

Special Communication of the Grand Lodge of Manitoba.

A Special Communication of the Grand Lodge of Manitoba, for the purpose of laying with Masonic ceremonies the corner stone of All Saint's Church, at Morris, Man., was held on Wednesday, the 7th ult. The M. W. the Grand Master, J. H. Bell, opened Grand Lodge in ample form, and a procession being formed, marched to the site of the new Church. On arriving at the place, Bro. Rev. Geo. Gardener, incumbent, offered up prayer, followed by the reading of a portion of Scripture, and the singing of an appropriate hymn, and then, after a few remarks called upon the Grand Master to lay the stone of the Temple, about to be erected to the honor and glory of God, with Masonic ceremonies. These having been duly performed according to ancient usage, the Grand Master delivered the following able and interesting address :

BRETHREN,—Beneath the vaulted canopy of Heaven, on the bosom of the broad prairie and the rising town of Morris, and with the impressive rites of our fraternity, and to the exultant swell of solemn music, we have laid the corner stone of a church designed for the worship of the ever-living God. We have poured the corn, wine and oil—our ancient emblems of plenty, joy, gladness and peace—on that stone, and placed within it the casket containing the memorial of the event and ceremonies of the day. The hour, the place and the services in which we have been engaged, carry the reflective mind across the abyss of centuries to scenes and actors in far distant lands. In the morning of time, and long before civilization had visited the world, before the races of men had emerged from their tribal relations, the sound of the Mason's labor was heard—with such implements as the forest, the spoils of the chase and the quarry afforded, they performed their allotted tasks. The earliest attempts at monumental architecture consisted of mounds of earth, solitary upright stones, tablets of rock, and circles of the same material, sometimes encircling a

large area. These rude monuments, erected at a time and by a people over whose history rests the pall of everlasting silence, are found on the plains and mountains of Europe, amid the deserts of the Orient, and in the shades of the primeval forests of America. They bear no design, device or inscription to explain their origin or purpose. We can only conjecture that they were intended to commemorate some important event, and to aid in transmitting the tradition of it to future generations. Long after the commencement of historic times such a custom prevailed, for we read in the Holy Writings that a leader of Israel placed a stone near the sanctuary where the Most High had spoken to His people and said, "Behold this stone shall be a witness unto us, for it hath heard all the words of the Lord." At last the creative genius of a mortal whose name and birth-place is now unknown, with an inspiration almost divine, discovered a mode of transmitting the dull ores of the earth into lustrous metals, and fashioned them into tools and implements of labor. The light that shone from the first forge of pre-historic ages was one of the grandest illuminations this world has ever witnessed. With the Iron Age architecture assumed the exactness of a science, while it retained all the graces of an art. In the valley of the Nile we find the earliest achievements of architectural genius—efforts, which in grandeur and massiveness, stand unrivalled, and which may endure till time shall be no more. What mechanical agencies were employed in their construction, or what tools were used in tracing inscriptions which are carved on their walls, are mysteries which the researches of science have failed to solve. The great pyramid of Ghizeh, far higher and vaster than any edifice which modern art has built, carries the imagination beyond the period of authentic history into the twilight of tradition, when the place whereon we stand was probably an inland sea, when our continent was peopled by nations that have vanished like shadows from the earth, before the Israelites had placed the oracles of God near the waters of Siloa. Ages before civilization had dawned on the banks of the Tiber, or the shores of Greece, this pyramid and other tombs and Temples of the Nile had witnessed the silent march of the centuries as they sped onward to the eternity of the past—hundreds of generations of men have toiled and passed away; empires have arisen, flourished and died; creeds, systems and dynasties have disappeared, leaving no trace on the sands of time; islands have emerged from the depth of the ocean, and sank beneath its wave; flaming worlds have shone in the firmament and wandered from their orbits into night and chaos, and yet, amid all changes and revolutions, these