

To Bro Richard Woof, from

S. B. Ellis,
Shetfield

The Connection between the Templars and the
Freemasons in the City of York.

A PAPER

Read before the Members of the Ancient Ebor Preceptory,

NO. 101,

ON THE 11th SEPTEMBER, 1877,

BY

E. SIR KNIGHT T. B. WHYTEHEAD, E.P.

V. D.



S. A.

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“οὕτως ἔστι τὸ θέλημα τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἀγαθοποιούντας φιμοῦν τὴν τῶν ἀφρόνων ἀνθρώπων ἀγνωσίαν.—1 PET. ii, 15.”

SIR KNIGHTS,

I do not intend at this time to do more than glance at the general History of the Order; any other course would be unnecessary, and most of our Sir Knights are doubtless well acquainted with the leading facts. A few passing allusions to its origin are, however, desirable in order to form a connected story, and to elucidate the train of events of which I propose to speak.

Founded in 1118 by a handful of Crusading Knights, with the object of affording protection to the pilgrims who visited the Temple at Jerusalem, and who bound themselves by a monastic vow to an ascetic life, this fraternity of Military Monks increased rapidly in numbers, and in a few years became one of the most powerful and wealthy of knightly organisations. Hugo de Payens was the First Grand Master, and St. Bernard Abbot of Clairvaux, himself drew up a Code of Statutes for the government of the Order. Brilliant as was the existence of the fraternity, and doughty and serviceable to the cause of the Church as were its deeds of valour, a period two centuries embraced its rise and fall. Probably no religious body ever enjoyed, for a brief term, so wide a popularity, or gained for itself so general an esteem; for the lives of the Knights bore evidence of their deep-hearted devotion, and the existence of one or two black sheep within the fold only served as exceptions to prove the rule.

At the conclusion of the last Crusade, the Moslems had made such progress that the Templars, with other Orders of Crusading Knights, were driven out of the Holy Land, and after the loss of Acre they retired to Cyprus, where Jacques de Molay was appointed Grand Master. In 1299 the Templars again captured the Holy City, but once more were compelled to relinquish the Holy ground, and finally left the scenes of their ancient glories.

And now came the time which saw the combined attack made upon them by the avaricious King of France and the unprincipled Pope who occupied the chair of Jupiter Capitolinus at Rome. In October, 1307, a general arrest of Knights Templars was made throughout France, and pressure was put upon Edward II of England to compel him to combine with the Continental Powers for the suppression of an Order which had become so wealthy and powerful as to render it a very important, and perhaps dangerous, factor in the political squabbles of those days. As I have said before, there was really no good ground of allegation

against the brethren, save that they were rich and prosperous, but false witness was abundant then, as in the days of Naboth, and hundreds of renegade scoundrels, rejected candidates for the Order, and others, were found ready to swear to the commission in secret conclave, by the Knights, of the most fearful atrocities, and the indulgence of indescribable orgies. On the strength of such accusations, the Knights were tortured, burned at the stake, and treated in the most shocking manner in the dominions of Philip le Bel and his friend the Pope. In other countries the persecution was not quite of so rigorous a kind, and usually the forfeiture of their estates contented the greed of their persecutors. Jacques de Molay, the Grand Master, was burned at the stake in Paris, and in France and England the Order was suppressed. In Portugal and Scotland the Knights found altars of refuge, and there the brethren were protected.

