

GENERAL RULES

SALUTES

Officers will salute with sword or hand, according as the sword is drawn or in its scabbard. Upon addressing or being addressed, the Junior will always make the first salute, which will be acknowledged by the Senior. If the salute is with the sword, both come to *Carry* simultaneously and stand at *Attention*. They should always exchange salutes at the close of the conversation.

The Sovereign Master (or Commander), if seated, does not arise to acknowledge a salute, and the High Priest (or Prelate) acknowledges salutes by bowing ceremoniously.

An officer should always have his sword drawn when giving a command.

The following portions of the Ritual shall not be conferred upon more than one person at the same time:

R. C.: Each Candidate to pass over the bridge separately. The work to be exemplified on the first and last Candidate. All to be introduced into the Audience Chamber immediately following the first Candidate.

K. T.: See Optional Rubric pages 110, 111 and 112.

ILLUSTRIOUS

ORDER OF THE RED CROSS

RED CROSS OFFICERS

Sovereign Master	S. M.
Prince Chancellor	P. C.
Prince Master of the Palace	P. M. P.
Master of Cavalry	M. C.
Master of Infantry (also Companion Conductor, C. C.)..	M. I.
Excellent High Priest	H. P.
Master of Finance	M. F.
Master of Dispatches	M. D.
Standard Bearer	St. B.
Sword Bearer	Sw. B.
Warder	W.
Sentinel	Sen.
Guards (three or more)	Gd.

These officers should wear the Ceremonial Robes or in lieu thereof:

Green Sash; Belt and Sword; Cap, with the Red Cross of the Order on the front of the same.

If a Commandery is unable to furnish such Robings, then plain civilian dress is to be worn. The Grand Council, the Companion Conductor, the Warder (while guarding the Grand Council), and the Jewish Guards, must not appear in the Red Cross Uniform, as herein given.

RED CROSS PARAPHERNALIA

1. Robes and suitable Head-Gear for the Officers of the Palace.
2. Robes for the High Priest and members of the Grand Council.
3. An Altar; Bible; Swords; Square and Compasses; Cushion; Fetters; Garb of Slavery; Robe and Coronet for Zerubbabel; portable writing stand; deeree and writing quill.
4. Commanderies shall also provide Jewish and Persian Banners, designed as follows:
Jewish Banner: The Banner of Judah a white background with Lion Rampant thereon.
Persian Banner: White background, the blazing sun in the upper half, and three crescents or half moons in the lower half, designs in gold.
5. A practical Bridge.

RED CROSS OPENING

S. M.: Prince Master of the Palace:—See that the Audience Chamber is in suitable array for my reception. Prince Chancellor and Excellent High Priest:—Accompany me to my apartment.

P. M. P.: [*In Audience Chamber.*] Companion Warder:—Sound the assembly. Officers:—Take your stations. Companions:—Be seated.

Companion Master of Cavalry:—Are all present Companions of the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross?

[Master of Cavalry examines those on the South, Master of Infantry those on the North. When opposite each other in the West, Master of Infantry will report to Master of Cavalry; then both proceed to their stations. The Master of Cavalry salutes the Prince Master of the Palace and reports.]

M. C.: Prince Master of the Palace:—All present are Companions of the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross. [*Seated.*]

P. M. P.: Companion Warder:—Post the Sentinel, inform him that a Council of the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross is about to be opened, and direct him to guard accordingly.

[Warder informs the Sentinel, closes door, knocks ❖❖❖ ❖❖❖
❖❖ Answered by Sentinel. Warder resumes station and reports.]

W.: Prince Master of the Palace:—The Sentinel is at his post, and the Audience Chamber is duly guarded.

P. M. P.: Companion Master of Cavalry:—Form the lines for the reception of the Sovereign Master.

[The lines are formed and the Sovereign Master received according to Tactics of the jurisdiction. When the Sovereign Master enters, the Warder will announce "The Sovereign Master." When the Sovereign Master has reached his station in the East he will command.]

S. M.: *Carry, SWORDS.* Let the Words be communicated.

[Sovereign Master takes his seat while these tests are being made by the Prince Master of the Palace. For manner of communicating the words, see "The Work."]

P. M. P.: First Division:—*Communicate to the Second Division the Jewish Pass.* GUARD. [Word given.] *Carry, SWORDS.*

P. M. P.: Second Division:—*Communicate to the First Division the Persian Countersign.* GUARD. [Word given.] *Carry, SWORDS.*

P. M. P.: First Division:—*Communicate to the Second Division the Red Cross Word.* GUARD. [Word given.] *Carry, SWORDS.*

P. M. P.: Second Division:—*Communicate to the First Division the Sign, Grip, and Word of a Companion of the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross.* GUARD. [Sign, Grip, and Word given.] *Carry, SWORDS.*

P. M. P.: Sovereign Master:—Your order has been executed.

S. M.: [Rising.] Companions:—*Attention. Order, SWORDS. UN-COVER.* Excellent High Priest:—Lead our devotions.

PRAYER

The following may be used:

H. P.: Almighty and Eternal Jehovah, the only liv-

ing and true God, whose throne is in the heavens, yet who regardest alike the princes and the people that dwell upon the earth, we desire to thank Thee for the many mercies and blessings with which Thou hast been pleased to crown our lives. We thank Thee for this social and fraternal intercourse with our Companions. Be mercifully near us at all times, and give us the aid of Thy Holy Spirit to guide us into all Truth. Grant us Thy grace to cheer and strengthen us in our journey through life, and deliverance from the snares and pitfalls of the Evil One. Incline our hearts to seek Thy favor and protection as our rightful Sovereign, that we may not be impeded in the great work of erecting a spiritual edifice that shall endure forever. Pardon all our sins, we pray Thee, and finally admit us into the presence of the King of Kings, as members of His eternal household. Amen. [All respond.] Amen.

S. M.: Companions:—*RE-COVER. Carry, SWORDS. Return, SWORDS.*

[The lines dismissed by the command:]

S. M. Companions:—Be seated.

S. M.: Prince Master of the Palace:—It is my order that a Council of the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross be now opened. This you will communicate to the Companions for their government.

P. M. P.: [Draws sword, if not already drawn.] Companions:—*ATTENTION. Draw, SWORDS.* It is the order of the Sovereign Master that a Council of the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross be now opened. Take due notice and govern yourselves accordingly. *Present, SWORDS.*

P. M. P.: Sovereign Master:—Your order has been executed.

S. M.: [*Rising.*] I now declare this Council of the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross opened in due form. *Carry, Swords.* Companion Warder:—Inform the Sentinel, and direct him to guard accordingly.

W.: [*Opens door and says:*] Companion Sentinel:—The Council is now open. Take due notice and guard accordingly.

