

# THE KNIGHT TEMPLAR.

A clever and genial writer in the *Michigan Freemason*, gives the following graphic sketch of an incident occurring during a masonic excursion on the Mississippi, which cool and chivalrous Knight Templarship alone saved from proving fatally disastrous :

It was a magnificent sight to see our immense boat, accompanied by the *Lady Gay* and the *Belle of Alton*, their decks crowned with fair ladies and Knights Templar, bands of music, distinguished citizens, and invited guests, as they steamed up the Mississippi, then down to Jefferson Barracks, where we all went on shore to spend a pleasant hour, after which we again went on board and steamed merrily up the river.

I was standing near the captain. The commander of the Templars came and leaned wearily on the capstan. I turned to Reuben Mitton and whispered in his ear these words: "That man was born to command." He had the form of a Hercules, the head of an Apollo, and the eye of an eagle, and, as circumstances afterwards demonstrated, the heart of a lion. Although not so very large, he appeared larger than he really was; he was full and athletic, and still every proportion was a symmetry, and every movement a grace.

While he was still leaning silently on the capstan, and while I was yet analysing his fine countenance, the captain of the steamer, with pale lips and blanched cheeks, approached the young Templar, and in a low tone and trembling voice said :

"Great God! sir, we are sinking. We are snagged, sir, in the bottom, and nothing can save us."

"How long can you keep her afloat?" carelessly inquired the young Templar.

"She may go down in five minutes; she cannot keep afloat more than fifteen," replied the captain.

"Do not make your situation known to any one except your crew or we will have a panic, and then all will be lost. Signal the *Lady Gay* to lean to: none will notice or understand the signal of distress. Get your crew and hands ready to move, I will manage the rest."

"Blow, Warder, blow," said the young Templar, speaking to his ensign, who stood near him, at the same time leaping upon the capstan. Every one was startled by a shrill blast from the Warder's trumpet. A hundred Templars' swords leaped from their scabbards at the blast.

"Attention, Sir Knights," shouted the young commander. "The next ceremony in the programme is for the Sir Knights, ladies and gentlemen on this boat, to make a visit to our friends on board the *Lady Gay*. As the steamers are rapidly approaching each other, and cannot be kept but a minute or two together, the movement must be a rapid one. You will form procession at once, and, as the boats come together, pass over the gangway under an arch of steel, to the lower deck of the *Lady Gay*. Forward, Sir Knights, to the gangway. Music in front. The band will play 'The Knights Templar Quick-step.'"

In obedience to these orders, the Knights formed a double line to the