

NEW MASONIC HALL IN EDINBURGH.—On Thursday se'nnight a great masonic display was made in Edinburgh, on the occasion of laying the foundation of a new hall there for the Grand Lodge of Scotland. The event drew together between 3 000 and 4,000 Freemasons, representing nearly all the lodges of Scotland, headed by the Duke of Atholl, Grand Master Mason of Scotland. Excursion trains were run from all parts of the country, and in many of the smaller towns a holiday was held in honour of the event, and in Edinburgh itself a very general suspension of business took place. There was a numerous deputation present from the Grand Lodge of England, headed by Lord Panmure, Depute Grand Master, besides deputies representing various English provincial grand lodges, and also the treasurer and secretary of the Grand Lodge of Ireland. Among those who took part in the ceremonial were Lord James Murray, Lord Loughborough, the Hon. F. Dundas, M.P., Sir Archibald Alison, Mr Forbes Mackenzie, Mr J. Whyte Melville, and numerous other grand officers of Scotland and England. The day was one of brilliant sunshine, and as the procession, which was formed within the quadrangle of Holyrood Palace, moved up the Canongate and High Street to St. Giles's Church, the whole line was thronged with dense multitudes of spectators. After hearing a sermon from the Grand Chaplain, the procession was once more formed, and passed through several of the streets of the New Town, to the site of the new hall, in George Street. On arriving at the spot the foundation was laid with full masonic ceremonial by the Duke of Atholl, who afterwards addressed the brethren, thanking them for the spirited and gratifying manner in which they had turned out, many of them from distant parts of the country. He was sure they were all extremely happy to see that deputations from the grand lodges of England and Ireland had come to join with their brethren in Scotland in laying that important foundation stone. He trusted that in a little time such a superstructure would be raised upon it, as would be a credit to the Masons of Scotland. His grace then expressed his own gratification, and he was sure the gratification of all the provincial brethren at the very cordial and flattering reception which they had met with from the citizens of Edinburgh. The proposed hall will represent a temple of the Ionic order, and will cost, including the purchase of the site, nearly 10,000*l*. At half-past six o'clock, in the evening, about 800 of the masonic brethren sat down to a banquet in the Music Hall, the Grand Master presiding. Among other toasts he proposed "The Health of the Earl of Zetland, Grand Master Mason of England," which toast was replied to by Lord Panmure, Depute Grand Master, who said it would be his pleasing duty, and that of the deputation who had accompanied him from England, to report that they had that day witnessed one of the most successful masonic gatherings that ever took place within the British empire. He knew of no occasion on which upwards of, he might say, 4,000 Masons had been gathered together with such successful order and attention as they had witnessed this day; nor did he believe that anywhere, except in this city itself, such a gathering could have taken place. They had that day been privileged to see the foundation stone laid of a grand Freemason's Hall for the craft of Scotland, and the deputation and himself had most earnestly prayed the Great Architect of the Universe that in the superstructure to be raised above that foundation stone the Masons of Scotland might advance the dignity and the interests of the craft for ages to come. Among the succeeding toasts was that of "The Provincial Grand Masters," to which Sir A. Alison replied, and in the course of his remarks recounted a family anecdote to show the advantages of masonry, and its humanising tendencies. In the American war one of the British officers was wounded with a bayonet while storming an intrenchment. The bayonet was at his breast, when he caught hold of the hand of a young American officer, and gave him the Freemason's grip. The latter instantly struck up the bayonet from the breast of the British officer, thus saving his life, and the American afterwards took him to his home for some months, where he was treated like a brother. The officer came home to Scotland, married a young lady related to the noble family of Erskine, and the issue of that marriage was his wife, Lady Alison. In the evening a ball took place in the Assembly Rooms, and various other entertainments were provided for the masonic brethren. Together the occasion passed off with great *éclat*, and it is said that no masonic demonstration of equal magnitude and splendour had been made in Scotland since George IV. visited Edinburgh in