[Warder closes door, knocks ☒☒☒ ☒☒☒ ☒☒ Answered by Sentinel. Warder resumes station and reports.]

W.: Sovereign Master:—Your order has been obeyed.

S. M.: Companions:—*Return, Swords.* Be seated.

THE ILLUSTRIOUS ORDER OF THE RED CROSS

Optional Short Ceremony

[An exemplar may be used. The class shall participate in those parts of the Ritual where indicated. When an exemplar is used the class shall be placed in a convenient position where they can witness and hear the ceremony, and participate when necessary. The entire class shall be conducted into the Audience Chamber, by the M.I., and the exemplar shall be placed a few paces from the Altar, which shall be placed before the class enters:]

S. M.: The Illustrious Order of the Red Cross is conferred in a Council duly convened, and the ceremony must be conferred in full or short form. I will confer the Order upon you in short form, and proceed to invest you with the attributes of the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross. Before doing so, however, I must require of you the following declaration:

(All candidates must make declaration)

S. M.: Companions, do you on your honor as Royal Arch Masons, and in the presence of God and these witnesses, declare that you will be forever faithful to the trust we are about to repose in you, and that you will keep inviolable our secrets, and maintain the honor of this Council.

Candidates: I do.

S. M.: (Recites Historical Lecture:)

HISTORICAL LECTURE

The Scriptures inform us that for their sins, and those of their forefathers, the Jewish people were led into captivity by Nebuzar-adan, Captain of the Guard of Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon. As slaves they tilled the valley of the Euphrates and of the Tigris, until Cyrus destroyed the Chaldean dynasty.

During that captivity, Zerubbabel, Crown Prince of the House of Judah, and Darius, son of Hystaspes, formed an alliance of friendship which was probably terminated only with death.

One of the first acts of Cyrus was the liberation of the Jewish captives. He then permitted them to return to Judea, that they might rebuild the City of Jerusalem and its Temple, which Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed.

The foundation of the Second Temple was laid five hundred and thirty-five years before Christ—Zerubbabel, the Royal Prince, Jeshua, the High Priest, and Haggai, the Prophet, laying the same.

Cyrus died, and his son, Cambyses, succeeded him on the Medo-Persian throne. On complaint of the Cutheans, and other contiguous tribes, Cambyses commanded the work of the City and Temple to cease. During the nine years that followed, scarcely anything was done on the walls of Jerusalem, or the Temple.

Cambyses died and the Magians seized the throne, from which their usurper was driven, in a little over a year, with great slaughter. Then the Seven Great Families of Persia laid hold of the government, and Darius ascended the throne. He appointed Zerubbabel, his friend, to be Governor of the Jews that had returned to Mount Zion under the decree of Cyrus the Great, and afterwards appointed him to that place of great trust—a guard of the

Royal Bed-chamber—for the protection of the person of the King. There were three of these Guards, and they were chosen by the Monarch because of his implicit confidence in their loyalty.

Fifteen years after the Jews had laid the foundation of the Second Temple (520 B.C.) they were forced to call a Grand Council to consult about the state of the country. Cambyses was dead, and the Magian usurper, Smerdis, had been driven from the throne, to give place to Darius, son of Hystaspes, whose favoring of the Jews was believed to be almost as marked as that of the Great Cyrus.

Darius spread a feast at his capitol, and invited thereto the Princes and Rulers of the realm. That feast was thoroughly enjoyed, and at its close “they every one departed to bed at their own house, and Darius the King went to bed.”

The King slept lightly, and awaking he fell into conversation with his Three Guards. He suggested, as a part of the festivities of the morrow, that they three engage in a public discussion of some interesting question, as had been the custom on similar occasions from time immemorial, and that he would reward with a princely gift the successful contestant. The King then propounded the following question:

“Whether Wine was not the strongest?—Whether Kings were not such?—Whether Women were not such, or whether Truth were not the strongest of all.”

Esdras makes the Guards suggest both the questions and the prize, but we follow the story as told by Josephus.

Again the King slept, and the Guards prepared for the friendly contest of the following morning. When the King arose he sent for the Princes and Rulers to meet him in

the Audience Chamber, and witness the contest between his Guards.

The contest began in time by one of the Guards de-claiming in favor of the strength of Wine, followed by another in favor of the power of the King. Then the Jew, Zerubbabel, contended for the supereminency of Women, concluding with a noble deliverance in favor of Truth.

The brilliant assembly burst forth into applause when Zerubbabel concluded, and the King awarded him the prize, with these words: "Ask for somewhat over and above what I have promised, for I will give it unto you because of your wisdom."

Then "Zerubbabel put him in mind of the vow he had made in case he should ever have the kingdom." Now this vow was "to rebuild Jerusalem, and to rebuild therein the Temple of God, and also to restore the vessels which Nebuchadnezzar had pillaged, and carried to Babylon."

And behold the King was pleased to arise and to kiss his eloquent Guard, Zerubbabel, and to grant his request. Zerubbabel returned to his people in Jerusalem with great joy, and the rebuilding of the City and Temple was immediately resumed. Darius not only kept his vow, but made large contributions to the rebuilding out of the Royal Treasury.

The details adopted to more beautifully round out the drama, and more pointedly teach the lesson of the almighty force and the importance of Truth, do not intrench upon the facts of history.

The Illustrious Order of the Red Cross is not a Pagan rite nor is it a mere social observance. It is an Order founded upon Truth, and is a proper preparation for the solemnities of the Order of the Temple.

Darius believed in the one God, when he registered a vow to rebuild the City and Temple of Jerusalem, a vow he religiously kept. "Blessed be the God of Truth," on the lips of Darius purges the memory of his early reign from all taint of Sabianism, into which he wandered in later life.

As Judaism was a preparation for Christianity, so let the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross be a preparation for the Christian Order of the Temple.

S. M.: Today, you and each of you are Zerubbabel, as we go back in time to the Court of King Darius and the Founding of the New Order.

Princes and Rulers, to perpetuate unto all ages the remembrance of this happy occasion, and the events which have renewed our early intimacy with Zerubbabel, we propose to found a new Order. It shall be instituted to inculcate the almighty force and the importance of TRUTH. It shall be forever known as THE ILLUSTRIOUS ORDER OF THE RED CROSS, and upon you, Zerubbabel, as a further proof of our friendship and esteem, we will confer the honor of creating you its first member. But before we can do so we must demand of you a solemn Vow to be forever faithful to the Laws and Regulations which we now establish for the government of that Order.

Prince Zerubbabel, you will now approach that Altar, on which lie a copy of the Sacred Writings of your people, and what we are assured are the symbols of your Ancient Craft.

You will kneel upon your left knee, your right knee forming a square, your left hand resting upon the Sacred Writings, Square and Compasses, and your right hand upon your heart. [Done.] Princes and Rulers, arise, and witness this Vow.

