

sanction and patronage of the Kings of Scotland, who occasionally presided in person.

Thus the body ceased to be a purely building association, and gradually assumed its present aspect.

In the reign of James II, the office of Grand Master was confirmed by the Crown to the Earl of Orkney, in whose heirs and successors the office subsequently became hereditary.

In the year 1736, William St. Clair, the "last Rosslyn" being obliged to alienate his estate, and having no children, was anxious that the office of Grand Master should not become vacant at his death. He assembled the Lodge and resigned into their hands every title which he possessed to that office, and left the selection of a successor to *their own choice*.

They, by their free suffrages, elected him to be their Grand Master, and he was succeeded in 1737 by the Earl of Cromarty.

As an honorable and gratifying testimony to the *pure principles of the order*, it may be mentioned, that when the act for the suppression of seditious and treasonable societies was passed in 1797, containing a clause in which it was declared illegal for any body of men to require from their members *an oath or test* not authorized by law, *an express exemption was introduced in favor of the Lodges of Free-Masons*.

Among other illustrious names of Patrons of the Order appear King George IV, who while Prince of Wales and afterwards Prince Regent, long acted as Grand Master, and patronised the Order, even after his elevation to the Throne. Upon the death of that monarch, similar patronage was extended to the Order by King William IV:—H. R. H. the Duke of Sussex was ever the true friend and active promoter of Free-Masonry, and discharged the duties of Grand Master with untiring zeal.

Napoleon I, the immortal Washington, and a host of distinguished men have been the ceaseless advocates and Patrons of the Order of Free-Masonry, and it must flourish to the end of the world, while its Members obey its solemn, useful and enduring mandates.

Its influence is most purifying, and a good man is a *better* man from adding to his other qualities that of a true Free-Mason.

Like the stained net which whitened in the sun, Grows pure by being purely shone upon.

J. L. S.

WILLIAM MERCER WILSON,

Grand Master of Masons in Canada, was born in Scotland, Aug. 24th, 1813, and emigrated to Canada West in 1832, locating himself in the town of Simcoe, in the county of Norfolk, his present residence. Bro. Wilson was initiated into Masonry June 11th, 1840, in St. John's Lodge, (now Norfolk Lodge), and was passed and raised July 9th, in the same year. The following December he was chosen Ju-

nior Warden, and had the high honor, for so young a Mason, of delivering the address at the public installation of the officers on St. John's day, 27th same month. This address was so highly estimated, that it was subsequently published by the Lodge. At the annual election, in Dec., 1842, he was elected Master, and, with but few interruptions, held that honorable position for nearly ten years. In June, 1847, a splendid gold jewel was presented to him by his Lodge for his efficient services; and, on the 22d of the next month, he laid the corner-stone of the Norfolk County Jail, with Masonic honors. In Capitular Masonry, Bro. Wilson received all the degrees, in King Hiram Royal Arch Chapter, at Hamilton, C. W.; and, in the Chivalric Brauch, is Prov. Grand 2d Captain of the Prov. Grand Conclave of Canada.

The Earl of Zetland, Grand Master of England, having, by his patent, revived the Prov. Grand Lodge of Canada West, Sir Allen MacNab, the Prov. G. Master, in June, 1848, appointed Bro. Wilson G. Pursuivant; and, at the laying of the foundation stone of the Town Hall at St. Catharine's, on the 30th Oct. following, he, by special appointment, acted as G. Orator. His address was published, by order of the Prov. Grand Lodge, in Pamphlet form, whilst the newspapers of the day also published it in full. In the Prov. Grand Lodge, Bro. Wilson was a constant attendant, and an active participator in its proceedings, frequently being called upon to fill important stations in the absence of the proper officers.

The Agricultural Society of Canada having appointed him a delegate to the Great Exhibition in London, in 1851, he visited England, and, whilst there and in France, he frequently visited the Lodges, and returned to Canada with a deeper veneration for the Order and a higher estimate of the value of Masonry. On his arrival home, he was honored by a public reception.

On the 11th Oct., 1855, a Convention of Lodges was held at Hamilton, C. W., to express their dissatisfaction with the mother Grand Lodge and adopt measures for the best interests of the Canadian Craft. The result of their deliberations was the formation of the Independent "Grand Lodge of Canada," of which Bro. Wilson was elected first Grand Master, and has since, by successive re-elections, retained that dignified station. About an equal number of the Canadian Lodges, however, did not join at that time in the movement, and, until Sept. 9th, 1857, sustained their Provincial Organization, when they formed themselves into another independent body, and styled it the "Ancient G. Lodge of Canada," under the G. Mastership of Sir Allen MacNab. The differences between the two organizations were most happily adjusted in July, 1858, Bro. Wilson presiding over the United Craft; and we have no hesi-

tation in saying that Canada never before had so efficient an officer.

Bro. Wilson, as a speaker, is fluent, and his language so far above mediocrity as to entitle him to the rank of an orator. His gestures are graceful, and his voice, at all times, well modulated. In the social circle, and we speak from personal knowledge, his manners are winning, and he possesses that happy faculty of entertaining a numerous party, without at all appearing to monopolize the conversation. Bro. Wilson brought into the county of Norfolk its first printing press, and, for some time, edited the *Norfolk Observer*. In acknowledgement of the services rendered by him in the outbreak of 1837, when he commanded a troop of cavalry, the Government appointed him Clerk of the Peace, and also Clerk of the County Court, which offices he still retains. He has been raised to the rank of Lieut. Colonel of the Militia of the Province, and is, among those not Masons, widely known as Colonel Wilson, and highly esteemed.

THE NINE GREAT TRUTHS IN MASONRY.

(From the *American Quarterly Review of Freemasonry*.)

THERE are nine GREAT TRUTHS which are at the foundation of Freemasonry—truths which it is its mission to teach—and which, as constituting the very essence of that sublime system which gives to the venerable institution its peculiar identity as a science of morality, it behoves every disciple diligently to ponder and inwardly to digest.

The First Great Truth in Masonry is this:

No man hath seen God at any time. He is One, Eternal, All-Powerful, All-Wise, Infinitely Just, Merciful, Benevolent, and Compassionate Creator and Preserver of all things, the Source of Light and Life, co-extensive with Time and Space; who thought, and with the Thought, created the Universe and all living things, and the souls of men: THAT IS—THE PERMANENT; while everything beside is a perpetual genesis.

The Second Great Truth in Masonry is this:

The soul of man is immortal; not the result of organization, nor an aggregate of modes of action of matter, nor a succession of phenomena and perceptions; but an EXISTENCE, one and identical, a living spirit, a spark of the Great Central Light, that hath entered into and dwells in the body; to be separated therefrom at death, and return to God who gave it: that doth not disperse or vanish at death, like breath or smoke, nor can be annihilated; but still exists, and possesses activity and intelligence, even as it existed in God, before it was enveloped in the body.

The Third Great Truth in Masonry is this:

The impulse which directs to right conduct, and deters from crime, is not only older than the ages of nations and cities, but coeval with that Divine Being who sees and rules both heaven and earth. Nor did Tarquin less violate that eternal law, though in his reign there might have been no written law at Rome against such violence; for the principle that impels us to right conduct, and warns us against guilt, springs out of the nature of things. It did not begin to be law when it was first written, but when it originated, and it is coeval with the Divine Intelligence itself. The consequence of virtue is not to be made the end thereof; and laudable performances must have deeper roots, motives, and instigations, to give them the stamp of virtues. If a man shall lay down as the chief good that which has no connection with virtue, and measure it by its own inter-