to unite. Permit me, honored guests, most cordially to endorse the welcome which the Right Worshipful Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania has extended to you. We greet you as brothers of the mystic tie, as Companions of the Royal Arch, as valiant and valorous soldiers of the Cross. Philadelphia, so long the Mecca of the pilgrims of liberty, is this day the Palestine of pilgrims of chivalry of America. The city the Christian Chivalry proclaimed "throughout in which liberty was the inhabitants thereof" on all the land to all the people, proclaimed to be the birthday of independence, invites to have the principles of Christian chivalry, from the North, the South, the East and the West, who proclaim the almighty force of truth, and whose watchword is liberty.

On the 13th of June, 1859, St. John's Commandery, No. 4, was constituted with twelve members. Like some skeleton battalions of which we have heard, it consisted of eleven officers and one private. After working regularly for sixteen years it adjourned to meet at the call of its commander, under a provision of its constitution that the elected officers should continue in office until their successors should be duly elected. The Commandery kept, but did not break, before the storm of anti-Masonic prejudice and fury which swept over the land. It continued in a state of suspended animation for thirteen years, when it was aroused from its syncope, and again buckled on its armor. And now, after twenty-one years of prosperity and progress, its muster-roll numbers three hundred and forty-one.

During its long suspension the officers had become inexpert in the work, and a Royal Arch Mason, Comp. R. Stirling Wilson, whose name can never be mentioned but with respect by the Knights of this city, went to New York, and was admitted to the Order in Malta, having been well instructed in the work and mysteries. He was elected the first Commander after the revival of the Commandery, and to his zeal and energy is due in no small degree the unparalleled success of Templarism in Philadelphia, whence three commanderies now number as many members as the Commanderies in the Commonwealth could muster ten years since.

On the 16th of May, 1864, the Grand Encampment of Pennsylvania was organized under the authority of the Grand Lodge of the State, and in June of the same year, Sir Knight R. Stirling Wilson was duly elected Grand Master. His interest in the Order and affection for its principles, and his labors and zeal so much to disseminate, continued unabated but like Moses he was removed to the land of everlasting rest.

The Grand Encampment of Pennsylvania had been organized under the authority of the Grand Encampment of the United States about one month previous to the organization of the Grand Encampment in Philadelphia. These two rival bodies which claimed Templar jurisdiction in this State waged a bloodless war with each other during the succeeding years. As both were composed of true and courteous knights, they knew not the same work and mysteries, and adhered with equal fidelity to the landmarks and usages of the Order, there was no reason but a difference of allegiance to prevent their union. In the year 1857, the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, which had long lorded over the Orders of Knighthood within its jurisdiction, and the contrast was happily quoted, like that of the rosewood York and Lancaster, by a marriage, and the union has been cemented by reciprocal courtesies during the last twelve years, and no Sir Knight would have or desire to force an apple of discord into our peaceful asylums.

I will detain you no longer with details of our history. Whoever may desire to know more of Pennsylvania, will find ample information in the volumes which our learned biographer has published under the authority of the Grand Commandery of the State.

The assembling of so many distinguished members of our Order from all parts of our country, has, to my mind, a deeper meaning than a display of numbers, the glitter of regalia, the pomp of procession, or the pride of social festivity. We have a higher and holier vocation. While a double hand of iron has spanned the continent, and bound together the shores of the Atlantic and the Pacific with a chain as strong as the interests of commerce and industry, binding in a golden or electric communication unseen by the profane, but felt everywhere, which unites all parts of our land by a bond of brotherhood. The Masonic Orders, true to their principles amid the wreck of empires and the clash of arms, whispered in the ears of the combatants on both sides, "I are brothers; love one another." And now that the war-storm has passed, the same angel of love which crewhile staunched the blood of the wounded, and gave a cup of water to the dying, and fed the starving prisoner, whether he wore the blue or the grey, still animates the breasts of Knights Templars, and by the attraction has drawn together this vast assemblage of representative men of the Republic, that we may know one another better and love one another more.