OPTIONAL RUBRIC

(In conferring the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross, the Sovereign Master, in administering the vow of the Order, may have the candidates repeat paragraph # [1], the Sovereign Master will recite paragraphs [2], [3], [4], [5], [6], and the candidates will repeat paragraph [7].)

[All candidates must participate in the Vow.]

OBLIGATION OR VOW

S. M.: Yws "I", pynifaram:

[1] I,, omofwaa, itpotSA
otU, atw, dhah, saspav, tIwfkacts, b
ttIOotRC; tIwncttaoetatalCot
O; anuhuat, se, oliIshfhletts; ow
tboaradeCotIOotRC.

[2] Ifpav, tIwstaabtRaRotooaoCo
tIOotRCowImhham.

[3] Ifpav, tIwaaoadSarsstmb la,
ogmbthoatalCotO, iwtdofm, nioua
aem.

[4] Ifpav, tIwvtcoataacCotO, wt, a
tIwahoalo.

[5] Ifpav, tIwnaatfoooaCotIOot
RCutsbpalnrcotO, otrotsC, aualW.

[6] Ifpav, tIwnaobpatcotOuapws
nhrratnpDoF, ttbomkab.

[7] TatIsaspav, wafasrtoapts, w
ae, mr, oseomimw; bmunlapttohmhp
d, ttt suaIht; atutltssIbeftsoa
taeCotO, siekowvtmsvaaCotIOot
RC. ShmG, akms. (Or:—AmGkmsitdoo
ts.)

S. M.: Arise, and approach the throne.

S. M.: And now, Zerubbabel, we will confer upon you the highest honor in our gift by creating you the first member of this new Order. You will kneel on your left knee.

S. M.: [*Raising his scepter.*] We now create and constitute you a Companion of the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross, which we now found; and we do hereby create and constitute each of the Princes and Rulers present a Companion of said Order.

Arise, Companion Zerubbabel, and with this hand receive a hearty welcome into this new Order, which will be ever ready to protect, vindicate and defend you. Princes and Rulers, be seated.

S. M.: [*With Green Sash in hand.*] I now invest you with this Green Sash, and make it the insignia of this new Order, which is designed to perpetuate the remembrance of the events that have occasioned the renewal of our friendship, and to inculcate the almighty force and the importance of TRUTH. Let its color ever remind you that TRUTH is a divine attribute, and the foundation of every virtue. Companion Master of Infantry:—Gird Companion Zerubbabel.

[The Master of Infantry approaches with a belt and scabbard and clasps the belt around Zerubbabel.]

S. M.: [*Taking up Sword.*] I now present you with this Sword. In the hands of a true and courteous Companion of this Order it will be endowed with three excellent qualities:—its hilt with FAITH, its blade with HOPE, its point with CHARITY. Let these teach you that he who draws his sword in a just and virtuous cause, having FAITH in God, may reasonably HOPE for victory, ever remembering to extend CHARITY to a fallen foe. Return it to its scabbard. [*Done.*] There let it remain until consumed by rust, rather than draw it in the cause of Injustice, Falsehood, or Oppression, for JUSTICE, TRUTH, and LIBERTY are the Grand Characteristics of this Illustrious Order.

S. M.: [*Resuming his seat.*] You will now be instructed in what we decree to be the attributes of this Order, and the

MEANS OF RECOGNITION

among its members. These are:

- [1] T J P.
- [2] T P C, w i t o t R.
- [3] T R C W.
- [4] T S, G, a W o a C o t I O o t R C.

Companion Master of Cavalry. You will communicate these as we direct.

[Master of Cavalry takes position in front of Zerubbabel.]

S. M.: Draw, SWORDS. T J P i g w t c o t S. GUARD. Give cuts. [*Done.*] I i g o a A o S, w y s n f. A y l f a p t b e o; p y l h o e o r s. T P i J, a t R i B. T C c w a g t P, a, i c, t C c w g t R. Communicate. [*Done.*] Carry, SWORDS.

S. M.: T P C i g w f c o t S. GUARD. Give cuts [*Done.*] —a u a a o s w y s n f. A y l f a p t b e o; p y l h o e o r s. T C i T, a t R i S-b. T C c w a g t C T, a, i c, t

C e w g t R, S-b. COMMUNICATE. [Done.] Carry, SWORDS.

S. M.: T R C W i g i t s m w f e o t s. GUARD. Give cuts. [Done.] A y l f; p y l h o e o r s. T W i V, a t R i T. COMMUNICATE. [Done.] Carry, SWORDS.

S. M.: T S, G, a W o a C o t R C a g w t c o t S, a a t, w b t p o t s t e o l s, n t h.

[1] T S i g a f e. GUARD. Give one cut. [Done.] I i l t w o a t, t. Give the Sign. [Done.]

[2] T G i g a t t e. G s a t e. [Done.] A t l f a p t b e o. I t f o y l h. [Done.] T s t s, a r i f u e f a s. [Done.] N b p o s t e o l s, n t h. [Done.] T W i L, t R i L. T s w i g i r t t f. COMMUNICATE. [Done.] Carry, SWORDS. Return, SWORDS.

[Master of Cavalry resumes his station.]

S. M.: On entering or retiring from a Council of the Red Cross, you will advance to the centre of the Chamber, face the Sovereign Master, and give the Sign. It alludes to the Penalty of your Vow, where reference is made to the sound of the last trump.

THE BANNER OF THE ORDER

S. M.: The Banner of this Order shall be of green color. In its centre there shall be a Star of seven points, within which shall be a Red Cross of equal arms and angles, surrounded by the Motto, *Magna est Veritas, et praevalerebit*,—"Great is Truth, and it will prevail."

The Cross shall be the emblem of this Order, the four arms indicating DEITY, TRUTH, JUSTICE, LIBERTY. These will commemorate our faith in God, and in the Grand Characteristics of this Illustrious Order.

[All candidates will give the sign when retiring.]

END, OPTIONAL SHORT CEREMONY

FULL CEREMONIAL

S. M.: Companion Warder:—Ascertain if any Candidate is in waiting for the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross.

[Warder ascertains from Sentinel, and reports.]

W.: Sovereign Master:—Companion....., a Royal Arch Mason, is in waiting to receive the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross.

S. M.: Companion Master of Dispatches:—Has the Candidate complied with the Statutes?

M. D.: He has, Sovereign Master.

S. M.: Companions, if there be no objection we will confer the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross upon Companion..... [Pause.] There being no objection,

Companion Master of Infantry:—Retire and prepare Companion.....for reception into this Order.

