

Masons of Victoria on Monday, 4th May, was in every sense a splendid success. The ceremonial took place at the Town Hall, Melbourne, and the magnificent and stately interior was for the time being transformed into a vast Grand Lodge room. The doors were opened at 3 o'clock, and long before the hour of tiling, a quarter past four, the building was filled with an assemblage comprising the *élite* of the Craft, there being also a very large number of Master Masons present.

The Most Worshipful installing Grand Master, Brother Chief Justice Way, addressed the Grand Master. He said:—Most Worshipful Grand Masters and Brethren,—Seven years have passed away since we met in this hall to enthrone the First Grand Master of Victoria, and to place in his hands the emblems of his authority which he has since used so beneficially, so wisely, and so well. None of us who were then present can ever forget that historic occasion, that impressive ceremonial, when the representatives of the lodges belonging to the four constitutions then working in this colony paid homage to their first Grand Master, when Masonic union was accomplished and the fully constituted United Grand Lodge of Victoria became one of the ruling Grand Lodges of the world. And now we are met again for a like purpose we have no reason to regret the step that was then taken. The objects you had in view have been achieved. The Craft has been consolidated and enlarged. It has been brought under one central administration, and it is now in reality as well as in name a United Brotherhood. Remembering the unprecedented financial difficulties which this colony has had to encounter, and from which she is happily recovering; and remembering also that it is not the practice of the Craft to invite recruits to its ranks, the increase in the number of lodges and of members strikingly evidences the success of the union. The number of lodges then stood at 137—now it is 40 more, or 177. The

membership at the union was 6,000. To-day—in spite of over 7,300 resignations, deaths, and exclusions—the subscribing members number above 8,500, or nearly 50 per cent. more than at the date of the union. The stream of relief also has flown on with expanded volume. Nearly £10,000 has been distributed by the Board of Benevolence during the last seven years, and this independently of the relief afforded by private lodges and individual Masons. May I pause, then, to congratulate M.W. Bro. Coppin—the veteran leader of the union cause in Victoria, on this signal triumph of the principles which he advocated persistently and courageously through good report and through evil report for so many years. And there is equal reason for satisfaction at the choice which was made of M.W. Bro. Sir William Clarke, as your first Grand Master, a choice which alone made the union possible. Again and again that choice has been ratified. Six times in as many years the votes of Grand Lodge for the Grand Mastership have been unanimously cast for the same illustrious Masor. Wise, conciliatory, and just as a ruler; upright—nay, chivalrously honorable in his dealings with his fellow men: loyal as a subject, patriotic as a citizen, distinguished alike for ingenuous simplicity of character and kindness of heart, munificent, not in his benefactions alone, but in every relationship, Sir William has won for himself year by year a still larger measure of the respect, the confidence, the gratitude, and the love of his brethren of the Craft. Although in Australia we have hitherto adhered to the English rule of re-electing our Grand Masters as long as they are willing to retain office; yet during the seven years of Sir William Clarke's masonic rule in Victoria there have been repeated changes in the occupancy of the Grand Master's throne in the adjacent territories. In New South Wales—owing to Lord Carrington's and Lord Jersey's successive departures, and the lamented death of Sir Robert