

they took the Ashmole rite as a basis, incorporating therewith much of the Scottish form of dramatizing the work, and some of the English and Irish, to conciliate all parties, and Americanized the whole.

The form of ritual thus prepared, was presented to a Grand Assembly convened to deliberate in the matter. It was approved, and recommended to all the Grand Lodges for adoption about the year 1798. It was styled the Ancient York Rite. It was adopted in most of the States of the Northern Jurisdiction of the United States; yet some of the Grand Lodges—Pennsylvania and others—still adhere to the English rituals.

The system, usually called with us Ancient York, is in reality American; compiled from various forms to suit the requirement of the time; the definitions of York Masonry, York Rite, or Ancient York, each comprehends the system promulgated at York City in 926, and consisting of the three symbolic degrees; any slight deviation in rendering, or in phraseology, does not in the least affect its title.

If the title, Ancient York, is claimed exclusively by a portion of the craft, why not meet in a general assembly, and let all Masons in good standing have an equal voice in the deliberations,—“even to the youngest Entered Apprentice,”—as was the custom in the days of yore at the city of York; otherwise, such distinction does not belong exclusively to any one form of rendering the rituals, but is equally applicable to the whole fraternity practising the three symbolic degrees only.

The Book of Constitutions of 1738, page 196, after naming several Provincial Grand Masters, states:—“All these foreign lodges are under the patronage of our Grand Lodge of England, but the old lodge at York City, and the lodges of Scotland, Ireland, France and Italy, affecting independency, are under their own Grand Masters, though they have the same Constitutions, charges, regula-

tions, &c., for substance, with their brethren of England, and are equally zealous for the Augustan style, and the secrets of the Ancient and Honorable Fraternity.” J. H.

CEREMONIAL

Of Laying the Corner Stone of Masonic Hall, Seventy Years Ago, at Saint John, New Brunswick.

Although the ceremonies were plain and simple, your readers may be interested in learning the ways of the craft of the olden time in these matters. The particulars are taken from a report made to the then Provincial Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia, which body, at that time, held jurisdiction over the Province of New Brunswick as well.

“In Grand Lodge,
March 5th, 1817.

“The Grand Secretary laid before Grand Lodge the minutes of a temporary Grand Lodge, held at Saint John, New Brunswick, which was read, viz:—

“By virtue of a warrant under the hand and seal of the R. W. John George Pyke, Esquire, Grand Master of the Ancient Society of Freemasons in Nova Scotia, and the masonic jurisdiction thereunto belonging, dated at Halifax, the 14th day of September, in the year of our Lord 1816, and of Masonry 5816, a Grand Lodge assembled at the Exchange Coffee House, in the city of Saint John, in New Brunswick, on the 28th day of September, in the same year, for the purpose mentioned in the warrant.”

PRESENT.

The R. W. Thomas Wetmore, Esquire,
Grand Master.

“Garret Clopper, Esquire,
Deputy Grand Master.

“David Waterbury, Senior
Grand Warden.

“William Wykely, Junior
Grand Warden.

“James Hendricks, Grand
Secretary.