

Crusades, and in the centuries next following that period, and which bore the true chivalric stamp. Masonic Templarism is fortunate in being able to trace, even traditionally, a line of descent from such heroic sources. It is the Templar grade, however to which chief prominence attaches in the modern organization, and it is this grade which gives the distinguishing title to the body. A special interest, therefore, attaches to the ancient Templars, a military Brotherhood organized for the protection of Christian pilgrims in Palestine. These valiant Knights, first called "Poor Fellow-Soldiers of Jesus Christ," came afterwards to be designated Knights of the Temple, for the reason that their headquarters in Jerusalem were near the supposed site of King Solomon's Temple, and thus it was in common speech they were called Templars.

The story of their chivalric character and brave deeds in Palestine has been often told; and so, also, has been told, with hardly less of interest, the story of their powerful influence in Europe, until at last envy and persecution caused the overthrow of the once flourishing Order. The end came with the death of their Grand Master, who was executed 18th March, 1313. The dispersion and suppression of the Templar Order quickly followed.

Masonic Templarism may not claim a lineal connection with the Ancient Order of Templars. The proof is wanting that the ancient Order survived the period of its persecution, so maintaining its organic life as to become the actual source and legitimate authority for the organizations of Masonic Templarism established in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. There is no sufficient evidence to justify this conclusion any more than there is to support that other proposition which affirms that the ancient Templars were Masons, and that the chief object which they had in view was to preserve the rites and ceremonies of Freemasonry. Dismissing these assumptions, Masonic Templarism may claim only a connec-

tion of tradition and sentiment with the ancient Order. This counts for much. There is a flavor of the old heroic spirit abiding with modern Templary which constitutes a delightful charm; there are lessons and legends brought down from mediæval days which have value; and there are associations with scenes and events belonging to the stirring period of the Crusades, which brighten the exposition of the Templar ritual as it is now learned and taught. But to claim more than this, to assert that Masonic Templarism, as it now exists, is the actual historic successor of the Templar Order of the Middle Ages, seems alike unnecessary and unwise. There is no call to do this any more than there is to maintain that other propositions which declares that Freemasonry was fostered and preserved by an Ancient Order of Templars.

To what source, then, is the origin of the modern order to be traced; How did it originate? By what forces and at what time was it moulded into its present form, being started upon a line of movement which shows increasing light and progress all along the way? It is of Masonic parentage. There can be no question of the rightful use of the terms "Templar Masonry" and "Masonic Templarism" in designating the modern system. But while this proposition is insisted upon, it must be conceded that important differences exist between the Masonic and the Templar systems.

Templary is essentially a Christian institution. It requires faith in the Eternal Son of God. It recognises the doctrines and religious propositions which underlie a common Christianity, and in its ceremonies it enforces most impressively many lessons drawn from the life, the sufferings, death, and the resurrection of Christ our Lord. It is an institution claiming to be established on a basis of Christian faith and the practice of the Christian virtues.

Masonic Templarism was but little known either in this country or in Europe prior to the nineteenth century.