It is the "suppression" of the Order in our own part of England that I wish particularly to notice. In August, 1309, Clement V. sent two bulls to Archbishop Greenfield, then occupying the Metropolitan Chair of St. Peter at York, one excommunicating the Order in the Province of York, and the other commanding the Archbishop to institute an enquiry into the conduct of the Knights, in concert with the Bishops of Durham, Lincoln, Chichester, and some other leading ecclesiastics. The King of France also wrote, urging the Archbishop to action. Greenfield being a sensible, and moreover a good man, had no fancy for this office, and wrote declining to act against the Knights, and objecting to the interference of other ecclesiastics in the affairs of his Province. In 1310, the following year, however, he seems to have thought it advisable to take some step in the matter, and called a Council in May to examine the Templars then immured in York Castle. These were Knights who had been taken at their neighbouring preceptories or houses of Ribstan, Wetherby, Newsham, Templehurs, in the West Riding, Faxeflete and Wythele in the East Riding, and Fousebrigg, Westerdale, Penhill, and Cowton, in the North Riding. There were 24 of these Knights, their names being:—Wm. de Grafton (senior) Preceptor of Ribstan; Ralph de Roston, Thomas de Stannford, Henry de Kereby, Thomas de Belleby of Penhill; Robert de Langton, Wm. de la Fenne, Preceptor of Faxflete; Richard de Kesewyk, Stephen de Radenhalgh, Priest of Westerdale; Michael de Sowreby, Priest of Sorenty (Diocese of Durham); Godfrey de Arches, Preceptor of Newsham; John de Walpole, Ivo de Eton, Henry de Craven, Roger de Hugyndon, Henry de Rouclyf, Galfred de Wylton, Walter de Gaddesby, Richard de Ripon, Thomas de Thresk, Wm. de Midleton and Walter de Clifton. Their examination ended in nothing. Of course they denied the monstrous charges brought against them, such as that they worshipped a cock, a lamb, a skull, and the like, and that they blasphemed the name of the Redeemer. No doubt their ceremonies, conducted in secret, and

at night, might, especially in those days of superstition, appear to a cowan (the character in which most of the witnesses appeared) of a very suspicious and even idolatrous nature. A little later a further capture of Knights was effected by the Sheriffs, and these were also examined with no results. The names of the second batch of prisoners were:—William de Grafton (junior), John de Usflet, Edmund de Latimer, John de Poynton, Richard Engayne, Ralph de Buleford, Stephen de Stapelbrigg, and Walter le Rebel. Subsequently our wretched brethren, in the dungeons of Clifford's Tower, were examined in private by the Dean and the Arch-bishop's penancer, and their servants and retainers were examined by a commission of Clergy; but, as before, nothing was obtained, save a collection of "cock and bull" stories, such as would serve for a nursery fable book of the present day.

We can easily imagine how the excellent Greenfield was disgusted with these ridiculous inventions, nevertheless he was compelled to proceed against the prisoners, and in February, 1311, he summoned a large Provincial Council to examine into the whole matter. The result was most creditable to the good sense of the Archbishop, for the Knights, having been persuaded to submit themselves to the authority of the Council, were neither condemned to torture nor death, as in other places, but were ordered to be sent to religious houses to do penance for their errors. Here they conducted themselves with so much propriety that in 1312 they were all released. Many of them, however, preferred to remain and lead monastic lives.

And here is one point which I think should not be lost sight of in the attempt which I am about to make to link the history of our Order with that of Freemasonry in England, and especially at York. We have seen that the Archbishop of York spread his protecting wings, as it were, over the fraternity, and disposed of them in religious houses. We know that the science of Architecture or Freemasonry (synonymous terms in those days) was preserved amongst the monastic mediæval builders. We know that these Knights, undergoing penance, would most likely be ordered to perform severe menial work, such as assisting the masons. What then is more probable than that finding themselves so nearly allied in religious belief and mystic observance, the Masonic Fraternity should have taken the Knights under their fostering care, and permitted and even aided them, in secret, in their ceremonies. It is in York, I believe, that we have the oldest evidence of the connection between Templary and Masonry, and there seems to me to be a greater probability of such an association existing in York and its neighbourhood than elsewhere, for the reasons I have already set forth.

It is indisputable that the Order was "suppressed" in England, but it does by no means follow that it was extinguished. In the case of Masonry, how often has often has the Order been suppressed in Italy, and yet has it not always existed in that

land in secret? So in England with Templary, also a secret society, and made doubly secret by its very "suppression."

From this you will probably have gathered that I am in favour of the theory of a direct succession in the Order, and that I believe ourselves to be legitimate Knights of the Temple descended from the ancient Crusaders. I am disposed to maintain that theory, and, I think, with good ground. On the Continent there are several bodies claiming to be descended from the Order, but none I think with better ground than, if as good as, ourselves. There is a great gap in the history of the Order from the time of its suppression up to towards the close of the last century, but we must remember that its secrecy was essential to its existence, and that the history of Freemasonry itself is not, so far as actual records go, of a very much clearer description.

The earliest encampments on record were held at York, London, Bristol, Bath, and Salisbury, and of these the earliest minute recorded is I believe at York, the particular spot as we have seen, where the Order might have been expected to have been cherished in concealment.

