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THE KNIGHTS TEMPLARS.

V.—THE TRIAL AND CONDEMNATION OF THE TEMPLARS.

At the break of day on the 18th of October, 1307, the Templars were surprised in their beds, carried off to the provincial prisons of the different bishops and flung into dungeons. More willing jailers they could not have had. They had long defied the bishops, and the bishops' turn was come. They took on themselves the responsibility of the King's action. Such prelates as were in Paris, with the heads of the University and the abbots and priors of the religious houses, assembled two days after in the Templars' Hall. They drew up an Act of Accusation, in which the knights were described as ravening wolves, idolaters, perjurers, and guilty of the vilest crimes. They asserted, to meet the inevitable incredulity, that the Grand Master and the preceptors had confessed their guilt. The Templars belonged to Europe—not to France alone. Philip sent circulars to Edward II. of England, to Germany, to the Kings of Aragon, Portugal, and Castile, telling his story, and inviting them to follow his example. His letter was read in England with astonishment. A great council was called at Westminster. Edward with his peers and prelates replied that the charges were incredible. The Templars were men of unstained honor. The Pope must inquire. He would take no action till the Pope had decided. He sent his own protest to his brother princes.

The Pope—the poor, infallible Pope—was in straits; he had not been consulted before the arrest. He could not refuse an inquiry; yet, perhaps, he knew too well how an honest inquiry would terminate. The King and the bishops had begun the work, and they had no choice but to go through with it. Before the Pope could proceed the bishops might prepare their case. It was winter. The Templars had been flung into cold, damp dungeons, ill-fed and ill-clothed. In the first months they had begun to die of mere hardship. They were informed of the charges against them; they were told that denial was useless. The

Grand Master and preceptors had confessed, and wished them all to confess. They were promised rewards and liberty if they obeyed; threatened with imprisonment and torture if they were obstinate. After some weeks of this, to bring them into a proper frame of mind, the bishops issued commissions to examine them.

And I must now beg you to attend. What I am about to tell you is strict fact; as well authenticated as any historical facts can be, and much better than most.

Belief, or the credulity of nobleness, had created the Templars. Belief—the ugly side of it, the credulity of hatred—was now to destroy them. Universal confession would alone satisfy the world's suspicions; and confession the King and his prelates were resolved to have. Wasted with hunger and cold, the knights were brought one by one before the bishops' judges. The depositions of the two approvers were formed into interrogatories. Did the knights, on their admission to the order, spit on the cross? Did they deny Christ? Did they receive a dispensation to commit unnatural offences? Did they worship idols? A paper was read to them professing to be the Grand Master's confession; and to these questions they were required to answer yes or no. A few said yes, and were rewarded and dismissed. By far the greater number said that the charges were lies; they did not believe that the Grand Master had confessed. If he had, they said that he had lied in his throat. And now what happened to the men who answered thus? They were stripped naked; their hands were tied behind their backs; a rope was fastened to them, the other end of which was slung over a beam, and they were dragged up and down till they were senseless, or till they acknowledged what the bishops wanted. If this failed, their feet were fixed in a frame like the old English stocks, rubbed with oil, and held to the fire till the toes, or even the feet themselves, dropped off. Or the iron boot was used, or the thumb-screws, or another unnameable and indescribably painful devilry. Thirty-six of them died under these tortures in Paris alone. The rest so

treated said anything which the bishops required. They protested afterward that their confessions, as they were called, had been wrung out of them by pain only. They were returned to their dungeons, to be examined again when the Pope pleased. But having confessed to heresy, they were told that, if they withdrew their confessions afterward, they would be treated as relapsed heretics, and would be burnt at the stake. Such was then the Church's law; and it was no idle threat.

I am not telling you a romance. These scenes did actually occur all over France; and it was by this means that the evidence was got together under which the Templars were condemned. But we are only at the first stage of the story.

The confessions were published to the world, and the world, not knowing how they had been obtained, supposed that they must be true. The Pope knew better; he remonstrated; he said that the Templars were not subject to the bishops, who were going beyond their power. The King accused him of trying to shield the Templars' guilt. The bishops, he said, were doing nothing but their duty, and the Faculty of Theology at Paris declared that no privilege could shelter heresy.

