

(Operative and Accepted) the legal statutes forming the base of our establishment. We have every reason to know that Masonry was originally a secret Society and was governed by laws known only to its members; we read of old manuscript being in the hands of private members, at an early day, but we have no evidence tending to show that they had reference alone to the fundamental laws; in 1719, however, they were all (or nearly all) gathered in and sent to Grand Lodge.

An eminent American writer tells us that Freemasonry was strictly a secret Society for more than two thousand years; that its members were forbidden to publish anything either in relation to its origin or teachings, and yet throughout all that period, its history was transmitted from generation to generation, unspotted by time, and undiluted by the sacrilegious hand of the innovator. The distinguished Chester says: "From the commencement of the world we may trace the foundation of Masonry; ever since Symmetry began and harmony displayed her charms, *our* Order has had a being." May it, Brethren, be our pride and pleasure to guard with zealous care this Ancient History, and hand it down to the generations that are to follow us without a blot upon its pages of our individual or collective creation. Last year I was twitted in a friendly way by some of my Masonic friends in being a little too lengthy in my address—this year I think I have guarded against a repetition of such allusions, partly on account of absence from my field of Masonic labor, and partly from the effects incident to what is known here as "Franchise Fever" which has a tendency to exclude the necessary matter generally embodied in a letter of this tenure.

In again surrendering the Gavel of Supreme Masonic authority into your hands, I do so with a full consciousness of my inability to do justice to the position, owing to my absence from the Province for nearly half the year. I can, however, fairly lay claim to an honest desire to further the interests of the Craft—to give impartial decisions upon all occasions, and in all sincerity to wish every Brother "God speed" in his walk in life, and hereafter a rest in the Great Grand Lodge above.

Fraternally yours,

EDGAR CROW BAKER,
Grand Master.

Resolved, That the address of the M. . W. . Grand Master be referred to a Special Committee of three.

The following Brethren were appointed by the R. . W. . Deputy Grand Master: