

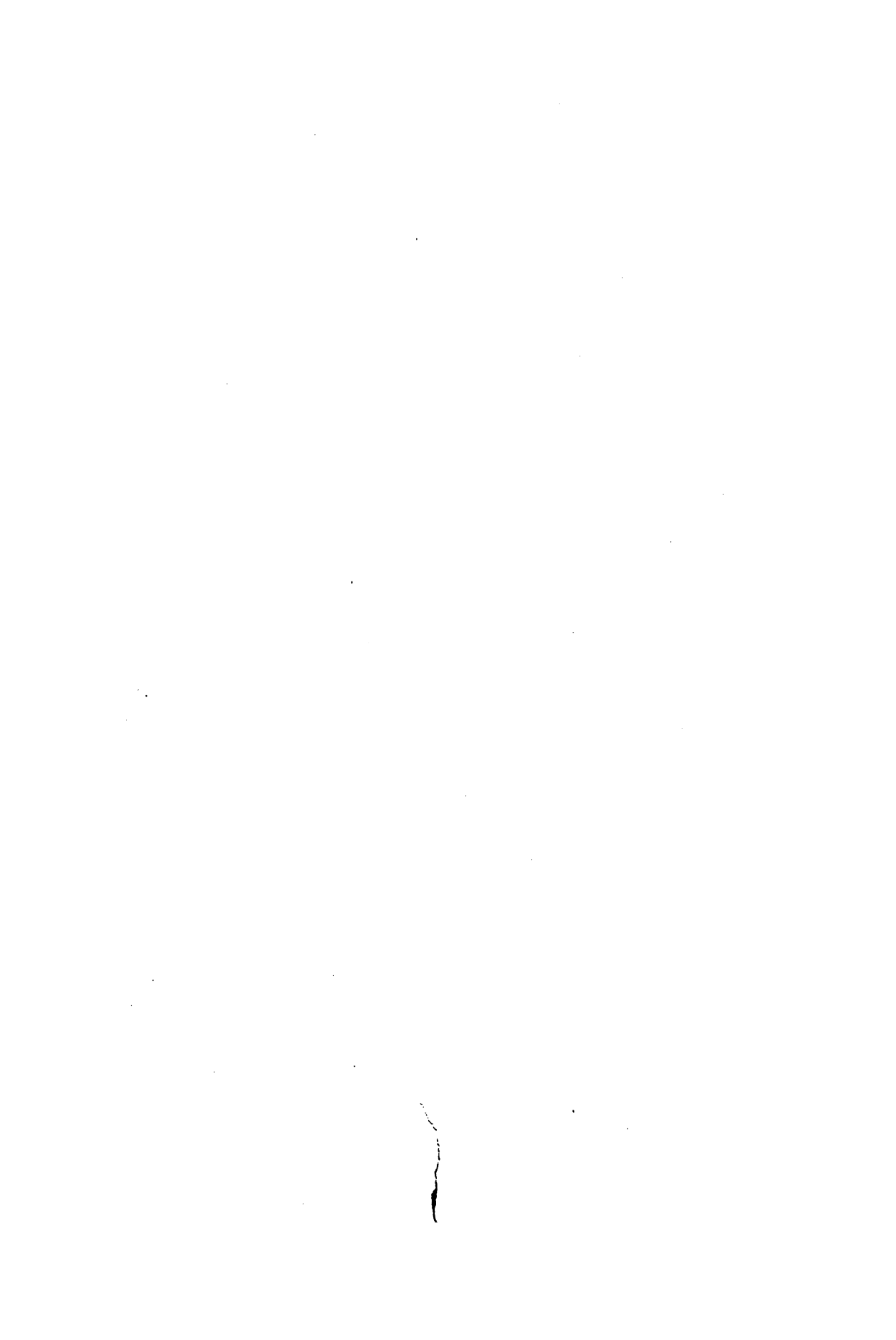
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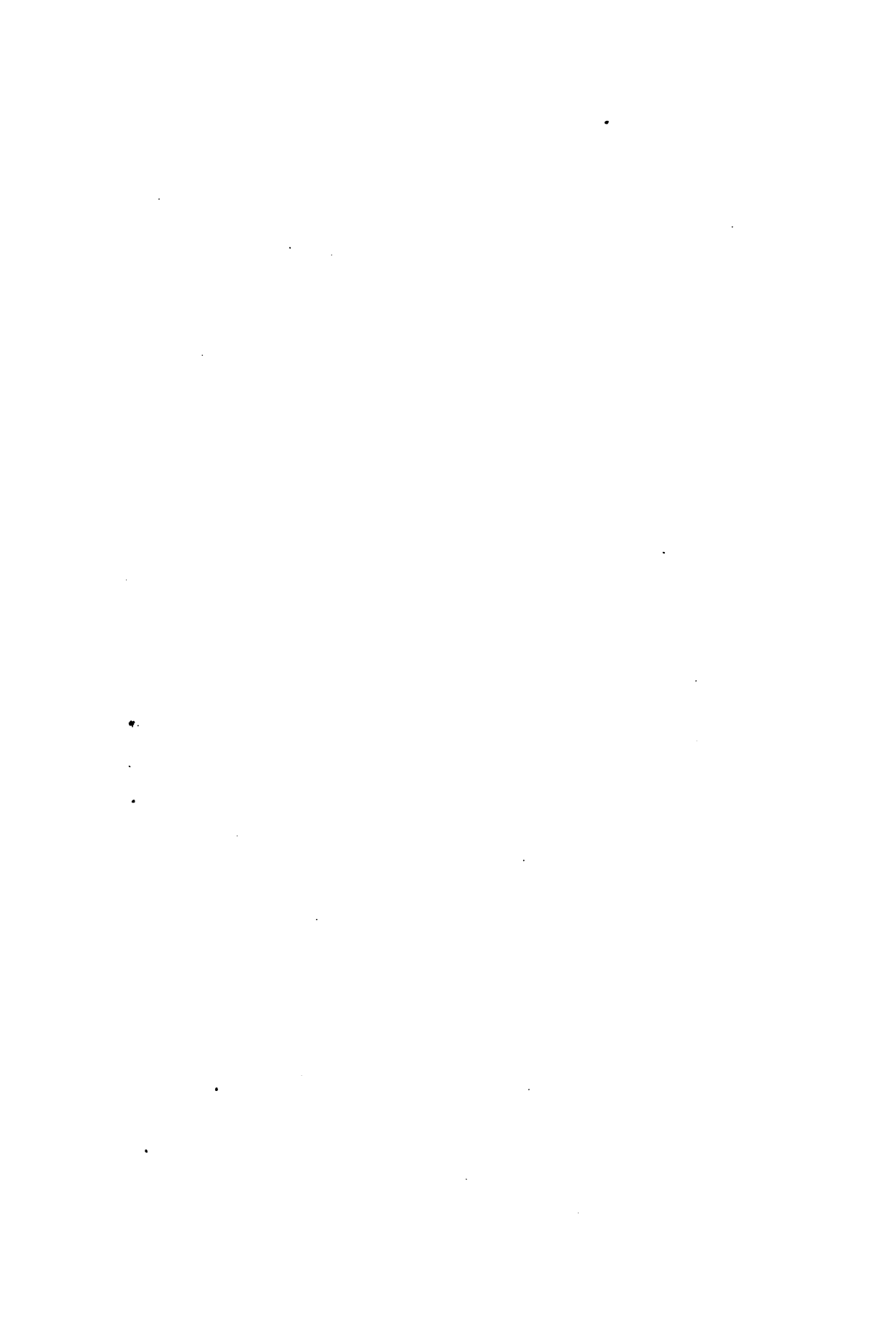
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# SIGNS AND SYMBOLS

ILLUSTRATED AND EXPLAINED,

IN A COURSE OF

## TWELVE LECTURES

ON

### FREEMASONRY.

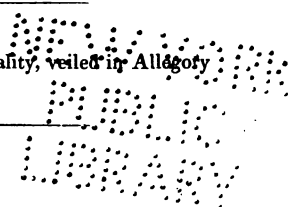
BY THE REV. GEORGE OLIVER, D.D.

VICAR OF SCOPWICK; INCUMBENT OF THE COLLEGIATE CHURCH, WOLVERHAMPTON; PROVINCIAL DEPUTY GRAND MASTER FOR LINCOLNSHIRE; DOMESTIC CHAPLAIN TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD KENSINGTON.

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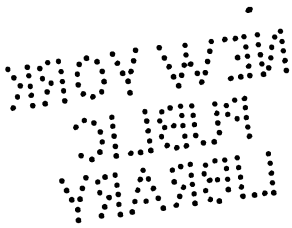


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TO

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS  
PRINCE AUGUSTUS FREDERICK,  
DUKE OF SUSSEX;

EARL OF INVERNESS; BARON OF ARKLOW;

KNIGHT OF THE MOST NOBLE ORDER OF THE GARTER;

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## P R E F A C E.

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IMPRESSED with a due sense of the high degree of responsibility which is incurred by an attempt to illustrate the Science of Masonry, I submit the following sheets to my Brethren, in the confidence of hope, that I have succeeded in placing the Light in so luminous a point of view, that, like the glorious Pillar which conducted the children of Israel safely out of Egypt, it will enlighten the true Mason, without affording a single ray to assist the forbidden investigations of those who have a desire to penetrate the arcana of Masonry, without submitting to the legitimate process of initiation. With pure intentions I have used my utmost endeavours to conceal from the prying eyes of uninitiated curiosity, those essential points which have constituted Masonry into an exclusive system, and will remain an impenetrable barrier between its professors and the world to the end of time. Some passages may be found whose ultimate sense will even be unintelligible to the ordinary Mason, and known only to him who has been exalted to the Royal Arch. It is hoped that the assiduous Brother, by the perusal of these pages will be able to add considerably to his stock of knowledge on this comprehensive subject. He will find, in the high antiquity of those Emblems, where all the beauties of Masonry lie concealed, new reasons for admiring the

judicious mechanism, and the refined morality of the Science; and will conduct his researches with renewed alacrity and spirit on discovering that the very same Symbols have been used for a similar purpose by every nation and people, and in all the secret institutions which have existed from the creation to the present time.

In tracing the antiquity of these significant Emblems, we are necessarily plunged deeply into the MYSTERIES of ancient nations, which though founded on the principles of primitive Masonry, and using the same symbolical imagery, were not productive of the same results; because there existed a radical defect in their formation, which blighted every genial principle, and counteracted the efficacy of emblematical instruction, which has an express tendency to soften the manners and humanize the heart. They were established for the purpose of placing a secret and uncontrollable power in the hands of the hierophants and mystagogues, and hence every means was resorted to which might extend their influence or increase their popularity. These purposes being foreign to the primitive design, innovation followed innovation, each succeeding change being a retrograde movement from original purity, until, instead of a mild and benevolent religion, thus renounced by gradual steps to make room for superstitions more splendid and imposing, their rites of divine worship became fierce and bloody, implacable and severe; and this produced a corresponding change in the disposition of the heart. Instead of the cheering ray of Hope, from which comfort and consolation were derived by the ancient professors of pure Masonry, under the pressure of adversity; the degenerate race were bowed down with sadness and despair. The place of pure devotion was usurped by obscene rites and ceremonial observances.

In a word, LIGHT was rejected, and an unfathomable *Darkness* had taken possession of the Soul. Hence severe penances were instituted, which the wretched sufferers were taught to believe would propitiate the wrath of heaven; and hence arose also, united with the perverted meaning of an ancient prophecy, the horrid custom of sanguinary sacrifices, in which the polluted altars of the gods were stained with human gore.

The mysteries of Egypt contained all the secrets of their religion and politics; and inspired dread and terror throughout the world. By the uninitiated they were regarded as vehicles of knowledge more than human; and the dispensers of them were reputed to possess some high and peculiar attributes of the divinity. The initiated themselves were struck with a sacred horror, at the recollection of that awful solemnity which attended their own initiation; and dared not even to name, or refer to them in familiar conversation, lest their indiscretion should elicit the summary vengeance of the justly offended deities.\*

When Grecian philosophy began to prevail, the mysteries were applied by wise men to the purpose of enquiring more particularly after the nature and attributes of the Deity, which though a legitimate pursuit of primitive Masonry, had yielded to the introduction of popular innovations, until the truth was obscured under a mass of absurdity and fable. Their bold disquisitions varied from the monotony of ancient practice, and differed essentially from each other; whence many distinctive varieties were introduced into the Lodges or Schools, which never before existed; and the doctrines were diversified according to the speculative

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\* Horap. l. ii. od. 3.—Liv. l. xxxi.

opinions of each Principal Superintendent. These Schools bore every character of Masonry, except that one grand and distinguished characteristic, which confers life and vigour on all its proceedings, the true knowledge and worship of the Deity. It is highly probable that these philosophers had some faint knowledge of the true God, but they did not worship him as God, preferring the creature to the Creator; and in the lesser mysteries they substituted a rabble of false deities to his total exclusion. In taking a brief view of this succedaneum for Masonry, as it existed in every nation of the world before the coming of Jesus Christ, we may see to what a skeleton of dry bones it was reduced when forsaken by the spirit.

