

Ireland at the end of the last century, conferred as a Masonic degree, after the Royal Arch and before the Masonic Templar, but which of late years has been but little practised as a separate degree, being now embodied in the A. & A. S. Rite 33^o as the 15, 16 and 17^o of that Rite, having also allusion to the first step of the Royal Order of Scotland.

The Red Cross of the United States has been constructed into an elaborate dramatic Military Masonic degree to conform to the United States system adopted and practised there, and is but one of the numerous superfluous and fictitious degrees imposed upon True Masonry during the last century, which was at that time, and is now, strongly opposed by the Grand Lodge of England as glaring impositions manufactured by ritual compilers who have introduced all sorts of parasitical degrees upon pure Masonry.

The principal attraction to this Red Cross degree by its admirers, lies in the dramatic gorgeous Eastern costume, scenery and banquet, and the great merit claimed consists of the aphorism adopted as the motto of the degree: "Magna est veritas et prevalibit," "Great is truth and it will prevail."

The legend of the degree is founded on certain passages of the sacred book of Ezra and the Apocryphal book of Esdras, recording the building of the second Temple more than five centuries before Christ, and communicates the mission of Zerubbabel, a prince of Judah, to the Court of Cyrus, King of Persia, and his successor Darius, to obtain permission to rebuild the Temple and city of Jerusalem, and the restoration of the Holy vessels remaining at Babylon after the captivity.