

## THE DOCTRINE OF EXCLUSIVE JURISDICTION.

We regret exceedingly that we should have missed the opportunity of seeing the Editor of our respected contemporary, the CANADIAN CRAFTSMAN, on the occasion of his recent visit to the old country, and showing him those courtesies which a visiting brother is entitled to, and which it is a pleasure and a privilege as well as a duty on the part of the brother visited to show. We should gladly have discussed with him, so far as time permitted, questions of general interest—all and singular—affecting the welfare of the Fraternity. Especially should we have been prepared to humor him to the top of his bent in considering the vexed question of Exclusive Masonic Jurisdiction, which has formed the subject of more than one article both in his and our columns. We do not imagine we should have got much further than we are now in establishing a common basis of agreement in respect of this doctrine, not because we are less open to correction than other people, but because the doctrine is essentially modern and almost exclusively American. There has always been, as far as we know, some general principle governing the interjurisdictional relations of Grand Lodges with each other, and as Bro. Chetwode Crawley, in his "Notes on Irish Freemasonry" No. II., in Volume VIII., Part 2, "Ars Quatuor Coronatorum," points out, "at the present time almost every Grand Lodge in the world has given its implicit or explicit adherence to some modification of the principle which may thus claim to that extent, and no more, the force of an Established Usage, though it can never be classed as an Ancient Landmark." But the extent to which this principle was, and outside Freemasonry in the United States and British North America still is, limited, is shown in the passage he quotes from an anonymous pamphlet published in London in 1765, and entitled, "A Defence of Freemasonry as

Practised in the Regular Lodges, Both Foreign and Domestic, under the Constitution of the English Grand Master";—"But the *English* Masons should be cautious with whom they converse, as there are many *irregular* Masons, *i.e.*, modern *Lodges* under the title of *Ancient* or *York*, who some time ago pretended to be *constituted* or *authorised* by the Grand Master of *Ireland*, who (bye-the-bye), I am credibly informed, refused to countenance them, as it would be highly absurd for one Grand Master to constitute Lodges in the Territories of another." The same writer in the same article quotes a case noted in the minutes of the Grand Lodge of Ireland in 1796, in which sundry brethren of the "Loyal Inverness Fencibles" applied for a warrant of the said Grand Lodge and were referred by it to their own Grand Lodge in Edinburgh; and though we cannot lay our hands for the moment upon the reference, we have read of a similar case in which certain Scottish brethren, residing in London, applied to the Grand Lodge of Scotland for a warrant, and were referred to the Grand Lodge in London. This principle of the territorial jurisdiction of Grand Lodge was, indeed, as Bro. Speth points out in a note on Bro. Crawley's article, established, so far as the Grand Lodge of England was concerned, in 1770, when "in acknowledging the new Grand Lodge of the Netherlands, it agreed to refrain in future from establishing any new lodges in that country, but it explicitly insisted upon the right of such lodges of its Constitution in Holland as chose to adhere to their English jurisdiction being allowed to do so undisturbed." The principle thus laid down in 1770 has been consistently followed by the Grand Lodge of England ever since, and as far as we know by the Grand Lodges of Ireland and Scotland, which have concurrent jurisdiction with it in those parts of the British Empire in which there are not recognised local Grand Lodges. In the United States of North America, each State has its Grand Lodge, whose