

WARWICKSHIRE FREEMASONRY.

INSTALLATION OF THE PROVINCIAL GRAND MASTER.

With an elaborate and dignified ceremonial befitting the occasion, Mr. George Beech was, in the Birmingham Town Hall, on Monday afternoon, duly installed as Prov.G.M. of Warwickshire Freemasons, in succession to the late Marquis of Hertford. It seldom happens in the annals of modern Masonry that such an honour is conferred upon an untitled member of the Craft, and so far as Warwickshire is concerned one has to travel back to the year 1792 to find a commoner as head of the province.

The I.M. was the Rt. Hon. Lord Ampthill, G.S.C.I., G.C.I.E., Pro-G.M., and the representative of the Duke of Connaught.

By half-past 3 o'clock the Town Hall was practically filled with Freemasons, representing not only Warwickshire, but including visitors from the neighbouring Provinces of Staffordshire, Worcestershire, Shropshire, Derbyshire, and even beyond the limits of the Midland Counties.

After the singing of the well-known Masonic hymn, " Hail Eternal ! by Whose aid," Lord Ampthill addressed the assembly, pointing out that a Prov.G.M. was one of the most important officers of the G.L., inasmuch as he was the direct representative of the province to the G.M.

The newly-installed Prov.G.M. subsequently addressed the G.L., and expressed his deep appreciation of the high honour which had been conferred upon him. He succeeded three noblemen whose names were revered throughout the Midlands, and who had stood high in the councils of the Empire.

Subsequently a banquet took place at the Grand Hotel. The Pro-G.M. presided over a large company. After the loyal toast, the health of Lord Ampthill was submitted from the chair.

In reply, the Pro-G.M. attributed much of the enthusiasm which greeted the toast to the fact that he had had the good fortune to be private secretary to Mr. Joseph Chamberlain. (Applause.) Whatever their political opinions might be, they would all admit that Mr. Chamberlain was a great Englishman, and one who had deserved well of his fellow countrymen, and one of whom the city of Birmingham had every reason to feel justly proud.

Mr. Headon-Boocock proposed " The Rt. Hon. T. F. Halsey, R.W. Deputy-O.-M., and the Officers, Present and Past, of the G.L. of England." Mr. Granville Grenfel responded.

Lord Ampthill submitted the toast of " The Prov.G.M.," to which Mr. George Beech replied, and stated that the province now boasted 42 Lodges, with over 2,000 members.—" The Deputy-Prov. Q. M. " was proposed by Sir E. Letchworth, G.Sec., and acknowledged by Colonel W. F. Wyley.—Other toasts followed.