

that of the St. John's Lodge, *Philadelphia*, Penn. But in a capital work just issued by Bro. H. Sadler, entitled "*Masonic Facts and Fictions*," an extract occurs from the minutes of the Grand Lodge of England, which Bro. Lane considers refers in all probability to the No. 79 of 1731, held at "*Three Kings on Crispian Street, Spittle Fields*," London, which, on 24th of June, 1721, it was agreed to constitute. Only half the fee has been traced as paid, and the Lodge apparently was dropped after 1731. No time was lost in removing London Lodges from the roll for non-attendance, or other causes. Of course the entry in the "Pocket Companion" still remains to be explained, but I feel that the notion of that *Philadelphia* Lodge ever being on the English Roll is now rendered more unlikely than ever, by Bro. Lane's probable identification of the original No. 79. I am inclined to think that the fact of its existence was known directly or indirectly to the compiler (W. Smith), through one of Franklin's newspapers. Any way, this St. John's Lodge was actually working in and from 1731, and had on its roll of members some of the best citizens of Philadelphia. So far as Bro. Gould has been able to decide, and in his belief I entirely share, he considers this Lodge had its origin from a kind of "time immemorial" usage, just as with other Lodges in America and Europe. This view may be objected to by Brethren not fully cognizant with the facts, but the more it is tested, the stronger its accuracy becomes. The four or more old Lodges that formed the premier Grand Lodge of England 1716-7; the Lodge at *Alnwick* with records from 1701; at *York* from early times; the Lodge in which Elias Ashmole was initiated in 1646; and the very ancient Lodges in Scotland, some of which have records extending from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to the present time; are all instances of the custom of holding

Lodges, so far as we can judge, without any authority or warrant other than those of usage, etc. A warrant was granted in 1736 by Price, as Provincial Grand Master of New England, to a Lodge, whose members had been in the habit of meeting for no one knows how long before at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and of whose origin we are in ignorance. On this point, Bro. Gould's noble history should be carefully consulted. Indeed, for that matter, many of the Charters issued by the Grand Lodge of England and Scotland were granted early last century, to Brethren who had for long assembled as Lodges without any authority of "constitution" as we understand the term now. They were not illegal Masonic combinations then, they only were not styled "*regular Lodges*" by the Grand Lodge, that term describing those Lodges which were enrolled in the Books of that Body and had paid the stated fee for "Constitution." Their Masonic legitimacy and knowledge were not questioned, and on their petition, due attendance, as far as circumstances permitted and payment of fees, etc., the Grand Lodges were only too pleased to turn them into "*regular Lodges*," as aforesaid. One of these, with Records from 1674, has never yet joined the Grand Lodge! I refer to the *Melrose Lodge*, Scotland. This Lodge has as much right to follow its course, as the *regular* Lodges have, only the latter cannot fraternize with the former.

3. The first *Grand Lodge* formed and at work in America, according to existing evidence, was held in Philadelphia, for the Province of Pennsylvania. When it was originated we cannot tell, nor by whom. If the Treasurer's Book of the "St. John's Lodge" was begun on June 24th, 1731, and not "written up" in the following year, the name of "William Allen, Esq., Grand Master," occurs at the former date. There are many newspaper references to this "Grand Lodge" from June 26th,