After Pythagoras had newly modelled the Mysteries; and different sects of Masons, or Philosophers, (for Pythagoras gave the name of Philosophy as well as Mesouraneo to our Science,\*) began to entertain new and irreconcilable opinions on the subject of research; their speculations were carried on in each Lodge with eager avidity, but without adopting a selfish system of exclusion. Each body was in the highest degree communicative; its members were ever ready to instruct others in their peculiar dogmas; and all united in the common pursuit of searching after truth. They had very indistinct notions of the true God, though his name was not unknown to them; and entertaining gross and sensual ideas of his nature, it is no wonder that Vice became deified, and that the commission of every unnatural lust, was not only permitted, but even made a test of reverence to the Deity.† Mercy was by one converted into a vice;‡ by

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\* Cic. Tuscul. quæst. 5.—Valer. Maxim.

† Lucian de Dea Syr.

‡ Laert. in vit. Zen.



another, adultery was sanctified;\* and fornication† and suicide‡ were the common practice of all. Thus the purity of Masonry fled from these institutions as they retrograded from the true worship of God; and this purity it was that they in vain endeavoured to recover. They practised vice; but then they thought that it was virtue; they practised the worship of false gods or dæmons; but they verily thought, until the later ages, when a few sects dissented from the belief, that they were performing a service acceptable to God, by practising the rites of true religion through the intervention of mediators. And hence it is easy to demonstrate, not only that Masonry as practised by Jews and Christians, but also, that every resemblance of it in all parts of the world, was professedly, if not practically devoted to the perfecting of man's mental powers, that he might pass through a life of virtue here, to the full enjoyment of it in a future state.

Under what denomination soever our Science has been known in the world; under what form soever it may have been practised from the fall of man to the present time, it has always been understood to have a distinct reference to the worship of God, and the moral culture of man. Whether it were received under the appellation of Phos, Lux, Synagoge, Mystery, Philosophy, Mesouraneo, or Masonry;—whether practised by the antediluvians, the Patriarchs, the Idolaters, the Jews, the Essenes, or the Christians; in all ages and among all people it possessed the same reference to the prominent truths of religion. The idolatrous mysteries which were the most perfect imitation of Masonry that could be practised by those who had

\* Herod.

† Laert. de Demet.

‡ Laert. de Arist.

renounced its distinguishing principles along with the true worship of God, were founded to preserve amongst mankind the nominal practice of religion, although the incense might be offered to dæmons on an idolatrous altar; and they were usually celebrated in conjunction with the rites of divine worship. Thus were they generally applied to the purpose of perpetuating a knowledge of the divinity, and the doctrine of a future state of rewards and punishments; as well as to fix in the minds of the uninitiated vulgar, a deep and solemn reverence for the duties of religion.\* It is scarcely necessary to enlarge on this point, because the fact is universally notorious; nor shall I discuss the unessential difference in each of these Mysteries, as that would involve many useless repetitions, for their nature and object were universally the same. The characteristic propensities of a people, the state of their progress from barbarism to civilization; their intellectual attainments, the character of their government, or their intercourse with other nations, might and did create some distinction in the ceremonial, but the great essentials, broadly struck out by the Cabiric priests, did never vary. The same primary doctrines remained in the reign of Theodosius which were inculcated by the founders, though the ceremonial had become polluted with every species of abomination and uncleanness. If Masonry, or its idolatrous substitute, be considered under the worst and most forbidding forms, it invariably preserved the moral dogmas and institutes of each national religion. It is true that false religion produced false Masonry; and the latter, faithful to the principles by which it was supported, proceeded no farther than an idolatrous worship would sanction. In a

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\* Strab. Geogr. l. i.

word, the Mysteries were the only vehicles of religion throughout the whole idolatrous world; and it is probable that the very name of religion might have been obliterated from amongst them, but for the support it received by the periodical celebrations, which preserved all the forms and ceremonies, rites and practices of divine worship; and the varieties of custom in this particular, constituted the sole difference betwixt the Masonry (shall I so call it?) of different nations. Wheresoever the Mysteries were introduced, they retained their primitive form, adapted to the customs and usages of the national religion; and if varied in some unimportant points, it was to commemorate certain extraordinary performances of the tutelary deities, or to perpetuate some remarkable circumstance attending their first institution in a particular country. Hence the same, or similar ceremonies, which were applied to Osiris and Isis in Egypt, the great source of secret and mysterious rites,\* were celebrated in Greece, in honour of Bacchus and Rhea; at Eleusis, they were applied to Ceres and Proserpine; in Tyre and Cyprus, to Adonis and Venus; in Persia, to Mithras and Mithra; in India, to Maha Deva and Sita; in Britain, to Hu and Ceridwen; in Scandinavia, to Odin and Frea; and in Mexico, to Tlaloc and the Great Mother; for these appear to be but different names for the same deities, and most probably referred to Noah and the Ark. They were all originally the same System, founded on primitive Masonry; but being deteriorated by false worship, bore a very imperfect resemblance to the divine pattern. They all however preserved a disguised tradition of the creation and fall of man, and the universal deluge; they used as most significant emblems, the

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\* Lucian de Dea Syr.

Theological Ladder; the triple support of the universal Lodge, called by masons, Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty; the Point within a Circle, and many other legitimate emblems of Masonry; they used the same form of Government; the same system of secrecy, allegory, and symbolical Instruction; all tending to the same point, the practice of moral virtue. None were admitted without previous probation and initiation; the candidates were bound by solemn oaths; united by invisible ties; taught by Symbols; distinguished by Signs and Tokens; and, impelled by a conscientious adherence to the rules of the order, they professed to practise the most rigid morality; justice towards men, and piety to the gods.

In treating on all the points connected with these Symbols, I trust it will be acknowledged that in this Course of Lectures I have not removed the veil which conceals a single forbidden secret; that I have not exposed to the public gaze a single word, letter, or character, which may tend to excite sensations of alarm in the bosom of the most rigid and tenacious Mason; but that I have endeavoured modestly to illustrate such points and symbols as may show the beauty of the System, and convince mankind at large that Masonry is really what it professes to be, an Order of Peace, Harmony, and Brotherly Love.

I have been scrupulously careful about the admission of a single sentence from the *peculiar* Lectures of Masonry which has not already appeared in a printed form in one or other of our legitimate publications. It is true, the following pages contain much genuine Masonry; but it is not marked by the use of a distinguishing type, and is distributed with so much precaution as to render fruitless the attempt of an uninitiated person to determine where it is concealed; while

to the assiduous Mason's view it lies open and exposed. To him it is like a burning and a shining Light, elevated on a lofty candlestick, and darting its pure and perfect rays to enlighten and invigorate the Soul.

I conclude this Preface in the words of Brother Wellins Calcot, who published some disquisitions on Freemasonry in 1769. "However anxious and restless the busy and invidious may be, and whatever attempts they may make to traduce our Institution or discover our mysteries, all their endeavours will prove ineffectual. They will still find that the only means to attain to the knowledge of our mysteries are abilities, integrity, firmness, and a due and constant perseverance in the great duties of moral and social life, in principles of religion and virtue, and whatever is commendable and praiseworthy. These are the steps, and this the clue, that will lead and direct the practisers of such excellencies to the heights of Freemasonry, and while they adhere to them, will effectually secure them favour and esteem from every able and faithful Brother, and the warmest approbation and satisfaction from their own hearts."



# SIGNS AND SYMBOLS.

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## LECTURE I.

ON THE HIEROGLYPHICAL SYSTEM OF THE ANCIENTS.

“ When first the golden morn aloft,  
With maiden breezes whispering soft,  
Sprung from the East with rosy wing,  
To kiss the heavenly first born spring ;  
JEHOVAH then from hallowed earth  
Gave Masonry immortal birth.” *Masonic Ode.*

“ Study eagerly the meaning of the hieroglyphics and emblems which the Order lays before thee. Even nature does not always unveil her secrets; she must be observed, compared, and frequently watched with attention in her operations.” *Masonic Exhortations, from the German.*

It has long been my opinion that the most beneficial results would ensue to the Science of Freemasonry, were the Masters of Lodges to devote some portion of their time to the delivery of explanatory Lectures on subjects of general interest connected with the Institution. Such a practice might be the means of elucidating many points, on which our customary Lectures leave us entirely in the dark. Some years ago, a law, emanating from the M. W. G. M. passed the Grand Lodge,\* empowering every Master to

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\* December 1st, 1819.

deliver his Lectures, "in a language suited to the character of the Lodge over which he presides," with this only proviso, that the established Landmarks be not removed.

This liberal regulation leaves the local discussions of our Lodges open to considerable improvement; and relieves us from the shackles of a constituted form, whose unvarying features, beautiful as they are, after a few years' habitual repetition, become, to a certain extent, uninteresting; for every human composition, how superior soever it may be, palls on the mind when the charm of novelty has faded away; and, at a still more distant period, its salutary impression ceases altogether. But a provision, like that I have just referred to, constitutes a Masonic Lodge into a Literary Society, where every member is at liberty to add to the general stock of knowledge, by promulgating the results of his own enquiries, and disseminating among the Brethren, the fruits of his researches in our ancient and scientific Institution.

Masonry contains many points to which such enquiries may be usefully directed; I shall suggest a few, in the course of these Lectures, and state how far my own observations have extended.

One important question, which appears to have been almost wholly neglected by Masonic writers, is:—whether Freemasonry be a servile imitation of certain ceremonies in the ancient idolatrous Mysteries, as is asserted by some writers; or whether it be the great



original from which the Mysteries themselves were derived. On this enquiry I have bestowed much deliberate consideration; for I found it impossible to be satisfied with practising a science derived from the polluted dregs of idolatry. To investigate this important point fully and impartially, I have consulted most of the principal mythological writers, both ancient and modern, whose works are accessible and possess either interest or authority. I have examined, with the greatest attention, the mysterious establishments of all nations in the world; and have bestowed infinite pains in collecting, from the institutions of antiquity, the peculiar ceremonies of initiation; as well as the date of their origin, their doctrines, usages and customs, in the hope of elucidating this most abstruse point, and detecting the fallacy of those pretensions to originality, which were exhibited in the practice of idolatrous rites, in various heathen nations. The result of this investigation has introduced into my mind a firm persuasion that Freemasonry is not, as some authors seem to think,\* a scion snatched with a violent hand from the ancient mysteries; but, in reality, *the original institution from which all the mysteries were derived*; because, from their agreement in certain essential points which could only be obtained from a system of purity and truth, we derive

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\* Fab. Pag. Idol. b. v. c. 6.—Clinch, in Anthol. Hibern. 1794.—London Magazine, Jan. 1824.—Robison's Proofs of a Conspiracy, p. 20.

ample testimony to establish the fact, that the mysteries of all nations were originally the same, and diversified only by the accidental circumstances of local situation and political economy. I admit, without hesitation, that Masonry and the Mysteries bear many characteristics in common, which point out a common origination; but by tracing the latter to their source, separating the component parts with a careful hand, and minutely analyzing every occult rite and mystic ceremony, it will clearly appear that they owe their origin to the pure science which we now practice under the designation of Freemasonry. The true system of divine worship had its accompanying institution of mystery, which was coeval with religion, and essential to its support. This arrangement was copied by the idolaters; whose newly established plans of worship were always accompanied by corresponding systems of mystery, formed on the same basis, and embracing the same principles as the pure system which was attached to the primitive religion. As, therefore, the *true* preceded the *false* religion, so the Institution now called Masonry was anterior to the establishment of the mysteries.

It is true many impediments exist to prevent a clear and satisfactory elucidation of the institutions of antiquity. The greater portion of the ancient authors, who mention them, appear to have been under the high restraint of that awful secrecy which the initiated

were bound to observe;\* and consequently many of the secrets and usages remain undiscovered. Enough, however, may be collected to convince us of their common origination; and certain ceremonies and symbols, which bear a striking resemblance to the rites of Freemasonry, may be traced in these institutions, amidst the heterogeneous mass of profaneness and impiety, which rendered the celebration at once disgraceful and obscene.

