

to be again and again brought forward before its final accomplishment. And an application of this pungent, but exact, criticism was found in the history of these new buildings. The matter was permitted to lie over until a Grand Lodge on March 5th, 1862, a report from the Board of General Purposes re-producing the resolutions of December 1st, 1850, requested authority from Grand Lodge to appropriate a portion of the property for a tavern, and after discussion, the question was referred back to the Board to consider the appropriation of the property to Masonic purposes or otherwise. A sub-committee was formed, and their report was presented to Grand Lodge June 4th, 1862, adopting the principle of isolating the Masonic structure for a tavern, and enumerating the accommodation required by the Craft. After much discussion and opposition the report was adopted, and it was agreed that plans should be prepared and estimates made to carry out the resolution. At the next Grand Lodge, in September, 1862, the law of the Book of Constitutions had to be amended to allow of power being delegated to a special committee of seven members to consider and specify the requirements of the proposed new building. Ultimately at the following Grand Lodge, December 3rd, 1862, the Committee were appointed, but it required three months more delay to advertise for plans and to buy up certain unexpired leases. However, at Grand Lodge, June 3rd, 1863, it was reported that twenty designs had been sent in, illustrated by 200 drawings. These had been submitted to the inspection of the Craft at St. Martin's Hall. The scheme required a Masonic Temple, apart from the large dining hall, lodge rooms, and offices for the Craft, and a tavern ministering to, but totally separate from, the Masonic portion. It was stated that putting the cost of building and furnishing at its maximum, an outlay of £45,000 might be required. This was to be provided by £20,000 then standing to the credit of the fund of General Purposes, and £25,000 to be borrowed of the Fund of Benevolence at 4 per cent. interest, in lieu of $3\frac{1}{4}$ per cent., which the investment of it in Consols was then yielding, and such was anticipated to be the increase of revenue, that the loan and interest was estimated to be paid off in ten years. Great discussion and opposition took place; objections of all kinds were raised. Some brethren predicted that £100,000 would have to be expended; it was asserted to be illegal and inexpedient to borrow of the Fund of Benevolence; it was contrary to practice to separate the tavern; it was even suggested that the opinion of the country brethren should be taken; in other words, that the Building Committee should consist of 100,000 members. Finally, of the three best designs, those of Bros. F. Cockerell, E. M. Barry, and S. Daukes, the first-named was chosen, and all requisite powers were given to the Building Committee. The foundation-stone of the new buildings was laid on the occasion of the Grand Festival, April 27, 1864. Bro. J. Havers is called in the inscription *Curator emeritus septem virorum preses*. The buildings were actively pushed forward, and on March 1, 1865, a portion was opened to the brethren attending Grand Lodge. The Grand Secretary's and charity offices were transferred June 7, 1865. The new hall was finished February, 1866, and at Grand Lodge on December 4, 1867, it was announced that the buildings were completed, having consumed a period of three-and-a-half years in construction; and on this occasion Bro. James Mason was prompt in proposing a cordial vote of thanks to the Building Committee. The repair and redecoration of the Great Hall, however, were committed to the same hands who had