Those who maintain that "Craft Masonry" has *always* upheld the doctrine of "universality" and that the High Grades are modern innovations attempted to be grafted upon the old stock, speak no doubt as they honestly think, but certainly not *ex cathedra* nor, I claim to think, according to evidence. Dr. Oliver ever maintained that Freemasonry was during "the dark ages" a Christian Order, and had only been divorced from Christianity at the revival in 1717, and I am strongly disposed to agree with him, not only because of the Christian doctrines inculcated in its teachings, so utterly opposed to the "eye for eye and tooth for tooth" code, but because, not only before 1717 but up to the end of the last century (in many instances) the name of the Redeemer was used in the craft lodge prayers.

At York, in 1780, the Grand Lodge of All England recognized five degrees in Freemasonry, the E.A., the F.C., the M.M., the R.A., and the K.T., and I will read you a copy of an old certificate still preserved in the archives of the York Lodge, which, to my mind, clearly proves this.

"GRAND LODGE OF ALL ENGLAND.

Be it known to all our Masonic Brethren throughout the whole earth that Mark Anthony Robinson, of the City of York, Yeoman, hath been initiated into our Mysteries in the undermentioned Degrees by Us particularly attested. And We recommend him (after due examination) to be received into any Lodge of Free and Accepted Maceons of the same Degrees.

Given at the City of York, under the seal of the Grand Lodge of All England, the thirtieth day of December, A.D. 1779, A.L. 5779.

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| Admitted to the first Degree on the 26th day of January, A.D. 1779. | } Francis Smith, Deputy G.M. John Coupland, Senior G.W. Thomas Bewlay, Junior G. W. |
| Raised to the second Degree on the 20th day of February, A.D. 1779. | } William Siddall, G.M. John Coupland, Senior G.W. Thomas Bewlay, Junior G.W. |
| Raised to the third Degree on the 27th day of September, A.D. 1770. | } William Siddall, G.M. John Coupland, Senior G.W. Thomas Bewlay, Junior G.W. |
| Raised to the fourth Degree, or Royal Arch Maceon, on the 27th day of Oct., A.D. 1779. | } William Siddall. John Coupland. Thomas Bewlay. |
| Knight Templar the 29th day of November, A.D. 1779. | } Francis Smith, G.M. |

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JOHN BROWNE,
Grand Secretary."

If further proof were wanting of what I assert,* that this Christian Degree was part and parcel of ancient Masonry, as recognised at this period, I think you will admit that it is to be had in the following extract, made by me from the minute books of the Grand Lodge of All England at York:—

(At an Emergency Meeting of the Grand Lodge of All England,
held Tuesday, 20th June, 1780.)

"It was ordered That the Grand Lodge of All England, comprehending five Degrees or orders of Masonry, shall from and after St. John's Day next, be assembled five times in a quarter, to wit, one night in the degree of Entered Apprentice, one night in the Fellow Craft's degree, one night in the Master's degree, one night in the degree or order of Knight Templar, and one night in the most sublime degree of Royal Arch * * ."

And now we come to a still more interesting record, taken from the same minute book (being the Grand Lodge of All England Minutes from 27th December, 1774, to 31st July, 1780):—

"GRAND LODGE OF ALL ENGLAND.

Second Night of Quarter. Friday, 18th February, 1780.

The companions of the Honorable Order of Knights Templars, assembled at the Grand Lodge Room in York, pursuant to summons.

Present :—

Sir Francis Smyth, Grand Master.
 Sir Thomas Beckwith, Grand Aid de Camp.
 Sir John Coupland, Deputy Grand Aid de Camp.
 Sir John Browne, Scribe.
 Sir John Jennings, Messenger.
 Sir John Hampston.
 Sir John Hassall.

The Grand Lodge of Knights Templars was opened and also the Royal Encampment formed and raised, And our Noble Brother and Companion Sir Francis Smyth having been duly elected to and Invested in the high Dignity of Grand Master and Grand Commander of the Order of Knights Templars in England, was at this Royal Encampment declared, acknowledged, and obeyed as such. And he nominated for his Officers as follows :—

Sir Robert Lakeland, Grand Aid de Camp.
 Sir Thomas Beckwith, Deputy Grand Aid de Camp.
 Rev. Sir John Parker, Grand Chaplain.
 Sir John Jennings, Senior Messenger, or Knight of the Watch.

