

and that brethren might offer suggestions of such a nature as they thought desirable, these suggestions and amendments have now been reconsidered, and the document as amended will be submitted for your adoption.

Since the last meeting of the Grand Lodge I have officially visited nearly all the Lodges in this part of the province, and in every instance my reception was most kind and fraternal. I would take this opportunity of earnestly impressing upon those brethren who may hereafter fill high positions in Grand Lodge, the necessity and importance of paying frequent visits to the subordinate Lodges, which will not only have the effect of drawing still closer the bonds of brotherhood, but will also satisfy those brethren whose lot has been cast in the more distant and less settled parts of the Province, that we take a deep and lively interest in their masonic welfare and happiness, and that they are indeed members of that great mystic fraternity, which has endured for ages and extends its benefits to the remotest regions of the world.

In the course of my masonic tour I observed with regret that there existed a great diversity in the working of the various Lodges, and conceiving that one uniform system of work is essential to the well being of the craft, I would strongly recommend to your serious consideration whether that object would be best secured by first deciding which system of work now in use shall be permanently adopted, and then promulgating it by Lodges of instruction or by appointed lecturers, or by any other means you may approve. Before quitting this subject I would suggest that the Committee which you may appoint to decide on the mode of work to be followed by the craft in Canada, should be requested also to take into consideration and report upon the propriety of adding the "mark" to the "fellow craft's" degree. It has long been my opinion that the mark is not properly a part of the "arch" degree but belongs to the second degree, and a similar view of the subject appears now to have been taken by the Grand Lodge of England as well as by several other Grand Lodges.

The subject of numbering our subordinate Lodges will also claim your attention during the present session. This is a matter of some importance, and though not unattended with difficulty, I entertain no doubt but that a careful investigation of the subject by a Special Committee will result in a satisfactory conclusion.

I desire warmly to congratulate you upon the prompt and hearty recognition accorded us by the Most Worshipful the Grand Lodge of Ireland. As a large number of the subordinate Lodges now affiliated with this Grand Lodge were formerly working under warrants from the Grand Lodge of Ireland, the action of that grand body was looked for with much solicitude by us all, and the truly fraternal manner in which the expression of our masonic feelings were appreciated by them, binds us still closer in that bond of brotherly love which I trust will remain unbroken and unstrained so long as the sun and the moon shall endure.

A number of Grand Lodges in the United States, also, have already, in the most fraternal spirit, acknowledged the correctness of our masonic position, whilst a few others have delayed their recognition, out of courtesy to the Grand Lodge of England, waiting until an opinion had been expressed by that Grand Lodge. I am not disposed to condemn the extreme caution exercised by that portion of our sister Grand Lodges in this matter, but will merely say, that whilst the Grand Lodge of England is looked up to by Canadian masons with sentiments of the highest respect and regard, and whilst her approval of the step we have taken will be hailed by all with delight and satisfaction, we do not for a moment admit that her decision in the matter can in any way affect the legality of our position. The correctness of our course has been clearly demonstrated by many of the most distinguished, and best informed, of masonic writers and authorities, and although by some parties our proceedings have been condemned, I have neither met nor heard of a single instance in which any but worthless and specious arguments have been adduced against the correctness of our action, or our present constitutional position.

The present meeting of Grand Lodge has been deferred beyond the appointed time, in the hope that I should have been able to lay before you the reply of the Grand Lodge of England to our Address, I regret, however, to say that up to this time no communication has been received. We must, therefore, confidently hope, that the true spirit of masonry which has ever prominently distinguished the Grand Lodge of England, will so direct their counsels at their next meeting, that they will approve the action we have taken for the security and benefit of the craft in this Province, reciprocate the sincerely fraternal feelings we entertain towards them, and recognize with cheerful satisfaction, their sister Grand Lodge of Canada. I would strongly recommend that until the decision of the Grand Lodge of England shall have been received, the course which has hitherto been pursued towards the members of those Lodges which have not yet affiliated with us should be persevered in, and that we should continue all fraternal offices to those brethren whose conscientious scruples have deterred them from at once joining with us in the establishment of an independent Grand Lodge, feeling assured that when the justice of our cause has become fully understood, the Grand Lodge of Canada will reunite under its banner the whole masonic fraternity of the Province.

I observe by the report of the proceedings of the Grand Lodge of New York, in June last, that the M. W. Joseph D. Evans, the Grand Master, in his address to the Grand Lodge stigmatizes us as a spurious Grand Lodge and pronounces us as schismatic and rebellious. He even goes farther than this, and presumes to censure the action of those distinguished Grand bodies, who have acknowledged our masonic existence and position as an independent Grand Lodge.

We have strong reasons for believing that the course taken by Bro. Evans was induced by a circular recently issued by the Provincial Grand Lodge of Canada West, wherein it is asserted that the statements contained in our Address to Grand Lodges are not borne out by facts; and this charge, or rather ingeniously arranged misrepresentation, supported by further misrepresentations of parties well known to you to be actuated by personal and interested motives, and to be the agents of the Provincial Grand Lodge, has doubtless misled the Grand Master of New York. I trust we are warranted in the conclusion that the observations of Bro. Evans were made in ignorance of the principal facts connected with our recent movements, for it would, indeed, be painful to me, and I cannot adopt the only other alternative and believe that any statement of a Brother holding the high position of Brother Evans amongst the masons of New York, could have been made with an utter disregard of truth.

