

TREE PLANTING.**A FEW REMARKS MADE BY THE OFFICIATING OFFICER AFTER THE
CONSECRATION OF LODGE MOUTOA, NO. 195.**

It was a happy thought that induced the brethren of this Lodge to plant in front of the hall a tree which has so much Masonic significance. The acacia has an ancient lineage, most of the species are evergreen, and are natives of the East. Mackey, the historian, is responsible for the statement that the acacia of Freemasonry is the *Mimosa Nilotica* of Linnaeus, a shrub which grew in great abundance in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem. Historically we are told that, according to Jewish law, no interments were permitted within the walls of the city, and it is stated that, as it was unlawful for the coheens or priests to pass over a grave, it became necessary to place marks where interments had been made, and the acacia was used for the purpose. Coincident with the acacia were the palm of the Egyptian mysteries, and the mistletoe of the Druids. The evergreen nature of the plant, united to other circumstances, should remind us of the immortality of the soul, and figuratively applied, in the present instance, should lead to the hope that Lodge Moutoa will never die, but will increase in luxuriance from generation to generation. We build not alone for the present, but also for those who follow after, and in the future days the brethren will no doubt recognise that this tree planted to-day has the greatest value in connection with the history of the Lodge, and they will laud the wisdom which has interwoven the immortal lessons of Freemasonry with its practical work. I thank you very much for according me the honour of performing a ceremony of such significance.—[Published by request.]

**AN ADDRESS READ AT THE CONSTITUTION OF LODGE
MOUTOA, No 195.**

[By R.W. BRO. J. KEESING, P.G.W.]

BRETHREN,—We learn from history that in the earliest ages men found it necessary to bind themselves together for the purposes of mutual protection from oppression and want. In those days the motive was a selfish one, each man helped his neighbours so that he himself might have their assistance in time of need. As time went on, it became recognised that man had duties to God, and that his fellow man, independently of expected benefits in return, had claims upon him for help. The first Society formed on these considerations was Freemasonry as we have it to-day, the Ancient Order of Free and Accepted Masons.

Man's sense of his responsibilities to his neighbour has grown stronger, and still more strong with the advance of civilisation. The latter, unfortunately, has increased the evils as well as the benefits to mankind, and the temptations which beset us have increased so that now in our time there are many more roads which lead to moral and social ruin, to poverty and distress, than our ancestors had to fear and compete with. The duties which devolve upon our honourable association have developed and become more important, our field of labour has become more extensive, and it is for us to see that we are equal to the demands of our age, that we do not shirk our responsibilities, but working in the name of God, and praying for His assistance, let us boldly advance to meet the evils of the day; let us use the intelligence God has given us for the benefit and uplifting of our fellow men.

It is thus only that we can justify our existence in these days when education is valued, and development and cultivation of intellect is appreciated. If we are content with merely assisting our brethren in a monetary sense, and relieving the wants of our aged and indigent, then there is no need of our pomp and grandeur, nor is there necessity for our expensive machinery. We must recognise that the world is in need in other directions, and that we are the organisation upon which it depends under God for its salvation.

Brethren, you are well acquainted with the Divine and humane sentiments which are promulgated by our beautiful ritualistic service. I think, therefore, you will agree that I am justified upon this rare and special

occasion in endeavouring to awaken in your minds a realisation of the enormous powers for good possessed by the Masonic fraternity throughout the Universe.

Unfortunately, the exigencies of the conditions of our civilisation cause to be engaged in purely commercial and money-hunting occupations many of the strongest minds and brightest intellects of our communities. Nevertheless, the survival of our unselfish association, and the comprehensive membership we can boast of, are convincing evidence that the hearts and souls of numberless intelligent men are still sufficiently free to allow them to use their endeavours in the cause of God and humanity. When it is remembered that in every country there are large numbers of Freemasons, many of them influential and in high places, does it not seem remarkable that the world is still so far from settling the problem of universal peace ? Freemasonry to my mind is a mission. It is not only in this enlightened age a combination of men for their own good alone, but its mission is to diffuse the light of wisdom, aid the strength of reason, dispense the beauties of virtue, and lessen the aggregate of human misery and vice.

I have no doubt that the majority of our Freemasons practice these duties as individuals, to the best of their ability, and in accordance with the teachings of the Craft; but the question arises, does the function of Freemasonry end here ? Unity we know is strength, and if the Craft of the various civilised countries were to hold a great convention and decide to unite their powers in an effort to do so, they might arrive at a solution of this, the world's greatest problem : " On earth peace, goodwill towards men." In some countries, especially in America, great conventions are held, and no doubt with good results as far as they go, but these are to a great extent limited to the inhabitants of the country in which they are held. Think what would be the possible results of a world-wide International Convention of Freemasons. It will be said that the greatest diplomats of the age have been engaged upon this subject. Is it not a fact, I ask, that the great efforts of these experts have been hampered by the ambition and interests of the nations they represented ? I say that it must necessarily be so when it is a question of dealing between Governments. The only possible way in which may be attained the great desideratum is through an internal influence acting upon the very pulse of the people themselves, and there is no organisation existing so able as our Craft to initiate and foster so high, so holy, and so important a movement. Independently of this, the greatest message of our age, there are innumerable directions in which good should result from such a convention as I suggest. Brotherly love, with the grace of God, is claimed by us to be the cement which binds together in one indissoluble bond the fraternity of Freemasons. What if in this way we put our claim to the test. Such love is the greatest lever the world has known, and God alone knows what great good might result from the trial. Brethren, you cannot cultivate too high an ideal in connection with Freemasonry, nor over-estimate its power for good, providing we stand together and remain united.