The Junior Messenger to be nominated at a future Encampment.

Then the Knights unanimously elected Sir John Brown to the office of Scribe.

Brother Francis Cholsey having been unanimously approved at a previous Encampment to be Initiated and made a Knight and Companion of the Order of Templars or Knights of the Tabernacle was received, initiated, and made a Knight and Companion accordingly, and was admitted a Member of the Royal Grand Encampment of All England.

Then the Old Rules were read, and these following were ordered to be recorded and always observed.

No Person can be Initiated into this Order until he hath passed the other Degrees in Freemasonry, nor until he hath unanimously passed the Ballot of the Knights in the Lodge or Encampment.

That every brother initiated into this Order must pay for his initiation the sum of ten shillings and sixpence to the fund and one shilling to the Messenger.

That before any brother can become a Member of the Grand Lodge in this Order he must be ballotted for and admitted by the Knights at their Lodge or Royal Encampment, for if one Black Ball appear against him he cannot be admitted.

That in case of death, absence, or other default, the dignity of Grand Master is to be supplied *pro tempore* by the Grand Aid de Camp, and next by the Deputy Grand Aid de Camp, and then by the Knights according to seniority.

The Lodge or Encampment was closed and adjourned."

The Grand Lodge of all England at York probably ceased its existence about 1792, and it seems likely that the Knights Templars of York, being thus left out in the cold, began to hold independent meetings, and started a separate minute book of their own. Only a page or two of this book is preserved, unhappily. The title page is as follows:—

“ORDER OF TEMPLARS
BELONGING THE
GRAND LODGE OF ALL ENGLAND,
HELD AT
THE CITY OF YORK.
MINUTE BOOK.”

And into this book have been copied in a clerky hand the minutes I have read last with the following additions, after the law about the ballot:—

“The Grand Lodge of the Knights Templars in England assembles at York the third Friday in every month, And oftener in Cases of Emergency, And the Royal Encampment is raised if found convenient, whenever the Lodge of Knights is assembled.

The Past Grand Master's Cloathing is the same with the other Knights.

The Treasurer and Scribe are elected by a Majority of the Knights of Grand Lodge, And the Grand Master for the time being hath the Right of nominating the other Officers who thereupon hold their respective Offices during the Grand Masters Presidency.

The Messenger's Fees are one Shilling each Lodge Night, and he delivers the summonses.

Then a hundred Summonses were ordered to be printed for summoning the Companions of this Order, And the Encampment and Lodge was adjourned to the third Friday in next month, Except in Case of Emergency.”

Thus is the only portion of the minute book which has been preserved.

But we must revert to the old Grand Lodge minute book, which contains further records of Templar meetings, and these of a valuable kind.

(Extract from Grand Lodge of All England Minute Book.)
Thursday, 18th May, 1780.

“The Companions of the Honourable Order of Templars or Knights of the Tabernacle, assembled at the Grand Lodge Room, in York, pursuant to summons.

Present.—

John Coupland, as G.M. and G. Command.
John Hampston, as G. Aid de Camp.
Francis Clubley, as Dep. G. Aid de Camp.
John Browne, Scribe.

The Grand Lodge of Knight Templars was opened, and also the Royal Grand Encampment formed and raised as usual.

Brother Edward Woolley having been balloted for at a former Encampment and unanimously approved, was initiated and made a Knight and Companion of this Order, and was on ballot admitted member of the Royal Grand Encampment.

Also Brother William Blanchard was then proposed to be made a Knight and Companion of this Order, and being balloted for was admitted and also received and initiated. He was on ballot also admitted member of the Grand Lodge in this Order.

The Lodge and Encampment was closed and adjourned.

(From Minutes of the Grand Lodge of All England at York.)

“Thursday, 6th July, 1780.

The Companions of the Honourable Order of Templars or Knights of the Holy Tabernacle, assembled at the Grand Lodge Room in York, pursuant to summons.

Present :—

Francis Smyth, G.M.
Robert Lakeland, G. Aid de Camp.
Edward Woolley, Dep. G. Aid de Camp.
John Browne, Scribe
John Coupland.
John Hampston.
Francis Clubley.
Wm. Blanchard.
John Hassall, V.B.

