



INSTALLATION OF THE PRINCE OF WALES AS GRAND MASTER OF THE FREEMASONS OF ENGLAND AT THE ROYAL ALBERT HALL.

THE PRINCE OF WALES AND THE FREEMASONS.

The imposing ceremony of the installation of his Royal Highness Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, as Grand Master of the Ancient Order of Free and Accepted Masons in England, was performed on Wednesday at the Royal Albert Hall. It is provided by the constitutions of this mystic fraternity that their Grand Master shall be elected yearly "at the quarterly communication in December, being the meeting nearest to the winter solstice, and at the Grand Lodge nearest to the vernal equinox, namely in March." Re-election is usual; but the resignation, last year, of the Marquis of Ripon has obliged the Freemasons to elect a new president. The Grand Master, when he has been so elected in December and March, is to be regularly installed at the Grand Masonic Festival, which takes place annually "on the Wednesday next following St. George's Day," and which is "dedicated to brotherly love and refreshment." St. George's Day, as all Christian Englishmen ought to know, was the 23rd ult., so that Wednesday last came to be the day for this installation. It was attended by nearly eight thousand Freemasons from all parts of England. The new Grand Master, being a Prince of the Blood Royal, had exercised his prerogative of appointing a peer of the realm, the Earl of Carnarvon, to be Pro-Grand Master, and to convene the Grand Lodge. This Grand Lodge, as we explained before, consists of the present and past grand officers of the Order, Grand Masters, Wardens, Chaplains, Treasurers, Registrars, Secretaries, Deacons, Superintendents of Works, Directors of Ceremonies, President of General Purposes Board, Sword-bearer, Organist and Grand Pursuivant, the Grand Stewards of the year, and the Master, Past Masters, and Wardens of every Lodge. It meets at Freemasons' Hall, Great Queen-street, four times a year, "for quarterly communication," on the first Wednesdays in March, June, September, and December; besides the Grand Masonic Festival and occasional meetings "of emergency." All the public affairs of the Order in England are managed by the Grand Lodge, while each local or private Lodge is left to dispose of its own particular affairs, having the appointment of its own officers—the master and two wardens, the treasurer and secretary, the two deacons, the inner guard, and the tyler, with a chaplain, a master of the ceremonies, and stewards, if thought needful. There are about 1500 lodges in England, including the District and Provincial Grand Lodges, with their respective Grand Masters and other grand officers.

The arrangements for the ceremony of last Wednesday were made by a Committee of the Board of General Purposes, consisting of Brothers J. B. Monckton, president; Peter de L. Long, vice-president; J. E. Saunders, P.G.D.C.; Thomas Fenn; and Sir Albert Woods, Garter-King at Arms of the Herald's College, who is Grand Director of Ceremonies among the Freemasons. They were zealously and efficiently aided by the Grand Stewards; to one of whom, Mr. E. M. Haigh (of 213, Regent-street), P.M.P.G. Steward, we are indebted for the Sketch which has furnished our illustration in the two-page Engraving. Mr. Haigh, a well-known photographic artist, has also supplied portraits of many distinguished members of the fraternity. He intends publishing a large chromo-photograph of the ceremony, perfectly accurate and authentic in all its details.