This circular of the Provincial Grand Lodge is the first case that has come before me of any one having openly dared to dispute the truth of any statement contained in our Address, which, with a desire that our case should become thoroughly known, was extensively circulated all over this continent. And the first I knew of the existence of the Circular, which appears to have been carefully concealed from us, was a few days since when a distinguished Brother, and leading member of the Grand Lodge of South Carolina, informed me that such a Circular had been addressed to them. Since my arrival in this City a copy has been put into my hands and it will presently be laid before you. Had it not been for this evidence I would not have believed that the "Officers" who still cling to the Provincial Grand Lodge would have descended to calumniate our proceedings, which they well know to have been taken on calm reflection, with strictly conscientious motives, and in perfect accordance with the principles of the Constitution of Freemasonry.

In addition to the 2000 miles which I have travelled, exclusively on masonic business, in the Province, since our last meeting, I returned last week from a visit to Kentucky, which involved a journey of 2000 miles more. I visited the Kentucky brethren on their special invitation, and with a desire to make the acquaintance of the leading members of our order in the neighbouring

Republic, and I cannot find words to express the gratification I experienced from the kind and fraternal welcome with which I was received, and the pleasure and advantage I derived from the intercourse with the brethren whom it was my good fortune to meet. These honors and attentions I received as your representative, and it gives me great pleasure to communicate the fact to you.

I desire to recommend to your favorable consideration that important undertaking to which our distinguished Brother Robert Morris has devoted so much time, ability, and capital. I allude to his republication of standard masonic works. By the labour and enterprise of Brother Morris in placing within the reach of all a fund of masonic information, not only in the publication referred to, but also in the valuable periodical conducted under his auspices, a flood of masonic light has been bestowed upon the craft of inestimable benefits to the masons of the present day, and which was quite unknown to our masonic progenitors. There are many other masonic periodicals deserving your warmest support, and Brethren desirous of becoming intelligent working masons, should avail themselves of the opportunity of acquiring the valuable information thus placed within their reach. I cannot quit this subject without expressing the great pleasure I experienced, on the receipt of the 1st number of an ably conducted masonic sheet, published in Montreal under the title of *The Canadian Masonic Pioneer*. The spirit and enterprise displayed by our Montreal brethren in originating this periodical, entitles them to the gratitude of the craft; and well-knowing that it is to be conducted by some of the best informed masons in the Province, we may look forward with confidence to its becoming an invaluable disseminator of masonic light and truth.

Before concluding my address I desire to express my high appreciation of the valuable services rendered to the Grand Lodge and to the craft generally, by our esteemed brother the RW Dr Bernard, the Deputy G. Master. His unwearied exertions, his uniring energy, his talents and his time, have been freely and cheerfully devoted to advance the interest of the Grand Lodge, and entitle him to our grateful thanks. In these remarks I feel assured that I express the feelings of the Grand Lodge.

W. M. WILSON, G.M.

On motion of R. W. Bro. Stephens, seconded by R. W. Bro. Bellhouse, the Grand Master appointed the following brethren a Committee to consider and report on the various subjects embraced in his Address: R. W. Bro. Stephens, W. Bro. Osborne, W. Bro. Abbott, Bro. O'Brien, and Bro. Martin.

Dispensations granted by the Grand Master for the following Lodges, were then confirmed and warrants ordered:—

On motion of RW. Bro. W. B. Simpson, seconded by RW. Bro. Jas. Daniells, for St. Andrews Lodge, Caledonia.

On motion of RW. Bro. Jas. Daniells, seconded by VW. Bro. J. H. Isaacson, for Kilwinning Lodge, London.

On motion of W. Bro. J. Rolfe, seconded by WB. Bro. Abbott, for Rehoboth Lodge, Toronto.

On motion of RW. Bro. A. Bernard, seconded by RW. Bro. Simpson, for St. Francis Lodge, Melbourne.

On motion of VW. Bro. Isaacson, seconded by Bro. Martin, for Jacques Cartier Lodge, Montreal.

On motion of VW. Bro. J. H. Isaacson, seconded by W. Bro. Barker, for St. Johns Lodge, Ingersoll.

On motion of RW. Jas. Daniells, seconded by W. Bro. Rolfe, for King Lodge, King.

On motion of W. Bro. David Brown, seconded by W. Bro. J. Taylor, for Alma Lodge, Galt.

On motion of RW. Bro. Simpson, seconded by W. Bro. Salmony, for Victoria Lodge, Sherbrooke.

A petition from brethren in Kingston for a warrant to form a Lodge to be called the Cataract Lodge, was then read, and on motion referred by the Grand Master to a Committee consisting of R. W. Bros. Bernard, Stephens and Isaacson.

The Grand Lodge called off from labor to refreshment and resumed its sitting at 8 o'clock.