The Grand Lodge of Knight Templars was opened and also the Royal Grand Encampment formed as usual.

Brother Jacob Bussey, now of Manchester, was proposed, balloted for, admitted and made a Knight Companion of this Order.

Likewise Brother George Kitson, &c.

Then Brother Kitson proposed Brother Thomas Mayor, of York, to be advanced to this order or degree, to be balloted for at the next Knights Lodge and Encampment.

Ordered that the several members of the Grand Lodge who are members of the Grand Chapter, and have not been made Knights Companions of this Order, viz., Brothers Francis Consett, Thomas Richardson, Thomas Bewlay, William Siddall, and William Smith, may without further ballot be respectively admitted to the same, and when made become members of the Grand Lodge in this Order if they are minded so to do.

That the Presiding Officers of the Grand Lodge in the other degrees shall preside also in this order or degree whenever such Presiding Officers shall be members of the same, and in case of default respectively to be succeeded by the senior members of the Knights in rotation.

That the several rules for the general order and government of the Grand Lodge in the other degrees consonant with the internal ones of this Order are always to operate and be considered by the Knights of this Order as binding rules."

(Then was presented to the Grand Lodge the following petition from Rotherham for a Warrant for a K.T. Encampment).

"To the Most Worshipful Sir Francis Smith, Grand Master of the Knight Templars, and Grand Commander of the Royal Encampment of all England, held at the antient City of York, his two Aids de Camp, and the rest of the Nobles there

The Petition of Sir John Hassall, Sir Josiah Beckwith, and Sir Peter Burnside, Knights Templars and Knights of the Royal Encampment.

SHEWETH,

That the places of residence of your Petitioners, being at and near Rotherham, in the County of York are about forty miles from the City of York aforesaid, within which distance no regular Knight Templars Lodge or Royal Encampment, especially one for the purpose of conferring the honorary degrees upon such Brothers as may apply to your Petitioners to be made Knights, and are deemed deserving of that honour is held, that your Petitioners know of.

Your Petitioners therefore pray that your Worships will grant to them and the successors a Warrant or Constitution, empowering them to hold a Knight Templars' Lodge and Royal Encampment at Rotherham aforesaid for the purpose of conferring the Honorary Degrees of Knighthood on such brothers as may apply to them, and be judged deserving that honour, and for such other purposes as are usually expressed in warrants granted in the likes cases.

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, shall ever pray, &c.

Signed, as well for myself, as on the behalf of Brothers, Sir John Hassall and Sir Peter Burnside.

JOSIAH BECKWITH,*

Rotherham, 25th February, 1780.

Whereupon it was ordered that a warrant may pass agreeable to the prayer of the petitioners upon the like conditions as a warrant for holding a Royal Arch Chapter at Rotherham was lately ordered to be granted.

The Lodge and Encampment was then closed and adjourned."

This minute book, the last of the Grand Lodge of All England, closes with a copy of the warrant issued to the Rotherham petitioners authorising them to hold a "Lodge of Knights of the Holy Tabernacle or of St. John of Jerusalem" at the Druidical Lodge in Rotherham, dated 6th July, 1780. This is accompanied

* It is worthy of note that to this signature is appended a Mason's mark, the only instance I have observed in the old minute book.

by instructions and principia together with orders to make annual returns to the Grand Lodge at York. Accordingly there immediately follows a copy of a letter from Sir Knight Beckwith, containing a report of the opening of a R. A. Chapter and also a Lodge of Knight Templars, both under York warrants, and the giving of the degrees to candidates, dated 22nd July, 1780. In the case of the K. T. report, it says, "that Brother James Simes, of Sheffield, was *re-made* a K.T."

All this is important as showing that York was then regarded as the head quarters of Knight Templary and that a member made under some other authority was "*re-made*," before he could be recognized.

This is the last record of the Order in connection with the Grand Lodge of All England, and the Sir Knights in this city, in 1791, obtained from the Grand Master of the Orders of Knighthood in London a Warrant of Confirmation, now in the possession of the Hull Sir Knights, of which the following is a copy:—

Initium Sapientiae Amor Domini.

In the name of the Grand Architect of the Universe.

THOMAS DUNCKERLEY, G.M.