S. M.: Let the Grand Council be formed in the Council Hall, under the direction of our Excellent High Priest.

[The Grand Council will be formed in the apartment intended for that purpose, thus: The High Priest goes thither, puts on his robes and takes his seat on the dais. The Warder, and a sufficient number to form the Council, accompany him, and all put on Jewish robes. Warder takes station near the door, and the Companions take seats in equal numbers on each side, in front of the High Priest, and face inward. The Master of Infantry and Candidate go to Preparation room. The Master of Infantry, who now becomes and will be styled, "Companion Conductor," will say to the Candidate:]

C. C.: Companion, I am now to become your Conductor. I will, therefore, represent you, speak for you when necessary, and answer for you such questions as you may not be able to answer for yourself.

[When all is in readiness.]

H. P.: ☒☒☒ Companions, by virtue of the power in me vested, I now declare this Grand Council open. Companion Warder:—You will so proclaim.

W.: [*Opening door so that the Candidate may hear.*] By order of the Excellent High Priest, I proclaim the Grand Council now open. [*Closes door and resumes station.*]

H. P.: Companions, the Grand Council is in session. ☒

[Having prepared the Candidate by clothing him as a Royal Arch Mason, the Companion Conductor makes an alarm ☒☒☒ ☒☒☒ ☒]

W.: Excellent High Priest:—There is an alarm.

H. P.: Companion Warder:—Attend to the alarm. [*Warder opens door and enters Preparing Room.*]

W.: Who comes here?

C. C.: Companion....., who, having received all the necessary preceding degrees of Freemasonry, now solicits the honor of being admitted to the Grand Council.

W.: Await the order of the Excellent High Priest.

W.: [*Inside.*] Excellent High Priest:—The alarm was caused by Companion....., who, having received all the necessary preceding degrees of Freemasonry, now solicits the honor of being admitted to the Grand Council.

H. P.: Admit him.

W.: [*Opening door.*] You have permission to enter.

[Companion Conductor and Candidate enter and take position, standing at foot of Council opposite the High Priest.]

HIGH PRIEST'S ADDRESS

Companions, the Council here assembled represents the Grand Council convened at Jerusalem in the second year of the reign of Darius, King of Persia, to deliberate upon the unhappy condition of the country, and to devise means whereby they might secure the favor and protection of the new Sovereign, and obtain his consent to their proceeding with the rebuilding of the City and Temple.

After the death of Cyrus, the Jews, whom he liberated and sent back to Jerusalem, were forbidden by Cambyses, his son and successor, to continue the work of rebuilding, and at the time this Council was convened the work had ceased during several years.

Zerubbabel, the royal Prince of the House of Judah, participated in the deliberations of that Council, and we have admitted you to this presence in expectation that you will assume the name and represent the character of that illustrious Prince, whose hands laid the foundation of the Second Temple, and whose hands the Lord promised should finish it.

Are you willing to assume his name, represent his character, and participate in the deliberations of this Council?

Candidate: I am.

H. P. Zerubbabel, you will then be seated with your Companions, and the Council will give attention to the reading of a Lesson from the records of our fathers.

[Companion Conductor and Zerubbabel take seats with Council.]

READING FOR HIGH PRIEST

High Priest [Reads]: Now in the second month of the second year of their coming into the house of God at Jerusalem, Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and the remnant of their brethren, the priests and the Levites over 20 years of age and all those who were in captivity, commenced the rebuilding of the house of the Lord which Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed.

Under the direction of Jeshua and Kadmiel the foundation of the Temple was laid amidst the sound of trumpets and cymbals, and praising the Lord according to the ordinance of King David. And all the people shouted with a great shout, and they sang together in praising and giving thanks to the Lord because He is good, for His mercy endureth forever toward Israel.

When the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the children of the captivity were building the temple unto the Lord God of Israel, they came to Zerubbabel and asked permission to assist in the work, saying "Let us build with you; for we seek your God as ye do and we do sacrifice unto him since the days of Esar-Haddon, King of Assur, which brought us up hither," but they are refused because King Cyrus ordered the work to be done by the Jews.

They thereupon engaged in a campaign of harassment and false accusations which continued until the death of King Cyrus. Cyrus was succeeded by his son Cambyses who reigned for nine years, and during that period little or nothing was done on the walls of Jerusalem or the Temple.

When Artaxerxes ascended the throne, Rehum the chancellor and Shimshai the scribe wrote to him in the Syrian language saying that if Jerusalem be builded again, the Jews would no longer pay toll, tribute, and custom and thus endanger the revenue of the king.

Artaxerxes answered the letter by issuing an order that the city not be builded and that all work cease. When King Artaxerxes' letter was read before Rehum and Shimshai and their companions, they went quickly to Jerusalem unto the Jews and made them cease by force and power.

And so all work ceased until the second year of the reign of Darius, King of Persia, a period of fifteen years after the Jews laid the foundation of the second temple.

[Excerpts from Ezra, Chapters 3 and 4.]

END OF READING

H. P.: You see, Companions, how our enemies have made false accusations against us, hired counsellors, and finally by force and power have caused the work entirely to cease. If any Companion has a suggestion to make as to how we may obtain the favor and protection of the new Sovereign, let him now speak.

[Companion Conductor and Zerubbabel arise, and Companion Conductor speaks for Zerubbabel.]

C. C.: Excellent High Priest, our Sovereign Lord, Darius the King, having ascended the throne of Persia, our people are inspired with new hopes of securing his protection and support in the noble and glorious work of rebuilding the City and Temple. For, while in private life, Darius made a vow to God that, should he ever ascend the throne of Persia, he would rebuild Jerusalem and its Temple, and restore all the holy vessels remaining in Babylon.

Having been formerly honored with the favorable notice, and even friendship, of the King, I now with confidence offer my services to this Council. I will cheerfully undertake the hazardous enterprise of traversing the Persian dominions and of seeking admission to the presence of the King. Should I be successful, I will embrace the first favorable opportunity to remind him of his vow, and impress upon his mind the almighty force and the importance of TRUTH. Well knowing his piety, integrity, and reverence for sacred things, I entertain no

doubt of securing his consent to our enemies being driven away, so that we shall be no longer hindered or impeded in our noble and glorious work.

H. P.: Companions, you have heard the generous offer of Zerubbabel. Do you accept? (See pages 174-175).

Council: [*Cheerfully.*] We do.

H. P.: [*Rising.*] Companion Zerubbabel, this Council with joy accepts your noble and generous offer, and I will forthwith invest you with the necessary passports by which you can make yourself known to the friends of our cause, wherever you may meet them. But before confiding to you so important a mission, one of vital interest to our cause, I must require of you a solemn pledge to be faithful to the trust we are about to repose in you. If you are willing to make such a pledge, place your right hand on your heart, and answer me truly:

1. Do you, on your honor as a Royal Arch Mason, and in the presence of God and these witnesses, declare that you will be forever faithful to the trust we are about to repose in you?