The rites of that Science which is now received under the appellation of Freemasonry, were exercised in the antediluvian world; revived by Noah after the flood; practised by mankind at the building of Babel, conveniences for which were undoubtedly contrived in the interior of that celebrated edifice; and at the dispersion spread with every settlement, already deteriorated by the gradual innovations of the Cabiric Priests,† and modelled into a form, the great outlines

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\* Diod. Sic. p. 32.—Horap. l. 2. Andoc. de Myst. p. 7. Meurs. Eleus. c. 20. "The betrayers of the Mysteries, (says Warburton,) were punished capitally and with merciless severity. Diagoras the Melian had revealed the Orphic and Eleusinian Mysteries; on which account he passed with the people for an Atheist. He likewise dissuaded his friends from being initiated into these Rites; the consequence of which was, that the city of Athens proscribed him, and set a price upon his head. And the poet Eschylus had like to have been torn in pieces by the people on the mere suspicion, that, in one of his Scenes, he had given a hint of something in the Mysteries." Div. Leg. b. ii. s. 4.

† "The Mysteries of the Cabiric Rites," says Sammes, in his *Britannia*, p. 55, "were accounted so sacred and powerful, that whosoever was initiated in them, immediately received, as they thought, some extraordinary gifts of holiness, and that in all their dangers they had a present remedy and

of which are distinctly to be traced in the mysteries of every heathen nation, exhibiting the shattered remains of one true System whence they were all derived.

The rites of idolatry were indeed strikingly similar, and generally deduced from parallel practices, previously used by the true Masons; for idolatry was an imitative system, and all its ceremonies and doctrines were founded on the general principles of the patriarchal religion. If the patriarch united in his own person the three offices of king, priest, and prophet; the secret assemblies of idolatry were also governed by a Triad, consisting of three supreme officers: if primitive Masonry was a system of Light, the initiated heathen equally paid divine honours to the Sun, as the source of light, by circumambulating *in the course of that luminary*, during the ceremony of initiation. The uniformity of practice which attended the progress of error in different nations is truly astonishing. They equally used the Ambrosiæ Petræ, as vehicles of regeneration; they shrouded their rites under the impenetrable mask of secresy; they possessed the same mode of conveying instruction by symbols, allegory, and fable; the same repugnance to committing their

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expedient about them to deliver and rescue them; but that which most affected the Phenicians was a confidence they had, that those religious ceremonies preserved them from dangers by sea. Therefore it is no wonder that, arriving in Britain, they taught the inhabitants that worship, to which they held themselves most obliged for their safety."

abstruse secrets to writing; the same system of morality; the same attachment to amulets, talismans, and perhaps magic; and equally inculcated the immortality of the soul, and a future state of rewards and punishments, which were alike pantomimically exhibited during the initiations.\*

The departure from Freemasonry was indeed, at its original corruption but slightly marked. The object was changed by the substitution of surreptitious deities, but the ceremonial remained nearly the same. It was only by successive, and in some instances, very remote innovations, that the system at length assumed a different character; and even at its last and most corrupted change, many striking points of resemblance may be traced, which unequivocally denote a common origination. Hence, however the mysteries of different nations might vary in ceremonial observances, they contain certain arbitrary landmarks, which are unquestionable evidences that they were derived from some true and primitive system; for they were nothing but Masonry or Lux, gradually perverted to the corrupt purposes of a false and spurious worship.

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\* Borl. Cornw. p. 174. Fab. Cab. c. 10.—Warb. Div. Leg. b. ii. s. 4.—Apul. Metam. 2.—Dav. Celt. Res. p. 289.—Cesar. de bel. Gal. l. 6. 13.—Porph. de Abstin. l. 4. s. 22.—Kæmpf. Japan. b. iii. c. 4.—Sacontala, Sir W. Jones's works, vol. vi.—Dav. Druids, p. 277.—Warb. Div. Leg. b. iv. s. 4.—Brand's Pop. Ant. vol. ii. p. 376.—Orig. con. Cels. l. 3.

The system of hieroglyphics or symbols,\* which is proposed for illustration in these Lectures, was adopted into every mysterious institution, for the purpose of concealing the most sublime secrets of religion from the prying curiosity of the vulgar; to whom nothing was exposed but the beauties of their morality.† “The old Asiatic style so highly figurative, seems, by what we find of its remains in the prophetic language of the sacred writers, to have been evidently fashioned to the mode of the ancient hieroglyphics; for as in hieroglyphic writing, the sun, moon, and stars were used to represent states and empires, kings, queens, and nobility: their eclipse and extinction, temporary disasters, or entire overthrow; fire and flood, desolation by war and famine; plants or animals, the qualities of particular persons, &c. So, in like manner, the holy prophets call kings and empires, by

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\* Hieroglyphics are emblems or signs of divine, sacred, or supernatural things, by which they are distinguished from common symbols, which are signs of sensible or natural things. Hermes Trismegistus is commonly esteemed the inventor of hieroglyphics; he first introduced them into the Heathen theology, from whence they have been transplanted into the Jewish and Christian. Sacred things, says Hippocrates should only be communicated to sacred persons. The Egyptians communicated to none but their kings and priests, and those who were to succeed to the priesthood and the crown, the secrets of nature and the mysteries of their morality and history; and this they did by a kind of Cabala, which, at the same time that it instructed them, only amused the rest of the people. Hence the use of hieroglyphics or mystic figures to veil their morality, politics, &c. from profane eyes.—*Spon.*

† Ramsay's Travels of Cyrus, b. iii.

the names of the heavenly luminaries; their misfortunes and overthrow are represented by eclipses and extinction; stars falling from the firmament are employed to denote the destruction of the nobility; thunder and tempestuous winds, hostile invasions;—lions, bears, leopards, goats, or high trees, leaders of armies, conquerors, and founders of empires: royal dignity is described by purple or a crown; iniquity by spotted garments; error and misery by an intoxicating draught; a warrior by a sword or bow; a powerful man by a gigantic stature; and a judge by balance, weights, and measures. In a word, the prophetic style seems to be a speaking hieroglyphic.”\*

The whole mystical system of Pythagoras was expressed by signs and symbols, which the initiated understood, while the rest of the world, though in the midst of light, remained for ever enveloped in the impenetrable shades of darkness.† His secrets were forbidden to be committed to writing, and were delivered orally from one to another as ineffable mysteries. The Pythagoreans, so famous for their silence, conversed with each other chiefly by signs; a practice which was adopted, not only as an universal language, but to conceal from the vulgar their peculiar doctrines and modes of thinking. Symbolical instruction, which was found so useful in impressing on the mind the most

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\* Warb. Div. Leg. b. iv. s. 4.

† Jambl. c. 34.

dilated and comprehensive truths, that it had been adopted from Masonry into all the mysteries, was in high esteem with Pythagoras ;\* for he said, in treating of all things divine and human, the vastness of such a complicated subject demanded short symbols to help and assist the memory.† This system was attended with other very important advantages. The method of communicating ideas by signs and symbols, had in all ages given its possessors a decided advantage over the rest of the world; for, “as generals use watchwords to distinguish their soldiers from others, so it is very advantageous to communicate to friends and brothers, some peculiar signs and symbols as distinctive marks of a society. These amongst the Pythagoreans were a chain of indissoluble love.”‡

The Druids also possessed a profound system of hieroglyphics, the principles of which were communicated with great reluctance, even to the Epoptæ

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\* “The most ancient,” says Stanley, (*Hist. Phil.* vol. 3. part 1. p. 112.) “and such as were cotemporary with, and disciples to Pythagoras, did not compose their writings intelligible, in a common vulgar style, familiar to every one, as if they endeavoured to dictate things readily perceptible by the hearer, but consonant to the silence decreed by Pythagoras, concerning divine mysteries, which it is not lawful to speak of before those who were not initiated; and therefore clouded both their mutual discourses and writings by symbols; which, if not expounded by those that proposed them, by a regular interpretation appear to the hearers like old wives’ proverbs, trivial and foolish; but being rightly explained, and instead of dark rendered lucid and conspicuous to the vulgar, they discover an admirable sense, no less than the divine oracles of Pythian Apollo; and give a divine inspiration to the Philologists that understand them.”

† Laert. vit. Pyth.

‡ Stanley’s *Life of Pyth.* b. iv. c. 1.



themselves. The characters of this species of symbol were borrowed from the appearance of natural objects, and chiefly from the vegetable creation. "Thus, of a man who possessed an expanded mind, it would be said, *he is an Oak*; of another, who was liable to be intimidated, was irresolute and wavering, *he is an Aspen leaf*; or of a third who was hollow and deceitful, *he is a Reed*."\* The knowledge of these symbols was properly denominated mystery; and the initiated were strictly forbid to commit any portion of it to writing.† This method of concentrating the secrets of their order, and fixing them permanently in the recollection by means of visible images, was adopted to prevent the uninitiated‡ from acquiring improperly any insight into their occult rites and disquisitions. Whatever was valuable in the system of Druidism, was embodied in some visible and picturesque object, which thus became a depository of important truths. Hence, almost every object they saw could read them a Lecture on morality; and hence inanimate matter was said to speak with the lips of knowledge; and contemplation was assisted and enforced in every

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\* Davies Celt. Res. p. 247.

† Cesar de bel. Gal. l. 6. 13.

‡ The ignorant Britons were easily impressed with superstitious reverence for these profound secrets; for at the period of the Roman invasion under Cæsar, they were still extremely rude in their diet and mode of life. (Strabo. l. 4. Diod. Sic. l. 4.) some went entirely naked, (Xiphil. l. 21.) others were clothed in the skins of beasts, (Cesar. l. 5. c. 14.) and the state in which they were found induced the Romans to style them barbarians. Herodian. l. 3. Pomp. Mela. l. 3. c. 6.

situation, by the actual presence of those silent, yet eloquent teachers of wisdom.

Geometrical figures, as lines, angles, squares, and perpendiculars, were ranked amongst the symbols of Druidism. "As the Druids had no enclosed temples, thinking them inconsistent with the majesty of the gods, so neither had they any carved images to represent them, and for the same reason; but instead thereof, rude stones were erected in their places of worship at some mystic, significant distance, and in some emblematic number, situation, and plan; sometimes in *right lines*, sometimes in *squares*, sometimes in *triangles*, sometimes in both; now single and fifty paces distant or more from the circles; or eminently taller than the rest in the circular line, and making a part of it like portals, not only to shape the entrance, but also to hallow those that entered: it appearing by many monuments, that the Druids attributed great virtue to these passages between rocks."\*

This custom was practised in its greatest perfection, and consequently with the most triumphant success in Egypt, the land of allegory as well as superstition. Those astonishing specimens of human art and ingenuity, which still remain in that country to excite our wonder and admiration; (not to mention the sphinges, the obelisks, the catacombs, and other minor, though stupendous masses of architecture) the

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\* Borl. Corn. b. ii. c. 17.


gigantic pyramids, one of which, say the Copts, was erected by Ham, and another by Shem, are generally regarded either as having been intended for tombs, or repositories for hidden treasure in times of public agitation. Some, indeed, have conjectured that they were buildings appropriated to the occult purpose of practising magical arts, and the construction of talismans and charms. The truth however is, that they were places principally used for the celebration of the mysteries, which were of great importance in Egypt, and derived additional celebrity from the splendour, solidity, or costliness of the place which was devoted to their solemnization. Now the quadrangular Pyramid contained many mysterious and symbolical references. It was supposed to allegorize the soul, or the principle of immortality. And this opinion was not peculiar to Egypt, but was admitted by the Indians, the Chinese, and in the extremest regions of the West; for the high Altar of Vitzliputzli, in Mexico, was Pyramidal; as was also the celebrated Temple at Nankin. Sphinges were erected in the front of temples and places of initiation, as we are informed by Clement, of Alexandria,\* to denote that all sacred truth is enfolded in enigmatical fables and allegories.†

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\* Lib. 5. c. 4.

† In India a secret language was used in the mysteries, which was called *Devanagari*, a word compounded of *Deva*, divine, and *Nagari*, a city, and this language was boldly asserted to have been revealed to them by the Deity himself.—*Maur. Ind. Ant.* vol. 3. p. 396.