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In the East of London, a Place full of Light, where reigneth Silence and Peace, but the Darkness comprehendeth it not.

To them whom it may concern, greeting.

Know ye that we Thomas Dunckerley, of Hampton Court Palace, in the County of Middlesex, Most Eminent and Supreme Grand Master of the Royal Exalted Religious and Military Order of H.R.D.M., K.D.O.H., Grand Elected Knights Templar of St. John of Jerusalem, &c., under the patronage of His Royal Highness Prince Edward, having received a petition from Sir John Watson and several Noble Knights residing at and near the City of York, of Time Immemorial, humbly requesting a Patent of Constitution to open a Conclave or Chapter of Encampment at the City of York. And we do hereby grant to the said Sir John Watson and the other Noble Knights Petitioners and their Successors full power and authority to assemble on the 14th day of March next ensuing, to install Knights Templar, &c., at their Field of Encampment aforesaid, or at such other time and place as they and their successors, with the consent of us and our successors, for the time being, shall appoint. With such powers, privileges, prerogatives, and immunities, as do from antient usage and of right belong to regular established Conclaves or Chapters, and to make Knights of the Order, subject nevertheless to the

antient statutes and ordinances of our predecessors, or that may hereafter be enacted by us or our successors in a Grand and Royal Conclave.

Given at London aforesaid in our Grand Field of Encampment this 11th day of March, Anno Tues 5795, Anno Domini 1791, Anno Ordinis 673, Anno Cædis, 477.

R. W. WHALLEY, G. Chancellor.
W. HANNAM, Acting Grand Master.
WM. EARLE,
Principal G. Scribe and Registrar."

The patent is engraved, and the names and dates only are in writing, showing that other warrants of confirmation were issued at the same time. From this warrant, and from the title and contents of an ancient ritual in the possession of the York Lodge, I suspect that the ceremony was of a very mixed kind, and included several degrees now worked separately. The title of this ritual is "Royal Union Band of Holy Royal Arch Knight Templar Priests, Order of Aaron, &c."

The York brethren worked under this warrant for a few years, but I am not aware that any minutes are in existence of their proceedings. It is not even certain where they met, but it is stated that the Falcon Inn, in Micklegate, was the scene of their labours. I believe no member of the body, as it existed at that period, survives, but a very aged brother, who was the W. M. of the York Lodge in 1813, remembers the existence of the Knight Templars Encampment not long previous to that year, and of some of the reasons which led to its being broken up, which circumstance is said by the Hull Sir Knights to have occurred in the year 1809 or 1810. An official list of Chapters of K. T. in existence on April 12th 1810, published in the *Rosicrucian*, gives the "Redemption," City of York, as meeting on the Second Monday, but gives no place of meeting. The warrant, I am informed by the Registrar of the Antient York Conclave, of Redemption at Hull, was purchased, together with the furniture, for £60, by some members of the Order at Hull, who worked under the warrant for several years. For a period after this again the Encampment at Hull became dormant, but in 1862 it was again revived, and a new Warrant of Confirmation applied for and granted.

Several brethren in York, having taken the degree at Hull, desiring to re-establish a Preceptory at York, held a meeting at the King's Arms, Fossgate, and resolved to apply for a warrant, and this step was accordingly successfully taken. A warrant was granted in the names of the following petitioning Sir Knights:—James Meek, Wm. Lawton, Thomas Luty, Thos. Cooper, A. E. Hargrove, John Ward, R. W. Hollon, and J. E. M. Young, bearing date 18th December, 1868. Under this warrant the Ancient Ebor Preceptory, 101, is now working, and may it long continue to flourish, even better than it has heretofore done. Of

course, it cannot but be a matter of regret for us that through the action, or perhaps it would be better to say non-action, of some of our predecessors the ancient warrant should have passed away from us, but it is in vain to lament a circumstance which cannot now be remedied. Still we may fairly claim lineal descent from "Sir John Watson" and the other "Noble Knights," seeing that the founders of our Ancient Ebor Preceptory were all knighted at Hull under the Confirmation Warrant, and we Knights of more recent standing have received the degree from their worthy hands.

