

ions have been advanced as to why the Templar system was introduced into F. and A. M., and doubts expressed on the subject, that I feel it but right to lay before you all the reliable information that can be collected. I have already shown that the Ancient Templar Order and the Builders' (Stone Masons' Guild) took their rise from the same source and in the same century,—promulgating the same doctrines:—The Sacred or Holy Mysteries.*

On the suppression of the Templars, many of the brethren took refuge and united with the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, afterwards "Knights of Malta," and there preserved their secret doctrines.

In the progress of time, the Earl of "Tor-pichin," in Scotland, became the head of the Order in that country, who, at the Reformation, resigned his connection with it and surrendered to the Crown the Lands and Lordship of the United Orders, which ceased to be (in Scotland) a Sovereign Body; but the doctrinal ritual, it is claimed, was preserved, and carried to the North of Europe, principally into Denmark, where it has been kept and practised (though in secret) under the protection of Royalty.

I am persuaded that the Order of St. John, after the Union with the dispersed Templars, had such a ritual; indeed, portions of it, I have every reason to believe, I had in my possession, and found it an easy matter to obtain evidence of its truths. Several private papers of Judge Walter Rodwell Wright (whom H. R. H. the Duke of Sussex succeeded as Grand Master of the English Templars in 1812), given to me in Malta, with many valuable documents from other sources, were lost chiefly in the fire of 1882.

Judge Wright's original papers on the

"The word "Mystery" in the Scriptures, is well defined as simply meaning, "A revealed truth, a truth which man could not discover, but which God makes known."

The Sacred or Holy Mysteries, preserved in the cloisters of the early Christian Church, are anterior to the Christian religion, being the spirit of prophecy. "They saw Christ by faith and represented Him and His doctrines by symbols." They are in existence to day, as they were then. The Advent of Christ confirmed them in their full glory. They teach that *none* can claim the right of eternal life beyond the grave but those who "Believe on Him that liveth and was dead, and is now alive for ever more," and follow the Lowly One in the narrow path which is marked out for pilgrims in their sojourn here. They are dogmatic; they discard all metaphysical reasonings and speculative theories, and declare with a trumpet tongue the "fall of sin"—the innate corruption of human nature and the necessity of regeneration.

Red Cross Order convince me that he was aware of the ancient system preserved by the Order of St. John.

While the progress of the Templar Order was advancing in retirement and secrecy, the Builders' branch (Masonry) was progressing in the erection of religious houses, preceptories, monasteries, colleges, etc., for two or three centuries, during which time the early members were removed by death, and their places filled by "Builders" or Masons of the common Order; so that in the early part of the fifteenth century, the Builders were formed into a "Guild," and the characteristics of their sacred doctrinal mysteries, which they had inherited, were forgotten and lost, partly from motives of prudence, partly from indifference and forgetfulness. The earliest record we have of the mechanical Guild growing out of the Builders from the Cloisters, together with their ritual, is A. D. 1549. On examination of them, it will be found that they had but *one degree*, and that purely mechanical or operative, although fully Christian (vide Steinbrenner's History) in its teachings. When the revival and revision of 1717 took place, the Christian element of Masonry was eradicated, and Free and Accepted Masonry declared a universal doctrine and no longer sectarian. There can be but little doubt that the desire on the part of many of the old members to preserve its early Christian character led to the introduction of the Modern Templar system being attached to Freemasonry, showing that both originally sprung from the same source, and were in possession of the same early teachings of the Christian faith. We can, however, only consider our Templary an imitation of the Ancient Order, rather as being *appropriated* than inherited.

This, then, would seem to be the true reason *why* the Templar Order has been closely associated with Modern Free and Accepted Masonry, but our English system has been *always* kept separate and distinct from the Craft degrees, forming no part of them, and, conferred *after* the Royal Arch degree, considered the climax of Masonry, the completion of the second part of the Master's degree, separated from it and embodied in a ceremonial of Jewish legends,—the production of the last century.

The Templar system, with us, is, therefore, nothing more than a Christian association of Freemasons, who represent and follow the traditions of the Ancient Religious and Military Orders of the Crusaders, imitating, as nearly as possible, their usages and customs, and strictly adhering to their teachings and doctrines.

Until of late years, in all the discussions which have taken place as to the history and object of Templary, its purely orthodox Christian character was never disputed. Why, then, is there so much difficulty