

attitude, while on pillared niches at each corner the Scottish titles of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. On each end there is placed a fine specimen of cairngorm in a richly-pierced setting, with pebbles in relief, similar to the front, and on the back the Edinburgh arms is placed on the centre of the panel; on the front, back, and sides are small triangular panels of Campsie pebbles, with gold scroll in relief. The casket—which is thoroughly national and not at all gaudy, the different stones being harmoniously grouped, the prevailing tone of colour being a very dark red—is richly ornamented with Runic, Celtic, and Gothic engraving. It is in every respect a credit to the art-workmanship of the Scottish capital.

#### THE MASONIC HALL, YORK.

THE old Masonic Hall in York having been removed, in order to effect the Blake-street improvements, the members of the craft determined upon the erection of a new hall, which has just been completed and opened with Masonic ceremonial. "The new Masonic Hall," says the *York Herald*, "though possessing some claim to architectural merit in its exterior, was never intended for mere outside show. A serviceable building, with proper interior accommodation, was the prime consideration, and well has that been obtained. Few persons merely glancing at the building from Blake-street would imagine that it was the cover to a classic hall, 40 ft. long by 30 ft. wide, with walls divided into panelled compartments by lofty pilasters, surmounted by Corinthian capitals, with proper bases and

large and fully-ornamented frieze and arched mouldings, from which, on a coved cornice, the horizontal ceiling rests. The ceiling is divided into three compartments, two of which admit light through stained glass, whilst the centre is appropriately filled with stained glass, and the centre with Masonic symbolism. The hall is entered by means of folding-doors, over which is an organ-loft, supported by square columns. One end has two sets of projecting columns slightly raised from the other sides by a platform. A throne stands between these columns. There is a spacious vestibule, on each side of which there is a preparing and a reception room, and on the right a semicircular staircase leading to a room for the assembling of the members. This room is about 30 ft. long, with a fireplace at each end. It also has an entrance to the organ-loft, and looks down into the body of the hall. The doorway is supported by Corinthian pilasters. The front is of stone, and the windows are of plate-glass. The north side is of divisional compartments of brick upon a stoned dado and quoined cornice. The other sides, facing private property, are plain. The architect was Mr. J. E. Oates, a brother of the order."

#### THE "GIANT" BALLOON.

(From our Paris Correspondent.)

THE long-talked-of balloon of the "Société Générale d'Aérostation et d'Autolocomotion Aérienne" made its début on Sunday last, at Paris, in the plain of the Champ de Mars, the immense space

is now so much accommodation has been provided in this slight basket-work construction, which is cleverly disposed in such a manner as to comprise a small printing-office, a photographic department, a refreshment room, a lavatory, a compartment for the captain's bed and the "luggage" of the travellers, and another compartment at the opposite extremity with three beds. The entire car is provided with an inflated indiarubber lining, so as to render submersion impossible.

The "Giant," for the construction of which 20,000 yards of white silk, at six shillings a yard, was required, has been produced under the active superintendence of M. Nadar, of the Boulevard des Capucines, who asserts that he has discovered, or will discover, the means of travelling in the air by the employment of the screw-propeller. The "Giant" has only been created as a means for gaining sufficient money by its exhibition and voyages to enable him to carry out his confidently-expressed ideas with respect to his new system of Aerostation; and, in order to keep public attention fixed on this important subject, the energetic Nadar has also founded a new monthly journal, entitled *L'Aéropolite*, the first number of which was published on the appearance of "Le Géant" in the Champ de Mars on Sunday last.

On the occasion of the first ascent of this giant balloon the Captain N. [adar] was assisted by two celebrated French aeronauts, the brothers Godard, at whose suggestion the second portion of the balloon (the compensator) was prepared; but for want of the necessary time, as night was approaching, not employed for the first ascent. For this reason some disappointment was expressed, as it was evident that without the compensator the duration of the voyage would



THE NEW MASONIC HALL, YORK.