

INSTALLATION OF THE PRINCE OF WALES.

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From the London Times, April 29.

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF WALES was installed as Grand Master of English Freemasons yesterday, at the Royal Albert, Hall with great magnificence. The traditions of Freemasonry carry back the history of the Craft to a period antecedent to the building of Solomon's Temple, and represent the Wise King as having himself filled the office which the heir to the Throne of Great Britain has now been called to occupy. Even if we accept these traditions, there has never, from the time of Solomon until now, been such a gathering of the Masonic brotherhood as that of yesterday—a gathering unequalled alike in the numbers and the social *status* of those who took part in it, and in the magnitude of the arena in which it was held. The doors of the Hall were opened at one o'clock for the admission of those brethren who had been fortunate enough to obtain tickets; and long before that hour the approaches were crowded by a continuous stream of vehicles. The skill with which the entrances to the different parts of the hall have been designed can never be more signally illustrated than by the fact that, in the short space of an hour and a half, some 10,000 Freemasons entered the building, assumed the clothing distinctive of their several degrees and rank, and proceeded to the seats allotted to them, without a single instance of confusion or disturbance having occurred. The interior of the hall had been specially prepared for the occasion, and the central path up the arena, leading from the entrance to the throne, which was placed beneath the organ, was covered by a carpet of harmonious color and masonic design, the gift of a brother of the Craft. On the south and east of the arena were chairs for the two chief officers of the Grand Lodge; and the central space was divided into four blocks, leaving clear pathways between them. By half-past two all the brethren who were not officially engaged in the work of the day had taken their places, wearing masonic clothing, which, besides their aprons, consisted in most cases of a broad collar of light blue silk, while some, who were entitled to wear collars of crimson, were arranged so as to border the pathways, and to form a "thin red line" in front of the blue. In the amphitheatre, the tiers of boxes, and the balcony, the light blue collars were everywhere predominant, relieved always by the background of crimson furnished by the hangings and decorations, and sometimes by the scarlet uniform of some member of a military lodge, or by the purple clothing of some advanced brother of the Craft. To the right and left of the organ, space was reserved for the Grand Officers and for distinguished visitors, among whom Prince Christian and deputations from various foreign lodges were conspicuous. Shortly after half-past two the Pro-Grand Master, the Earl of Carnarvon, was ushered into the hall by a procession, which, as he took his seat on the throne, filed right and left to occupy reserved places, and to complete the spectacle. The Pro-Grand Master then performed the ceremonies necessary to convert the assemblage into a meeting of the Grand Lodge, and the Minute of the Prince's election as Grand Master having been read and confirmed, Garter King-at-Arms formed and headed a procession which went to meet His Royal Highness. The Duke of Connaught had already seated himself near the Pro-Grand Master, and had been warmly received; but when the Prince entered the Hall, the vast assemblage rose as one man, and regardless for the moment alike of Masonic order and of the ceremonies of the Craft, greeted him with such applause as even his experience at public assemblages could seldom have heard equalled. The Prince was conducted up the arena to a chair on the left of the Pro-Grand Master, and before seating himself he bowed repeatedly in response to the plaudits of the brethren. He then went through the forms prescribed by the Masonic ritual, and was duly inducted into his throne, the enthusiasm of the assembled Freemasons once again outstripping the proper order of the ceremonial, and finding vent in cheers with which the building rang again.

Garter King-at-Arms, who holds also the high Masonic office of Grand Director of Ceremonies, then proclaimed His Royal Highness in due form, and called upon the brethren to salute him in Masonic fashion. This being done, the Earl of Carnarvon rose from the seat to which he had retired, and according to the ancient custom, addressed the new Grand Master on the duties of his office. He said:—

Your Royal Highness, Most Worshipful Grand Master,—It has been from time immemorial the custom, when any master of the Craft was placed in this chair, to remind him of the duties that he then undertook, though it is unnecessary that I should remind your Royal Highness, who is so conversant with all the affairs of the Craft, of the whole of those duties. That our time-honored custom should not entirely disappear, it will be my duty to address to you a few words on this occasion. Your Royal Highness knows well that Freemasonry possesses many titles to respect even in the eyes of the outer world. It is, first, of great antiquity—an antiquity extending into the sphere of immemorial tradition; secondly, it is known and practised in every country,