

BROTHER HUGHAN ON THE GRAND MASTERSHIP.

At the celebration of St. John's festival at Truro, England, Bro. Hughan, the celebrated Masonic author, in response to the toast of the Prince of Wales and the other Grand Officers, said :

"It was some 33 years since they had a Royal Grand Master to preside over them, and during that time there had been great changes in Freemasonry. The election of the Prince of Wales to the Grand Mastership of English Masons, arose out of the secession of the Marquis of Ripon, the late Grand Master, to the Church of Rome. It was a rather curious fact, that just 100 years ago a very prominent Roman Catholic nominally presided over the Grand Lodge, as Grand Master, namely, Lord Petre, and at that time there were not 200,000 Masons in the world, whereas, at the time of the resignation of the Marquis of Ripon, there were over 2,000,000. Some fifty years before then, another prominent Roman Catholic was Grand Master—the Duke of Norfolk, and at that time there were not 5,000 members in the world, so that they would see how rapidly the society progressed and how impossible it was for any *one* man or *many* men to expel it from England, or, indeed, anywhere. It had always been the boast of the Grand Lodge that it was neutral as regarded religion and politics. This boast was not without foundation, as we all know. Among the names of the Grand Masters could be found several of the Royal Family. There were King William IV., George IV., and the Dukes of Sussex and Cumberland, and he was exceedingly glad to see that three sons of Her Majesty Queen Victoria (whom may God long preserve) had now become brethren of the Mystic Tie. The Prince of Wales had not only the honor of being Grand Master of the oldest Grand Lodge in the world, but also of the largest and most benevolent. These facts were sufficient to show that Freemasonry was not antagonistic to the State, for surely no one would think that the Prince of Wales sought to undermine his own throne: and as to religion and morals there were thousands of ministers of various sects belonging to the Order, thus showing that neither religion nor morality met with any injury from the true Masonic principles. Masons must congratulate themselves on having so very excellent a Pro Grand Master as the Earl of Carnarvon to preside over them, and Lord Skelmersdale, the Deputy Grand Master, who was lately installed as Provincial Grand Master of the very important province of West Lancashire, was a most zealous brother, who had helped Masonry very materially. They and others had brought it to its present dignified position. It was a society that had seen many other institutions crumble and fall away, but it was still living, fresh and vigorous.

Thus midst the ruin of revolving years,
Unhurt, unchanged, Freemasonry appears.
Its towers and monuments may fade away!
Its truth and social life shall ne'er decay."

MASONIC CURIOSITIES.

In the early part of the last century, public processions of our fraternity in London, at the annual installation of the M. W. the Grand Master, were celebrated with a parade and splendor which we can hardly realize in these sober days. They rivaled the processions of the great Lord Mayor, and in respect to the public excitement they occasioned and the occupation which they gave to gossips, probably surpassed it. These celebrations by a society whose objects were mysterious, and symbolism unusual, could not fail to give rise to frequent squibs and pasquinades from the idle and frothy wits of the town. In the year 1742, a large engraving of one of these processions appeared, so clever in execution and so outrageous in parody, that Grand Lodge from that time felt the necessity of discontinuing the annual procession in public, which was finally abolished (except in case of dispensation for special occasions) in the year 1745.

The caricature referred to was entitled, "A geometrical view of ye Grand Procession of ye Scald Miserable Masons, designed as they were drawn up over against Somerset House in ye Strand on ye 27th day of April, Anno 1742. Invented and engraved by A. Benoist, at his lodgings at Mr. Jordan's, a Grocer, ye North East corner of Compton St., Soho."

It is to be regretted that Brother Findel, in his "History," skims the surface of those times with so light a hand. Far more curious information than has come to light hitherto, will yet be found, as to the gradual disclosure of time—old symbols and historically significant notes of customs by the diligent analyst of old prints, tracts, and MSS., which remain at present an undigested mass.