

two eminent patrons of Masonry—so say our modern lecturers.” “These traditions can be traced for several hundred years, and we, as Masons, have sufficient evidence for our purpose that they (the saints) were Essenes or Freemasons.” Of course, Bro. Pierson says: “We, as Masons, have sufficient evidence,” and we, as Masons, must take it for granted that Bro. P. knows all about it.

Legend 2nd. Lodges were successively dedicated to Noah, Solomon, Zerubbabel, St. John the Baptist, and last, owing to the massacres attending the destruction of the second temple, Freemasonry sank into decay, when seven brethren were deputed, in the city of Benjamin, to wait on St. John the Evangelist, and request him to become Grand Master of the Fraternity. The saint replied to the request: “Though well stricken in years, being upward of ninety, yet having in his early years been made a Mason, and still retaining an affection for the Craft, so he consented to their request.” Ever since which time Freemason lodges in all Christian countries have been dedicated both to St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist.

Legend 3rd. St. John the Evangelist first became connected with a lodge of Freemasons (Essenes), according to Masonic chronology, 4037, A. D. 35, and he continued attached to it during his lifetime.

Legend 4th. Enumerates the names that Masons were known by in successive ages, thus: Noachidæ, Sages, or wise men, Dionysiacs, Geometricians, or Masters in Israel, Hiram Brothers, Essenes, Brothers of St. John, and last, Free and Accepted Masons, which cognomen they received in 1440, at Valenciennes, in Paris.

Legend 5th. St. John the Evangelist, who was an Essenian Freemason (vide Calmet), instituted a secret theological society, with mystic rites and Masonic Emblems; and some authors go further, and assert that Clement of Rome, who was a disciple of Peter and Paul, at John's death, got possession of the books, &c., of the society, incorporated it into the Christian religion, and that Polycarp was a presiding officer.

Legend 6th. During the Crusades, the Masonic Knights, having, with those of St. John of Jerusalem, to fight against the infidels, they placed themselves under the protection of that saint, and proving themselves victorious, * * * they agreed that lodges should thenceforth be dedicated to God and St. John.” And Bro. Pierson here assures us “that the brethren in the fifteenth century placed implicit confidence in these legends.”

Legend 7th was doubtless invented by a Scotch Rite man. It goes on to say that twenty-seven thousand Scotch Brother Hiram when fighting in the Holy Land, displayed both valor and peculiar qualities of brotherly love, which peculiarity attracted the attention of some of the Knights Templar, who were induced to be initiated into the mysteries of the said Hiram Brothers, and these were so pleased with the ceremonies of the Hiramites, that other Templars followed their example, and in gratitude for the favors received, they passed a law that none but Hiram Brothers should thenceforth become Templars, and the Hiram Brethren, in compliment to the Knights, adopted the Baptist as their own patron, since which time Masonic Lodges were dedicated to St. John the Baptist.

Legend 8th. John the Baptist became an orphan when very young, and he was adopted by the Essenes, where he learned to feed on dates, “as we find him in the Gospel,” and this Bro. Pierson calls, “collateral evidence” to sustain the legend.