The scene in the Royal Albert Hall was very striking. The hall presents to view a circular area surrounded by several tiers of boxes and galleries one above another, all commanding a view of the platform in front of the grand organ. This platform, usually occupied by the choir at the concerts, was transformed into a dais, on which "the throne" was placed, the space around being large enough for 400 or 500 Provincial Grand Masters, Past Grand Officers, and visitors of this nation to be seated amphitheatrically behind it. The throne was the same in which his Majesty King George IV. was seated when he was Prince of Wales. It was cushioned and covered with rich purple velvet, and the floor was laid with a magnificent Oriental carpet, a century old, which had been lent for the occasion by Brother John Lewis, of Watling, street, and Halliwell, a member of the Westminster and Keystone Lodge. The edge of the dais was hidden by a bank of choice exotics and flowering plants. Behind the throne the banner of the Grand Lodge of England, and some other flags, were placed so as to screen the organist's seat from view. On the right side of the throne was the chair of the Pro-Grand Master, and on the left that for the Deputy Grand Master. State chairs were also set for the principal grand officers—namely, the Chaplains, the Registrar, the Chairman of the Board of General Purposes, and other. In front of the throne a wide aisle was formed right across the area to the Royal entrance. This was laid with a rich carpet of velvet pile woven expressly for the occasion at Brother Lewis's Halifax manufactory. It was 7 ft. 6 in. wide and 16 ft. long. The ground was blue, enriched alternately with the emblems of the Grand Lodge and the Prince of Wales feathers. The border followed the pattern and colours of the Royal Arch sash, relieved with the Grand Lodge symbols—wheatears, the vine, and the laurel. The effect was excellent. The Wardens' chairs were placed in their usual positions. The seats for the brethren were arranged in blocks, and in such a manner that no room was wasted. The floral decorations were supplied by Mr. Wills, of the Royal Exotic Nursery, Onslow-crescent, South Kensington. The arrangements for securing privacy were admirable. All the work of preparation was completed by ten in the forenoon; the workpeople were dismissed, and the hall and its approaches handed over to the sole custody of the Freemasons. The brethren who acted as stewards were placed at the entrances, which were numerous, and for each of which a certain number of tickets had been issued. One o'clock was the time fixed at which the doors were to be opened, but long before that time large numbers of brethren had arrived. They were admitted in batches, twenty or thirty at a time, in order to avoid the possibility of any intruder effecting an entrance. On reaching the corridors the brethren robed, and were then passed by their respective doors into the interior. As the hall gradually filled the scene became more and more picturesque. Every brother wore a light-blue silk collar. In box, in gallery, on the floor, in the uppermost tier, blue was the predominant colour, relieved by white gloves and by the purple and gold aprons of provincial grand rank. When the hall was quite filled, and at many points during the subsequent proceedings, which cannot be more particularly described, the effect was very remarkable.

At half-past two o'clock, the Pro-Grand Master, the Earl of Carnarvon, entered the hall with the other Grand Officers in possession, and took his seat on the dais. He was also accompanied by deputations from the Grand Lodges of Scotland and Ireland, of Sweden and Denmark, and by his Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught, who is "the youngest Master Mason," having been admitted to that rank, last Tuesday evening, at the Prince of Wales's Lodge, No. 259, held at Willis's Rooms. The Pro-Grand Master and his official assistants performed the ceremonies, whatever they are, necessary to constitute a Grand Lodge. The minutes of the previous election of the Prince of Wales as Grand Master were then read and confirmed; upon

which the Pro-Grand Master directed Sir Albert Woods to form a deputation to introduce his Royal Highness. This was done, and in a few minutes the silver trumpets drew attention to the entrance of the Prince and his sponsors in the following order, the organ playing a processional march, composed specially for the occasion by Brother Sir Michael Costa:—

- Four Grand Stewards of the Year.
- The Gloves and Apron of the Grand Master on a Cushion borne by the Master of a Lodge.
- The Collar and Jewel of the Grand Master on a Cushion borne by the Master of a Lodge.
- Grand Director of Ceremonies (Sir Albert Woods).
- Grand Secretary (Mr. John Hervey).
- President of the Board of General Purposes (Mr. J. B. Monckton).
- Grand Registrar (Mr. McIntyre, Q.C.).
- Grand Treasurer (Mr. S. Tomkins).
- Grand Chaplains (Rev. R. P. Bent and Dr. Simpson).
- Six Past Grand Wardens.
- Six Provincial Grand Masters—viz., the Earl of Shrewsbury, the Earl of Limerick, the Marquis of Londonderry, Lord R. Grosvenor, Lord Tenterden, and Lord Londesborough.
- The PRINCE OF WALES, Grand Master.
- Two Grand Stewards.

Everybody concerned having, under the direction of Sir A. Woods, taken his proper position, the brethren arose, and a prayer was offered by the Grand Chaplain. The Prince was then, with certain formalities, invested with the collar and jewel of his office, and placed in the chair; and, the trumpets having once more challenged attention, Sir Albert Woods proclaimed to the brethren in the prescribed form that his Royal Highness had been duly elected and installed. His Royal Highness was then addressed by the Pro-Grand Master, who reminded him of the high dignity and antiquity of Freemasonry, its universal acceptance and practice in every country of the world, and its association, in England more especially, with works of humanity and charity. If in some other countries it had often, unfortunately, allied itself with political faction and intrigue, its course had been signally the reverse in this kingdom, where it was the supporter of social order, of the Monarchy, and of all our national institutions. Never before, in the whole history of Freemasonry, had such a Grand Lodge assembled as he saw that day. He trusted that the Prince of Wales would long remain at their head, and would never feel any regret or anxiety for having taken this office upon himself.