The conduct of the Grand Master and the four Preceptors is a mystery. They were evidently bewildered, disheartened, shocked, and terrified; and confessions alleged to have been made by them were certainly taken down and published. It appears also that in January, 1308, three months after the arrest, they were brought before the Pope, and they were alleged to have confessed again on this occasion, and to have received absolution from him. But the Pope was still dissatisfied. The other Powers of Christendom insisted on a fuller inquiry. The formal sanction of the Papacy was required before the order could be suppressed, and even Clement, pliable as he was, could not proceed on the evidence before him. In the summer, six months later, seventy-two Templars—seventy-two only of the thousands still surviving in France—were willing to appear before him and give the required answers to the interrogatories.

These seventy two said that they had abjured Christ, had spit on the cross, had worshipped idols, and the rest of it. They were asked why they had at first denied these things? They said that they had forgotten, but had since remembered. Seventy-two, after all that bribes and tortures and threats could do, were not enough. The Pope was answerable to Christendom. The French bishops themselves were on their trial before the rest of the world; the sentence could not rest on their word alone. The Pope found himself obliged to appoint an independent commission, when the knights could be heard in their own defence with an appearance of freedom. A cardinal or two, an archbishop, and two or three papal lawyers, were formed into a court which was to sit in Paris. All precautions were alleged to be taken that the Templars should have a fair hearing if they wished it, without fear or prejudice. Every prisoner who would say that he was ready to defend the order was to be brought to Paris to be heard. Notice of the appointment of the commission was sent round to all the courts of Europe.

If Philip, if the bishops, really believed in the Templars' guilt, they ought to have welcomed the Pope's action. They had been cruel, but if they could prove their case their rough handling would not be judged severely. They were in no haste, however. The commission was appointed in August, 1306. It did not sit for another year. The Templars were now dying by hundreds. Their death-bed declarations were all protests of innocence. The survivors demanded that these declarations should be made public. When they learnt that they were to be heard before representatives of the Pope their hopes revived, and more than a thousand at once gave their names as ready to appear in the defence.

In August, 1309, the court was opened. It sat in the Convent of Geneviève. Citations were issued, but no one appeared. The Templars had been brought up to Paris, but they had been told on the way that if they retracted their confessions the Pope intended to burn them as relapsed; and after the treatment which they had met with anything

seemed possible. They claimed to be heard by counsel. This was refused. The court adjourned till the 22d of November; when some twenty of the knights were brought in and were asked if they were ready with a defence. They said that they were illiterate soldiers; they knew nothing of law pleading. If they might have their liberty with arms and horses they would meet their accusers in the field. That was all that they could do.

It was necessary to begin with the Grand Master. On the 26th of November, De Molay himself was introduced into the court. He was an old man, battered by a life of fighting, and worn by hard treatment in prison. Being asked what he had to say, he complained of the refusal of counsel. He claimed for himself and the Order to be heard before a mixed court of lay peers and prelates. To such a judgment they were willing to submit. They protested against a tribunal composed only of Churchmen.

Unfortunately for themselves the Templars were a religious order, and the Church alone could try them. The commission under which the court was constituted was read over. It was there stated that the Grand Master had made a full confession of the order's guilt; and from his behavior it might have been thought that he was hearing of it for the first time. We have the account of the proceedings exactly as they were taken down by the secretary. He crossed himself thrice. *Videbatur se esse valde stupefactum*; "He seemed entirely stupefied." When he found his voice he said that if the commissioners had not been priests he would have known how to answer them. They were not there, they replied, to accept challenges. He said he was aware of that, but he wished to God that there was the same justice in France as there was among the Turks and Saracens; among them a false witness was cut to pieces. No confession was produced to which he had attached his hand, and of other evidence there was none. The King's chancellor read a passage from a chronicle to the effect that Saladin, a hundred and twenty years before, had called the Templars a set of villains. Again De Molay appeared stupefied—as well

he might. He claimed privilege, and demanded to be heard by the Pope in person.

