

CIRCULAR FROM THE GRAND MASTER MASON OF SCOTLAND
TO THE MEMBERS OF THE GRAND LODGE.

—
FREEMASONS' HALL, EDINBURGH.

R. W. SIR,—The following notice of motion was tabled at the Quarterly Communication of Grand Lodge, on 6th November, 1871, viz.:—

Moved by the M W the Grand Master the Right Honorable the Earl of Rosslyn, and seconded by Bro. Wm. Mann, R W Senior Grand Warden, "That it is desirable that a project for the gradual extinction of the Grand Lodge debt, the augmentation and establishment of the fund of benevolence on a more permanent footing, and the building Lodge Rooms for the assembling of the brethren throughout the Provinces, be taken into consideration at the next Quarterly Communication."

"N. B. — The particulars of the project will be printed and transmitted to the various Lodges and Provincial Grand Masters in sufficient time to afford them the fullest information before the next Quarterly Communication."

In reference to the foregoing motion, I have to submit an explanation of the method by which it is proposed to accomplish the objects in view. In regard to—

1. *Grand Lodge Debt.*—This has been incurred by the erection of Freemasons' Hall, &c., for the benefit of the Scottish Craft at large, and, at the time it was incurred, it was anticipated that it would speedily be reduced and worked off. These hopes have been disappointed, and as a result the Grand Lodge is very much hindered in its progress and usefulness by this debt, and a very large sum of money, which might be used for benevolent purposes, is annually expended in payment of interest. It is therefore most desirable for the credit and welfare of the Grand Lodge, and the best interests of the entire Scottish Craft, that a strenuous effort be made to extinguish this heavy burden.

2. *Fund of Benevolence.*—This excellent scheme was instituted in 1846, and has, under the regulations then made, well served its purpose. It cannot, however, be denied that whilst standing before the world as an essentially Benevolent Society, the Grand Lodge takes but a very inferior position amongst the charitable institutions of Scotland, and considering the extension of the Craft and the many necessitous brethren and their families requiring aid and assistance, it is well worthy of the Lodges throughout Scotland to band themselves together for the extension and enlargement of the General Scheme of Scottish Masonic Benevolence.

3. *Lodge Halls throughout the Provinces.*—Experience has taught the lesson that Lodges meeting in Halls of their own, prosper more and discharge the duties of masonry better, than those which are obliged to meet in Hotels and Taverns, and when this is so generally recognized and allowed on all hands, little need be said to advocate a project which proposes by degrees to supply this acknowledged want.

It has long been considered desirable that some bond of union should exist between the members of daughter lodges under the Scottish Constitution and the respective lodges to which such members belong, connecting each lodge with its members more closely than at present. In lodges holding under the English Constitution this is done by subjecting each member to an annual payment to his lodge, and in many