

The following were elected Grand Officers for the ensuing year:—

M. W. Bro. Rev. Samuel P. Matheson, Grand Master.

R. W. Bro. John W. Harris, Deputy Grand Master.

R. W. Bro. Simon Duffin, Grand Senior Warden.

R. W. Bro. Roderick McCuaig, Grand Junior Warden.

Rev. Bro. James Flett, Grand Chaplain.

R. W. Bro. John J. Johnston, Grand Treasurer.

R. W. Bro. James Munro, Grand Registrar.

R. W. Bro. John H. Bell, Grand Secretary.

Bro. Chas. M. Murray, Grand Tyler.

After the installation the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

That this Grand Lodge cannot part with the services of M. W. Bro. Geo. F. Newcomb, as Grand Master, without again expressing their highest appreciation of the efficient and constitutional manner in which he performed the duties of Grand Master, and of our fullest confidence in his honesty and integrity as a man and a Mason.

Business being ended, Grand Lodge was closed in Ample Form.

[Written for the CRAFTSMAN.

The Mystic Tie.

Masonic High Grades in Canada.

In writing upon Masonic High Grades, I wish, as a preliminary, to be distinctly understood as meaning, by the term, a variety of Degrees, conferred by a variety of Rites and which Degrees are in effect not strictly, but merely *quasi* Masonic. They are not strictly Masonic, for the reason, that the Craft Grand Lodge, the ruling body in pure, ancient and symbolic Masonry, of which every Master Mason's Lodge is a component part, entirely ignores them. It—the Grand Lodge—does not forbid them; it does not acknowledge them; it simply knows them not. Every Master Mason is well aware that all the benefit that he can personally derive from the Order, all the relief and assistance that those near and dear to him can claim, in short, all Masonic utility emanates either from the Craft Lodge or Grand Lodge. Hence all useful, practical and beneficial Masonry begins and ends in the Master Mason's Lodge, and the Master Mason himself—being raised to the Sublime Degree—is the peer and equal of any Mason upon earth. This being the case, all the "High Grades," professing to be Masonic, cannot in strictness be considered as properly so; they are only, as before

stated, *quasi* Masonic. It is true that there is no real harm in any Mason taking any or all of them; they are in most cases amusing, in some instructive; they are the toys or recreations of an idle hour, in which many Masons, being but children of a large growth, find pleasure by indulging in. They are generally harmless, always useless, and in truth are valueless excrescences upon the body Masonic. With this declaration of what is generally held to be sound Masonic law upon the subject, I will proceed to notice the manner in which the "High Grades" are used and sometimes abused in Canada. The Rites claiming to possess them are as follows:—

The Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Thirty-three Degrees, which originated at Charleston, South Carolina, U. S. A., 31st May, 1801.

The Rite of Mizraim of Ninety Degrees, which originated at Milan in Italy, in 1805.

The Rite of Memphis of Ninety-six degrees, which originated at Paris, in France, 7th July, 1838.

The Ancient and Primitive Rite of Thirty-three Degrees (being a condensation of the Rite of Memphis of Ninety-six Degrees) which originated at Paris, in France, in 1862.

The manner in which these various Rites were primarily constituted was this. During the latter half of the last century, a vast number—some hundreds—of *pseudo* Masonic Degrees were fabricated and set afloat in Europe, and were generally entitled "Side Degrees." It at length occurred to some enterprising Masons that it would be both pleasant and profitable to congregate a quantity of these Degrees together, to number them consecutively, beginning with the Fourth (leaving to *genuine* Masonry the questionable honor of being the First, Second and Third), and administer them to Brethren who had a fondness for high sounding titles, resplendent jewelry, and "fuss and feathers" generally, at a price. The Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, being first in the field, led off the game, and the others followed suit, and they have continued up to the present time, sometimes flourishing, sometimes nearly dormant, their good or ill success chiefly depending upon the states of the times, that is, as to whether money was plenty or scarce. The Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, has been by all odds the most successful, and is at the present time by far the most widely diffused of all these Rites, but at the same time it has shown itself to be in many cases, the most intolerant and arrogant amongst them. Owing to its priority of origin, and some pretended Charter of Constitution, purporting to emanate from Frederick the Great of Prussia (which most Masonic writers of repute now consider forgeries), it