

Masonic zeal, had urged the brethren to rear and embellish this hall dedicated to Freemasonry. It would be retained by him as an evidence of the friendly feeling extended to him by the brethren of that town. He concluded by congratulating the members on the possession of so fine a Temple.

In the evening the Hall was thrown open to the public, and a conversation held. A large number of invitations were issued, the result being that between 400 and 500 people assembled to listen to the addresses of the M. W. the Grand Master, and other distinguished brethren, and also to the musical part of the programme which had been carefully prepared by Bro. G. K. Creighton. W. Bro. Mackay, W. M. of St. Thomas Lodge, occupied the chair. The proceedings opened with the "Grand Masonic March," which was followed by a vocal duet. The Chairman then introduced the Grand Master, who delivered the following address:—

BRETHREN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—I thank the brethren of St. Thomas for the very handsome present of this gavel. The manner in which it has been given shows the truly generous spirit which prompted the offer, and which spirit, imbued with Masonic zeal, has successfully urged the brethren to rear and embellish this hall dedicated to Freemasonry. The gavel will be retained by me as an evidence of the friendly feelings exhibited by my brethren of this town, and will ever remind me of this pleasant visit. I must congratulate them on this handsome temple, and it is one of the evidences of the growing and advancing spirit of Freemasonry that the new halls in which the precepts of our Order are inculcated, should be worthy of our time-honored institution. I am happy to meet so numerous and respectable an assembly, not only of the brethren of the mystic tie, but of those who, not belonging to the Order, I may fairly claim as being friendly to our ancient fraternity. On this occasion I have been called on to make a few remarks explanatory of that Society of which in this

Province I have the honor to be the head, but those remarks must of necessity be not only general but brief, for while some would appreciate speeches eulogistic of the Order, yet I must consider the wishes and feelings of others who do not desire any encroachment on the musical entertainment of this evening, which our brethren of St. Thomas have so thoughtfully provided. So far as our rules will permit, I will endeavor to explain "What is Freemasonry," that we may not be misunderstood by those who do not rank under our banners, and that we may not be held in disesteem by the loveliest and fairest of the works of the Almighty Architect. Freemasonry is an art, more properly a science, founded on the principles of geometry, and directed to the service and convenience of mankind; its end, moral and purpose is to subdue our passions—not to do our own will—to make a daily progress in a laudable art, to promote charity, good fellowship, good nature and humanity, all of which may be summed up in the words—Religion and Philanthropy. Its lessons are, for the most part, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols, and with the Holy Bible, ever open, it has been well termed "the handmaid to religion." It is an ancient institution, where men of all shades of opinion in religion and politics may meet and exchange the right hand of fellowship, may pursue their mental researches into the regions of science and morality without fearing any collision from hostile opinions which may sever the links of harmony and brotherly love by which their hearts are cemented and knit together. Wealth, power and talents are not necessary. An unblemished character and a virtuous conduct are the only qualifications which are requisite for admission into the Order. Freemasonry is divided into three degrees or stages of advancement, which have an apt and obvious reference to the progressive state of man. The first degree is emblematical of the darkness of the chaos which preceded man's creation, of the night by which his mind was obscured after his original transgression till the light of natural religion first beamed into his soul. The second degree is characteristic of our advance into the dawn which ushered the refulgence of the light which revealed the Creator; whilst in the third degree the brother is brought to the bright blaze of the fullest revelation, to that bright star whose rising brings peace and salvation to the faithful and obedient of the human race to attain the ends for which the Order was originally formed. Every candidate must pledge himself never to divulge the mysteries nor communicate to the outside world those important secrets with which he is entrusted and by which he is enabled to distinguish his brethren from the uninitiated, and convince