

States; almost all of the members, it is said, were from Ireland, those especially of the Carlisle Lodge. What is wanted is a reliable statement of the earliest date at which the Templar Order was first practised in the various countries in which it now exists. Tradition is what we have principally to rely upon as to our identity with the ear y Order, and it is not impossible but that tradition is right, for it is unreasonable to suppose, looking to the men who in modern times have been associated with the Order, that they wilfully countenanced an imposition. Nor can it be credited that the plain, honest, upright, but in many cases, illiterate men who handed down Craft Masonry, committed the folly and worse than folly, of inventing certain rites and ceremonies, which, though beautiful in themselves, are entirely unmasonic in their tendencies, and then with an audacity that could have no parallel, call themselves Knights of the Temple. The idea is altogether beyond belief. Neither can I understand how Freemasonry and the Order of the Temple could ever become amalgamated. The former is of its very essence cosmopolitan; the latter sprung from an origin which was of its essence chivalric and knightly. The trowel of the one levelled distinctions and spread the cement of a universal fraternity. The sword and spurs of the other could only be won by noble birth and heroic deeds in defence of the Christian faith. Alas! that I should say it! What do half the men who are Templars know or care for the early history of the Order; they merely regard it as a Masonic degree they can be advanced to, which will enable them to wear another Star or Cross, but the true meaning of which they are satisfied should be as unintelligible to them as Hebrew.

OBJECT OF THE TEMPLAR ORDER.

The question naturally arises "What is the modern Order of the Temple, and the object of the institution?" In general terms we can confidently state that it is exclusively devoted to the Christian religion, based upon the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Christ, without sectarianism, and designed to elevate man to that position morally and socially, which God intends man should aspire to and reach. It is actuated by the purest principles of Christian philanthropy, perfectly unconnected with politics, and although forming no part of mere symaolic Masonry, is an adaptation of all the tolerant principles of Craft Masonry to a system of Christian application, taking for its model the moral attributes of the illustrious, religious and military Order of the middle ages, and although laying claim to a Knightly succession yet without a vestige remaining of its original mighty power and influence, now represented by our peaceful but powerful Christian Society, which teaches and exercises the fullest and most tolerant charity towards all men, and, from the principles of the religion in whose interest it has been perpetuated, it requires us to set our faces against vice and intemperance, to uphold the right, defend the weak and oppressed, and succour the destitute. Let it then be no idle boast to say, we belong to an Order, the members of which in olden time, the great, the good, the noble and the brave of Christendom, were only too proud to call themselves "Poor fellow-soldiers of Jesus Christ," and to the extent of our ability, and the opportunities offered us, delight to pay homage and follow precepts of the Great Captain, whose sworn soldiers we are, and that too by our own voluntary act. Of this there is no doubt, the vows are upon us, and whether we try to act in accordance with those vows or not, we can in no wise alter our position to that Great Captain unto whom sooner or later, as it pleaseth Him, we shall have to render an account. To you then, Preceptors of the Order, teachers and rulers, I most emphatically say it becomes your bounden duty to observe the strictest caution as to whom you admit into your Preceptorics. When men are banded together for any purpose, noble or otherwise, there will be those who will seek admission for purely selfish purposes. Do not allow the expediency of increasing your funds or of swelling the ranks of your Preceptorics to actuate your motives in admitting those who from mere curiosity or good fellowship seek to join us; and as is too often the case by their conduct give cause to our enemies to revile and repudiate our illustrious Order; an Order which has ever raised the jealousy and hatred of that intolerant Church which does not admit the exercise of private judgment or the right of free thought, and would still keep the human mind in the darkness of error and superstition. The Romish Church has been ever jealous of the Masonic Society, and all others connected with it, dreading the dangerous opposition to her unlawful assumption of authority which the great secret organization condemns and bans.

The animosity that suddenly sprung up in the early part of last century on the part of the Papal authorities towards Freemasonry may have been occasioned by their having only then discovered that their old antagonist, the Templar Order, was perpetuated within the secret recesses of the Masonic Order, and that then for the first time the thunders of the Romish Church were directed at the peaceable and inoffen-