Z.: I do.

2. Do you solemnly promise to keep inviolable our secrets, and to maintain the honor of this Council even at peril of your liberty and life?

Z.: I do.

H. P.: Having knowledge of your former obligations, and confidence in your present declarations, I will invest you with a sword. Let Zerubbabel be girded.

[Companion Conductor clasps a belt, with scabbard attached, around Zerubbabel.]

H. P.: [*Handing Zerubbabel a sword.*] Receive this sword. Its glittering blade should symbolize the purity of your intentions. With it you will be able to defend

yourself against your enemies, and maintain the Truth. I will now invest you with this Green Sash. [*Places Sash over Zerubbabel's neck and across his body under his left arm.*] Accept it as a peculiar mark of our esteem. Wear it as a perpetual incentive to the performance of every duty, and rest assured that the memory of him who falls in a just and virtuous cause is blessed, and will forever flourish in immortal green.

The Companion Warder will now invest you with the Jewish Pass.

W.: [*Draws Sword and goes to Zerubbabel.*] C, t P i g w t c o t s, t:—A y r f. [*Cuts given.*] I i g o a A o S, w o s n f. A y l f, p y l h o m r s, a I p m o y. T P i J, a t R i B. T C e w a g t P, a, i c, t C e w a g t R. Carry, SWORDS. [*Warder returns to his station.*]

H. P.: Zerubbabel, you are now prepared for your hazardous journey. When dangers threaten, remember that your cause is just, and that you are armed with a trusty sword. Should occasion demand its use, be valiant, yet prudent. May the God of our fathers protect you, and speed you on your way.

C.C.: Zerubbabel, follow me.

[Companion Conductor and Zerubbabel start on journey. Before reaching Guards, Companion Conductor instructs Zerubbabel what answer to make when challenged.]

H. P.: ☒☒☒ I now declare this Grand Council closed. ☒

[High Priest and Council doff robes, and return to the Audie Chamber.]

JOURNEY

First Guard: HALT! Who comes there?

Z.: A friend.

First Guard: Advance, friend, and give the Pass.

Z.: [*Gives Jewish Pass.*]

First Guard: Correct. Pass on.

[Same colloquy with Second Guard as with First Guard.]

C. C.: [*At the Bridge.*] Zerubbabel, you have now reached the river that forms the boundary line between our own country and the realm of Darius, the King. I can accompany you no farther. *Over this Bridge you must pass alone and pursue your journey without escort. Farewell! God speed your hazardous undertaking.

*[When Commanderies have Banners, the following may be inserted:]

On this side you perceive the Jewish Banner, on the other the Persian Banner.

[Zerubbabel crosses the Bridge and meets Persian Guard. Other guards nearby.]

P. Gd.: HALT! Who comes there?

Z.: A friend.

P. Gd.: Advance, friend, and give the Countersign.

[Persian Guard will command a repetition of the Countersign, which Zerubbabel attempts to give, with a harsh WHAT? after second effort. Then:]

P. Gd.: Ho Guards! An enemy! A spy! Seize him! Disarm him!

[Guards rush to Zerubbabel, seize him and deprive him of his sword and sash. The Companion Conductor moves to his side and acts as the mouthpiece of the prisoner.]

C. C.: Why treat me thus? Why this violence? I am neither an enemy nor a spy.

P. Gd.: Who are you, then?

C. C.: A Prince of the House of Judah, the first among my equals,—and a Mason.

P. G.: You - a - Prince - of - the - House - of - Judah! Where are you from?

C. C.: Jerusalem.

P. Gd.: What is your name?

C. C.: Zerubbabel.

P. Gd.: What do you desire?

C. C.: An audience with your Sovereign.

P. Gd.: Only as captive and slave can you approach his Majesty.

C. C.: Then lead me to his presence.

P. Gd.: Guards, clothe him in the garb of slavery, and bind him in fetters. [Done.]

P. Gd.: Captive and slave, follow me.

P. Gd.: [At Chamber door.] ❖❖❖ ❖❖❖ ❖❖

W.: [Salutes.] Sovereign Master:—There is an alarm.

S. M.: Companion Warder:—Attend to the alarm.

W.: [Outside.] Who comes here?

P. Gd.: A detachment of his Majesty's guards, who have made captive of one whom they suspect to be an enemy and a spy.

W.: Who is he?

P. Gd.: He claims to be a Prince of the House of Judah, the first among his equals, and a Mason.

W.: [To Zerubbabel.] Where are you from?

C. C.: Jerusalem.

W.: What is your name?

C. C.: Zerubbabel.

W.: What is your desire?

C. C.: An audience with the King.

W.: Your request shall be made known to his Majesty.

W.: [Inside, Salutes.] Sovereign Master:—The alarm was caused by a detachment of your Majesty's guards, who have brought hither one whom they suspect to be an enemy and a spy.

S. M.: Who is he?

W.: He claims to be a Prince of the House of Judah, the first among his equals, and a Mason.

S. M.: Where is he from?

W.: Jerusalem.

S. M.: What is his name?

W.: Zerubbabel.

S. M.: [Surprised.] Zerubbabel! What does he desire?

W.: An audience with your Majesty.

S. M.: Companion Master of Cavalry:—[Master of Cavalry arises. Salutes.] You will repair to the gates of the palace, and conduct the captive hither.

M. C.: [Outside.] Is he armed?

P. Gd.: He is not.

M. C.: Then follow me.

[Master of Cavalry now takes command of the Guards, who, with the captive, enter the palace. They halt before the Sovereign Master. Sword and sash are carried into the palace by one of the Guards.]

M. C.: [Saluting.] Sovereign Master:—I have brought hither the captive.

S. M.: [*Scrutinizing Zerubbabel.*] This is no enemy! It is indeed Zerubbabel, the friend and companion of my youth.

Zerubbabel, having gained admittance to our presence, we command that you forthwith declare the particular motive that induced you, without our permission, to pass the confines of our dominions.

C. C.: O King! Live forever! The tears and complaints of my companions at Jerusalem have brought me hither. My people were liberated by King Cyrus, and commanded to "build the house of the Lord God of Israel, which is in Jerusalem." But, by command of King Cambyses, the work ceased, and our adversaries on the other side of the river have ever since hindered and impeded our noble and glorious efforts to rebuild the City and Temple of our God.

Therefore have I come hither to implore your Majesty's favor and protection. And I now beseech thee, O King, to restore me to thy confidence and esteem, and grant me admission among the servants of the royal household, until it shall please your Majesty to give me audience in behalf of my people.

S. M.: Zerubbabel, I have often reflected with much pleasure upon our early intimacy and friendship. I have also learned with great satisfaction of your fame as a wise and accomplished Freemason. Having long entertained a profound veneration for that ancient and honorable Institution, and a sincere desire to become a member thereof, I will at once grant your request, and confer upon you one of the principal offices of our household, on condition that you reveal to me the secrets of Freemasonry.

