

GRAND LODGE OF IRELAND,

HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF ABERCORN was, on January 6, installed Grand Master of the Freemasons of Ireland, an office held for over 50 years by the late Duke of Leinster. The ceremonial was held in the Masonic Hall, Molesworth Street, and was invested with all the pomp and pageantry which the Order could impart to it. All the Grand Officers and a numerous host of Masters and Past Masters of Lodges, including many representing the provinces, were present in full Masonic costume, with the decorations of the several ranks, and formed a brilliant assemblage. On the arrival of his Grace from the Vice-regal Lodge, he was conducted by the Deputy Grand Master (Brother Shekleton) and the Grand Officers, to the small lodge room, where he was formally installed as Master of the Grand Master's Lodge. They then proceeded to the Grand Lodge room, where the lodge was opened in due form, and the Grand Master-elect was inducted to the dais, while a Masonic march was played on the organ.

After prayer by the Grand Chaplain, his Grace knelt, and the obligation of his office having been administered to him, he was invested by the Deputy Grand Master with the official insignia, and conducted to the throne, while the Duke of Connaught's Grand March was played on the organ. A selection was also sung from a Masonic ode especially composed for the occasion. The Director of the Ceremonies, Bro. St. George, then proclaimed his Grace, amid a flourish of trumpets, declaring, with impressive formality, all his titles, and, last of all, that of Grand Master of the Ancient and Honorable Order of Free and Accepted Masons of Ireland. The proclamation was followed by the enthusiastic cheers of the Assembly, and Bro. Shekleton, Deputy Grand Master, on the part of the Order, congratulated his Grace on his acceptance of the office. In the course of his address, he said:—

"It was a matter of great satisfaction to us that your Grace was enabled to accept the office for which you were selected by the numerous and enthusiastic suffrages of your Irish brethren; selected not from any political motives—for all who hear me know that when we cross the portals of this building we Masons discard considerations of party, and remember only that we are members of a brotherhood, linked together by ties of universal charity and love, knowing no distinction of class or creed,—but selected as an Irish nobleman, who has been neither ashamed nor afraid to reside among us, and who, both in private life and while discharging high and responsible functions, has obtained the respect and esteem not merely of those who entertain the same religious and political views as your Grace, but of those who are most diametrically opposed to them. To be called upon in such a way as your Grace has been to preside over a society so widely diffused and so influential as the Masonic body, is unquestionably an honor of which any one, no matter how exalted in rank, might well be proud. Your Grace has been elected in succession to one whose memory is, and will, I trust, be ever cherished among us—one who for a period exceeding the span of most men's lives, ruled over our Order with mild and courteous sway. We cannot, in the course of nature, anticipate so prolonged a tenure of office from your Grace, but we most fervently trust that the bond of union which has this day been cemented between your Grace and the Masons of Ireland may not soon be severed, and we can assure your Grace that though the office of Grand Master is an annually elected one, so long as your Grace is willing to preside over us you need not apprehend any desire for change on the part of your constituents."

His Grace was saluted according to ancient usage, amid the cheering of the whole Assembly, with great enthusiasm.

The Grand Master, in returning thanks for the honor conferred upon him, expressed his sense of the responsibility which it involved, especially when he recalled the memory of the late Grand Master, to whose loss he referred in terms of the deepest regret, warmly eulogizing his administration of the office and his distinguished character. His Grace said it would be his earnest desire to follow the example so worthily set by his predecessor, and to use every endeavor in his power to maintain the dignity of the Grand Lodge and to advance the great and important influence which Freemasonry exercised towards mankind. His connection with the Order was of no recent date. It was now 43 years since he was admitted into the Apollo University Lodge in Oxford, and the course upon which he then entered as a novice culminated in the honor now conferred upon him. His Grace then added:—

"It has not needed that long experience to teach me what you all know, and what has been so well expressed to-night—the great objects of Freemasonry. We know that its objects are not political, (hear, hear); that they are not confined to any denomination or to any sect, (hear hear); but, that as a widely-spread community for the extension of human sympathy and human brotherhood, it has been the means of embracing myriads of men of all nations and of all creeds in one common bond of amity. (Hear, hear," and applause.) Brethren, it is not necessary for me in this