

who generally mixed with the outer world and only occasionally met in secret to practise their rites, and it should be remembered that they were always opposed to the general or public belief; but the doctrine practised and upheld by the Monks was that sanctioned by the Church and State, it was the Christian religion and there was no necessity of any secrecy about it. The Freemasons of olden times were obliged to practise their mysteries secretly, because some of their teachings were not in harmony with the Church of Rome and the general belief among the public.

The mode of admitting a person to membership in a Cloister was certainly by a different process and ceremony than that practiced in a Freemason's Lodge. The Novices for the order of Monks are not initiated as we Freemasons initiate a candidate for our mysteries. The rules of admission into several of the Monasteries or Nunneries are not secret; they are in print and can be read, and will prove that they bear no similarity to Masonic initiation; nor do the ceremonies bear similarity to those of our Masonic Fraternity.

I will now resume the evidence from the history of architecture relating to the old Freemasons.

The period of building religious edifices from the time of the edict of Constantine to the tenth century is termed the Old Christian Period of Architecture, during which time the Basilica of Rome combined with the Etruscan arch, formed the chief model for religious edifices; but as the rage for church building became general, the architects made various combinations, and devised new plans, resulting in a particular style called the Romanesque, or Roman style; by others it was named the Old Saxon style; and by a few even the Byzantine style. The Romans had, according to the different countries in which it was applied, different variations; in England, for instance, it was termed the Norman style.

The Romanesque was in use chiefly from A.D. 1000 to 1250; and during that period the Monks' almost exclusively monopolized the erection of ecclesiastical edifices, while the Freemason Societies, especially on the continent of Europe, occupied a subordinate position; yet they continued to plan and work in secret against the usurped power of the Monks; while in England, where greater liberty existed, the old Freemasons took a more prominent position. The abuse which the Monks had made of the confidence and wealth entrusted to them, and their change of life, from that of piety to debauchery and profligacy, created among the people a spirit of aversion and opposition. The people began to erect towers, settle therein, establish civil communities and improve the schools.

During the twelfth century symptoms of great architectural revolutions had begun to show themselves in north-western Europe; various changes were introduced, especially in the arch, and finally a new style of architecture arose; one that was adapted to the Christian religion. But this change did not originate from the Monks; it exclusively emanated from the laity; this new style of architecture was the Gothic or old German style; it originated in the Isle de France and in Paris in the second half of the twelfth century, and in the thirteenth century it spread over all the countries of Christian Europe.

This was pre-eminently a Christian architecture, its principle being, "Infinity made imaginable." The credit among the laity for devising this new and Christian style of architecture, naturally falls to those who were constantly engaged in that art, and these were the Freemasons; their membership was composed of men from various countries; they were Greek, Italians, French, German and Flemish people; they kept secret the principles of their art, and they were protected by papal bulls and other privileges,