

OUR SISTER GRAND LODGES.

UNITED GRAND LODGE OF ENGLAND.

The Quarterly Communication of Grand Lodge was held on Wednesday, March 2nd, at Freemasons' Hall, Great Queen street, the EARL DE GREY and RIPON, K. G., occupied the chair as M. W. Grand Master; Earl Percy, S. G. W.; Algernon Perkhoe, as J. G. W.; Lord de Tabley, as Deputy G. Master; Rev. C. J. Martyn, G. Chaplain; J. Cropper Foster, G. D.; W. P. Scott, G. D.; Sir Albert Woods, (Garter), G. D. Cer.; Æneas J. McIntyre, G. Registrar; Brackstone Baker, G. D.; A. J. P. Powell, G. D.; L. T. mkins, G. D.; Samuel Tomkins, G. Treas.; John Hervey, G. Sec.; Joshua Nunn, G. S. B.; William Ough, G. P.; James Brett, Asst. G. P.; Chas. B. Payne, G. T., &c., &c.

Grand Lodge having been formally opened, the GRAND SECRETARY read the regulations for the government of Grand Lodge, and the minutes of the Quarterly Communication of December last, which were confirmed.

Bro. RAYNHAM W. STEWART then rose and said: In pursuance of my notice on the last occasion, I beg to propose that our Brother, the Earl de Grey and Ripon be our Grand Master for the year ensuing, and I feel certain that in proposing him I shall hear no dissentient voice. (Cheers).

LORD DE TABLEY: Brethren, it has been proposed and seconded that our noble Brother, the Earl de Grey and Ripon, be elected on this occasion M. W. Grand Master to the Craft in England. Those who are of that opinion will be good enough to hold up their hands. (Cheers.) (The brethren having unanimously carried the proposition, his Lordship said): I am sure that this Grand Lodge having carried that proposition unanimously, they have merely expressed the unanimous voice of the Freemasons of England.

SIR ALBERT WOODS, G. D. Cer., then called on the brethren to salute his Lordship in the usual manner.

THE EARL DE GREY AND RIPON: Right Worshipful Sir, officers and brethren, I can assure you that it is with no small emotion that I rise to return you thanks for the signal proof of your confidence which you have just been pleased to afford to me. I am well aware, brethren, that the vote of to-night will require to be confirmed at the ensuing Grand Festival, before I shall be called upon to enter on the duties of the office for which, as far as I can judge this evening, it will be your pleasure to call me; and therefore, this would not be a suitable opportunity for entering at any length into the expression of my thanks. But I should, indeed, be wanting to my own feelings if I were not to seize the first moment to tender to you the expression of my heartfelt gratitude for the great honor which you have been pleased to confer upon me. I can assure you it will be my constant endeavour during my tenure of this office, if it should be confirmed to me, be that tenure short or long, earnestly to labor faithfully to discharge the duties that will then be imposed upon me. (Hear, hear). And I feel very deeply the sense of the importance and the responsibility of those duties, because it seems to me that it is no light matter to be called to the supreme government of such a body of my fellow countrymen, as those who are enrolled in these fortunate days in the ranks of Masonry. And I feel also—and even yet more deeply—the immense difficulty which must lie upon any one who is called to follow in this great office one who has filled it now for a quarter of a century. (cheers), as worthily as Lord Zetland. All that I can say is, that it will be my constant endeavour to follow—with however feeble steps—the bright example which he has set me. And, brethren, that allusion brings me to a task far more congenial to me than the speaking of myself, it brings me to the discharge of the duty which I gave notice that I should undertake to-night at the last meeting of the Grand Lodge—the moving of a resolution expressive of your sentiments at the retirement of Lord Zetland. I know well that it can need no words of mine to induce you heartily to concur in the expression of your admiration and respect for that distinguished Brother, and of your regret that we should be deprived of his services as Grand Master. The duty has fallen to me, brethren, of drawing up the resolution, and this is the mode in which I venture to submit it to you:—

“That this Grand Lodge desires to record its sense of the eminent services which have been rendered to Masonry by the Most Worshipful the Earl of Zetland in the course of the 26 years during which he has presided over the Craft; and to convey to his Lordship the expression of the heartfelt regret of the members of this Grand Lodge at the termination of the intimate connection which has existed for so long a period between him and them; and of their hope that they may still be permitted to enjoy for many years the great benefit of his presence among them, and of his counsel and advice; and to assure him that the manner in which he has always discharged the important duties of his great office has won for him the lasting respect and affection of this Grand Lodge.”

Brethren, I am confident that you will all agree in the sentiments which I endeavour to embody in the resolution. I am sure that none of you will contest that the services which Lord Zetland has rendered for six and twenty years to the Craft have been eminent and valuable. I will not trouble you with figures and statistics upon this occasion; but I have asked at the Grand Secretary's office for some information as to the progress of the Craft since 1844, and I find that during that period the number of lodges in the calendar has increased by 70 from 1844 to 1870; that the number of certificates issued in 1844 was under 1,000, and that during 1869 there were 7,000 (cheers). And I find also that there has been an equal increase in the progress of our Masonic Charities and in the degree of their prosperity. Now, brethren, I do not mean to say—it would be unjust to the Craft at large if I were to say—that that great progress of Masonry has been due only, or that it could have been due only, to the distinguished person who occupied this throne. No doubt, every brother in his degree and position has contributed to that progress, but you will all agree with me, I am confident, that if the rule of the Craft during that lengthened period had not been wise and judicious, that great progress would not have been realized. Well, then, if such have been the services of Lord Zetland, is it not natural that we should feel a deep regret that we are about to lose him as the occupier of the great office of Grand Master? We are about to lose that which we cannot replace—five and twenty years' experience,—that which is of the greatest importance in a great office like that of Grand Master—a knowledge of the Craft and of the business of his post; and we are about to lose that which is more important still, a man of high and noble nature, from whose mind every mean, petty, personal consideration is ever absent; a man who gave to the rule of the Craft a stamp of integrity and honour. (Cheers). Well, then, I ask you to express your earnest hope that it may please the Great Architect of the Universe to preserve that valuable life to us for many years to come, and that we may often see in