The Preceptor of Payens then appeared. He admitted that he had confessed with many of his brethren, but their confessions were false. They had been handed over to a set of men, some of whom had been expelled from the order for infamous crimes. They had been tortured, and many of them had died on the rack. He for himself had had his hands crushed till the blood ran from his nails. He had been flung into a well and left lying there; he had been for two years in a dungeon. He could have borne to be killed—to be roasted, to be boiled—anything which would be over in a moderate time, but such prolonged agonies were beyond human strength. If he was treated so again he would deny all that he was then saying, and confess again. He was remitted to custody, and the commissioners cautioned the jailer not to deal hardly with him for what he had said. The caution was necessary. Many of them were still afraid to speak, or would say nothing except that they had been tortured. They would speak if they were set free. As long as they were kept prisoners they dared not. The commissioners, to encourage them, sent out a warning to the bishops, and again assured the knights of protection. The court wanted nothing but the truth. They might tell it freely; no harm should happen to them.

This gave them courage. Six hundred of them now came forward, one after the other, and told the secrets of their prisons, with the infernal cruelties which they had suffered there. A list was produced of those who had died. One very curious letter was read which had been written by a high official and sent to a party of Templars at Sens. It was to the effect that the Bishop of Orleans was coming to reconcile them. They were advised to make submission, and in that case were promised all kindness; but they were to understand that the Pope had distinctly ordered that those who retracted their confessions should be burnt. The official in question was called in. He said that he did not think that he could have written such a letter; the seal was his, but it might have been written by his clerk.

One prisoner was carried into the court, unable to stand. His feet had been held to the fire until they had dropped off.

The evidence was still utterly inconsistent. Priests came forward, who said they had habitually heard Templars' confessions, yet had heard nothing of the enormities. Others, on the other hand, adhered to the story, telling many curious details—how they had been required to spit on the cross, how they had been frightened and refused, but had at last consented—"*non corde sed ore*"—not with their hearts, but with their lips. But the great majority were still resolute in their denials. At last the whole six hundred made a common affirmation that every one of these articles named in the Pope's Bull was a lie; the religion of the Templars was pure and immaculate, and so had always been, and whoever said to the contrary was an infidel and a heretic. This they were ready to maintain in all lawful ways, but they prayed to be released and be heard, if not before a mixed tribunal, then before a General Council. Those who had confessed had lied; but they had lied under torture themselves, or terrified by the tortures which they witnessed. Some might have been bribed, which they said was public and notorious; the wonder was that any should have dared to tell the truth. As a refinement of cruelty, the bishops had refused the sacraments to the dying.

The commissioners were now at a loss. Individuals might be worked upon by fear and hope to repeat their confessions, but the great body of the order were consistent in their protest. The commissioners said that they could not hear them all. They had asked for counsel; let them appoint proctors who could speak for them. This seemed fair; but the unfortunate men were afraid of trusting themselves to proctors: Proctors being few, might be tempted or frightened into betraying them. They still trusted the Pope. They had been invited to speak, and they had been promised protection. The members of the court had some kind of conscience, and it began to seem likely that the case might not end as the King and the bishops required. They could not afford to let it go forth to the

world that the Templars were innocent after all and had been brutally and barbarously treated without sufficient cause; public opinion did not go for much in those days, but they were at the bar of all Europe.

We need not assume that they themselves did not believe in the Templars' guilt; men have a wonderful power of making themselves believe what they wish to believe. If the Templars had been formidable before the attack on them was begun, they would be doubly formidable if they came out of their trial clean as their own white robes; it was necessary to stop these pleas of innocence, and the French prelates were equal to the occasion.

While the Pope's commissioners were sitting at St. Geneviève the Archbishop of Sens opened a provincial court of his own in another part of Paris. The list of knights was brought before him who had given their names as intending to retract their confessions. On the 10th of May, 1310, four of the Templars demanded audience of the Papal judges. They said that the knights had been invited by the Pope to defend the order; they had been told to speak the truth without fear, and had been promised that no harm should happen to them. They now learnt that on the very next day a great number were to be put on their trial before the Archbishop of Sens as relapsed heretics. They said truly, that if this was permitted, it would make the inquiry a farce—it would stain irreparably the honor of the Holy See. They entreated the commissioners to interpose and prevent the Archbishop from proceeding.

