

corporations of architects of the middle ages already mentioned; because the constant mingling of religion in law, politics, and science, by no means ceased in the middle ages; on the contrary, in some particulars, a still closer union was effected.

As the Roman *collegia* held their meetings with closed doors, nothing was more natural than that they should become, in times of violent political agitation, the place of political parties and religious mysteries, secret worship and doctrines of all sorts. The Roman emperors of the first centuries limited the *collegia* as much as possible; but the later governments favored them so much more.

In the *corpus juris* are contained several lists of mechanics and arts legally existing and free from taxation in the third and fourth centuries; among which we find those of architects, ship-builders, machine-builders, builders in ballistae, painters, sculptors, workers in marble, masons, stone-cutters, carpenters, &c. There was no town at all important, no province ever so distant, where some of the *collegia* just mentioned did not exist, to the downfall of the western and eastern empires, with their peculiar constitutions, and having, more or less, a religious character. These corporations of artificers, whose occupations were connected with architecture, were ordered by command of the emperor to come from all parts of the empire to assist in the building of large cities, palaces, churches, &c. Similar artificers also accompanied each Roman legion.

Many of such Roman corporations existed in Britain during the Roman conquest, where they were divided in the legions and cities. The same was the case in Spain, in France, or the Rhine, and on the Danube. In Britain, these *collegia* vanished with most of their works when the Picts, Scots and Saxons devastated the country, but in France, Spain, Italy, and in the Greek empire, they continued to flourish; and from these countries the christian Saxon rulers of Britain, particularly *Alfred*, and his grandson *Athelstan*, (the former who reigned from 871 to 900, the latter who ascended the throne in 925,) induced a number of artificers and architects to England, in order to build castles, churches and convents.

It may here be mentioned as a parenthesis, that *Alfred*, who was surnamed the Great, divided the twenty-four hours of the day into three equal parts: one devoted to the service of God, another to public affairs, and the third to rest and refreshment. Although these foreign artists, and the few who had survived the ravages of the barbarous tribes, were Christians, and though most of their leaders were clergymen, yet the corporations which they had formed had no constitution than those transmitted to them from the Roman colleges, which were spread over all christian Europe, and the character of which is still to be learned from the *Corpus Juris Romani* in general, and from the building corporations of the western and eastern Roman empire in particular.

The constitution, consequently, was the same which the Roman building corporations had had before, and which the remainder of the artificers under *Alfred* and *Athelstan* acknowledged. As the members of these corporations of architects of the tenth century belonged to different nations, and at the same time publicly or secretly to sects widely differing in their tenets, and often condemned as

heretical: in short, as they were very different in faith, customs, and manner of living, they could not be induced to go to England to remain there without receiving from the Pope and king satisfactory liberties and letters of protection, especially jurisdiction over their own bodies, and the rights of settling their own wages. They then united under written constitutions, founded upon the ancient constitution of the Roman and Greek colleges and the provisions of the civil law.

The different tenets of the members, the scientific occupations and the elevated views of their leading architects and clergymen, naturally gave rise to a more liberal spirit of toleration, a purer view of religion and stricter morals than were common in those times of civil feud and religious persecution.

Out of the times of the Romans they had preserved the doctrine of the education and dignity of an architect, as described by that celebrated writer on architecture, *Vitruvius*, whose books were their constant manual, and who flourished during the reign of *Julius Cæsar* and *Augustus*, from 60 B. C. to A. D. 14.

The religious tenets of these artificers being often the object of suspicion to the orthodox, they were obliged to keep them secret. Secrecy, moreover, was the character of all the corporations of the middle ages, and down to the most recent times. The corporations of mechanics on the continent had what they called secrets of the craft,—certain words or sometimes impressive ceremonies by which they were enabled to recognize each other. To this we must add, that the corporations of architects in the middle ages were descended from the times of antiquity; so that their societies had received, in the times when Rome adorned all gods and listened to all philosophical systems, impressions derived from the Greek philosophical school, particularly the Stoic, united with some fragments of the Greek and Egyptian mysteries, and subsequently modified by notions acquired in the early times of Christianity, particularly from the Gnostics, which led to certain doctrines and sacred ceremonies, clothed according to the times in symbols, and constituting their esoteric mysteries.

The watchful eye of the Popes induced them to keep these doctrines closely concealed, in connection with the real secrets of their art and its subsidiary branches, their rude chemistry, their metallurgy and natural philosophy, and to preserve their knowledge in forms otherwise foreign to it, if they wished to escape persecution. The great importance which architecture assumed in those times, is to be accounted for from the enthusiasm for splendid houses of worship, in which the religious spirit of those times displayed itself to an unparalleled degree.

The history of these corporations as here given, and their historical connection with the present society of Freemasons, indisputably appears from what we know of antiquity, from the history of England and from the agreements of the constitutions, symbols and customs of the present Freemasons, with those of the above corporations.

The architects, with their assistants and pupils, formed associations called "Hütten," or lodges. At an assembly held at Ratisbon, in Bavaria, in 1459, it was agreed that a Grand Lodge should be formed at Strassburg, in Alsace, as the place of general assembly, and that the architects of that cathedral,