And now for just a few remarks on the general history of the "suppressed" existence of the Order. From Hugh de Payens to Jacques de Molay there were twenty-two Grand Masters, and then, as our opponents allege, the Order ceased to exist. The French Knight Templars assert that Molay, just before his death, conferred his office on John Mark Larmenius, of Jerusalem, and thence that there was an uninterrupted succession of Grand Masters up to this time. It was from this line of Grand Masters that the Duke of Sussex received authority to establish a Grand Conclave in England. The Scotch Knight Templars claim through Peter d'Aumont, who fled with a body of Knights from France to Scotland, where there was no persecution, and took refuge in the Abbey of Kilwinning, whence they derived their Masonic associations. It was through these Knights that the very curious and interesting "Royal Order of Scotland," established by Robert the Bruce, on the field of Bannockburn, took its rise. The Swedish Templars claim through Count Beaujen, nephew of Molay, and other bodies make other claims.

However much of truth there may be in each tradition, and traditions, if sifted, always leave some residuum, it is singular, to say the least of it, that the first band of Knights, the nucleus of the Order, should have met and linked themselves together in the recesses of the hills of Syria, where, even up to the present day (as in 1113), exist societies of a Masonic character amongst the Druses. It is thus quite possible that the connection between the Templars and Freemasons may have been of even older date than the persecution of the former, and that their association with the Masonic fraternity at the persecution may after all have only been a re-union with the companions of their former toils.

These remarks have been, I fear, very disjointed and discursive. They are little more than memoranda, jotted down from time to time, and now for the first time strung together. My theory is not that York is the only place where our Order has been fostered, for I have no doubt at all that at many other points, and especially in Scotland, it has an unwritten history and holds an unbroken existence, but though we have no actual direct evidence, I think we are very fairly justified in regarding ourselves as exercising an especial privilege, when we conduct on traditional ground those solemn mysteries which our mediæval brethren, through peril and persecution, piously preserved for their religious successors.

Having enunciated such views, it is hardly necessary to add that I, as an individual, incline to the resumption by the Order of the ancient and genuine nomenclature. I do not seek a divorce from Freemasonry in any sense, even in the title of the Order, believing as I do that it is to Freemasonry that we largely owe the present existence of Templary, and I take it that it would be in the nature of ingratitude to cast from us our basis of connection with the system which sheltered and preserved those good Knights who now are dust and whose swords are rust.

But in all these discussions concerning our origin and descent, let us never forget what Knight Templary really is. In the words of a little known but exquisite poet:—

“Think not that chivalry is dead * * * * *
 “Still doth the old heart live, whose knightly vow
 “Did once with lofty deeds the world endow,
 “And dignity on meanest things impressed.
 “Are not the dead around us: is not thine
 “The past, as an inheritance, to stir
 “High memories in thee, which thy blood may warm?”

Let us never forget or lose sight of the high professions which we as pilgrims all have taken upon ourselves, for, though times and circumstances have altered, and we are no longer called upon to draw the carnal sword upon the armed foe of the Gospel of fallen man, we still live in days when the Church of Christ is called upon to face far more formidable, because insidious, opponents in the varied forms of Infidelity, Atheism, Deism, and Scepticism; and we may still do good and valiant service under the banners of the great Captain of our salvation, in contending for the Faith, against His great spiritual enemies, in whatever guise they come, whilst, as chivalrous Knights, we need never be under the necessity of undertaking quixotic crusades in search of the weak, the persecuted, and the distressed, to whom we may extend the knightly hand of relief, succour, and support; ever remembering the words of our Prophet, Priest, and King:—
 “Forasmuch as ye did it unto one of these, my brethren, ye did it unto me.”

By such conscientious carrying out of our obligations, we shall justify the existence of an Order that has many detractors and maligners, and prove that the ancient spirit that first moved our brethren to their secret compact in the mountain ranges of Syria has worthily descended upon their representatives of the nineteenth century, and that the mantle of white which we wear and the eight-pointed cross which rests upon our breasts are no empty and idle decorations, but real emblems, symbolical of the Christian purity and constancy which inspire our hearts to deeds of charity and faith, and point our thoughts upward and onward on that glorious pathway, along which we proudly bear our banners blazoned with the golden legend—“Honour All Men, Love the Brotherhood, Fear God, Honour the King,” and with our hearts cherishing the distinguishing cry of our ancient brethren—“Love to God, Unity, and Peace to All.”



STAN MOLE SUA.

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