

Address of GEORGE W. WHITEHEAD, Esq.,
Grand Master—To the Members of
the Orange Institution in British
North America.
Woodstock, July 15th, 1851.

BELOVED BRETHREN,—

It would appear strange indeed if I did not take an early opportunity of declaring to you generally, my sense of the high honor conferred upon me, and the expression of confidence reposed in me, as evinced by your calling upon me to fill the responsible post of

Grand Master of the Orange Institution of British North America.

My election to that office has taken place under circumstances of a peculiar nature. A division had unfortunately occurred during the past year among the Members of the Institution, and the Orange body differed as to the validity of the Election of two Brethren of high standing in the Order, each of whom claimed to be your head, and each of whom had a large body of supporters.—Without expressing an opinion as to whom the right of Office rested with, it must be allowed that the minority in either case were entitled to the respect of the majority. Within our Order such a state of division could not exist any time without impairing, if not destroying its efficiency and the welfare of the Institution being paramount to any consideration for individual members, however high their standing, it was not to be wondered that an early move was made to restore our unity.

At a meeting of our Brethren held at Montreal, in the month of October last, a Special Committee was named to communicate with those who acknowledged another head, and to invite them to co-operate in the labor of reconciliation. The sentiments of the various Counties upon the existing cause of difference were ascertained, their suggestions considered, and a meeting of the County Masters was subsequently convened, at which, after careful consideration, it was unanimously agreed that at the then approaching period of the Annual Election, a change of the Grand Officers was advisable, and the election of others recommended in their stead, as the principal, if not the sole step necessary to the complete restoration of unity in the Order. At that election the names of various Brethren were recommended for the various offices, and the hope was unanimously expressed that at the approaching Annual Election, the desire of all to prefer the interests of the Institution, to the interest of individuals would be paramount, and though distance separated the meetings, yet that their feelings would be in unison, and that whether at Brantford or Bytown, the recommendations of the County Masters would have had effect, and the unity of the Order be restored by the election to office of the Brethren recommended by them. On the 21st and 22nd of June, the respective meetings were held, the recommendations submitted to each,—and though at that Brantford meeting the proposition for a reconciliation was rejected, yet it is worthy of note, that out of about Nine Hundred Members of the Grand Lodge within the Province of Canada, there were found but about One-sixth of that number who by their votes (no doubt unconsciously) maintained the interests of an individual member against the unity of our Order.

At the very large and influential meeting which took place at Bytown, the recommendation of the County Masters were in every respect unanimously adopted, and by

none concerned in more cordially than by the late Grand Master of the Order, Brother GEORGE BENJAMIN, and the Officers last serving under him, who have resolved at any personal sacrifice to remove all cause of dissension.

In pursuance of the recommendation of the meeting of County Masters and the unanimous vote of the Brethren assembled at Bytown, sustained as I believe it to be by the overwhelming majority of the members of the Grand Lodge, and supported too, by the nearly unanimous wishes of members of the whole Order throughout this Province, I have been called on to fill the high and honorable post of Grand Master, for the ensuing year. This would, under any circumstances, be an honor, but doubly so in my case as I have been called thereto by the unanimous vote of that portion of our body which acknowledged as their leader other than him under whom I was acting, and who was acknowledged by my County during the past year. My personal feelings urged me to decline the high honor conferred upon me. But when it was represented to me that my acceptance of the Trust would go far to, if not effectually reconcile the difference in our Order, personal considerations were laid aside, and I have accepted the responsible office of Grand Master for the ensuing year, and entered on the discharge of the many and arduous duties thus imposed upon me. I do so without fear because I feel confident that I shall be sustained in my efforts by the good sense of the Orangemen of British North America, particularly in this Province and by none more cordially than by the Grand Officers and Brethren who were so lately opposed to me in the question which has unfortunately divided the Order.

