



BAS-RELIEF IN THE INTERIOR OF THE MASONIC HALL, EDINBURGH.

MASONIC HALL, EDINBURGH.

The New Hall of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, the foundation-stone of which was laid about eight months ago with a display of masonic pomp unprecedented, was formally opened and consecrated with masonic ceremonies on Thursday, the 24th inst., by his Grace the Duke of Atholl, Grand Master Mason of Scotland, assisted by the office-bearers and members of the Grand Lodge. Upwards of two hundred "brethren of the mystic tie," including deputies from provincial lodges, met in the hall, which was tastefully decorated. The Revs. A. Bonar and W. Graham officiated as Grand Chaplains. After the ceremonies the Grand Master declared the hall to be duly inaugurated as the Freemasons' Hall of Scotland. In the evening a masonic festival was held under the presidency of the Grand Master attended by about three hundred masons. On the following evening a masonic ball, also took place in the new hall.

The hall is spacious, lofty, and richly ornamented; it is eighty feet long, thirty-eight feet wide, and thirty-six feet high from the floor to the centre of the arched ceiling; the entablature, which is very beautiful, is supported by handsome fluted Ionic pilasters. In the space over the entablature, at the south end, has been placed a very fine allegorical group, representing St. Andrew, supported on either side by Faith, Hope, and Charity; the figures are life size, and are from the studio of Mr. John Thomas, of London. Immediately above the entrance to the hall, at the north end, there is an orchestra with an elegant balcony in front, with a space at the back of the orchestra for an organ. The hall is finely lighted by numerous glazed panels in the roof, and by three large windows in the south end. The latter have inside sashes filled with stained glass, the designs of which were prepared and executed by Mr. James Ballantine, of Edinburgh. A variegated border runs round each of the windows, within which the general groundwork consists of

Scotch thistles, beautifully diapered in blue, and each window comprises three circular emblematical illuminations. The top circles contain lunette with angelic figures, adapted from designs by Raphael, with masonic symbols and devices. The central circles contain heads of David, Isaac, and Solomon, the builders of the Jewish temple; and the lower circles the Edinburgh arms and shield, ornamented with a mural crown and the sword of the Grand Lodge, surmounted by the ancient Scottish lion.

Mr. Bryce, of Edinburgh, is the architect of this well-proportioned building.

The bas-relief placed over the windows at the south end of the hall displays in the centre the figure of St. Andrew, the patron saint of Scotland, with the cross. On the right are figures emblematical of Faith and Hope, and on the left the emblem of Charity nursing an infant, whilst on a small couch is another little one at play. The whole group reflects much credit on the artist, Mr. John Thomas.



OPENING BALL AT THE NEW MASONIC HALL, EDINBURGH, ON FRIDAY WEEK.