C. C.: Sovereign Master, when our Most Excellent Grand Master, Solomon, King of Israel, governed the Craft, he taught that "TRUTH is a divine attribute, and the foundation of every virtue." To be good men and true is the first lesson taught us in Masonry. My engagements are sacred and inviolable; I cannot reveal our secrets. If I can obtain your Majesty's clemency only at the sacrifice of my integrity, then I humbly decline the royal appointment, and cheerfully will I submit to exile, or even death.

S. M.: Zerubbabel, your virtue and integrity are truly commendable, and your fidelity to your engagements worthy of imitation. From this moment you are free. [*May extend sceptre.*] Guards: [*Two Guards step right and left of Zerubbabel.*] Strike off those chains! [*Sovereign Master pauses until Guards remove fetters.*] Remove that garb of slavery! [*Done.*] May these never again disgrace so pure a Mason, so noble a Prince.

S. M.: Prince Master of the Palace:—Bring forth a royal robe, and clothe Zerubbabel in habiliments befitting his rank.

P. M. P.: [*Putting robe and coronet on Zerubbabel.*] Thus shall it be done unto the man whom the King delighteth to honor. [*This may be sung.*]

S. M.: Zerubbabel, we greet thee, and assign thee a place in our household.

[Master of the Palace conducts Zerubbabel to a seat near the throne.]

THE IMMEMORIAL DISCUSSION

S. M.: From time immemorial it has been the custom of the Sovereigns of this realm, on occasions like the present, to propose certain topics for consideration, and to bestow princely gifts upon the one found wisest in the discussion. In conformity to that custom I now propose the following question, with the assurance that he who gives the most satisfactory answer shall be suitably rewarded.

Which is the greatest:—

The strength of Wine,
The power of the King, or
The influence of Woman?

Prince Chancellor, what say you?

P. C.: [*Arises, bows.*] Sovereign Master, it is the opinion of your Chancellor that the strength of Wine is the greatest.

S. M.: Prince Master of the Palace, what is your opinion?

P. M. P.: [*Arises, bows.*] Sovereign Master, it is the opinion of your Master of the Palace that the power of the King is the greatest.

S. M.: Prince Zerubbabel, have you an opinion to offer?

C. C.: [*Companion Conductor and Zerubbabel arise and bow.*] I have, your Majesty. In my humble opinion the influence of Woman is greater than the strength of Wine, or the power of the King, but above all things TRUTH beareth away the victory.

S. M.: Sayest thou that TRUTH beareth away the victory! Prince Zerubbabel, that is an important addi-

tion you have made to our question, and it shall have consideration.

Princes and Rulers, let the discussion now begin. Prince Chancellor, are you prepared to maintain your opinion by argument? If so, begin.

P. C.: [*Arises, bows.*] O ye Princes and Rulers, how exceedingly strong is WINE! It causeth all men to err that drink it; it maketh the mind of the king and the beggar to be all one; of the bondman and the freeman, of the poor man and of the rich; it turneth also every thought into jollity and mirth, so that a man remembereth neither sorrow nor debt; it changeth and elevateth the spirits, and enliveneth the heavy hearts of the miserable. It maketh a man forget his brethren, and draw his sword against his best friends. O ye Princes and Rulers, is not WINE the strongest, that forceth us to do these things?

S. M.: Prince Chancellor, your argument is well-chosen. Prince Master of the Palace, are you prepared to defend your position?

P. M. P.: [*Arises, bows.*] It is beyond dispute, O Princes and Rulers, that God has made man master of all things under the sun; to command them, to make use of them, and apply them to his service as he pleases; but whereas men have only dominion over other sublunary creatures, KINGS have an authority even over men themselves, and a right of ruling them by will and pleasure. Now, he that is master of those who are masters of all things else, hath no earthly thing above him.

S. M.: Prince Master of the Palace, your argument is both pleasing and forcible, being well-calculated to maintain the dignity of the throne. And now, Prince

Zerubbabel, we will hear the reason for your opinion, and for the important addition you have made to our question.

C. C.: [*Arises with Zerubbabel and both bow.*] O Princes and Rulers, the force of *Wine* is not to be denied; neither is that of *Kings*, that unites so many men in one common bond of allegiance; but the supereminency of *WOMAN* is yet above all this; for *Kings* are but the gifts of *WOMEN*, and they are also the mothers of those that cultivate our vineyards. *WOMEN* have the power to make us abandon our very country and relations, and many times to forget the best friends we have in the world, and, forsaking all other comforts, to live and die with them. But when all is said, neither they, nor *Wine*, nor *Kings*, are comparable to the almighty force of *TRUTH*. As for all other things, they are mortal and transient, but *TRUTH* alone is unchangeable and everlasting; the benefits we receive from it are subject to no variations or vicissitudes of time or fortune. In her judgment is no unrighteousness, and she is the strength, wisdom, power, and majesty of all ages. **BLESSED BE THE GOD OF TRUTH.**

[When Companion Conductor concludes, the Prince Chancellor and Prince Master of the Palace will arise and exclaim:]

P. C. and P. M. P.: [*Together.*] Great is *TRUTH* and mighty above all things!

S. M.: [*Rising and lifting crown.*] “**BLESSED BE THE GOD OF TRUTH!**”

[Sovereign Master, Prince Chancellor, and Prince Master of the Palace resume their seats.]

S. M.: Zerubbabel, ask what thou wilt, and we will give it thee, because thou art found wisest among thy companions.

C. C.: O King, remember thy vow, which thou hast vowed, to build Jerusalem in the day when thou shouldest come to thy kingdom, and to restore the holy vessels which were taken away out of Jerusalem. Thou hast also vowed to build up the Temple, which was burned when Judah was made desolate by the Chaldees. And now, O King, this is that I desire of thee, that thou make good the vow, the performance whereof, with thine own mouth, thou hast vowed to the King of heaven.

S. M.: Prince Zerubbabel, it shall be done. We will faithfully fulfill our vow. Passports shall be issued to you, and orders given to all our Officers throughout the realm, that they give you, and those who may desire to accompany you, safe conduct back to Jerusalem. There you shall be no longer hindered or impeded in the rebuilding of your City and Temple. We will also send back to Jerusalem all the holy vessels remaining in Babylon.

And behold we do make a Decree. Master of Dispatches:—Read aloud that Decree.

M. D.: [*Reads Decree.*]

“Moreover, I make a decree what ye shall do to the elders of these Jews for the building of this house of God: that of the king’s goods, *even* of the tribute beyond the river, forthwith expenses be given unto these men, that they be not hindered.

