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FOURTH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY, BROCKVILLE, 1887. 313

I cannot in general terms agree as to the antiquity of all the Masonic traditions, and would ask you not to pass over thousands of years and lose sight of the intervening space, by which alone what we call Masonry is known, poring over Egyptian hieroglyphics to solve the mysteries of the primitive world, however interesting to the Antiquarian, gives but little insight into Modern "Freemasonry" and its kindred studies. No doubt the theory is correct that in Babylon centuries before the Christian era, when the Jews were returning to Jerusalem to assist in building the second Temple—"Confucius" and "Pythagoras" carried back much to commemorate the building and glory of the "First" Temple, and taught others. We have been taught in a school of a later period, and I prefer to have my history nearer home; more so, as we have now one of the most exhaustive and reliable histories by "R. F. Gould," Barrister-at Law, London, England, ever published on "Free-Masonry"—a perfect mine of information not to be found in any other work on the subject.

THE COMMENCEMENT OF MASONIC TEMPLARY.

It is clearly ascertained that modern or Masonic Templary originated from the "High Grade" system of Free-Masonry—soon after Speculative Masonry was directly imported from England to the continent of Europe, where it was enthusiastically adopted as a pure code of morality and universal Brotherhood.

The "High Degrees" were first promulgated about 1741, or a few years earlier, (ostensibly unknown before that period) by French and German members of the Craft, who, for the most part, confined to men of leisure and letters, principally chosen from the higher classes of social life, not content with the truly noble mechanical origin of Free-Masonry, were ambitious to be thought the descendants of the famous "Religious and Military Fraternity of the Templars," and endeavored to assert a claim to a parentage more in accordance with their own ideas, based upon the supposed connection that had *traditionally* existed between the Templars of the Crusades and the old Christian Builders or Architects of the cloisters.

These High degrees, being founded on false premises (1) were at first strongly opposed by the English Craft, as glaring innova-

(1.) The High degrees are the additions made to the original Craft degrees of Speculative Masonry to all above that of "Master