

Duke de Chartres, afterwards Duke of Orleans, and best known as "Egalite," was for some time Grand Master of France, does not militate against this statement, inasmuch as that plotting prince systematically opposed the monarch, and upheld the broadest democratic principles. "Egalite" was elected Grand Master in 1771, and for his Deputy or Adjoint, Montmorency, Duke of Luxemburg, the "Premier Christian Baron," a title upon which the Montmorencies especially prided themselves. The Order then became fashionable, although Louis XVI. seems never to have sanctioned its proceedings; and as if to justify his caution, in 1789 the watchwords of the French Craft unfortunately became identified with those of the Revolution—words of specious seeming, but of really terrible import to the Royalists—"Liberty, Equality, Fraternity."

The subsequent events, which plunged France into an abyss of blood and anarchy, had the effect of almost annihilating Freemasonry in that country. On the 22d of February, 1793, the wretched Egalite repudiated the Masonic Order in a letter which appeared in the *Journal de Paris* of that date, and on the 6th of November following, his quondam friends, the *sans culottes*, conducted him to the guillotine, where he expiated his crimes of perjury and treason.

In 1796, there were but eighteen Lodges working in the whole of France, and of these, only three were in Paris, the remainder being thus distributed: Rouen, seven; Havre, four; Perpignan, two; Melun and Rochelle, one each. In 1805, under the Empire, the Grand Mastership was restored in the person of his Imperial Highness, the Prince Joseph Napoleon, afterwards successively King of Naples and of Spain; while the Prince Cambaceres, Arch Chancellor of the Empire, was installed First Grand Master Adjoint.

In the same year a Lodge of adoption was held at Strasburg, under the auspices of the Lodge of "Franc-Chevaliers of Paris," over which the Baroness Dietrich presided as Grand Mistress, in concert with the Chevalier de Challan, as acting Grand Master. The Empress Josephine honored this assembly with her presence, and assisted at the initiation of one of the ladies of her household. In 1809, Murat, brother-in-law of Napoleon, was proclaimed King of Naples, and re-established Freemasonry in his dominions, at the same time accepting the title of Grand Master. These facts demonstrate that the Bonaparte family supported the Craft, and it is also generally known that certain military degrees were invented, and sedulously propagated in the French army during the First Empire. These Orders are said to have been instituted by the great Emperor himself, but the statement is not authenticated by reliable testimony. Nevertheless, some account of the degrees may be of interest to the brethren.

The candidate for the first of these military grades was invested with a sword, a pistol was placed in his right hand, and a dagger fixed to his waist. The lodge room was surrounded with a brilliant light, representing the name, "Bonaparte," and the victories of the French armies were emblazoned in the east and west. The candidate's pilgrimage denoted his journey through the world, and victory in every quarter of the globe. He forced his way past every obstacle, overthrew all whom he encountered, and finally arrived at the grand Egyptian pavement, where he swore fidelity to Napoleon, the "Invincible Leader of unconquered legions," as the boastful phrase ran, and also fidelity and attachment to his companions-in-arms.