

which I must refer you, arranges the pedigree of the modern Templars under six different heads, but the legends adduced are, I think, for the most part unreliable, and the legality of each branch far from satisfactory, unless we except the existing State Order of "Christ in Portugal," which is, no doubt, the genuine Order of the Temple. This order is under Papal surveillance (as is also that of Malta in Italy), confined to Roman Catholics of noble birth, the king being Grand Master, and not acknowledging fraternity with any other branch. The "Ordre du Temple," of France, now obsolete, also asserted claims in favour of its legality, which, however, were not unimpeachable. The branch derived from Scotland has stronger historical claims to go upon, which, however, "Murray Lyons," in his very exhaustive work on Scottish Masonry, denies, and the validity of the tradition that the present Templars are descended from the old Order of the Crusades. At the same time it is an admitted fact that in Scotland the Templars were never suppressed; they were associated with the Hospitaliers, and it is natural to suppose that they preserved their distinctive rites and ceremonies intact by regular descent from one to another. When the Hospitaliers were secularized at the time of the Reformation, then, of course, those of both the Orders that preferred the reformed faith left their religious houses and were merged into the general population. It is also perfectly natural to suppose that these secularized soldier monks being or becoming Free Masons may have, with the view of preserving their ancient Orders, incorporated their peculiar rites into their Masonic lodges, and there is nothing at all illogical in supposing and asserting that true branches of both the Temple and the Hospital may still be in existence, and that isolated lodges may have received their Templar and Hospitalier rites directly from the secularized or protestant Knights of the combined orders, which, so far as they were religious institutions, were abolished at the reformation.

MASONIC CONNEXION.

Prior to the revival in 1717, and the reconstruction of Masonry in its present symbolic form, very little is known of the proceedings of Masonic bodies, from the fact that very few written documents were permitted to be recorded, and of these few, owing to the jealousy or over caution of their rulers, many were burnt in London in 1721; but there is no doubt a system of speculative Masonry, distinct from that of the craft operative or building societies, existed, derived from the secrets of occult philosophy, or the Rosicrucian Order of the middle ages, from which some of the high grades had their origin, and in which the rites and dogmas of the Templars were preserved. It is recorded that the speculative and operative bodies met together in the general assemblies of Masons in York and London, and that in the seventeenth century members of the Rosy Cross, Protestant Knights Templar, and Knights of St. John, joined in these assemblies; but it was not until about 1750 that we first hear of the Templar degrees in the south of England being publicly attached to Craft Lodges of the "York Rite" of Free Masonry, from whence they spread to other parts of the kingdom. Why so little is known of the personation of the Templars by the Free Masons, after its suppression as a Chivalric Body, may have been from the fact that as the knowledge of their existence was of necessity restricted to the secret societies, so it was impossible that any but Masons could join it, and they, preserving the

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