Brethren of this new Lodge, you have the best wishes of all who are assembled here, as well as of the members of the Craft throughout the Dominion. The greatest good we wish you is that each and everyone of you will be blessed with strength of character and ability to perform your duties so that the virtues of a true Freemason may grow upon you. That you will be proud of the good you do, and make proud of its youngest daughter the G.L. that has licensed your existence.

CONSTITUTION AND DEDICATION OF LODGE MOUTOA, No. 195.

The ceremony of the Constitution and Dedication of Lodge Moutoa, Gonville, Wanganui, No. 195, which took place at 3 p.m. on 24th April last, was attended by a large number of brethren, the opportunity of witnessing an event of such an impressive character being one that was taken full advantage of. The excellent fraternal relations which exist between the brethren of the New Zealand and English Constitutions in Wanganui was evidenced by the presence of the W.M. and many P.Ms. and brethren of Lodge Tongariro, No. 705, E.C., with whom was also the Deputy-D.G.M. of Wellington, E.C., R..W. Bro. G. W. Palmer.

Owing to the near approach of G.L. Communication, and the consequent pressure of business, the M.W.G.M. and the M.W.G.Sec. were unable to visit Lodge Moutoa for the occasion. M.W. Bro. H. J.

Williams, P.G.M., was therefore appointed to act as Deputy-G.M., and the beautiful and solemn service was made more impressive by the dignity and earnestness with which he officiated. Assisting M.W. Bro. Williams were R.W. Bro. T. A. Peterkin (Wellington), Prov.G.M. ; R.W. Bro. J. A. Nash (Manawatu Kil.), S.G.W. ; R.W. Bro. J. H. Keesing, P.S.G.W., Acting-J.G.W. ; V.W. Bro. Rev. T. Porritt, P.G.Chap., Acting-G.Chap. ; W. Bro. J. T. Muir, P.J.G.D., Acting G.D. of C.; W. Bro. G. G. Bullock, Acting-G.Sec.; W. Bros. D. McFarlane and W. A. Veitch, Acting-G.Ds.; W. Bros. R. Mathison and H. A. Price, Acting G.Ss. ; and W. Bros. H. A. Purser and H. Price, acting as I.G. and O.G. respectively. The musical portion of the ceremony was rendered by a choir under Bro. A. C. Lennard, Who also acted as Organist.

G.L. having entered, the Lodge was opened in due form by the Dedicating Officer. After the usual devotional exercises, the Acting-G.S. read the petition for the formation of Lodge Moutoa and the Charter authorising its existence, the latter naming W. Bro. Duncan Munro (formerly W.M. of Lodge Ruahine, Woodville) as the first W.M., Bro. J. W. Deem as the first S.W., and Bro. J. D. W. McBeth as the first J.W. Then followed the beautiful ceremony of dedicating the building to the glory of God and the practice of Freemasonry, which made a deep impression on all present, no less by its beauty than by the reverential spirit in which it was performed. The D.G.M. then formally declared Lodge Moutoa duly constituted, and after the Patriarchal Benediction, and an address by RW. Bro. Keesing, the Lodge was called off till the evening.

On the brethren going to refreshment, an interesting little ceremony was carried out, being the planting of an acacia tree in rear of the Temple as a memorial of the occasion, particulars of which will be found elsewhere in this issue.

There was another large attendance in the evening for the installation ceremony, which was carried out by the Prov.G.M., R.W. Bro. T. A. Peterkin. The G.L. officers were as before, save that W. Bro. G. S. Gordon replaced W. Bro. Veitch, whose public duties had called him elsewhere. The ceremony of placing W. Bro. D. Munro in the chair was carried out with all the usages sanctioned by ancient custom, the W.Ts. in the three degrees being presented by W. Bros. G. G. Bullock, A. G. Bignell, and W. J. Treadwell respectively, while the addresses to the W.M., the Wardens, and the brethren were delivered by R.W. Bros. T. A. Peterkin, J. A. Nash, and J. H. Keesing. The officers for the ensuing year were invested by W. Bro. D. McFarlane, as follows :—D.M., W. Bro. C. H. Bowater ; S.W., Bro. J. W. Deem ; J.W., Bro. J. D. W. McBeth ; Chaplain, Bro. Rev. D. Calder ; Treas., W. Bro. N. P. Svenson ; Sec., Bro. F. Symes ; S.D., Bro. J. Fowler ; J.D., Bro. G. L. McLean ; Org., Bro. L. Craig ; I.G., Bro. F. Bourne ; Tyler, Bro. J. C. Arnold ; S.S., Bro. F. Stevens ; J.S., Bro. A. McCune.

The labours of the day being closed in due form, the brethren then adjourned to the Gonville Town Hall, where the lady friends of Lodge Moutoa had excelled themselves in providing a bounteous supper, the "Fourth" being very enjoyable. The usual loyal and Masonic toasts were offered, that of "Lodge Moutoa" being proposed by M.W. Bro. Williams in a very happy, and at the same time encouraging, speech. In replying, the W.M. gave an interesting resume of the events leading up to the formation of the Lodge, and explained why the name " Moutoa " had been chosen. " Moutoa," he said, perpetuated an important event in the history of Wanganui. In 1865, a band of rebel natives was on its way to attack the town, but they were met on the island of Moutoa, on the Wanganui River, by the friendlies, who completely defeated them, and thus saved the whites from massacre. By choosing " Moutoa " as the name of the Lodge they would be perpetuating that event, and seeing that the name had meant so much to Wanganui in the past, he trusted that it would also mean a great deal in the future in helping to encourage its citizens in the ways of charity and virtue. Actuated at its outset by so commendable a spirit, there should be no doubt that Lodge Moutoa, starting under such favourable auspices, will become a not inconsiderable factor for good in the Masonic life of Wanganui.