In their initiations, the Egyptians informed the candidate, as an ineffable secret, that the mysteries were received from father Adam, Seth, and Enoch; and in the chief degree the perfectly initiated aspirant was termed, from the name of the Deity, AL—OM—JAH; pronounced Allhawmiyah. After the initiation was fully completed, figs and honey were presented to the candidate, accompanied by this maxim, *TRUTH is sweet.*

The characteristic property of these mysteries was **SECRESY**: Hence sprang the innumerable Emblems and hieroglyphical Symbols with which they abounded;—hence the great personification of Silence or Taciturnity so frequently recurring on all their sculptured monuments; and hence their incessant reference to *Darkness*, which was an emblem expressive of the profound secrecy under which the initiated were bound by solemn obligations, enforced by denunciations of rigorous penalties. The Symbol of this darkness, resembled a Mason's *Trowel*.\* 

The reason assigned for this jealousy has been revealed to us by Apuleius. He says, that in a subsequent part of his own initiation, the hierophant produced *certain mysterious writings, or Tracing Boards which contained Symbols explanatory of the whole System*, expressed by figures of animals, and secret marks, interwoven with apparent intricacy; now

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\* Ahmed ben Washih.

revolving like a wheel; now turned inwards and crowded together, *that the hidden meaning might be effectually concealed from the prying curiosity of the uninitiated.*\* The symbolical instruction of Egypt was of unlimited extent: every thing in nature; every thing mysterious; every branch of science; each technical phrase, and each component part of the mysteries, were expressed by a significant and appropriate Symbol. Hence arose the complicated inscriptions on tombs, obelisks, and temples; which are generally mere historical records, pointing out the name of the builder, with the addition of such moral precepts as the genius of the founder might suggest, and bearing a reference to the circumstances which occasioned the construction of the Edifice.

“ If they wished to express a powerful, brave, cunning, and avaricious King, they painted the figure of a man with the head of a lion, pointing with one of his fingers to a fox before him. If they wished to express the attributes of understanding, sagacity, and wisdom, they represented a man with the head of an elephant, pointing with one of his fingers to a sitting ape. If they wished to give him the attributes of justice, generosity, and liberality, they drew a man with a bird’s head, and before him a balance, a sun, and a moon. If they meant to represent him cruel, faithless, and ignorant, they gave him a dog’s, ass’s, or

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\* Metam. l. 2.


boar's head, with a pot of fire and a sword before him.





“A man of perfect wisdom and understanding, accomplished in all his ways, and without the least blame, was painted with a beautiful face, with wings like an angel, holding in his hands a book, in which he looked, a sword and a balance, and behind him two vases, one of them full of water and the other of blazing fire, under his right foot a ball with a crab painted on it, and under his left a deep pot full of serpents, scorpions, and different reptiles, the covering of which had the shape of an eagle's head.”\*

Thus every thing was enveloped in mystery, the key of which was initiation. The hidden meaning of the Egyptian hieroglyphics is now pretty well known, and appears to be as follows: The world, governed by the providence of God, was symbolized by a circle, with a hawkheaded serpent in its centre. The sun, by a man or child enthroned upon the lotos or water lily. Honour and victory, by a palm-tree; power and authority, by a rod or staff; secrecy, by a grasshopper; knowledge, by an ant; fecundity, by a goat; aversion, by a wolf; instability, by a hyena; malice, by a crocodile; destruction by a mouse; and deformity by a bear. Plenty was represented by the right hand with the fingers open; and protection, by the left hand closed. Ignorance was depicted by a light spot in

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\* Aben Waasih's Hierogl.

the midst of a darkened surface. If the omnipresence of God was dilated on, the idea was comprehended under the form of an infinitely extended circle, whose centre is every where, but whose circumference is no where. His omnipotence was designated by a human foot; and his boundless mercy by a cherub. Did the initiated refer to the four elements? They were portrayed by certain prismatic colours. *White* represented the air; *Blue* the water; *Purple* the earth; and *Crimson* the fire. Again, the visible characters used to represent the elements were these;  Air.

 Water.  Earth.  Fire. 

#### The Four Elements.

Did they contemplate the creation of the world? It was fixed in their minds under the idea of the supreme Serpent god Cneph, ejecting from his mouth an egg. Did they embody in their imagination the hero god Osiris? He was ever present under the form of a bull, which was considered an incarnation of the god, and a symbol of the sun. If his mystical death and subsequent reviviscency were the subject of their devout thoughts, these fundamental points were figured under a butterfly, and the physical changes which distinguish that remarkable insect. If they contemplated the same mythological personage in the character of the sovereign of the universe, he was designated by a sceptre and an eye; if under the form of the sun, he was symbolized by a frog; or, of the Great Father

rising regenerated from the waters of the deluge, the symbol was the same reptile emerging from the lotos. The Zodiac was considered as the Great Assembly of the twelve gods, the Sun being supreme, and the Planets his attendants. The human soul was depicted by a hawk, and the universe by a beetle. Life by this figure  It was also represented by that celebrated symbol, the Crux Ansata .\*  represented Death;  Sin;  Angel; and  Devil.

If immortality were the subject of their contemplation, it was engrafted on their minds by the idea of a Serpent annually casting and renewing his skin. And if their hearts were exalted to the eternal God, seated on his throne in heaven, he was figured as an august Being of a purple colour, shadowed with beams of glory.†

Such is an outline of the hieroglyphical system of Egypt, which formed the actuating principle of their scheme of politics as well as religion; but it was stained with licentiousness and obscenity, which ultimately brought upon it the execration of the wise and good.

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\* This sign, says Sir Archibald Edmonstone, (*Journey to the Two Oases of Upper Egypt*, p. 109.) "originally signifying Life, would appear to be adopted as a christian emblem, either from its similiarity to the shape of the cross, or from its being considered the symbol of a state of future existence."

† Hor. Apol. Hierogl.—Apul. Metam.—Ahmed ben Washih.—Plut.—Jambl. de Myst.—Plut. de Isid. et Osir.—Porph. vit. Pyth.—Diod. Sic. Bibl.—Philo. Byblius apud Euseb. de præp. evan.—Clem. Alex. &c.



I must not omit to mention, however, that this people contrived to embody the whole of their symbols in one mystical diagram, which was esteemed a constellation of the secrets perpetuated in the mysteries. I subjoin the emblem, but leave the explanation of it to your own ingenuity and research.




The system of symbolical instruction, in all other mysteries was commensurate with this. The emblems which Masons now make use of as the secret repositories of their treasures of morality, were adopted by the ancients in very early times, as signs and symbols; and were even substituted for alphabetical characters.\* Thus, in the ancient alphabet of the Virgin, the *Square* was used to express the letter S; in the alpha-

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\* Diod. Sic. l. 3. c. 1.

bet of Socrates, it stood for Z or th ; and as an hieroglyphic it denoted equally a Building and a Learned Man, according to the different situations in which it was placed. *A circle supported by two perpendicular parallel lines*, denoted Will and pleasure; and in the Lunar alphabet, the same character represented the letter Y. In the alphabet of Tauras, *a point within a circle* stood for R; in the Lunar alphabet for H; in the Solar alphabet for B; in Aristotles alphabet for W and U; in that of Hermes for A; and in the Egyptian hieroglyphics, it represented a Star.

The Triangle, now called a *Trowel*, was an emblem of very extensive application, and was much revered be ancient nations as containing the greatest and most abstruse mysteries. It signified equally the Deity, Creation, and Fire; in the alphabet of the Moon, it represented the letter S; and in the hieroglyphics of Egypt, we sometimes see the suppliant presenting a triangle to his god. The *Mallet* was a symbol of Thor, the northern god of thunder. In the alphabet of Belinos, it was used to express the letter M; in that of Plato, L; in that of Hermes, B; in the Indian alphabet A; in the alphabet of Hermes Abootat, the *Mallet* united with a *Pickaxe*, denoted R; in that of Jupiter, N; and in the Berrabian alphabet, Z. In the alphabet of Pythagoras, the *Compasses* stood for S; in that of Diosmos the Egyptian, for F; and in the oldest Chaldean alphabet, the *Square and Compasses* united as they are in our Third Degree of Masonry,

was a character used to represent the letter H. In the alphabet of Saturn, the *Plumb* stood for S; and a *Skull* for T; in that of India, a *Chissel* stood for A; in that of Hermes, a double cross supporting a circle  for S H R; and two *parallel lines* for Y; and in the Solar alphabet, a Sun represented the first letter A.\*

We have here a fund of pleasant research offered for our investigation, which cannot fail to repay the active Mason for any extent of labour he may be induced to bestow upon it. And I must recommend you to apply yourselves assiduously to this curious and amusing study. In the prosecution of such an useful and instructive pursuit, do not suffer yourself to be abstracted by the idiot laugh of ridicule, or the cynical sneer of contempt; but proceed in an undeviating course to the investigation of truth, assured that the beautiful results will amply reward your labours. If you practise Masonry for the sake of its convivialities alone, it will soon pall on your mind; for these are introduced into the System, only to cheer and relieve nature after its painful and unwearied researches into the hidden stores of Masonic knowledge; but if your mind embrace the great principles of Masonry as the chief source of gratification, and use its lighter shades of enjoyment as merely temporary relaxations when the hour of graver labour has expired; you will then enjoy every benefit

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\* Vid. Hammer's Translation of Ancient Alphabets from Ahmad Bin Abubeki Bin Washih.

the science can impart; your expanding genius will soon be imbued with all the vigour of a healthy intellect, matured and ripened by a rich increase of scientific and religious knowledge; and your mind rapidly advancing to perfection, will ultimately be prepared for the full irradiations of complete and never fading glory when time shall be no more.

## LECTURE II.

ON THE ALL-SEEING EYE.

“ That sacred place where *Three in One*,  
 Comprised thy comprehensive NAME;  
 And where the bright meridian Sun,  
 Was soon thy glory to proclaim.  
 Thy watchful EYE, a length of time,  
 The wondrous *circle* did attend ;  
 The Glory and the Power be thine,  
 Which shall from age to age descend.” *Dunckerley.*

“ May the sublime idea that thou walkest before the *Eyes* of the *Omnipresent*, strengthen and support thee.”

*Masonic Exhortations, from the German.*

WHEN we look round on the wonderful works of God, as displayed in the formation of this globe which we inhabit ; when we extend our view to the immense arch of heaven, and behold the amazing orbs of light, burning with perpetual refulgence, and illuminating every part of the vast and boundless expanse ; when we contemplate the wonderful productions of Nature, from the stupendous ocean to its minutest inhabitants, from the majestic lion that prowls in the desert, to the most insignificant reptile that hides its diminutive form beneath the surface of the earth ;—we can scarcely resist the impression which such an employment will naturally produce in the mind, that, the origin of these mighty phenomena, which exhibit

such a wonderful mechanism in their structure, and such a regularity in their motions, must have been the work of an invisible and all powerful Architect. Do we enquire how came the human frame by all those mysterious properties which sustain and preserve its uniformity of action from one generation to another ;—how came man by the reasoning faculty which elevates him so much above the level of the animal creation? This could not be merely fortuitous, for accident seldom produces two inanimate forms that bear any degree of resemblance to each other ; and the human body, so complicated, so uniform, so perfect in all its parts and faculties, could, least of all, be the effect of chance, and therefore must be the work of *some* superior Being ; and he who could form the wonderful machine, and furnish it with reason, must be divine.

The existence and truth of this *omnipresent* Being ; are the first steps of Masonry, and ought to be the principal objects of our contemplation. As Masons we are directed to remember that wherever we are, or whatever we are about to do, his All Seeing Eye observes us ; and whilst we continue to act in conformity with the established usages and customs of our Order, we are under an obligation to discharge every moral and social duty, with fervency and zeal.

The emblem now before us, if rightly considered, is of infinite importance both to our present and future welfare. It encourages and enforces an habitual obedience to those moral precepts, which form the

beauty and excellence of our system, and impresses the mind with an awful sense of the perpetual inspection and scrutiny, which every thought, word, and action, must inevitably sustain from an infinitely good and perfect Being. The All-Seeing Eye of God is every where present. He is equally in the Lodge room and in the closet; in the broad expanse of heaven, and in the secret recesses of caverns, vaults and dungeons. He observes every action; he hears every address, whether of sacred prayer, or of impious blasphemy.