The commissioners professed to be sorry—they could hardly do less, but they said that the Archbishop was not under their jurisdiction. They themselves represented the Holy See; the bishops had an independent authority; they had no power over the bishops nor the bishops over them. They did promise, however, to think the matter over and see if anything could be done.

The Archbishop would not allow them time for much thinking; he was a sturdy prelate and had the courage of his office. Two days after, on the morning of the 12th, just as the

commissioners were going to chapel (they were particular about all these things it seems), word was brought them that fifty-four of the knights who had applied to be heard before them had been tried and sentenced and were to be burnt at the stake that very afternoon. The poor commissioners were really disturbed. They were not prepared for such prompt action—their own dignity, the Holy Father's dignity was compromised. They sent in haste to the Archbishop, to beg him at least to postpone the execution; every Templar who had died hitherto had declared the order innocent, and these would do the same. If witnesses were invited to speak, and were then burnt for speaking, they would have to close their court. Already the very report of the Archbishop's intentions had so terrified the knights that some of them had gone out of their minds.

The Archbishop was made of tougher stuff—Fouquier Tinville and the Revolutionary tribunal were not more resolute. To terrify the knights into silence was precisely what he intended. Accordingly that same afternoon, as he had ordered, those fifty-four "poor brothers in Christ," whose real fault had been that they were too faithful to the Father of Christendom, were carried out to the Place St. Antoine, near where the Bastille stood, and were there roasted to death. They bore their fate like men. Every one of them, torn and racked as they had been, declared with his last breath that, so far as he knew, the accusations against the order were groundless and willful slanders. Half-a-dozen more were burnt a day or two after to deepen the effect. The Archbishop clearly was not afraid of man or devil. Some say a sensitive conscience is a sign of a weak character. No one can accuse the Archbishop of Sens of having a weak character; he knew what he was doing and what would come of it.

I will read you a declaration made the next day before the Pope's commissioners by Sir Amarie de Villiers, one of the prisoners. He said that he was fifty years old and had been a brother of the order for twenty. The clerk of the court read over the list of crimes with which the order was charged. He turned

pale; he struck his breast; he raised his hand to the altar; he dropped on his knees. On peril of his soul, he said, on peril of all the punishments denounced on perjury, praying that if he was not speaking truth the ground might open and he might go down quick into hell, those charges were all false. He had confessed on the rack. He had been taken to St. Antoine the evening before. He had seen his fifty-four brethren taken in carts and thrown into the flames. He had been in such fear that he doubted if he himself could endure to be so handled. With such an end before him, he might say if he was brought again before the bishops, and they required it of him, that he had not only denied his Lord; but had murdered him. He implored the judges to keep to themselves what he was then saying. If the Archbishop got hold of it, he would be burnt like the rest.

The terror had cut deep. The Pope's commissioners had neither the courage to adopt the Archbishop's methods or to repudiate and disown them. They sent to him to say that they must suspend their sittings. He answered scornfully that they might do as they pleased. He and his suffragans had met to finish the process against the Templars, and they intended to do it. A few more victims were sacrificed. The rest of the knights, who had offered to speak before the commissioners, were naturally silent. The commissioners could not help them. They withdrew their defence, and the commission was adjourned till the following November.

The tragic story was now winding up. When November came the court sat again, reduced in number and reduced to a form. The duty of it thenceforward was simply to hear such of the order as had been broken into submission, and were willing to repeat the story which had been thrust into their mouths, with such details as imagination or reality could add to it. I do not suppose that the accusations were absolutely without foundation. Very often the witnesses seemed to be relating things which they really remembered.

The Templars were a secret society, and secret societies have often forms of initiation

which once had a meaning, with an affectation of solemnity and mysticism. I am not a Freemason. Many of you no doubt are. I have heard that the ceremonies of that order, though perfectly innocent, are of a kind which malice or ignorance might misinterpret, if there was an object in bringing the order into disrepute. You know best if that is so. Somewhere abroad I was myself once admitted into a mysterious brotherhood. I was sworn to secrecy, and therefore I can tell you little about it. I was led through a narrow passage into a vast darkened hall, where some hundred dim, half-seen figures were sitting in silence. I was taken to a table in the middle with a single candle on it. There—but my revelations must end. I could have believed myself before the famous Vehm Gericht. The practices alleged against the Templars as crimes were in fact most of them innocent. They were accused of worshipping a skull; some said it had jewels in its eye, some that it had none. An accidental question brought out that it was a relic of an Eastern saint, such as any Catholic might treat with reverence. The officers of the order were accused of hearing confessions and giving priestly absolution, and this was a deadly offence. By the rules of the order the lay superiors were directed to hear confessions and inflict penance. Confusion might easily arise.