Having thus declared my acceptance of the Office,—I shall now proceed to carry out the further recommendation of the County Masters, in the formation of two Provincial Grand Lodges for Canada West. For that purpose a Meeting will be held at Brantford, on the 4th, and at Kingston, on the 11th of August, at which those Brethren now entitled to vote in the Grand Lodge are invited to take part in the Elections for the respective proposed divisions to which they may belong. At these Meetings it will be seen to what extent the welfare of the Institution, and the desire for union amongst the Brethren prevails, and I not only cordially invite but earnestly urge the presence of every Member, who can possibly attend thereat, for the larger the attendance, the greater will be the certainty of ensuring that much desired unity in our Order. On that occasion you will have to elect Provincial Grand Officers for your local Government, and these Grand Officers will, with the Officers of Counties, henceforward compose the body by whom the Grand Officers of the Orange Institution of British North America will be elected, and I rely upon your making such a choice as will ensure the support of the Lodges within your respective Provinces and, at the same time, promote the general welfare of the Institution. When you have thus formed your Provincial Grand Lodges, and the re-organization of our body, under its altered constitution, takes place, it will be my duty to convene the then Members of the Grand Lodge of British North America to elect their Grand Officers, under that Constitution, when I shall render an account of my stewardship and cheerfully abide your decision upon my acts.

In the mean time, and in conclusion, I would entreat of you, my Brethren, to lay

aside all personal considerations, and let us join heart and hand in this movement to secure, I trust for ever, that Brotherly Love and Unity which should be as sacredly treasured as those principles of veneration for THE ALMIGHTY and LOYALTY to THE THRONE, which have characterized our Order from its first formation to the present hour.

Believe me, Brethren,

Ever yours in the

Bonds of the Brotherhood,

GEORGE W. WHITEHEAD,

Grand Master of the Orange Institution of British North America.

THE RUSSIAN WAR.

THE ENGLISH FLEET BEFORE CROONSTADT.

Baltic Fleet, of Cronstadt, June 30.

We left Baro Sound on the 22nd instant, and under steam, proceeded up the Gulf of Finland. The English division of the fleet were exclusively composed of "the cavalry of the navy."—The French line-of-battle ships (Austerlitz, screw, included) were towed by small steamers, in which two of ours joined to get them along. On the 24th we came to an anchor off the island of Seskar, while anchored there, we were somewhat excited by observing a Russian steamer heave in sight on her way apparently from Cronstadt to Helsingfors. She suddenly pulled up on sighting us, and then after a momentary pause tarried tail and cut back towards Cronstadt. The Dragon, as one of the dogs of war was let slip after her, but she attempted in vain to close with the fugitive, which was a much faster vessel than the pursuer. However, it is an ill wind that does not blow somebody good: before returning to the squadron again, the Dragon captured a boat laden with timber, which was abandoned by the owners, who struck out for the shore on observing the Dragon shape her course for them. Vessels are now occasionally chased which are found to contain floating villages—men, women, and children, with all their goods and chattels, deserting their farms and homes on some little islands, where, had they remained, they imagined death by shooting or imprisonment from the ruthless English awaited them. Those poor creatures become terror-stricken when boarded, caused in some measure by the usual preamble of firing a shot, often more across their bows to oblige them to heave to. The poor women are found huddled together in some little hiding-hole. However, the poor things are soon reassured by kindness, and see that we are not the brutes they were led to suppose we were. We part—no longer enemies, but now real friends, much to their surprise they are again set free, and continue their route without further molestation. After having stayed a couple of days off Leskar, the squadron moved on for Cronstadt. The gulf narrowed as we approached its *cul de sac*. The land on either side is covered with a sea of rich waving woods of pine-trees, especially on the Finnish shore, which is the higher, occasionally oases, if I may be allowed to speak so, appear in this moving mass of green, revealing snug hamlets and cultivated fields which often slope down to the dark, nasty water of this great brackish gulf. As we closed with Cronstadt, and as soon as the tall masts of the Russian ships in harbor (19 ships of the line and five steamers) were descried from our topmast heads, great excitement prevailed through the fleet. A rumour is set about that the Russian ships, not expecting us up so high, are at anchor outside the forts. Not a breath of wind prevails to carry them inside under protection of their batteries; if such be the case, visions of immediate action, certain victory, and captured ships, seize upon our imaginations. Ships are in advance of the squadron, looking out for the "infernal machines." All the ships have watches posted in their tops, reporting every floating log of wood that floats near us, bearing any resemblance to a buoy—in appendage said to be attached to all those submarine traps—We draw closer and closer. A mirage now