The ground of a Lodge is said to be holy, in reference to a certain hill in Judea, where the Deity frequently condescended to communicate with man. First with Enoch, whence he was translated to heaven without passing the gates of death; then with Abraham, when he obeyed the divine command, and actually bound his son Isaac, in whom all the promises centred, for the purpose of sacrifice, but was arrested by a voice from on high; next with King David, when he offered up that acceptable sacrifice which was approved by a supernatural fire from heaven; and lastly, with King Solomon, at the Dedication of the Temple. And on this spot the divine Shekinah dwelt until the Babylonish Captivity. But, however our Lodges may be hallowed by a reference to these striking events, and hence be esteemed blessed with the continual presence of the divinity; there is no place however secret, or however barred from human

observation, but God is equally and substantially present. The universe, extended beyond the reach of human ideas, where worlds are piled on worlds innumerable, widely distant from the smallest speck in that superb vault of studded lights, which human ingenuity, with all its implements of science can trace, is the solemn temple of the Lord ; and here and every where His All-Seeing Eye is always present. Here, in the open Arch of heaven, the divine finger may be seen ; that glittering canopy, where every orb of light chants forth a song of praise. Here the contemplative Mason lifts up his heart to his maker, assured that in whatever circumstances he may be placed, if he be the friend of Virtue, he still enjoys the sunshine of God's almighty protection. Should he, like Joseph the son of Jacob, be confined to the solitary cell of a dungeon, His All-Seeing Eye is there ; or should he unhappily, visit the haunts of debauchery and licentiousness, He is there also. Whether the Mason practice virtue or vice ; whether he be an ornament to his profession, or disgrace it by acts of fraud and violence, he cannot rid himself of that All-Seeing Eye which is upon him wherever he goes ; which follows him into his most secret retirements, and beholds the hidden thoughts and practices of the heart. If in the spirit of Masonic philanthropy, he present his mite in secret to the worthy distress, his reward is not lost ; for God has beheld the transaction, and shall return it openly in seven fold blessings. And He is equally present



where injustice and wrong are committed. He hears the cry of the virtuous oppressed, and will assuredly interpose at the most convenient season. These considerations have something so awful in their nature and tendency, that they can scarcely fail to produce a salutary impression. You must feel confounded when you are about to commit an evil action, if for a moment you call to mind your Masonic lessons, and reflect that the All-Seeing Eye is upon you; *that* invisible Eye whose power could prevent the greatest enormities; and not only strike you with instant death, but destroy both soul and body for ever.

The ancient idolators in all their various systems of worship, had some faint ideas of an Eternal and *Omnipresent* God, which must necessarily have been derived from the true religion; and was undoubtedly preserved in the mysteries, along with the doctrine of a future state. Pausanius informs us that they worshiped a God who is eternal. His words are remarkable. *Ζεὺς ἦν, Ζεὺς ἐστὶ, Ζεὺς ἔσεται.* Orpheus said, God is ONE, he is of himself alone, all things are born of him, and he is the governor of the world.\* Pythagoras also, to the same effect, says, there is but one God, who created all things.† Plato adds, God is the parent of all things.‡ Euripides,§ Sophocles,|| Lucan,¶ and other Greek and Latin poets and philosophers say

\* Cyr. cont. Jul. p. 26.  
 § Suppl. Act. 3. v. 734.

† Ibid. p. 85.  
 || Œdip. Tyran.

‡ In Tim. p. 1047.  
 ¶ l. 9. v. 566.

the same thing. The great Cudworth has effectually shown that the Egyptian Mystagogue taught to the initiated, the unity and omnipresence of the godhead. The altar at Athens is an indirect testimony to the same truth; for amongst the numerous deities with which their pantheon was crowded, they believed in one superior god, of whose precise nature and properties they publicly professed their utter ignorance,\* although they admitted his eternity, omnipotence, and *omnipresence*.† But we are furnished with unquestionable evidence, that, notwithstanding their professions, they did actually *know* something of the true and only God. The inspired writings inform us that the deity was known in idolatrous nations, under his own proper and significant appellation of JEHOVAH. Saint Paul says,‡ that they *knew* God, though they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but worshipped the creature rather than the Creator. And God himself tells us that they possessed the TETRAGRAMMATON, Tetractys, or Sacred Name, which amongst the Jews was JAH; for he says, “from the rising of the sun, even unto the going down of the same, my Name shall be (or is, according to the translation of Cudworth,) great *among the gentiles*.§

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\* Pausan. Attic.

† The definition given by Pythagoras of the omnipresent God, is curious, “A mind which commeateth and is diffused through every part of the world, and through all nature from whom all animals that are produced receive life.” (Lactant.)

‡ Rom. i. 21.

§ Mal. i. 11.

And they superstitiously believed that this Name was of such sovereign efficacy, as to enable the possessor to cure diseases, work miracles, and foretel future events. One of the uncanonical books of our scriptures asserts, that the heathen gave this great and incommunicable Name to their idols.\* They considered the chief god as *πολυώνυμον*, or, he that hath many names. Accordingly he was known by a great variety of appellations, all signifying the same Being, whose EYE is in every place, beholding the evil and the good; for the numerous tribe of inferior gods were merely worshiped as mediators. Thus Hesiod says, “there are thirty thousand deities inhabiting the earth, *who are subjects to Jupiter, and guardians of men.*”†


The Great Name of the Deity, which is termed by Josephus, incommunicable, is said to be preserved in the system of Freemasonry. Calmet observes, “when we pronounce Jehovah, we follow the crowd; for we do not know distinctly the manner wherein this proper and incommunicable Name of God should be pronounced, which is written with Iod, Hi, Vau, Hi, and comes from the verb *hajah*, he has been. The ancients have expressed it differently. Sanchoniaton writes Jevo; Diodorus the Sicilian, Macrobius, St. Clemens Alexandrinus, St. Jerom, and Origen, pronounce Iao; Epiphanius, Theodoret, and the Samaritans, Jabe or Jave; we find likewise in ancients,

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\* Wisd. xiv. 21.

† Oper. et Dier. l. 1. v. 250.

Jahoh, Javo, Jaou, Jaod. Lewis Capellus is for Javo; Drusius for Jave, Mercer for Jehevah; Hottinger for Jevah. The Moors call their god Juba, whom some believe to be the same as Jēhovah. The Latins, in all probability, took their Jovis, or Jovis Pater from Jehovah. It is certain that the four Letters which we pronounce Jehovah, may likewise be expressed by Javo, Jaho, Jaon, Jevo, Jave, Jehvah, &c. and that the ancient Hebrews were not unacquainted with the pronunciation of it, since they recited it in their prayers, and in the reading of their sacred books. But the Jews, after the captivity of Babylon, out of an excessive and superstitious respect for this Holy Name, left off the custom of pronouncing it, and forgot the true pronunciation of it.\*



The Tetragrammaton was preserved and transmitted by the Essenes. It was always communicated in a whisper,† and under such a disguised form, that while its component parts were universally known, the connected whole was an incommunicable mystery. They used, in common with the whole Jewish nation, the ancient and significant symbol by which this Name was designated, viz. three jods, with the point kametz placed underneath them, thus,  to express the equality of the three Persons of which they believed the godhead to be composed. This Holy Name they held

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\* Calm. Dict. vol. i. p. 749, with authorities.

† R. Tarphon, apud. Ten. Idol. p. 395.

in the utmost veneration. Camlet says, they believed the Name of God to include all things. "He who pronounces it, say they, shakes heaven and earth, and inspires the very angels with astonishment and terror. There is a sovereign authority in this name; it governs the world by its power. The other names and surnames of the deity, are ranged about it like officers and soldiers, about their sovereigns and generals; from this KING-NAME they receive their orders and obey."\*

Another celebrated Symbol of this august Name, was the disposal of the three points in a radiated form, so as to represent an imperial diadem.  This letter Schin too, *v*, was adopted as a mysterious emblem to designate the Tetragrammaton; and hence this letter was supposed to comprehend many valuable qualities. It was, therefore, deeply engraven by the Jews on their phylacteries, both before and behind, to induce the protection of the omnipresent deity it represented. Another Symbol was an equilateral triangle illuminated with a single Jod.  This initial letter

Jod, "denotes the thought, the idea of God. It is a *Ray of Light*, say the enraptured cabbalists, which darts a lustre too transcendant to be contemplated by mortal eye; it is a point at which thought pauses, and imagination itself grows giddy and confounded. Man, says M. Basnage, citing the rabbies, may law-

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\* Calm. Dict. vol. i. p. 751.

fully roll his thoughts from one end of heaven to the other; but they cannot approach that inaccessible Light, that primitive existence contained in the letter Jod."\*

The chief varieties of this sacred Name amongst the inhabitants of different nations, were Jah, and Bel or Baal, and On or Om. The first of these, as we have just seen, had many fluctuations. Jupiter, Jove, Evohe, &c. were but corruptions of Jah or Jehovah.† Iao, was pronounced by the Oracle of Apollo, to be the first and greatest of the deities.‡ “The name of Jupiter Sabazius, as Selden justly remarks, is clearly derived from Jehovah Sabaoth, a term perpetually applied to the Most High in the page of revelation, and that the celebrated Tetragrammaton, the incommunicable name יהוה was well known to the Greeks, appears abundantly from the writings of Clemens. Alexandrinus and Diodorus Siculus.”§ The Tetragrammaton is said to have been the *pass-word* amongst the Egyptians, to the

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\* Maur. Ind. Ant. vol. iv.

† The numerous speculations which have been submitted to the world respecting this sacred name are curious. One author says, from Jehovah came *Æs*, or *Esus*, a god of the Celts, and *As*, a god of the Goths. Another says, *Esus* or *Hesus* was a corruption of the Celtic *Dhia* a name for the Supreme Being, and the same with the Hebrew *Jah*; and from the same word the Latin *Deus* was derived. A third asserts that the name *Hesus*, a corruption, as above, of *Dhia* or *Jah*, comes from the Syrian *Hizzus* or *Haziz*, signifying strong and powerful in war; from which word the Phœnicians had their name of *Mars*, as out of *Jamblicus*, *Julian the Apostate* shows in his oration of the Sun. This was the triad. *HESUS—THARAMIS—BELEMES, unus tantummodo deus.*

‡ *Macrob. Saturn. l. 18.*

§ *Fab. Hor. Mos. p. i. s. 1. c. 2.*

secret chambers of initiation. Amongst the Apalachites of Florida, the priests of the Sun were called by the remarkable name of Jaovas;\* which was also the name of the deity. The modern Jews say that this word יהוה was engraven on the Rod of Moses, and thus he was enabled to work his miracles; and they add, that Jesus Christ stole the same word out of the Temple, and inserted it in his thigh, between the skin and the flesh, and by its sovereign potency performed all his wonders in Judea.†

The compounds of the second name Bel, are of great variety. Bel-us was used by the Chaldeans; and the deity was known amongst the ancient Celtæ, by the name of Bel or Bel-enus,‡ which title, by the modern authors, is identified with Apollo. The primitive name of Britain, was *Vel ynys*, the island of Bel; and the fires lighted up on May-day, were in honour of this deity, and called Bel's fire.§ The

\* Ten. Idol. c. 4.

† Calm. Dict. vol. i. p. 750.

‡ Many towers in England derive their names from this deity, for Belenus was no other than the sun, according to Elias Schedius; who imagines, in his book *De diis Germanorum*, that he found in the name Belenus the 365 days of the year, in like manner as the Basilideans formerly found them in those of Abraxas and Mithras. For this purpose Schedius writes βηλενος with an η that he may perfect that number, thus;

B	H	Λ	E	N	O	S
2,	8,	30,	5,	50,	70,	200 = 365.

*Montf. Ant.* vol. ii. p. 267.

§ These fires were originally lighted on the eves of the first of May and the first of November; perhaps because the latter of those days was turned into mourning; for tradition, and some chronicles say, that the British Chiefs were treacherously slain at Stonehenge on that day.—*Owen's Dict.* v. Coelcerth.

inhabitants made use of a word, known only to themselves, to express the unutterable name of the Deity, of which the letters O. I. W. were a sacred symbol. In this they resembled the Jews, who always said Adonai, when the name of Jehovah occurred.\* Another variation was Bal or Baal, as Bal-rama, used by the Indians; Bal-der, by the Goths; Baal and Baal-zebub, by the Sidonians; Baal-berith, the god of the Shechemites; Baal-peor or Baal-reem, of the Moabites; Baal-tis, of the Phœnicians; and Baal-zephon, of the Egyptians. Baal was the most ancient god of the Canaanites and was referred to the Sun. Manasseh raised altars to this deity, and worshipped him in all the pomp of heathen superstition; and when these altars were destroyed by Josiah, the worship of Baal is identified with that of the Sun.†

The third variation was On. Under this appellation the deity, was worshipped by the Egyptians; and they professed to believe that he was eternal, and the fountain of light and life; but, according to their gross conceptions, being necessarily visible, the Sun was adored as his representative, and was, most probably the same as Osiris. They knew the general purport of the name and little more. If they believed On to be the living and eternal God, they allowed the same attributes to the Sun, which they undoubtedly wor-

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\* *Introd. to Meyrick's Cardigan.*

† 2 Chron. xxxiii. 35.—2 Kings xxiii. 5, 11.



shipped as the Lord of the creation. Oannes was the god of the Chaldeans ; and Dag-On of the Philistines, both of which are derivations of the same name. On, was evidently the same deity as the Hebrew Jehovah ; and was introduced amongst the Greeks by Plato, who acknowledges his eternity and incomprehensibility in these remarkable words ; “Tell me of the God On ; which is, and never knew beginning.”\* And the same name was used by the early Christians for the true God ; for St. John in the Apocalypse,† has this expression ; *Ο Ων, και ο ην, και ο ερχομενος*, which is translated in our authorized version of the scriptures, by, “HIM, which is, and which was, and which is to come.”