And that which they have need of, both young bullocks, and rams, and lambs, for the burnt-offerings of the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the appointment of the priests which *are* at Jerusalem, let it be given them day by day without fail:

That they may offer sacrifices of sweet savours unto the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king, and of his sons.

Also I have made a decree, that whosoever shall alter this word, let timber be pulled down from his house, and being set up,

let him be hanged thereon; and let his house be made a dunghill for this.

And the God that hath caused his name to dwell there destroy all kings and people, that shall put to their hand to alter *and* to destroy this house of God which is at Jerusalem. I Darius have made a decree; let it be done with speed." (Ezra 6:8-12. King James Version).

[The Companion Conductor now becomes Master of Infantry.]

FOUNDING THE NEW ORDER

S. M.: Princes and Rulers, to perpetuate unto all ages the remembrance of this happy occasion, and the events which have renewed our early intimacy with Zerubbabel, we propose to found a new Order. It shall be instituted to inculcate the almighty force and the importance of TRUTH. It shall be forever known as THE ILLUSTRIOUS ORDER OF THE RED CROSS, and upon you, Zerubbabel, as a further proof of our friendship and esteem, we will confer the honor of creating you its first member. But before we can do so we must demand of you a solemn Vow to be forever faithful to the Laws and Regulations which we now establish for the government of that Order.

Companion Master of Finance:—Bring forth from the Treasury the Altar of Masonry that was brought out of Jerusalem.

[Master of Finance brings an Altar, on which is an open Bible with Square and Compasses displayed, and places it in front of the Sovereign Master.]

S. M.: Prince Zerubbabel, you will now approach that Altar, on which lie a copy of the Sacred Writings of

your people, and what we are assured are the symbols of your Ancient Craft.

You will kneel upon your left knee, your right knee forming a square, your left hand resting upon the Sacred Writings, Square and Compasses, and your right hand upon your heart. [Done.] Princes and Rulers, arise, and witness this Vow.

[All Candidates must participate in the vow.]

OBLIGATION OR VOW

S. M.: Yws "I", pynifars:

[1] Omofwaa, itpotSAotU, atw, dha
h, saspav, tIwfkactsbttIOotRC;
tIwnettaoetatalCotO; anuhua
d, se, oliIshfhletts; owtbora
d eCotIOotRC.

[2] Ifpav, tIwstaabtRaRotooaoC
otIOotRCowImhham.

[3] Ifpav, tIwaaoadSarsstmb la,
ogmbthoat

a l C o t O, i w t d o f m, n i o u a a e m.

[4] I f p a v, t I w v t e o a t a e C o t O, w t, a
t I w a h o a l o.

[5] I f p a v, t I w n a a t f o o o a C o t I O o t
R C u t s b p a l n r C o t O, o t r o t s C, a u a l W.

[6] I f p a v, t I w n a o b p a t c o t O u a p w s
n h r r a t n p D o F, t t b o m k a b.

Repeat after me:

[7] T a t I s a s p a v, w a f a s r t o a p t s, w a e,
m r, o s e o m i m w; b m u n l a p t t o h m h p d,
t t t s u a l h t; a t u t l t s s I b e f t s o a t a e
C o t O, s I e k o w v t m s v a a C o t I O o t R C.
S h m G, a k m s.

S. M.: Arise, and approach the throne.

S. M.: And now, Zerubbabel, we will confer upon you the highest honor in our gift by creating you the first member of this new Order. You will kneel on your left knee.

S. M.: [*Raising his sceptre.*] We now create and constitute you a Companion of the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross, which we now found; and we do hereby create and constitute each of the Princes and Rulers present a Companion of said Order.

Arise, Companion Zerubbabel, and with this hand receive a hearty welcome into this new Order, which will be ever ready to protect, vindicate and defend you. Princes and Rulers, be seated.

S. M.: [*With Green Sash in hand.*] This Green Sash, of which you were deprived by our guards, we now restore, and make it the insignia of this new Order, which is designed to perpetuate the remembrance of the events that have occasioned the renewal of our friendship, and to inculcate the almighty force and the importance of TRUTH. Let its color ever remind you that TRUTH is a divine attribute, and the foundation of every virtue. Companion Master of Infantry:—Gird Companion Zerubbabel.

[The Master of Infantry, who has put on his Red Cross Uniform, approaches with a belt and scabbard and clasps the belt around Zerubbabel.]

S. M.: [*Taking up Sword.*] This sword, of which you were deprived by our guards, we also restore. In the hands of a true and courteous Companion of this Order it will be endowed with three excellent qualities: its hilt with FAITH, its blade with HOPE, its point with CHARITY. Let these teach you that he who draws his sword in a just

and virtuous cause, having FAITH in God, may reasonably HOPE for victory, ever remembering to extend CHARITY to a fallen foe. Return it to its scabbard. [Done.] There let it remain until consumed by rust, rather than draw it in the cause of Injustice, Falsehood, or Oppression, for JUSTICE, TRUTH, and LIBERTY are the Grand Characteristics of this Illustrious Order.

S. M.: [Resuming his seat.] You will now be instructed in what we decree to be the attributes of this Order, and the

MEANS OF RECOGNITION

among its members. These are:

[1] T J P, i w y h a b i.

[2] T P C, w i t o t R.

[3] T R C W.

[4] T S, G, a W o a C o t I O o t R C.

Companion Master of Cavalry:—You will communicate these as we direct.

[Master of Cavalry takes position in front of Zerubbabel.]

S. M.: Draw, SWORDS. T P C i g w f c o t s. GUARD. Give cuts [Done.]—a u a a o s w y s n f. A y l f a p t b e o; p y l h o e o r s. T C i T, a t R i S-b. T C e w a g t C T, a, i e, t C e

w g t R, S-b. COMMUNICATE. [Done.] Carry, SWORDS.

S. M.: T R C W i g i t s m w f c o t s. GUARD. Give cuts. [Done.] A y l f; p y l h o e o r s. T W i V, a t R i T. COMMUNICATE. [Done.] Carry, SWORDS.

S. M.: T S, G, a W o a C o t R C a g w t c o t s, a a t, w b t p o t s t e o l s, n t h.

[1] T S i g a f c. GUARD. Give one cut. [Done.] I i l t w o a t, t. Give the sign. [Done.]

[2] T G i g a t t c. Give second and third cuts. [Done.] A t l f a p t b e o. I t f o y l h. [Done.] T s t s, a r i f u e f a s. [Done.] N b p o s t e o l s, n t h. [Done.] T W i L, t R i L. T s w i g i r t t f. COMMUNICATE. [Done.] Carry, SWORDS, Return, SWORDS.

[Master of Cavalry resumes his station.]

S. M.: On entering or retiring from a Council of the Red Cross, you will advance to the centre of the Chamber, face the Sovereign Master, and give the Sign. It alludes to the Penalty of your Vow, where reference is made to the sound of the last trump.