Masonry is not a political society. Partisan cliques cannot be lawfully admitted into its ledges, chapters, or asylums; and yet, indirectly and unconscious, its influence on the polity of the countries where it exists is undeniably potent. It has always been the friend of political liberty, and the enemy of arbitrary power. It has always been found most under free governments, and, in return, has been one of the firmest pillars of free institutions. This by reciprocation proves that freedom supports Masonry and Masonry defends freedom. Under despotic governments it has suffered relentless persecution. Private rights, the habitations of peace, tyrannical power, its votaries congregated on mountain summits or in sequestered glens and under the open canopy of heaven, or in the gloomy shade of forests, taught lessons of sublime lessons to neophytes in search of light. But in free England nobles and princes have been its patrons, and have deemed it an honor to walk on the level, and with hand in hand, while mingled in an all-embracing humanity. The grand charter of the English Bill of Rights, by which the great charter of English liberty was wrested from King John, was the work of the Grand Master of Templars. But America, more true than England; America, whose Constitution is an enlargement and improvement of the Bill of Rights and Magna Charta, has proved to be the most fertile soil for the growth of Freemasonry. In America it has kept time and pace with the march of political liberty. In America it has disseminated its principles unrebuked and unchallenged, except during those dark years when despotic prejudice, fostered by pretended crime and stimulated by political clamor, sought to crush it from its place among all civil orders, and even to deny them social recognition. But for more than several lustrums of the people succeeded to an unreasoning and fanatical excitement, and the institution which had survived the persecutions of kings and popes, and stood firm when dynasties were overthrown and empires wrecked, demonstrated its power to brave the madness of the people, which is more to be dreaded than the wrath of kings. Purified from its dross in the furnace of persecution, it shone forth with brighter lustre than ever before, and now, counting its members by hundreds of thousands, it stands a mighty host against the pretensions of caste, the prejudices of race, and the encroachments of power.

Ancient speculative philosophic Masonry is a social, moral, beneficial, and charitable institution. While it teaches the purest principles of morality, and is thus far the handmaid of religious claims not to be a religious society. It is a universal order, which encircles the globe, and is linked by no creed, language, or race. Every man who can enter with sincerity the invocation of Pope—

"Father of all! in every age,
In every clime adored,
If otherwises of faith, justified, may be admitted to its benefits, and taught the lessons of a broad philanthropy. But no sectarian pass its portals. A firm belief in the existence of a Supreme Being, the Author of all, the accountability to Him, are indispensable to the first and to every aspirant to light. Masonry is founded on the Bible and as in the first verse of the Bible we read "In the beginning God," so at the very threshold of Masonry we recognize the great primal truth "In the beginning, God;" God, the trust of the candidate for improvement and light, the adorable name of the Royal Arch—God, invoked in every intermediate degree.

But while ancient symbolic Masonry is world-wide, Templar Knighthood is a limited order. To the four objects of the Masonic social, moral, beneficial, and charitable ties, Templar Knighthood adds a fifth, the defense of Christianity. The prophetic vision it looks forward to a time when it will become world-wide, when "the stone that was cut out of the mountain without hands, shall become a great mountain and fill the whole earth." It will extend with the extension of a pure, life-giving, soul-saving religion; will go forth with its power and strength with its strength. Mailed champion of Christianity, it will stand in the midst of the world as its valiantly for the faith once delivered to the saints."

During the heroic age of Chivalry the stout Knights of the Temple and of Malta, bore their Beauseant unfurled to the breeze, white and peaceful to the friends of Christianity, dark and terrible to its enemies, ever ready against the armies of infidels, and hurled them back as the rock rends back the wave. Like the invincible Spartans, they never inquired how many their enemies were, but whether they were. They stood, a wall of steel, from which the Mohammedan invaders of Christian Europe recoiled in dismay, and on many a historic field stemmed the tide of infidel conquest, and rolled back their hosts, which came like Satan's fallen angels—

"A multitude, like which the populous North
Poured never from her frozen loins, to pass
Rhine or the Danube, when her barbarous sons
Came, like a deluge, on the South, and spread
Beneath Gibraltar to the Libyan sands."

In these wars between the Crescent and the Cross, Knighthood saved Europe from subjugation and the Christian religion from overthrow.

What now? When no armed foes assail our faith, do we to our Order in idle ceremonials, like the crazy knights of Don Quixote? Do we strut about with chests laughing at our sides, as children play soldier with wooden sabres? They are the legacy of our Order; and, more, they are symbols of our profession. We are no longer summoned to rise them to bew our way through quivering flesh to a physical triumph. They are now esoteric language. They speak to us of Jacob's Ladder, and of the Cross, reminding us to be sure we have a righteous cause, to contend for it with resolute courage, to endure hardness as good soldiers with unflinching fortitude, and to show mercy to the vanquished and fallen. But we rewrite unlike the fathers of our Order, against flesh and blood, but, like Paul, against "principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Here are enemies enough for us to combat. The infidel has changed his tactics. He no longer marshals his serried ranks in the open field, with his spears blare and sword clang; his sappers and miners are at work; he conceals his approaches under the surface of the ground, his parallels are close to our walls; he is excavating under the foundations of our fortress, seeking to undermine the foundations of our faith. "Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand." The weapons which infidelity now wields are arguments, false deductions from science, and sophistical reasonings, which would undermine the faith of our Order, against flesh and blood, but against "principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Here are enemies enough for us to combat. The infidel has changed his tactics. He no longer marshals his serried ranks in the open field, with his spears blare and sword clang; his sappers and miners are at work; he conceals his approaches under the surface of the ground, his parallels are close to our walls; he is excavating under the foundations of our fortress, seeking to undermine the foundations of our faith. "Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand." The weapons which infidelity now wields are arguments, false deductions from science, and sophistical reasonings, which would undermine the faith of our Order, against the foundations of the origin of the world without a Divine Architect; theories of the origin of life from the blind forces of nature without the breath of God to vivify; theories of the origin of man to fetch the vital flame from heaven; theories of development from a monad to a man, of whose inquisitive progenitor was a gorilla, and whose grandfather was the ape; theories of the relations of the sexes which, if practically carried out, would shake the foundations of civil society, and would at the same time destroy the immutable distinctions of right and wrong, and inculcate that whatever is in the theories of good and evil which merge all parts of evil in universal good, and thus make evil good. To meet these heresies no carnal weapons will avail. The battle is mainly intellectual, argument against argument, true science against false philosophy, eloquent appeal, power of the Spirit, which is the word of God, "quick and powerful, and sharper than a two-edged sword, and cleaveth even to the division of soul and of spirit, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Let our Order, which has fought so well against the world, the flesh, and the devil, now, in the spirit of chivalry, which have fashioned themselves to the noble true whose leagues are for the healing of the nations.