The Novices were said to receive licences to commit an abominable sin, yet there was scarcely a single knight who could be brought to say that he had even heard of such a sin being committed.

The spitting on the cross and the denial of Christ are less easy to explain. Thousands of the knights absolutely denied that such outrages were ever seen or heard of, yet a great many did with considerable consistency describe a singular ceremony of that kind. It has been supposed that the Templars by their long residence in Syria had ceased to be Christians, and had adopted Eastern heresies, that they were Gnostics, Manichees, or I know not what. This is a mere guess, and I do not think a likely one. They were mere soldiers. They were never a learned order. They left no books behind them, or writings of any

kind. The services in the Templars' churches were conducted with peculiar propriety. Every witness declared that the very crosses which they said had been spit upon were treated afterward with the deepest reverence. Nor was there really any attempt at concealment. Those who had been frightened at the forms of initiation were told to go and confess, often to secular priests in the neighborhood. Several instances of such confessions were produced. The confessors sometimes had treated what they heard as of no consequence. They had satisfied their penitents' consciences, not always in the same way. One said that it was meant as a trial of constancy. The Saracens if they were taken prisoners would require them to deny Christ or be killed. The officers of the order wanted to see how they would abide the test. Another said it was a trial of obedience. The Novice swore to obey his superiors in all things without exception. The severest test possible may perhaps have been occasionally tried. In no instances at all was it ever suggested that the forms of initiation pointed to any real impiety.

So strange a tale is not likely to have rested upon nothing. I suppose the custom may have varied in different houses. Men are men, and may not have been uniformly wise. But the more one reads the evidence the plainer it becomes that the confessions, and even the terms of them, were arranged beforehand. The witnesses produced after the commission met again told one tale. If they ever varied from it they were brought swiftly back into harmony. Sir John de Pollencourt gave the stereotyped answer. He had spat on the cross. He had done this and that; but we read in the Record: The commissioners, seeing him pale and terrified, bade him for his soul's welfare speak the truth whatever it might be. He need not fear. They would tell no one what he might say. He hesitated; then, on his oath, he declared that he had spoken falsely. He had not denied Christ. He had not spat on the cross. He had not received license to sin. He had confessed before the bishops in fear of death; and because his fellow-prisoners said that they would be killed unless they admitted what the bishops required.

The commissioners were not as secret as they promised to be. Sir John de Pollencourt was made to know behind the scenes what would happen to him if he was not submissive. Accordingly, four days after, the same witness was brought in again, withdrew his denial and again confessed. It is easy to see what had happened in the interval.

So handled, the rest of the process went on smoothly. Parties of knights who had escaped the torture chambers of the bishops and thus had not been forced into confession continued to speak out. On one occasion twenty or thirty appeared in a body, and pointed to the red crosses brodered on their clothes. That cross, they said, signified that they would shed their blood for their Redeemer. If, as they were told, their Grand Master had confessed that they had denied Christ, or if any of their brethren had confessed it, they had lied in their throats, to the peril of their own souls. But the mass of the knights had by this time abandoned their cause as hopeless. By the end of nine months a sufficient number of so-called confessions had been repeated before the commissioners to satisfy the Pope's scruples. The commissioners were themselves only too eager to wind up the scandalous inquiry. Not so much as an effort had been made to discover the real truth. The result was a foregone conclusion, and every utterance which could interfere with it had been stifled by cord or fire. The report was sent to Clement. A council of bishops was called together. It was laid before them and accepted as conclusive. The order of the Templars was pronounced to have disgraced itself, and was suppressed. The sinning knights were scattered about the world—some went back to the world—some became Benedictines or Cistercians. Some gave their swords and services to secular princes, having had enough of the Church. Some disappeared into their families. Their estates the Pope had insisted must be reserved to the Church; and were nominally given to the Knights Hospitalers. But the king extorted such an enormous fine from them that the Hospitalers gained little by their rivals' overthrow.