The same word with a small variation, was one of the names of the Supreme Deity in India ; and a devout meditation on it was considered capable of conveying the highest degree of perfection. In the Ordinances of Menu, we are informed how this sacred word was produced. “Brahma milked out, as it were, from the three Vedas, the letter A, the letter U, and the letter M ; which form, by their coalition, the trilateral monosyllable, together with three mysterious words, *bhur, bhuvah, swer* ; or, earth, sky, heaven.”‡ These three letters, which are pronounced OM, refer to the deity in his triple capacity of Creator, Preserver,

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\* In Timæo. v. iii. p. 27.

† i. 4.

‡ Sir W. Jones' Works, vol. iii. p. 93.

and Destroyer. The method of using it is given in the same code. "Three suppressions of breath, made according to the divine rule, accompanied with the triverbal phrase, bhurbhuvahswah and the trilateral syllable OM, may be considered as the highest devotion of a Brahmen."\* Mr. Colebrooke informs us that "a Brahmana, beginning and ending a Lecture of the Veda, or the recital of any holy strain, must always pronounce to himself the syllable OM; for unless the syllable OM precede, his learning will slip away from him; and unless it follow, nothing will be retained; or that syllable being prefixed to the several names of worlds† are manifestations of the power, signified by that syllable."‡

From what has been said, we may reasonably infer, that together with the name, the idolaters preserved in their mysteries some indistinct knowledge of the godhead, derived from the true system which preceded them; and accompanied with an acknowledgment that he possessed the attribute of omnipresence; the Symbol of which was the same as that used in the Science of Freemasonry; viz. an EYE, which was said to be equally in every place, for the purpose of taking a strict and impartial cognizance of human actions.

Fix your eyes, then, on that part of the Lodge, where this expressive Emblem is delineated. It will

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\* Sir W. Jones' Works, vol. iii. p. 235.

† Vide *Infra*, Lect. viii.

‡ *Asiat. Res.* vol. v. p. 352.

remind you that the Deity is watching over us, and will weigh, in the balance of Truth, every action, every word, every thought. As Masons, you are fully impressed with this important consideration, because it is fundamental to the Science you profess. It is inculcated upon you in all our illustrations, and can never be banished from your recollection. You are conscious of the presence of that great and glorious Being;—you are conscious that at this very moment he is employed in examining your hearts. They are open to his inspection. But are they pure—are they impressed with the never-failing virtues of *Faith, Hope, and Charity*—are they the abode of *Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence and Justice*, those splendid Cardinal virtues, by which your Masonry professes to be distinguished—does *Brotherly Love* burn brightly there—do they prompt you to exercise the first, best gift of heaven to your destitute Brethren, *Relief*—and does *Truth* hold her seat in your bosoms? If you are Masons in reality; Masons in the strictest acceptance of the term, your hearts are the seat of every moral and social virtue; and will not shrink from the close inspection of the All-Seeing Eye of God. But we cannot emulate absolute perfection; and therefore our hearts neither are, nor perhaps should be the abode of celestial purity, unalloyed by human weakness or hereditary contamination. Hence, whether as Masons or as men, we cannot but entertain some feelings of dread, under the reflection that we are subjected to the

constant and perpetual superintendence of the All-Seeing Eye. And this is not a sensation either improper or peculiar to ourselves. The best and most virtuous Masons the world ever produced, as well as wicked men, have entertained the same feelings. When Adam fell from his primitive state of Innocence; in the first agitation of remorse, he attempted to hide himself from the presence of God,\* because he dreaded the consequences of His fearful inspection. Cain heard his tremendous voice, and shrunk into himself with terror.† Jacob saw the Lord in a vision, and when he awoke from his sleep, he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and the gate of heaven!‡ Moses, under the impression of God's presence, trembled exceedingly, and confessed his very great apprehension.§ David was horribly afraid under similar circumstances.|| And many instances occur of individuals being struck with instant death, for their presumption in the immediate presence of God. Uzzah but touched the Ark of the Covenant over which the Lord dwelt, and was struck dead in a moment.¶ And the Almighty smote and slew fifty thousand men of Bethshesh, because they irreverently looked into the ark.\*\*

These instances are amply sufficient to convince you, not merely of the universal presence of the Deity, but

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\* Gen. iii. 8.    † Gen. iv. 13.    ‡ Gen. xxviii. 17.    § Heb. xii. 21.  
 || 2 Sam. vi. 9.—Psalm v. 7.    ¶ 2 Sam. vi. 6.    \*\* 1 Sam. vi. 19.

of his decided abhorrence of all impurity and carelessness of living. If therefore, as Masons, you are willing to be the Objects of his fatherly superintendence, let these reflections accompany all your *labours*, all your *recreations*;—and when the business of the day is about to be closed; let us with all humility and reverence return our grateful acknowledgments to the great Architect of the Universe, for favours already received, and supplicate his support on our endeavours to adorn and cement our lives and actions, with every moral and social virtue.

## LECTURE III.

## ON THE SERPENT.

“So spake the enemy of mankind, enclosed  
In SERPENT inmate bad, and towards Eve  
Address'd his way, not with indented wave,  
Prone on the ground, as since, but on his rear  
Circular base of rising folds, that tower'd  
Fold above fold, a surging maze, his head  
Crested aloft, and carbuncle his eyes,  
With burnished neck of verdant gold, erect  
Amidst his circling spires, that on the grass  
Floated abundant; pleasing was his shape  
And lovely.”

*Milton.*

THE Serpent is universally esteemed a legitimate Symbol of Freemasonry; yet though commonly introduced into all the groups of emblematical characters, which the fancy of ingenious Brethren may have designed, either for amusement or instruction, its origin and secret reference are not satisfactorily accounted for in the peculiar Lectures of Masonry. The subject may be involved in some uncertainty, but an attention to the general principles on which our Science has been founded, may do much towards unravelling the mystery; and may chance to produce a genuine illustration. One great result of the enquiry will certainly be, that the emblematical Serpent will be found to have had a place in the most ancient systems of primitive Masonry, and was a Symbol almost coequal

with its institution on this globe, by the first created man.

You are not ignorant that the Serpent has an established place amongst our emblems; although its true allegorical reference is not given in our accustomed disquisitions. It may be urged that this animal is the Symbol of Wisdom, as the Dove is of Innocence, because our Saviour connects these qualities with the same creatures.\* But this is to be satisfied with a very contracted explanation of a significant emblem, which certainly represents our fall in Adam, and our restoration in Christ; a subject of no ordinary importance; but one which embraces a comprehensive scheme, framed by the divine hand; and conveying the blessing of eternal happiness in a future state.

When our first parents were placed in the garden of Eden, as the abode of purity and peace, with angels for associates, and honoured with the peculiar presence of the Deity; their tenure was secured by the observance of one single condition, which was imposed merely as a test of their obedience;—they were forbidden to eat of the fruit which grew upon the Tree of Knowledge. How simple soever this prohibition may appear, they were induced by the flattering wiles of the Devil, who assumed the form of A SERPENT for this specific purpose, to forego, or at least, to render precarious all the actual felicity they enjoyed, for the

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\* Matt. x. 16.

deceitful hope of some greater acquisition of knowledge or power, which was promised by the tempter, as the certain result of violating the divine command.

Various have been the opinions advanced by theorists on this knotty question; by what kind of animal was our great mother betrayed? I shall lay before you a few of the most remarkable speculations of learned men, because they bear upon the subject under our notice, and may engage your attention or curiosity. "Some believe that the Serpent had then the use of speech, and conversed familiarly with the woman; without her conceiving any distrust of him; and that God, to punish the malice with which he abused Eve, deprived him of the use of speech. Others believe that the Devil transformed himself into a Serpent, and spoke to Eve under the *figure* of this animal. Others maintain that a real and common Serpent having eaten of the forbidden fruit, Eve from thence concluded that she too might eat of it without danger; that in effect she did eat of it, and incurred the displeasure of God by her disobedience. This, say these authors, is the plain matter of fact, which Moses would relate under the allegorical representation of the Serpent conversing with Eve. Cajetan will have this whole story, as it is related by Moses in the way of dialogue between the woman and the serpent, to be figurative only, to signify the inward suggestions of the Devil, and the woman's weak resistance. Others affirm that the Serpent's speech was nothing but hissing; and that Eve



understanding all creatures by their voices, apprehended what this animal had to say to her by the noise it made. Lyranus reports the opinion of some to be, that the Serpent put on the face of a beautiful young woman to tempt Eve. And some Rabbins believe that Samael, prince of devils, came in person to tempt Eve, mounted on a Serpent as large as a Camel!"\* Eugubinus thinks the animal was a basilisk;† and to crown this mass of absurdity, Dr. Adam Clarke, gravely tells his readers that the tempter was not a Serpent, but an ape!!!‡

However this may be, and perhaps I may offer a suggestion to clear the difficulty before I conclude, it is certain that our first parents lost their innocence, and instead of the expected good, gained in return the certainty only that they had forfeited the protection of God, and were in reality blind and miserable, naked and in despair. Driven now accursed into a world of troubles and calamities, the unhappy consequences of their want of faith, their eyes were indeed opened, but it was to a bitter sense of misery and shame; they were become liable to sin and sorrow, sickness and death; they beheld with deep remorse the dying agonies of those animals which were slain for sacrifice, pursuant to the divine command, certain that their own dissolution must follow, attended probably with similar pangs;

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\* Calm. Dict. vol. i. p. 37.

† Brown's Vulg. Err. p. v. c. 4.

‡ Family Bible. Note on Gen. iii. 1.

and with broken hearts and uplifted hands, they cried to their offended God for mercy. The Deity listened to the humble petition of his fallen creatures, because he saw that their repentance was sincere; and gave them a revelation, that the effects of their sin should be wiped away, and their posterity restored to his favour. He promised that the woman's seed should bruise the serpent's head; which was so exhilarating to our common mother, that, at the birth of Cain, her eldest son, she entertained a belief that in him the promise was fulfilled, which would restore to her the joys she had forfeited; and in an ecstasy of delirious joy she exclaimed, "I have gotten a man, *even the Lord Jehovah;*" for such is the true meaning of the original Hebrew in Gen. iv. 1. The vices of Cain would speedily convince her that this was not the promised seed; and she acquiesced with silence and submission in the dispensations of Providence. The prophecy, however, was triumphantly fulfilled in the Messiah, who came to destroy, and did, even in his human character, gain a decisive victory over *the Serpent*, the adversary of God and man.

The great scheme of this Evil Spirit was to rob man of the happiness he enjoyed in paradise, and by that means to counteract the design of God in the creation. He succeeded in the first instance, but the main part of his plan was defeated by Jesus Christ, who has reconciled man to God; and by the efficacy of his *birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension*, typified by the

Five Grand Pillars of Masonry, he has utterly destroyed the works of that old serpent, the devil,\* circumscribed his power, and bound him in everlasting chains and darkness unto the judgment of the last day.†

Hence this emblem amongst Masons has an undoubted reference to the establishment of christianity, which gave a death blow to the power of the Evil Spirit. The Serpent had engrossed the worship of all mankind; and by his oracles‡ had enslaved their minds in the fetters of superstition and overwhelming darkness. But the incarnation of Christ, by striking his oracles dumb,§ relieved his deluded votaries from

\* Rev. xx. 2.

† Jude 6.

‡ Potter (Archæol. Græc. l. 2. c. 9.) gives a fearful account of the connection between serpents and oracles. He says that "under the tripods where the Pythia delivered her responses, sometimes appeared a dragon that returned answers; and that the Pythia was once killed by him. And Eusebius reports *δράκοντα περι τὸν τριποδα*, that a serpent rolled himself about the tripod." How potent soever might be the spirit which communicated inspiration to the Pythia, many instances are on record where the priestess refused to yield obedience to his injunctions. Bribes have been accepted by several of the Pythiæ; who, for a stipulated remuneration, did *φιλιππιζεῖν*, or deliver their oracles at the dictation of their employers; and Nero dared the vengeance of the spirits of the sacred cavern by openly polluting it with the blood of men slain at the cavern's mouth. But when barbarism gave way to civilization, these Oracles certainly began to fail; and at the appearance of Jesus Christ to show mankind their fallacy and guide them by the light of truth under the high sanction of revelation, they became wholly silent and were heard no more. (Plut. de orac. defec.) Juvenal in his sixth Satire says, *Delphis oracula cessant*. And Strabo (l. 7.) says that in the time of Augustus Caesar the oracle at Dodona ceased to give responses.

