

adding very much, as the reader will readily concede, to the beauty and attractions of the scene. The pillars were each ornamented with Prince of Wales plumes, and at one side of the hall was the piano, placed there for the accompaniments to the musical part of the evening's entertainment. Long before Grand Lodge had risen, the tables were pretty well filled by those who, having tickets, and being unable to obtain admission to Grand Lodge, had wisely devoted the time to discovering the places allotted to them at the tables—the places were all allotted by ticket—and taking possession of them. Some disappointment was felt when it was ascertained that the Prince of Wales did not intend to remain for the banquet, and there was also a feeling of very great regret that the new Grand Master was also, because of the terrible circumstances of his brother-in-law's death, compelled to absent himself. The veteran Grand Master, the Earl of Zetland, occupied the chair, and he was supported by such a body of influential Masons, as has seldom been collected together on one platform on any similar occasion. The dinner was, like all other dinners, a scene of considerable confusion, until the cloth was removed; and the difficulty of hearing at the further end of the room, made it little better even when the toasts were being proposed. Here the custom is to have a toast master, who stands behind the chairman, calls order when the toast is to be given, announces it when it has been given, and leads the cheering. The toast master, on this occasion, had evidently occupied the position before, for I have seldom seen anyone more perfectly satisfied with himself. As to his real value, however, opinions may differ. For my own part, I cannot conceive a plan better adapted to prevent a hearty response. Except in the case of the Earl of Zetland's own health, proposed by the Earl of Dalhousie, when the company literally broke loose from the restraints of the toast master, and cheered as they felt, there was not, during the whole evening, a hearty spontaneous outburst, such as I have been accustomed to hear on like occasions in Canada. The toasts were the ordinary ones on such occasions—the speeches upon them, the ordinary speeches; and it is not therefore necessary to refer to them here. But the feature of the evening was the music. A number of lady and gentlemen vocalists had been specially retained, and under the direction of W. Bro. Coward, the Grand Organist, they sang some very beautiful selections. The banquet was over about half-past ten, and then such as desired repaired to the Grand Hall, where a concert was given, some very beautiful music being charmingly rendered. In the various anti-rooms during the evening, were served tea and coffee, the splendid drawing-room being especially appropriated for the ladies for this purpose.

Altogether the festival was a most magnificent affair, to have been present at which, I shall always regard as a red letter event in my masonic life.

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