

in the Freemasons' Tavern, the fire could never have been confined to where it was, though the injury is very great. No part of the tavern, nor, indeed, any portion of the Freemasons' building, is injured except the Hall, and yesterday business was going on in both places as usual. Colonel Shadwell Clerke, grand secretary, Sir John Monckton, and other officers of the Grand Lodge, were early on the scene in the morning, and a message, conveying full information of the disaster, was sent to the Prince of Wales. A search shows that the fire originated in a flue from the kitchen of the hotel, under the basement, at the north-east corner of the temple, and adjoining the party wall separating it from the great hall of the tavern. It was probably smouldering for a considerable time, but once alight the dry character of the surroundings made the fire spread over the whole of the walls and roof as though they had been tinder. The Hall is insured, but the loss in articles highly prized for their associations nothing can repay.—*London Standard*, May 5.

THE GRAND LODGE OF IRELAND.

The Grand Lodge of Ireland was founded on Feb. 8, 1729, the day the foundation stone of the present Bank of Ireland (formerly Irish House of Parliament) was laid Masonically, and is the senior Grand Lodge of the world, not the "second in point of antiquity." The "second in point of antiquity" is the Grand Lodge of Scotland, which was founded Nov. 8rd, 1736. Both these Grand Lodges can prove from their records continuous and united working from these dates; also that they have always used and borne the same coat of arms from their foundation to the present day.

I am quite aware that as in England, Freemasonry existed in both Ireland and Scotland for many long years prior to 1729 and 1736; but it

was only on those dates the Grand Lodges were founded.

I am also aware that the Grand Lodge of England claims to be the premier Grand Lodge of the world, but to this title it is not entitled.* There was a Grand Lodge in England founded in 1717; but this body was split into two Grand Lodges, styled Ancients and Moderns, each granting warrants to hold lodges.

These two Grand Lodges worked in opposition until the happy union into the present Grand Lodge of England on Dec. 31st, 1813, now going on seventy years ago.

Each of these Grand Lodges had their own coats of arms, as can be seen by the frontispiece of the "Ahiman Rezon" of 1764, those of the Moderns being the same as the Grand Lodge of Ireland, those of the Ancients being the arms of the Operative, or stone, Masons.

The arms of the present Grand Lodge of England are an amalgamation of these, those of the Ancients being on the left and those of the Moderns on the right.

The history of these two English Grand Lodges and of their union on Dec. 1st, 1813, will be found in the valuable and most interesting work on the subject, "The Masonic Register," by R. W. Bro. W. J. Hughan, who also gives as a beautiful frontispiece the present arms of the Grand Lodge of England.

The Grand Lodge of Ireland by its first Constitutions of 1730 was to meet "on the four great feasts," and Grand Stewards were to arrange the festival.

The quarterly meetings were continued until Nov. 3rd, 1768, when the meetings were arranged to be held on the first Thursday of each month at seven o'clock, and the Grand Festival seems then to have ceased to be held. In 1838 the hour of meeting was changed from seven to eight o'clock, and since Nov. 1st, 1875, the meetings in August and September have been given up. This will show that the