

doned its religious and military character,—half priest and half soldier—and incorporated it with the Masonic Institution. Such is the evidence, partly historical and partly traditional, that we have on this subject, and whatever may be its value, we must accept it as the only possible solution of the Templar problem of to-day. Any attempt to trace modern Templarism to the ancient organization on the plains of Palestine, which should leave its connection with Freemasonry out of the line of succession, would be to reduce Templarism, as an Order, to the condition and value of a child's bauble. For, if modern Templarism is not Masonic, it is—nothing. Hence, we have always felt that the Grand Encampment of the United States committed a great blunder, (thoughtlessly, we have no doubt,) when in 1859, it abolished the *apron* as a part of the Templar costume. The uninviting dress now worn by most of the Knights Templars of the United States, carries with it no reference to the Masonic growth of the Order, while the “black uniform,” as it is called, bears in its ornate apron, the proof and the testimony that modern Templarism owes its life to Freemasonry.

We are glad therefore to see that Sir Knight MOORE, while he indulges in the mistaken theory that there is an identity between the old and the new Orders, does not by any means reject the Masonic connections of the latter but does full justice to the question in these words :

“I will only add here, and that most impressively, that while thus endeavoring to give you some insight into its history and present position, it must not be supposed there is a desire on my part, or that of any true Templar, to ignore the obligations the Order owes to Freemasonry, which has so long fostered it, or weaken a full allegiance to that most honorable and time-honored Institution.”

This is said in the right tone, and we have written this much on this subject because we believe that there is a mistaken tendency in some persons, especially in England, to seek to divest the modern Order of Knights Templars of its close connection with, and its absolute dependence on, Freemasonry for its valid existence. And it is proper that a word of warning as to the mischievous tendency of such a theory should be given in time, lest the seed, now so small, should grow up into a mighty tree.

If then Templarism, in its Convents General, and its Encampments, in its Commanderies and its Preceptories, has not come to us by regular transmission through Freemasonry, it has not come to us at all, and then what we would fain call a succession from the Knights of the Crusades, is simply a figment of some ingenious inventor with no more claim to antiquity than has the association of Odd Fellows or of the Knights of Pythias. History will not allow itself to be so falsified.—*Voice of Masonry*.

## COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE AT A LODGE.

BY BRO. ALBERT G. MACKEY, M. D.

A CORRESPONDENT has written to me proposing the following case. He says :

“I was summoned to attend a meeting of my lodge. I did not attend and sent no excuse. I have since been summoned to attend another meeting and to show cause why I should not be disciplined for my non-attendance. Is there masonic law for this ?”

There are some complications about this question, which render its answer, categorically, not so easy as would at first sight be supposed.

In the first place, it is admitted, that Masonry is a voluntary institution, and any enforced attendance would seem to be at variance with this voluntary character. We are forcibly reminded of the question once discussed in a debating society, in a time of war—“Is it legal to compel a man to volunteer ?”

Again : In the *charge* given to an Entered Apprentice, at the time of his initiation, we find this solemn assurance on the subject :

“Although your frequent appearance at our regular meetings is earnestly solicited, yet it is not meant that Masonry *should interfere with your necessary vocations*, for these are on no account to be neglected.”

Now, how much attendance on any meeting would interfere with those necessary vocations, is a question which must be left to the judgment of the member, as it seems absurd to suppose that a lodge can be qualified to make a proper decision on the nature and importance of his private claims of duty.

So far then, one would be inclined to say that a lodge cannot enforce the attendance of its members. Every one must be permitted to judge for himself how far his attendance will be compatible with his own inclination, as it should be in a voluntary association, and how much such attendance will or will not interfere with other claims of duty.

But on the other hand we are met with the positive enactments of masonic law.