THE BANNER OF THE ORDER

S. M.: The Banner of this Order shall be of green color. In its centre there shall be a Star of seven points, within which shall be a Red Cross of equal arms and angles, surrounded by the Motto, *Magna est Veritas, et praevalerebit*,—"Great is Truth, and it will prevail."

The Cross shall be the emblem of this Order, the four arms indicating DEITY, TRUTH, JUSTICE, LIBERTY. These will commemorate our faith in God, and in the Grand Characteristics of this Illustrious Order.

THE WELCOME

S. M.: [*Going to Zerubbabel and taking his hand.*] And now, Companion, we bid you welcome to all the privileges of an Order founded upon TRUTH. Receive the congratulations of your Companions, and be seated among them.

[The Companion is welcomed by the members.]

END, FULL CEREMONIAL

HISTORICAL LECTURE

[Sovereign Masters will frequently find it instructive to the candidate and edifying to the members to explain the ceremonials. The following is suggested as helpful to such an explanation:]

The Scriptures inform us that for their sins, and those of their forefathers, the Jewish people were led into captivity by Nebuzar-adan, Captain of the Guard of Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon. As slaves they tilled the valley of the Euphrates and of the Tigris, until Cyrus destroyed the Chaldean dynasty.

During that captivity Zerubbabel, Crown Prince of the House of Judah, and Darius, son of Hystaspes, formed an alliance of friendship which was probably terminated only with death.

One of the first acts of Cyrus was the liberation of the Jewish captives. He then permitted them to return to Judea, that they might rebuild the City of Jerusalem, and its Temple, which Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed.

The foundation of the Second Temple was laid five hundred and thirty-five years before Christ; Zerubbabel, the Royal Prince, Jeshua, the High Priest, and Haggai, the Prophet, laying the same.

Cyrus died, and his son, Cambyses, succeeded him on the Medo-Persian throne. On complaint of the Cutheans, and other contiguous tribes, Cambyses commanded the work of the City and Temple to cease. During the nine years that followed, scarcely anything was done on the walls of Jerusalem, or the Temple.

Cambyes died and the Magians seized the throne, from which their usurper was driven, in a little over a year, with great slaughter. Then the Seven Great Families of Persia laid hold of the government, and Darius ascended the throne. He appointed Zerubbabel, his friend, to be Governor of the Jews that had returned to Mount Zion under the decree of Cyrus the Great, and afterwards appointed him to that place of great trust—a Guard of the Royal Bed-chamber—for the protection of the person of the King. There were three of these Guards, and they were chosen by the Monarch because of his implicit confidence in their loyalty.

Fifteen years after the Jews had laid the foundation of the Second Temple (520 B.C.) they were forced to call a Grand Council to consult about the state of the country. Cambyes was dead, and the Magian usurper, Smerdis, had been driven from the throne, to give place to Darius, son of Hystaspes, whose favoring of the Jews was believed to be almost as marked as that of the Great Cyrus.

Darius spread a feast at his capitol, and invited thereto the Princes and Rulers of the realm. That feast was thoroughly enjoyed, and at its close “they every one departed to bed at their own house, and Darius the King went to bed.”

The King slept lightly, and awaking he fell into conversation with his Three Guards. He suggested, as a part of the festivities of the morrow, that they three engage in a public discussion of some interesting question, as had been the custom on similar occasions from time immemorial, and that he would reward with a princely gift the successful contestant. The King then propounded the following question:

“Whether Wine was not the strongest?—Whether Kings were not such?—Whether Women were not such, or whether Truth were not the strongest of all?”

Esdras makes the Guards suggest both the questions and the prize, but we follow the story as told by Josephus.

Again the King slept, and the Guards prepared for the friendly contest of the following morning. When the King arose he sent for the Princes and Rulers to meet him in the Audience Chamber, and witness the contest between his Guards.

The contest began in time by one of the Guards declaiming in favor of the strength of Wine, followed by another in favor of the power of the King. Then the Jew, Zerubbabel, contended for the supereminency of Women, concluding with a noble deliverance in favor of Truth.

The brilliant assembly burst forth into applause when Zerubbabel concluded, and the King awarded him the prize, with these words: “Ask for somewhat over and above what I have promised, for I will give it unto you because of your wisdom.”

Then “Zerubbabel put him in mind of the vow he had made in case he should ever have the kingdom.” Now this vow was “to rebuild Jerusalem, and to rebuild therein the Temple of God, and also to restore the vessels which Nebuchadnezzar had pillaged and carried to Babylon.”

And behold the King was pleased to arise and to kiss his eloquent Guard, Zerubbabel, and to grant his request. Zerubbabel returned to his people in Jerusalem with great joy, and the rebuilding of the City and Temple was immediately resumed. Darius not only kept his vow, but made large contributions to the rebuilding out of the Royal Treasury.

The details adopted to more beautifully round out the drama, and more pointedly teach the lesson of the almighty force and the importance of Truth, do not intrench upon the facts of history.

The Illustrious Order of the Red Cross is not a Pagan rite, nor is it a mere social observance. It is an Order founded upon Truth, and is a proper preparation for the solemnities of the Order of the Temple.

Darius believed in the one God when he registered a vow to rebuild the City and Temple of Jerusalem, a vow he religiously kept. "Blessed be the God of Truth," on the lips of Darius, purges the memory of his early reign from all taint of Sabianism, into which he wandered in later life.

As Judaism was a preparation for Christianity, so let the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross be a preparation for the Christian Order of the Temple.

END OF THE ILLUSTRIOUS ORDER OF THE RED CROSS.

CLOSING

S. M.: Prince Master of the Palace:—I am about to close this Council. See that the Sentinel is informed.

P. M. P.: Companion Warder:—Inform the Sentinel that the Sovereign Master is about to close this Council, and direct him to guard accordingly.

[Warder informs Sentinel, closes the door, and raps $\times \times \times$ $\times \times \times$ $\times \times$ which are repeated by the Sentinel on the outside. Warder resumes his station.]

W.: Prince Master of the Palace:—The Sentinel is informed, and the Audience Chamber is duly guarded.

P. M. P.: Sovereign Master:—The Sentinel is informed.

S. M.: Prince Master of the Palace:—Prepare for our devotions.

P. M. P.: Companions, ATTENTION. UN-COVER.

S. M.: Excellent High Priest:—Lead our devotions.

PRAYER

S. M.: Companions, RE-COVER. I now declare this Council of the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross closed. Companion Warder:—Inform the Sentinel.

W.: [*Opens door and says:*] Companion Sentinel:—The Council is closed.

[Warder returns to station and reports.]

W.: Sovereign Master:—The Sentinel is informed.

S. M.: Companions:—You are dismissed.