His Royal Highness the Grand Master, who was received with enthusiastic applause, returned thanks to his brethren for the high honour they had bestowed upon him. It was an honour which several members of his family had borne, and he wished to follow in their steps, and by God's help to fulfil the duties of his office as they lay down. His Royal Highness further remarked:—

The Pro-Grand Master has told you, brethren, and I feel convinced it is so, that such an assemblage of Grand Lodges has never been known, and when I look round this vast and spacious hall and see those who have come from the north and the south, from the east and the west, to be present on this auspicious occasion, it is, I trust, an omen of good. The various public duties which in my position I have to perform will necessarily make me so frequently as I could wish to attend to by many duties connected with the craft. But you, brethren, may rest assured that I shall do my utmost to maintain the craft now in its present prosperity, and to do my duty by it and my duty to you on every possible occasion. It would, brethren, I feel sure, be useless for me, at a moment like this, to recapitulate anything which has been so ably told you by the Pro-Grand Master relative to Freemasonry. Every Englishman knows that the two watchwords of the craft are "loyalty" and "charity." As long as these are our watchwords, and as long as Freemasonry keeps itself from being mixed up with politics, so long will, I am sure, this great and ancient order flourish, and its benign influences will tend to maintain the integrity of this great empire. I thank you once more, brethren, for your cordial reception of me to-day, and especially those who have come such distances to welcome me on this occasion. I assure you I shall never forget to-day (Great cheering).

His Royal Highness then received deputations of congratulation from Scotland, Ireland, Sweden, and Denmark. He next proceeded to appoint the officers of the Grand Lodge for the year ensuing, as follows:—The Earl of Carnarvon, Pro-Grand Master; Lord Skelmersdale, Deputy Grand Master; the Marquis of Hamilton, Senior Grand Warden; the Lord Mayor, Junior Grand Warden; the Rev. James Simpson, D.C.L., and the Rev. Spencer Robert Wigram, Grand Chaplains; Samuel Tomkins, Grand Treasurer; Aeneas J. McIntyre, Q.C., Grand Registrar; Brother Hervey, Grand Secretary; Brother E. Wendt, German Secretary; Brothers Montagu Guest, W. Speed, R. Gray, and F. E. Murrell, Grand Deacons; Brother F. P. Cockerell, architect, Grand Superintendent of Works; Brother Sir Albert Woods, Grand Director of Ceremonies; Brother Dr. Woodman, Grand Swordbearer; Brother Wilhelm Kuhe, Grand Organist; Brother Wright, Grand Pursuivant; and E. P. Tyler, Assistant; Brother C. B. Payne, Grand Tyler, with the Grand Stewards. A cordial greeting was given to Brother Alderman Stone, Lord Mayor of London, upon his appointment as Junior Grand Warden.

The Grand Orient Lodges of France and of Italy sent letters of congratulation to the new Grand Master of England upon this occasion.

The banquet in Freemasons' Hall, at half-past seven, was attended by 400 guests, the Prince of Wales, as Grand Master, taking the chair. After drinking the health of her Majesty the Queen, the Duke of Manchester proposed that of the Princess of Wales and all the Royal Family. His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught, "the Junior Master Mason," returned thanks, and proposed, in a pleasant and lively speech, the health of his brother, the Most Worshipful Grand Master. He said he hoped that they would prove themselves not less worthy members of the craft than the Duke of Sussex and the Duke of Kent. In again returning thanks, the Prince of Wales said he would endeavour to do his duty as Grand Master, and would often have the pleasure of meeting his Masonic brethren. He gave the health of the King of Sweden and Norway, as Grand Master of Sweden; followed by the toasts of the Grand Lodges of Scotland and Ireland; which were responded to by Count Salza, Lord Rosslyn, Brother Shekleton, and Admiral Oscar Dickson. The Pro-Grand Master, Lord Carnarvon, was not at the banquet; but Lord Skelmersdale, Deputy Grand Master, and the Marquis of Hamilton, spoke for the Grand Officers, with Brother Erasmus Wilson for the Grand Stewards.

Our illustration presented in the large Engraving this week shows the scene in the Royal Albert Hall, at the moment when between seven and eight thousand Freemasons rose to hail the installation of the Prince of Wales as their Grand Master. Some further illustrations will appear in our next.

The twentieth annual meeting of the Band of Hope Union was held, on Tuesday evening, at Exeter Hall—Mr. Samuel Morley, M.P., in the chair. The report showed that the society had made satisfactory progress, but funds are urgently needed in order to extend its influence.