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J. B. TRAYNE, P.D.D.G.M.,
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KNIGHTS TEMPLAR COMPETITIVE DRILLS.

Calm and unbiased investigation of the subject has convinced me that nothing is to be gained by a further continuance of the practice of holding competitive drills by commanders at each recurring Triennial Conclave of the Grand Encampment. The successful commandery gains nothing, even though it secures a banner or what not. At that time it is doubtless the best drilled commandery in attendance, but that does not prove that it is the best in the country, because there may be a half dozen other commanderies not in attendance equally as proficient in the tactics, if not more so. Again, the ranks of a commandery are subject to changes, and the best drilled commandery of today may not be able to muster a corporal's guard of able-bodied men to take part in the drill of next year. And even though it did, what of it? Are the members of a commandery any better qualified to teach the beautiful and impressive lessons of Templarism because of their proficiency in the tactics? And are they better prepared to perform those Knightly duties of "feeding the hungry and clothing the naked, and binding up the wounds of the afflicted," because of their skill in the tactics? And does it make them any better men or Templars than those

unskilled in Templar tactics? To all of these questions my answer is no. Competitive drills create jealousies and heart-burnings between Templars, and are the cause of strife and contention in the body of Templarism that ought not, neither should they, have a lodgment in the breast of a true and courteous Knight.

There should be that openness and candor among Templars not to be found in any other society? Nothing but genuine friendship and brotherly good feeling should exist, not only between the members of a particular commandery, but it should be universal and as free as the air we breathe. The beautiful lessons of the Temple should be so learned that they may be rendered in the most impressive manner; thoroughness in this particular will tend to elevate and ennoble not only the order, but the individual members thereof, and will have a tendency to make better men and better Christian warriors of them. Templars properly instructed in the truths of the order will be better prepared to wage a warfare in defense of truth that will ennoble their natures, and make them feel that all are brothers in deed and in truth. Each successive repetition of a truth is sure to leave a trace of good in the hearts and consciences of all who re-