

"the M.W.G.M." He said he took the liberty of coupling these two toasts, not on account of time, but because this was the first occasion on which they had the opportunity of including two other members of the Royal Family otherwise than the Prince of Wales in Grand Lodge. The Brethren had been told by the Pro Grand Master the reason the Grand Master was not present; and the brethren all regretted his absence; but when they knew that he had gone abroad for the benefit of his health, and that being abroad was doing him good, they would not regret his absence. The Princess of Wales was also abroad, but he hoped we should soon see her bright, genial face again amongst us. Her Royal Highness had endeared herself to us, he believed, more than anyone thought it possible for any one woman to do. Not to dwell any longer on this subject, he would only add that it was a great day for Freemasonry when they saw three Princes of the blood Royal occupying the three first chairs in Grand Lodge. They were not present, but that was not their fault. The Duke of Connaught was now occupied with his duties in Ireland, and it was utterly impossible that he should have come to-day among the brethren, and he believed he would be in London only for ten days this season. Prince Leopold likewise was not present, for the reason that he was not in that state to take any liberty with his health. The brethren all wished his health was in better order. Although these two Princes were not present they both had their hearts in Masonry, and both wished themselves with the brethren.

Lord Skelmersdale, in proposing "The Health of the R.W. the Pro Grand Master," said the brethren had seen in Grand Lodge how sorry his lordship was to leave them, and for his (Lord Skelmersdale's) own part he knew Lord Carnarvon had the fullest intention to be present. It was only within a very short time before the opening of Grand Lodge that he found it would be impossible to remain. There was no better Mason in England, no man who more thoroughly had Freemasonry at heart and who wished to do good to it and encourage it in every possible way.

Lord De Tabley proposed "The Health of the R.W. the Deputy Grand Master."

Lord Skelmersdale in reply said it gave him great pleasure to be present, but at the same time great pain, for he had made up his mind to sit still, enjoy a good dinner, hear some good speeches and some good singing, and have nothing to say. But he was placed in the position of chairman suddenly, and he had nothing to do but to ask the brethren's forgiveness for his shortcomings. He had little to say about himself, but what he would say was that he congratulated the brethren presiding and the Craft generally on the way in which the Order was progressing and increasing. He knew it in more ways than one. He knew it in his own province of West Lancashire where it had become almost unwieldy. He knew it in Grand Secretary's office, because he had to sign his name a great many times, and Bro. Hervey's postage bill must be very large. The brethren knew they were prosperous, and they showed that they felt it by the munificent gift they made the other day to the Life-boat Institution that would be a lasting record of the gratitude of the Freemasons of this country for the safe return of the Prince of Wales from a foreign country. He was happy to-day that the Committee appointed to confer with the Secretary of that Institution as to the site of the lifeboats would very soon make their report, and he would say without hesitation that the places selected were those which he thought every one would agree were the best suited for the placing of lifeboats. Coming unprepared for the position of Chairman it was difficult for him to make a Masonic speech, but he might say that the brethren would not differ from him when he said that he