

as many years after the first establishment. King Baldwin, highly appreciating their services, and foreseeing the great advantages that would accrue to the Latin kingdom by their increasing in numbers and power, despatched two Knights Templar to St. Bernard, the Abbott of Clairvaux, with a letter beseeching him "to obtain from the Pope the approbation of their Order." Shortly afterwards, Hugh de Payens, accompanied by two other Brothers of the Order, proceeded to Rome, and were warmly received by Pope Honorius. A great ecclesiastical council was assembled at Traves (A. D. 1128), which Hugh de Payens and his Brother Knights were invited to attend, and the rules to which the Templars had subjected themselves being there described, St. Bernard undertook the task of revising them, and of forming a code of statutes fit and proper for their governance, which code was then confirmed by Papal bull, being the first authority granted by the Papal power to the Templars. It must be evident that, the Order having existed for ten years, and probably longer, without any authority from the Pope whatever, and having a regular code of rules of its own, which was merely revised, not originated, in 1128, by St. Bernard, cannot be looked upon as a creation of the Papal See. It was a voluntary body, originally self-constituted, and for many years self-existent, deriving no power or authority from the Pope, and when it did appeal to Rome for acknowledgment and assistance, it received not an original grant but a charter of confirmation, admitting the existence of power previously exercised. In this view of the matter which is the true historical view, how can it, with justness, be asserted that Pope Clement V., in 1312, legally abolished the Order? The Pope did not create it. The Pope could not abolish it. The Order, after the pretended bull of abolition of 1312, merely resumed its original position of a voluntary association of Knights for a specific purpose, that existed previous to the bull of confirmation of 1128. It was quite capable of legal continuation and transmission, even wanting the Pope's sanction, because that authority merely confirmed, it did not even permit to create it. Therefore, the succession of Knights of the Temple has been regularly preserved to this day by any of the Houses claiming to derive their descent from the original Order, we claim there is nothing in the bull of Clement V., that could legally deprive them of their right. They exist now as they existed previous to 1128, that is, *self-existent*, and neither having or requiring the sanction of Rome.

Having, as we think, given good reason for our assertion—that the Order of the Temple could not, and in fact was not abolished by Pope Clement V.,—let us now

consider the possibility of its legal existence at the present time. Sir Patrick Colquhoun, after a learned and apparently exhaustive consideration of the claims of the different bodies professing to possess it, comes to the conclusion that none of them do so, but that the Order is utterly extinct. We must again differ with him, and assert our belief that in some countries the Order *does* positively exist, and that in others it *may*. It does exist in Portugal, in which country it in fact never ceased. It is true that the name of Knights of the Temple was changed for that of "Knights of Christ" (a mere modification of the original name of the "Knighthood of the Poor Fellow Soldiers of Jesus Christ.") The same rules were continued, the same decorations worn, the same members of the Order continued, none being degraded or displaced; and, in 1319, the old Order, under its new name, or rather old name, received the sanction of Pope John XXII., and still exists in unbroken succession there, as an honorary distinction of Knighthood under the crown, and also in the Papal States, until the suppression of the Pope's temporal authority, where yet it may exist. It is a mistake to suppose that the existence of the Order must depend on the favor of Pope or Sovereign, or in the possession of property, as, in ancient times, one private knight could communicate Knighthood to another, so one private Templar (after the suppression) could confer the Knighthood of the Temple on another as his successor, so from succession to succession down to the present time. It *may* exist in England, and we are of opinion that further research will yet bring absolute proof of a fact which now rests almost entirely on Masonic tradition. The tradition is, to be concise, to the effect that at the time of our Cityward's suppression of the Order, in 1312, several of the Knights found refuge and protection from an unjust persecution in the secret Masonic Guilds of Builders and Architects, with whom it is supposed a compact was entered before the suppression, and that they there legally perpetuated and handed down their chivalric Order to the present day. This is the manner, according to our contention, justified by our traditions, that Templary came into Freemasonry and has been preserved intact as it is, true, and lawful succession. Now, although this assertion rests upon tradition, and as many doubtless will say, "a baseless foundation to build upon," but what is tradition? It is the oral or unwritten history upon which the belief in the truth of which so much of history, both sacred and profane, must depend,—it is history perpetuated at a time and among a people that had no other way of perpetuating it than by oral communication from one to another. It may, and it often does, differ in non-essential details,