VI.—THE FATE OF THE LAST GRAND MASTER.

The Grand Master's end remains to be told. The confession which he and three of the head preceptors were alleged to have made are extant, and resembled the rest, but we have seen how he behaved when the confession attributed to himself was read over to him before the commissioners. He had appealed to the Pope but without effect, and had been left with the three preceptors in prison. When the edict for the suppression was issued, and the other knights were dismissed, De Molay and his companions were sentenced to perpetual confinement. But the world was after all, perhaps less satisfied of the Templars' guilt than Philip could have wished, and in some way or other it was necessary to convince the public that the Grand Master's confession was genuine.

The bull of suppression was to be read aloud to the people of Paris. It was brought up with special solemnity by a bishop and a cardinal, and De Molay and the others were to be publicly shown upon a stage on the occasion. On the 18th March, 1314, a platform had been erected in one of the squares, with chairs of state for the cardinal, the Archbishop of Sens, and other distinguished persons. The Grand Master and his comrades were produced and were placed where the world could see them. The cardinal rose to read the sentence. When he came to the list of enormities of which, as the bull alleged, the Templars had been found guilty, and when the Grand Master heard it stated that he had himself admitted the charges to be true, he rose up, and in a loud voice which every one could hear, he cried out that it was false.

Philip himself was not present, but he was in Paris and not far off. Word was brought him of the Grand Master's contumacy. Not troubling himself with forms of law, he ordered that the Grand Master should be instantly burnt, and his provincials along with him, unless they saved themselves by submission. Two of them, Sir Hugh von Peyraud and Geoffrey de Gonville, gave in and were sent back to their dungeons. De Molay and the third were carried directly to the island in

the Seine, and were burnt the same evening in the light of the setting sun.

In his end, like Samson, he pulled down the fabric of the prosecution. There was thenceforward a universal conviction that the Templars had been unjustly dealt with. The popular feeling shaped itself into a tradition (possibly it was a real fact) that as the flames were choking him, the last Grand Master summoned the Pope and the king to meet him before the tribunal of God. Clement died in agony a few weeks after. A little later Philip the Beautiful was flung by a vicious horse, and he too went to his account.

A very few words will tell now how the Templars fared in the rest of Europe. There was no real belief in their guilt; but their estates had been given to them for a purpose which no longer existed. They were rich, and they had nothing to do. They were an anachronism and a danger. When the Pope agreed to their suppression, there was no motive to resist the Pope's decision; and they did not attempt to resist it themselves. Nothing is more remarkable in the whole story than the almost universal acquiescence of an armed and disciplined body of men in the Pope's judgment. They had been trained to obedience. The Pope had been their sovereign. The Pope wished that they should cease to exist; and they fell to pieces without a word, unless it were to protest their innocence of the crimes of which they were accused.

In England Philip's charges had at first been received with resentful incredulity, but neither king, nor peers, nor Church had any motive to maintain the Templars after the Pope had spoken. For form's sake there was an investigation in the lines of the French interrogatories, but there was no torture or cruelty. They knew that they were to go, and that they would be dealt with generously. The process was a curious one. As a body the English Templars stated that the forms of admission to the order were, as far as they knew, uniform. What was done in one house was done in all. If any of the brethren liked to depose to this or that ceremony being observed they would not contradict them, and

thus the difficulty was got over. A certain number of knights were ready to give the necessary evidence. Some hundreds of outside persons, chiefly monks or secular priests, deposed to popular rumors, conversations, and suchlike, names not given; a certain person heard another person say this and that. What was got at in this way was often not dreadful. A preceptor in Lincolnshire had been heard to maintain that "men died as animals died;" therefore, it might be inferred he did not believe in immortality. Templars sometimes had crosses worked into their drawers; therefore they were in the habit of sitting upon the cross. The English evidence threw light often on the manners of the age, but I cannot go into that. I have tried your patience too long already. I will, therefore, sum up briefly.

