

guided your efforts in the cause of Masonry, but, also, upon the deservedly high position which this Grand Lodge has attained in the masonic world. The blessing of God has rested upon our labors, and our constant prayer to Him should be that He would still continue to foster and to cherish our venerable and beloved institution, and so to influence and guide our aspirations and our acts, that we may successfully carry out the great objects for which we are associated together.

#### ATLANTIC CABLE.

Before proceeding to direct your attention more especially to the various important matters which will occupy your time and attention during the present session, there are two events of more than ordinary public interest, which have transpired since our last Annual Meeting, to both of which I will now briefly refer. The first of these, in order of date, was the successful achievement of one of the most wonderful undertakings which man in his restless energy ever attempted. I allude to the Atlantic Telegraph. The constant and rapid correspondence now hourly kept up between England and America must have a tendency to bind still closer together those great nations. May it prove an eternal link of brotherhood between us all, and may the Providence of God which has thus directed the genius of man to this crowning victory over difficulties and dangers of no ordinary magnitude, make it instrumental in securing the happiness of all nations, and the rights of all people.

#### THE NEW DOMINION.

The Royal Proclamation, which gave life and power to that great work in which our statesmen have been so long engaged, has been issued by our Most Gracious Sovereign, and the "Dominion of Canada" now takes her position among the powers of the earth. This binding together of the scattered fragments of an empire by closer union, not only doubles our material strength, but our moral influence also, and must exercise a powerful effect in knitting still more closely the ties of reverence and affection, which binds us to our beloved motherland. The immediate results of this important measure will depend entirely on the spirit in which our people work out its details, and, as an able writer on the subject remarks, the great ultimate issues which hang upon them, will in all human probability be decided by the tone which may prevail in the new Dominion, and the policy she may pursue during the next few years. That wise counsels may prevail, and that the leading men of all parties in the state may unite in securing a successful and harmonious working out of the great problem now submitted for our solution, is, I am sure, the earnest wish of every true lover of his country, and all will unite in the heart-felt aspiration and prayer to the Great Architect of the Universe, that He, by whose permission and authority kings reign and nations exist, will pour down his richest blessings upon our beloved Queen and upon this country and people.

#### A GENERAL GRAND LODGE.

The new state of political existence upon which we are now entering, necessarily brings up for our consideration, the effect which it must to some extent, have upon our position as a Grand Lodge. The name, by which for many years, we have been

known and recognized in the Masonic world, becomes now, it is claimed, a misnomer. The Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia, which has supreme authority in that section of the new Dominion, is as much a Grand Lodge of Canada as we ourselves are. The distinguished brother who presided at your last annual meeting approved of the idea of a General Grand Lodge, having Provincial Grand Lodges in each Province, and the Board of General Purposes to whom the subject was referred, also reported favourably upon the suggestion made by my Most Worshipful predecessor, but at the same time advised that no immediate action be taken in the matter. What at that time was only an anticipation, has now become a reality; and while I readily admit that there is something peculiarly pleasing in the idea of uniting all the members of our fraternity, who reside in the various Provinces now confederated together, into one grand body; and while contemplating also the probability of important territorial additions still to be made to the new Dominion, I must confess that I entertain grave doubts, whether a union, embracing such an immense extent of country, would have a tendency to promote the advancement of the best interests of Masonry on this continent. In Great Britain, as you are well aware, there is no General Grand Lodge; and in the neighboring Republic, each state has a Grand Lodge which exercises supreme Masonic authority in her own jurisdiction. In the year 1859, the subject of a General Grand Lodge for the United States, was brought before a Committee of Grand Officers for consideration, and by referring to my address of that year, you will find that I at that time expressed the opinion, that the creation of a General Grand Lodge having jurisdiction over the several States of the Union, would neither be expedient nor desirable.

In submitting, however, the whole subject to your careful consideration, I do not wish it to be understood that I either decidedly oppose or approve of the suggestions which have been made. All I mean to convey to you is, that thus far I have not been able to satisfy my own mind, as to the wisest course to be pursued under our present circumstances. But I earnestly request for it, that thoughtful and calm investigation which the great importance of the matter, imperatively requires at your hands; and I would suggest, that its consideration be referred to a special committee, who may be able to report during the present session.

#### THE MASONIC ASYLUM.

The next subject of importance to which I would now direct your attention, is the proposed Masonic Asylum. Acting upon the suggestions made by the Board of General Purposes, a circular, containing a series of questions has been addressed to each of our subordinate Lodges; their replies to which will enable us to ascertain the views and wishes of the craft generally, upon this very interesting and important question.

It appears to me, that we are not yet in a position, which would warrant so large an expenditure of money as would be required for the erection and endowment of such an establishment as the Masons of Canada would wish to see associated with their name and order. Neither do I believe, that there exists any urgent necessity for the immediate expenditure of money for this purpose; for although