§ Strabo. l. vii.

the effects of his potent agency. And he himself was reluctantly compelled to announce his degradation; for when Augustus consulted the oracle at Delphi, it answered that a child was born in Judea, who, being the Supreme God, had commanded him to depart, and he durst not disobey.\*

You may deem it something more than accidental, that there should exist a tradition of the Messiah bruising the Serpent's head, and the Serpent bruising his heel, equally in the east and in the west; amongst the Indians, the Greeks, and the Goths of Scandinavia. And yet it is an indisputable fact, that each of these nations preserved in their respective systems of religion, this very remarkable prophecy.† In the former country the Brahmins have in their temples, some sculptured figures, which are unquestionably descriptive of this event. One of them represents their middle god Vishnu or Kreeshna with his foot on the Serpent's head; and another has the same god encompassed in the folds of a serpent, which is in the act of biting his

\* Suid. in voc. Delphi.

† How extraordinary that every remarkable event which actually occurred in the infancy of the world, was accurately preserved by idolatrous nations, how widely soever they had departed from that peculiar people to whom the conservation of the antediluvian history was committed. A Son of the first man was violently assaulted and slain by his brother, as we are told by Moses. Accordingly other nations have a corresponding tradition. Sanchoniatho has recorded that a Son of Uranas was killed by his brothers. In Diodorus we find Hesperion meets a similar fate; and the Persian annals represent Siameck the son of Cai-Amurath, the first king of Persia, as being killed by giants. *Howard's Thoughts on the Structure of the Globe*, p. 229.

heel.\* In the same mythology, a monster compounded of a man and an eagle, called Garuda, is represented as being placed at the eastern portal of the garden of Eden, to prevent the intrusion of Serpents; to which animals he was supposed to bear a decided antipathy. After a long conflict, however, he destroyed them all except one, which he slung round his neck as a trophy.† This fable evidently refers to the expulsion of Adam from Paradise, the cherubim placed to exclude his contaminated race; and the ultimate destruction of them all, except the Patriarch Noah.

The Greek mythology furnishes us with another instance of this primitive doctrine, in its fable of the garden of Hesperides. Here existed a tree which bore golden apples; but it was guarded from violation by a serpent, whose folds encircled the trunk of the sacred tree. Hercules successfully engaged the serpent, and having slain him, took away the precious fruit. This event being deemed of sufficient importance to be perpetuated, was introduced into the Celestial Sphere, where Hercules is represented as *trampling on the Serpent's head*.

In Scandinavia, Thor, who is worshipped as a mediator, is said to have bruised the head of the great Serpent with his club;‡ and in a final engagement with the monster, it is predicted that he shall overcome and slay

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\* Vid. Maurice's Hist. of Hindostan, Plates, vol. ii. p. 290.

† Moor's Hind. Panth. p. 336.

‡ Edda. Fab. 27.

him; though himself shall perish from the poisonous exhalations which proceed out of his mouth during the terrible encounter.\*

Thus far the application of this Symbol is exceedingly satisfactory; and worthy of an introduction into a system which was instituted to keep alive in our hearts a veneration for the Supreme Being, and an unmixed love of virtue and pure morality. But we must now extend our views to distant regions, and mark in what manner, and for what purposes this same Symbol was introduced into other institutions, bearing the character of Freemasonry, until the absolute *worship of the Serpent* became a superstition prevalent throughout the whole world.

Justin Martyr tells us,† that among all the things which were accounted sacred amongst the Greeks, the Serpent was particularly considered as a very mysterious emblem. It is indeed most singular that Serpents should be either real or symbolical objects of devotion, in almost every known system of false religion. They were universal emblems of life and health; received the appellation of the beneficent dæmon, and were visible representatives of the god of creation and providence. And it is still more remarkable that there was always attached to the Serpent, an undefined idea of some restoration to the divine favour, which was expected to be accomplished by a gratuitous sacrifice.

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\* Edda. Fab. 32.

† Apol. i. p. 60.

If you will accompany me in my progress from one country to another, we will endeavour to produce a complete illustration of this Symbol founded on the facts which I have already laid before you. Egypt was the great conservator of ancient idolatry; and here we will commence our researches. In Egypt the Serpent formed a Symbol of the most awful images in existence.\* Cneph was the serpent god of this people; he was the second person of the sacred Triad, and said to be the Creator of the world.† He was usually represented by a hooded snake, sometimes called Basiliscus, or the Royal Serpent. The Egyptian temples were full of representations of this god.‡ Eternity was ever present to the mind of the devout worshipper, under the similitude of a Serpent with its tail in its mouth, or an endless Serpent enclosing an Eye; and Wisdom was represented by the same animal extended at length. Did he meditate on the mysterious Tri-Une deity, Eicton-Cneph-Phtha, he was presented to the worshipper's recollection, by the figure of a Globe and a Winged Serpent; the Globe symbolized the Supreme and Eternal God, the Serpent, the animating principle, and the Wings, the hovering Spirit of God, which moved on the face of the waters at the creation of the world.

Bend we now our course towards the farthest bounds

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\* Kirch. in *Œdip. syn.* 18. p. 508. Herod. in *Euterp.*

† Euseb. *præp. evan.* 1. iii. c. 11.

‡ Vid. Belzoni's *Researches in Egypt, Plates.*

of the East, to learn what the Persians, the Indians, and the Chinese believed about this noxious reptile. In the former country, the Serpent was worshipped,\* and considered an emblem of the Sun, which was esteemed the supernal habitation of their great god Mithras.† And the visible Symbol, was, the deity enveloped in the folds of an enormous snake.‡ In India, the Serpent was elevated into an object of adoration;§ and the splendid temples at Elora, contain many specimens of Serpent deities. In the second story of Teen Tal, at the south end of the veranda is a very large figure of *Sey Deo*, or more commonly *Seyhudea*, the immortal Serpent.|| In the temple of Jagnat, innumerable figures of Serpents are inscribed on the walls,¶ which display the antiquity and prevalence of this degraded worship in the vast regions of Hindostan. Vishna and Siva are equally represented as encompassed by curling Serpents, to denote their divine original.

In China, we again find this loathsome reptile raised to divine honours and worshipped. A Ring supported by two Serpents, was an awful symbol amongst the Chinese, emblematical of the World protected by the *power* and governed by the *wisdom* of the Creator. This people were indeed most superstitiously attached to the worship of dragons or serpents. The sixty-four

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\* Euseb. præp. evan. l. i. c. 10.

† Strabo. l. xv. Suid. in voc.

‡ Montf. Ant. vol. ii. p. 368.

§ Maurice's Indian Ant. vol. v. p. 1015.

|| Seeley's Elora, p. 175.

¶ Ibid. p. 216.



Symbols of the god Fo-Hi, who is said to have had the body of a Serpent,\* were revealed by this animal emerging from the bottom of a sacred lake. And thunder or rain, fair and foul weather, are equally attributed to the influence of the Serpent.†

From the East proceed we to the West, making a short excursion to New Zealand, as we traverse the vast ocean which separates China and Japan from the continent of America. These savages have no written records, and yet from oral tradition alone they know that the Serpent once spake with the human voice; and hence they adore him as a superior being. But he is their god of sorrow. They believe also that man was first created, and that woman was formed out of one of his ribs, separated from his side by the Deity himself, to be his companion and friend, while as yet there existed no mortal but himself.‡

In the savage regions of America we find abundant traces of this superstition. The two parents of the human race, were said by the Mexicans, to have been preserved from the effects of the deluge, by means of Serpents; which induced the adoration of this animal. The visible symbol of that preservation, was a Rainbow, with a Serpent suspended from each end of it. The temples of their bloody and vindictive deities, were

\* Couplet. Praef. ad Tab. Chron. p. 3. in Fab. Pag. Idol. vol. i. p. 453.

† Du Halde's China, vol. i. p. 270.

‡ Marsden in Christ. Observ. 1810, Nov. p. 724.

covered with representations of Serpents,\* in all their terrible varieties ; and their high god Vitzliputzli was pourtrayed in the shape of a man, whose hideous countenance was rendered truly horrible and disgusting, by certain black lines drawn across his forehead and his nose. He was seated on a Globe, which was a symbol of his universal power, over a lofty altar supported by four long poles, each end of which was ornamented with a serpent's head. His right hand grasped a serpent, and his left a buckler with arrows, all charged with emblematical devices, each conveying some mysterious signification, and inculcating some useful lesson known only to the initiated.†

This general veneration of so filthy a reptile, is somewhat astonishing, but you may rely on my accuracy and fidelity. I have spared no pains in the research; and if I had not honestly believed it was in my power to add to your stock of Masonic knowledge, as well as to interest and amuse your minds, I should not have offered these Lectures to your notice. I have however, still more extraordinary facts to relate.

Returning to our own quarter of the globe, we find Serpent worship so very prevalent in the early ages of the world, as to impose a distinguishing appellation on the whole continent; for Europe is said to have

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\* Gage's Surv. of the West Indies, p. 117.

† Purch. Pilgr. b. viii. c. 11. p. 796.

derived its name from the worship of *Eur-Op*, the Serpent of the Sun.\*

The inhabitants of ancient Scandinavia accounted living Serpents sacred, and fed them daily with milk.† The Serpent formed a constituent part of their sacred Triad. The priests practised augury by its assistance, because they considered it endued with some portion of celestial prescience. By virtue of certain incantations they tempted the Serpents from their hiding places, and offered them choice provisions. If they came freely and partook of what was set before them, it was accounted a good omen; but if they exhibited any appearance of reluctance, and lurked about, or returned to their holes without accepting the proffered food, the omen was deemed unpropitious, and portended some fatal disaster. In the most barbarous districts, it is said that the remains of this superstition exists at the present day.

In Gaul Serpents were emblematical of wisdom and truth. A curious statue representing the goddess of Truth, has been discovered amongst the ruins of the ancient temple of Montmorillon in Poitou, and Montfaucon has given a plate of it.‡ “The goddess is quite naked; and *two serpents*, (emblems of wisdom) twined round her legs and body, are embraced by both her hands to show the harmony, connection, and insepar-

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\* Fab. Cabir. vol. i. p. 180. † Olaus Magnus, Hist. Septentr. l. xxi. c. 30.

‡ Mont. Supplem. tom. ii. p. 221.

able union between wisdom and truth; the heads of both these serpents are applied to the breasts of the goddess, to show that wisdom draws all her support from truth; they are clasped fast and directed to the seat of nourishment, to show that truth readily yields her choicest treasures, her most amiable beauties to the searches of the wise and studious.”\*

We will close our enquiries in the country where we live, for our predecessors, the ancient Britons, carried this superstition to as great an extent as the inhabitants of any other nation. The Druids had a high veneration for the Serpent. Their great god Hu was typified by that reptile; and he is represented by the Bards, as “the wonderful chief *Dragon*, the sovereign of heaven.”† Dr. Stukeley says, that “the stupendous temple at Abury in Wiltshire, *is the picture of the Deity*; and more particularly of the Trinity; but most particularly what they anciently called the *Father* and the *Word*, who created all things; this figure you will find on the tops of all the obelisks; being equivalent to the Hebrew Tetragrammaton. *A snake proceeding from a circle*, is the internal procession of the Son from the First Cause. The Egyptians frequently added Wings to it, then it was the Trinity properly; but our ancestors judged, I suppose, that they could not represent the wings well in stone work, so omitted them. The Egyptians called this figure, Hemptha;

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\* Borl. Ant. of Corn. p. 103.

† Davies' Druids, p. 120, 121.

the Greeks, in abbreviated writing used it for Daimon, or the good genius; the Brachmans, in the East Indies use it; the Chinese, the ancient Persians, with whom it still remains at Persepolis; the Americans, our Britons; this shows it was extremely ancient; but of all nations, our ancestors have had the greatest veneration for it, that they have expanded it in so laborious a picture, three miles long.”\*

The most potent symbol or amulet of Druidism was the Anguinum or Glain-neidr, which derived its sole efficacy from its connection with the Serpent. It was attended by a serpent, which had entwined itself round the centre of the amulet, as the conservator of its virtues; and signified the superintending care which an *eternal* Being affords to his creatures. The anguinum was said to be produced from the Saliva of a large ball of Serpents closely interwoven together; and being impelled into the air by the hissing of the serpents, was received by a horseman in a pure white cloth, who was obliged to retire precipitately from the spot, to escape the fury of the serpents, who usually pursued the fugitive until they were impeded by a river which they were unable to cross.†

The Serpent with its tail in its mouth, was an emblem of Eternity with the Druids; and it read to the initiated a striking lesson on the certainty of death;

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\* Letter from Dr. Stukeley to Mr. Gale, Stamford, June 25, 1730.

