

wick Lodge from 1701, shows this, and is a case in point. They interpreted their oath, charges, and constitutions in a literal manner, and deemed their O.B. too sacred to be tampered with in the slightest degree. The present system of growing publicity originated with the newly pledged Masons of the Grand Lodge of London, who seem to have taken kindly to the term of Modern which the advocates and followers of the more ancient landmarks bestowed upon them. Yet, even in London, the old Craft was not very easy in its mind, for it is recorded by Bro. Jas. Anderson that in 1720 valuable documents were burned by scrupulous brethren lest they should fall into the hands of himself or the Grand Lodge. When the contending "Ancients" and "Moderns" united in 1813, new ceremonies were designed between them, and some compromise for this purpose had to be made on both sides.

I have thought that it must be interesting to many brothers to give a slight sketch of the York system as it existed from 1761-1800, and before the changes that I have just named. I find, however, after consultation with those who understand Masonic feeling, that I must greatly abridge what I had intended to say, and allude mostly to general things; the nearest resemblance to real York Masonry, I think is to be found at this day in the United States system.

There is a feeling amongst the more sceptical Masons that the late Brother Dr. George Oliver was blindly credulous, but the opinions which he appears to advocate in his later works, upon the alleged progress of the London Lectures, and their gradual cumulation destroys all value that his opinions might have had in regard to our Masonic traditions. No one now knows with any degree of certainty of what the full London Lectures consisted in, say, 1740; and if we know so little of these, we know absolutely nothing of those of York at the same date, for they undoubtedly had lectures. Nor had we any knowledge of what

the old operative and speculative Lodges further North taught their Neophytes, yet the Newcastle Company of Masons authorised a Subordinate Lodge on the 1st September, 1581, and assigned them in the *Corpus Christi* plays of the town "the burial of our Lady St. Mary the Virgin"; these plays are alluded to in 1426 and the Carpenters took the part of the "Burial of Christ." This 1581 Lodge would seem to have held the same relationship to the Newcastle Company, as the Speculative Lodge which Bro. Conder shews existed with the London Company of Masons in 1620, and perhaps some centuries earlier.

One of the most noteworthy things about York Masonry was the systematic detail by which it impressed its adherents with the idea that every item of its ceremonies had the sanction of King Solomon, and the new Initiate might have supposed that the Master in the East was the wandering Jew in *propria persona* and had witnessed with his own eyes the details which he was impressing upon the Neophyte throughout the various degrees. Solomon even initiated the freedom of builders from imposts out of which he established a Charity fund for the relief of Masons, and personally arranged the details of our secrets of recognition. Yet similar Societies to Freemasonry can be traced in various old nations before the erection of Solomon's Temple, which was a small work in comparison with some that preceded it in Egypt, India, Phœnicia, Babylon, and I think I may even say America. We may safely assume that the divisions of labour amongst the Craftsmen, mentioned in the Jewish Scriptures, is but the Hebrew translation of the same organization amongst other nations. In France, Charles Martel is alleged to have given freedom from imposts to the Masons, the Popes to the Templars.

The terms Gt. or Gd. A. of the U. or G. G. of the U., were seldom used at York, in fact only once or twice; the general terms is Almighty God; and true and living God; in this