

popularity, inasmuch as the proceedings of Masonic lodges, particularly in Germany, are never given to the public. The ideas advanced by the Crown Prince in his address are the more remarkable, as the Grand Lodge of Germany is proverbially the most conservative of the three Grand Lodges of Prussia. This Grand Lodge takes particular pride in occupying, to-day, the same position in every respect, which it occupied a century ago. Other Grand Lodges have long ago discarded the idea that all and everything pertaining to the history, principles, laws and regulations of Masonry must be carefully concealed from the eye of the public. And there is now almost nothing, if we except the ritual, but what is accessible to him who desires to investigate it. The result of these investigations is readily perceived in this country, particularly in the immense increase of lodges and members, and the fear is not unfrequently expressed by Masons that the great danger that now threatens the fraternity is a too great popularity.

The Grand Lodge of Germany, at Berlin, is not, as might be inferred from its title, the Grand Lodge of the whole of Germany, but simply one of the three co-ordinate bodies which the Prussian government permits it is dominions. The ritual practiced by this Grand Lodge is the so-called "Swedish System," and differs in many essentials from that practiced by other Masonic bodies. It was brought from Sweden to Berlin by Von Zinnerdorf in 1776. According to this system there is an independent Inner Council or Directory, which guides and controls the affairs of the Grand Lodge. It was but the day previous to the delivery of the Crown Prince's address that the Grand Master addressed the Grand Lodge in the most orthodox strain, closely adhering to the traditions which, he said, had been brought to them a century previous from Sweden. And when the Crown Prince, who is Grand Master of Order in Prussia, made known his progressive ideas, it is said that some of the more conservative gentlemen were so much overcome by the heresies of his Royal Highness, that they have not recovered from the effect to the present day. Without, however, inquiring into the truthfulness of this report, it is nevertheless certain that the address has created quite an excitement in the Masonic circles of Germany. It was of great length, and is as remarkable for the bold positions it assumes as for its favor and liberality; the latter evidently the result of conviction. There is no doubt that the Masonic fraternity will find it as interesting as that of Germany found it startling, and we regret that we are compelled to limit ourselves to a short synopsis of it.

After an appropriate introduction, the Crown Prince remarked that the three Grand Lodges of Prussia were alike near to him, and that according to his convictions there exists but one Masonry, represented in all systems through different forms only. Explaining why Masonry conveys ideas by symbols, he said that it was possible that they may be variously interpreted, as the traditions of the Order have been handed down through various channels. The past century was not wanting in violent struggles between the different systems, but the present time witnesses a different state of affairs, of which the representatives of the various systems present were the living witnesses. He entreated the brethren present to hold firmly to the unity of Masonry, and admonished them that each should divest himself of the belief that he alone was in possession of the whole truth and the only correct form for the same; that whilst they prided themselves in possessing the most correct interpretations, they should not fail to solve the true problem of the royal art, and be influence