected.

We know of no nobler channel in which for a great and powerful Order, like ours, to display its usefulness and to illustrate its teachings, than in protecting, sheltering and fitting for an honorable station in this life and happiness in the life to come, the helpless orphans of our brethren.

(CONTINUED NEXT WEEK.)