The time has come, Sir Knights, for us to do more than we have done. Our vows of defense and defend a pure, fervent, spiritual Christianity—a Christianity whose fruits shall be justice, honesty and truth, humility in prosperity, love to God and to man, charity to the erring, consolation to the afflicted, protection to the poor pilgrims of earth, deliverance to the oppressed, defence of the innocent, pulling down the fabric in the Redeemer—in a word, that godliness which "is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." O, how far we fall short of our professions! He who can witness our mysterious mouth after mouth with his heart untouched and his mind indifferent to these sublime significations, engages in a profane mockery; but he who can go out from our asylums to indulge in open or secret vices paralyzes his sword arm and puts into the hands of our enemies a keen weapon to wound us.

Freemasonry and Masonic Knighthood no longer stand on the defensive. They make no more apologies for their existence. They are silent their mouths to be, to act, to extend their influence and moral power, and to make their mark in history. But their conquests are to be victories of right over wrong, of truth over falsehood, of mercy over cruelty, of mind over matter, of the spirit over the flesh, of charity and intolerance. With these great objects before us, our next step in advance should be in the direction of the mind, and should provide for the education of our youth. We want a great, central, national Masonic University, not a mere High School for boys, but a University for young men; a University in fact as well as in name, including schools of medicine, of chemistry, of agriculture, of mining and engineering, and of law, medicine, and Christianity; an institution furnished with libraries, apparatus, cabinets, and museums, and manned with a corps of professors learned in their respective departments, men of liberal and comprehensive reach; an institution of such grade and calibre as will attract young men of all denominations, and especially the sons of Masons of all denominations, and prepare them to go forth into the various professions, and into the walks of scientific, literary and mechanical life, to defend the Christian faith against the insidious attacks of its enemies, and to demonstrate by the example of their lives, and by arguments drawn from all the resources of learning, the excellency and worth of the religion of love.

Is this scheme Utopian? Is the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania able to build a Masonic Temple that will cost a million dollars, and have not all the Chapters and Commanderies of the United States the ability to raise a million to build, furnish and equip an institution of learning, and another million to endow it? I tell you, Sir Knights, Companions and Brethren, that such a monument would be a greater honor to our Orders, and win for us more fame than the grandest edifice which the mind of man ever conceived, or the hand of man reared, or the hands of operative craftsmen erected.

I permit me, Sir Knights, to say in conclusion that you represent not only the Orders of Knighthood in your respective States, but the 2nd Subordinate Commanderies, and in the Grand Encampment of the United States, but you also represent all the professions, the mechanical branches of business and industry, the various departments of literature, science, the arts, and humanities, and the social and religious opinion. But on this neutral ground, which is neutrality so deep no rivalry has in the excesses of magnanimity and courtesy, we meet together as one family, one band of hearts, and of hands and hands no less. The friendly interchange of ideas and sentiments will give a wider range to our thoughts, open broader fields for our business operations, and will be awaked in us a more patriotism. We live in an age of heroic deeds and of heroic men. The continent should be occupied by an intelligent population, and be covered by prosperous industry. To America can enterprise nothing is impossible. We have the purpose and the will, and the wealth of Ormus and of Ind," by way of the setting sun. Knighthood follows closely the westward march of civilization in a crusade more glorious than Godfrey or Richard the Lion Heart ever dreamed of. Let the Saxon, a conqueror to rescue a continent from barbarism and infidelity. Let the Knight of the Red Cross and the Cross of Jerusalem, and Malta, and Malta, and Malta