

Hard times and depression in all kinds of business have no doubt been felt in Masonry as well as in all other institutions. These are matters over which we have no control, and whilst we may regret, still we should not be despondent, but look forward hopefully for more prosperous times. A large increase in membership is not always evidence of the real prosperity of a Lodge. It is better to increase slowly, by admitting only those who are known to be worthy, than in times of excitement to accept any whose admission we may afterwards have cause to regret.

Before closing this brief address, I wish to tender you my most sincere thanks for the honor you did me at the Annual Communication of Grand Lodge, in February, 1878, in re-electing me in my absence from the Province, as your Grand Master.

From the nature of my business and other matters in which I have been engaged, my time has been so fully occupied during the four years which I have held the high position of Grand Master, that I regret to state I have not been able to give that attention to the discharge of the important duties appertaining to that station, which should be given. Each year I determined to devote more time to the duties of the office, but for the reasons already named, I found it impossible to do so.

I must ask Grand Lodge to accept this as my apology for the imperfect manner in which my work has been performed.

In now asking you to elect my successor, I sincerely trust your choice may fall upon one who, whilst having the good of Masonry at heart, will have sufficient time at his disposal to efficiently promote the good of the Order.

I beg to tender my hearty thanks to the Grand Secretary and to all the officers and members of Grand Lodge, for