When all is said the story is a strange one, and I cannot pretend to leave it clear of doubt. But no lawyer, no sensible man can accept as conclusive evidence mere answers to interrogatories extorted by torture and the threats of death. A single denial made under such circumstances is worth a thousand assents dragged out by rack and gibbet. If the order had really been as guilty as was pretended, some of the knights at least would have confessed on their death beds. Not one such confession was ever produced, while the dying protestations of innocence were all suppressed. The king and the inquisitors force us into incredulity by their own unscrupulous ferocity. It is likely enough that, like other orders, the Templars had ceremonies, perhaps not very wise, intended to impress the imagination, but that those ceremonies were intentionally un-Christian or diabolical. I conceive to be entirely unproved. They fell partly because they were rich, partly for political reasons, which, for all I know, may have been good and sound; but the act of accusation I regard as a libel invented to justify the arbitrary destruction of a body which, if not loved, was at least admired for its services to Christendom.

It remains only to emphasize the moral that institutions can only be kept alive while they answer the end for which they were created. Nature will not tolerate them longer, and in

one way or another shakes them down. The Templars had come into existence to fight the infidels in Palestine. Palestine was abandoned to the infidels, and the Templars were needed no longer. They were outwardly strong as ever, brave, organized, and in character unblemished, but the purpose of them being gone, they were swept away by a hurricane. So it is with all human organizations. They grow out of man's necessities, and are mortal as men are. Empires, monarchies, aristocracies, guilds, orders, societies, religious creeds, rise in the same way, and in the same way disappear when they stand in the way of other things.

But mankind are mean creatures. When they destroy these creations of theirs they paint them in the blackest colors to excuse their own violence. The black colors in which Philip the Beautiful and his bishops were pleased to paint the Templars will, perhaps, if history cares to trouble itself about the matter, be found to attach rather to the extraordinary men calling themselves successors of the Apostles who racked and roasted them.

You in Scotland found no great reason to love bishops, and the story of the Templars does not increase our affection for them.—
J. A. FROUDE.

DOROTHY AND WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

Dorothy Wordsworth was one year and nine months younger than her brother William, and the only girl in a family of five children. When she was little more than six years old her mother died, and the children were separated. William was sent to school, and Dorothy to live with various relations in turn; but never again for any length of time was she with William until 1795, when she was four-and-twenty, and kept house for him at Racedown Lodge, Dorsetshire; and they began at once to live, the lives of true poets, feeding their eyes and minds with fair sights and great thoughts, and content with daily bread. Here began the work of Dorothy's life. Wordsworth at this time is described by himself and

others as utterly bewildered and dejected. He had hoped for great results from the French Revolution, and instead he was haunted by the remembrance of scenes of horror; he had abandoned all thought of the clerical profession which had been marked out for him, yet he did not seem able to take to any other. "I have been doing," he writes, "and still continue to do, nothing. What is to become of me I know not." At this juncture a friend left him 900*l.*, which enabled him to realize his wish of living with Dorothy, who had never ceased to have faith in him. She at once became his guardian angel. Her helpful and healing sympathy came to his aid, we are told; by her tact she led him from the distracting cares of political agitation to those more elevating and satisfying influences which an ardent and contemplative love of nature and poetry cultivate.

It is not easy to lead a person to an influence, and the word "tact" very inadequately describes the secret of Dorothy's power over her brother. It was rather that of an overmastering current of enthusiasm for all that was good and beautiful which swept her more prosaic and sluggish brother along with it:—

"She gave me eyes, she gave me ears;
And humble cares, and delicate fears;
A heart, the fountain of sweet tears,
And love, and thought, and joy."

Henceforth, as it has been said, "Wordsworth was the spokesman to the world of two souls."

The Wordsworths now made the acquaintance of Coleridge, and soon became great friends. Dorothy tells us of Coleridge's first visit, and "how he first thing that was read was William's new poem *The Ruined Cottage*, with which Coleridge was much delighted, and after tea he repeated to us two acts and a half of *Osorio*. The next morning William read his tragedy *The Borderers*." The Wordsworths moved to Alfoxden, near Nether Stowey, to be nearer to Coleridge, and there Dorothy Wordsworth, who herself had the eye and mind of a poet, lived a happy outdoor life, with the two poets for her constant companions. Sometimes they explored the neighborhood; sometimes they made short tours, putting the contents of their scantily filled