† Vid. *Antiq. of Masonry*, p. 122, note.

teaching them the universal fiat of nature, that every one who is born into the world must return to the place from whence he came, and be resolved into his original dust.

The reason to be assigned for the general worship of the Serpent, may, with some probability, be as follows. Man, having brought himself under the domination of Satan, not only by listening to his suggestions in the garden, but by a subsequent renunciation of the primitive worship; and feeling that he was accursed without possessing in himself the means of restoration to the divine favour, was willing to propitiate the being to whom all his misery was to be attributed, and who was hence esteemed the arbiter of his fate, by offering for his acceptance the rites of divine worship. Hence we find that in every system of idolatry, the chief deities were said to have taken up their abode in the bodies of serpents; and a serpent attached to the statue of a god in any part of the world, was considered an unequivocal mark of his divinity; from which belief, the devil, in holy Scripture, is usually denominated a Serpent or Dragon.\*

The antiquity of Serpent worship cannot be safely asserted; but it might commence very soon after the institution of idolatry, for Taut or Thoth was esteemed by the Phœnicians as the first person who introduced the worship of serpents amongst mankind;† and Thoth

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\* Rev. xii. 9. xiii. 4.

† Euseb. *praep. evan.* l. i. c. 10.

or Pathrusim was the great grandson of Noah. It may be reasonably conjectured however, that the veneration of this animal might date its original even from Paradise; for it is an ancient opinion,\* that the angels of heaven who conversed with Adam before his unhappy fall, assumed the bright form of winged serpents. On any other principle, it will be difficult to conceive how our great mother should so familiarly admit the approaches of an animal, which, she would otherwise be certain, could neither speak nor act rationally. But if the angels associated with Adam in this specific form, the difficulty vanishes, for our grand adversary, by assuming a shape which would elude suspicion, might reasonably expect to succeed in accomplishing his perfidious purposes. And hence it should appear that this animal, which, from the splendour of its colours, and the geometrical exactness of the figures which nature has painted on the outer surface of its skin, is possessed of great external beauty, was, before the fall, an object of unmixed admiration and delight unequalled by any other created animal. It was subsequently to that melancholy deviation from God's commands, that the serpent became an object of horror and loathing to mankind, and was unquestionably worshipped by the first idolaters in the way of propitiation.

It must here be observed, that in the mythology of

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\* Vid. Tenison's *Idolatry*, c. 14.

heathen nations, two kinds of serpents were introduced, endowed with different and contrary attributes. The one was malignant, a symbol of the evil principle, and accounted instrumental in producing the universal deluge ; the other beneficent, and supposed to possess every good and estimable quality. And these powers are represented as engaged in acts of continued hostility.

In the ages immediately subsequent to the flood, the sons of Noah would propagate amongst their posterity, the fact, that the knowledge of good and evil was acquired by the original parents of mankind, through the intervention of a Serpent, endowed with Speech, Wisdom, and Foresight. Such a representation proceeding from authority, would naturally induce a high degree of respect and veneration for an animal possessing these extraordinary attributes ; which would soon degenerate into actual worship, when the true God was entirely forsaken. This may be assumed as the true cause of Serpent worship ; and it is highly probable that both Jews and Christians, as well as acknowledged idolaters, have adored this animal on precisely the same principle.

Amongst the nations contiguous to the Jews, it might have a further reference to the Seraphim or ministering Angels of that people ; for *Saraph* signifies equally a fiery Serpent,\* and an Angel.† And the

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\* Numb. xxi. 6, 8.

† Isaiah vi.



miraculous cures effected by the Brazen Serpent would give an additional impulse to the practice; particularly when we consider that at a subsequent period, the Israelites themselves elevated this very symbol into an object of idolatrous worship.\* And I may add, with a learned mythologist, often quoted, that “since the fiery and fitting appearance of the Seraphim stationed before the garden of Eden, would bear a considerable resemblance to that of the fiery flying Serpent; and since the very same appellation was employed to designate each of them, it was not unnatural to conclude, that the form of the flying Serpent entered into the composition of the Seraphic or Cherubic emblems. We have no warrant indeed from Scripture to suppose that this was really the case; yet the notion itself, however erroneous, seems to have been of very great antiquity; and the existence of such a notion would obviously cause the serpent, particularly the winged serpent, to be viewed as a fit symbol of the Agathodæmon.”†

Before I conclude this account of Serpent worship, I cannot omit to lay before you a very curious and extraordinary account of the same superstition, as practised by a sect of Christians who were denominated Ophitæ, “both from the veneration they had for the Serpent that tempted Eve, and the worship they paid to a *real Serpent*. They pretended that the Serpent

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\* 2 Kings xviii. 4.

† Fab. Pag. Idol. p. ii. c. 7.

was Jesus Christ, and that he taught men the knowledge of good and evil. They distinguished between *Jesus* and *Christ*: *Jesus*, they said was born of the Virgin, but *Christ* came down from heaven to be united with him; *Jesus* was crucified, but *Christ* had left him to return to heaven. They had a live Serpent which they kept in a kind of cage; at certain times they opened the cage-door, and called the serpent: the animal came out and mounting upon the table, twined itself about some loaves of bread: this bread they broke, and distributed it to the company, who all kissed the serpent in turn. This they called their Eucharist!''\*

Thus have I exhibited for your consideration, a very comprehensive account of the origin and uses of this emblem in every nation of the ancient world. Amongst Masons, as I have already observed, it serves to remind us of our fall in Adam and our restoration in Christ; who has not only bruised the Serpent's head, but has restricted his power, and frustrated his malevolent intentions, by revealing to mankind the conditions of salvation, purchased by his own sufferings and death.

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\* Encyc. Perth. in voc. Ophites.

## LECTURE IV.

## ON THE CHERUBIM.

“————— Forth rush'd with whirlwind sound  
 The chariot of paternal deity,  
 Flashing thick flames, wheel within wheel indrawn,  
 Itself instinct with spirit, but convoy'd  
 By four CHERUBIC shapes: four faces each  
 Had wondrous; as with stars their bodies all,  
 And wings were set with eyes; with eyes the wheels  
 Of beryl, and careering fires between.”

*Milton.*

EVERY branch of science is progressive. In the First Degree of Masonry, we are taught the several duties of our station, whether to God, our neighbour, or ourselves;—the practice of the Theological and Cardinal Virtues, and every moral and social work. In the Second Degree we are admitted to a participation in the mysteries of human science; and catch a glimpse of celestial glory. But in the Third Degree, the veil is removed; we are admitted to the Holy of Holies; we view the Cherubim in all their brightness; and are blessed with a foretaste of heaven, through the resurrection of the dead. And if we pass on to the Royal Arch, we receive a wonderful accession of knowledge, *and find every thing made perfect*; for this is the *ne*

*plus ultra* of Masonry, and can never be exceeded by any human Institution.

In the peculiar Lectures of Masonry, much importance is attached to that great symbol of the glory of God, the Cherubim. It is a subject which adds much to the dignity and authority of our Science; inasmuch as its illustration has formed an important part of Speculative Masonry, from the moment that it flamed in awful grandeur on the *Eastern* portal of the garden of Eden to the present time.

It is a curious phenomenon in the worship of heathen nations, that their ideas of the Deity, as comprehended under a visible form, were invariably derived from the Symbols of the Patriarchal or the Jewish religion, and principally from the system used by the former, which was the grand trunk or root, from which the religious institutions of every nation and people, shot forth their luxuriant branches. The great symbol of the Deity, used both by the Patriarchs and their legitimate successors the Jews, was the Cherubim of Glory, expressive of the wisdom and power of Jehovah; and this invested these pure systems of worship with a distinctive character of holiness and truth, which the gentiles in vain strove to emulate, by an adoption of the constituent parts of the symbol, as real and acknowledged objects of genuine and rational devotion. In the present Lecture, I shall endeavour to illustrate this Cherubic Symbol, which in all ages has constituted one of the *secrets* of legitimate Masonry; and if we find that

it has been actually adopted into the mysterious institutions of every system of false religion known amongst men; this fact will be amply sufficient to warrant a conclusion, that they all emanated from the same source.

This sublime symbol was vouchsafed to man at the fall; and was placed over the East Gate of the garden of Eden upon an Ark, overshadowed by the divine glory or Shekinah. Here it remained, a permanent token of the divine presence, until the accumulated sins of men provoked the Almighty to withdraw his glory, and substitute a deluge of waters, which swept the apostate race from off the earth. It was renewed at the deliverance of God's chosen people from the tyranny of Egypt, and was again lost at the destruction of the temple by Nebuchadnezzar; but was revealed to Ezekiel, when the rebuilding of that celebrated edifice demanded a divine communication to impart the true form of the glorious Symbol, by which God had graciously manifested himself to his favourite people in ancient times, and which might probably have been lost, or inaccurately preserved during the calamities and privations attending a long and oppressive captivity in a foreign land.

This glorious appearance was exhibited to the prophet's enraptured view in a splendid and incomparable vision; and is described by him\* as consisting of an animal with the body of an Ox, invested with four

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\* Chap. i.

distinct heads of a Lion, an Ox, an Eagle, and a Man. The three first bore a striking resemblance to the Trinity; and the fourth head was that of a man, to denote that He, who, in his infinite mercy condescended to work out our salvation, should be clothed with humanity to accomplish the undertaking, and execute the great design as a created being. The whole compound figure was an apt symbol of all the Redeemed, thus placed under the visible protection of the Deity, manifested in the Shekinah, which extended its gracious influence over the Mercy Seat, on which the Cherubim were placed.

It was shadowed forth in the camp of the Israelites. The standard of Judah was emblazoned with the figure of a Lion, and hence the king of Judah was emblematically denominated a Lion;\* that of Ephraim, with an Ox; that of Reuben, with a man; and that of Dan, with an Eagle.† The Cabalists to identify these banners with the Deity, used to inscribe each of them with a letter of the Tetragrammaton, or sacred name of God; and the banners of the whole twelve tribes, were made symbols of the circle of the Zodiac, and represented the twelve months of the year; the solsti-

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\* Ezekiel xix. 3.

† “Diodorus Siculus adduces a corresponding custom in Egypt; and among the Greeks, we observe that the shield of Agamemnon bore a LION’S HEAD, that of Alcibiades, a SERPENT, that of Cadmus, a DRAGON, and that of Ulysses, a DOLPHIN.” Wait’s Antiq. vol. i. p. 149. More anciently the distinguishing symbols were placed upon the helmet. Thus the Crest of Osiris was a hawk, of Horus, a Lion, &c.

tial and equinoctial points being symbolized by the four great banners of Judah, Ephraim, Reuben, and Dan.\*

It pointed out the nature of Angels. The representation of a Man, a Lion, an Ox, and an Eagle referred to their understanding, their power, their patient ministration, their swiftness in executing the commands of the Most High.† The Ox being the symbol of *Fire*; the Lion, of *Light*, from the rays which were supposed to dart from his eyes; and the Eagle, from his rapid excursions into that element, being the symbol of *Air*; the union of Fire, Light, and Air or Spirit, were not only emblematical of the nature of ministering angels about the throne of God; but were the actual vehicles by which the Deity himself had condescended personally to communicate with man.‡ Calmet thinks that “the figure of the Cherubim was not always uniform, since they are differently described in the shape of men, eagles, oxen, and lions, and in a composition of all these figures put together. Moses likewise calls those symbolical or hieroglyphical representations which were represented in embroideries upon the Veils of the Tabernacle, Cherubims of costly work. Such were the symbolical figures which the Egyptians placed at the gates of their temples, and the images of the generality of their gods, which were nothing commonly but Statues composed of men and animals.”§

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\* Brown's Vulg. Err. b. v. c. 10.

† Tremel. in Ezekiel i.

‡ Heb. xii. 29.—Psalm xxvii. 1.—John viii. 12. and iv. 24, &c.

§ Calmet's Dict. in voc. Cherubim.

Do you enquire for what particular purpose the Cherubim were designed? On this mysterious subject I fear we must be contented to remain in ignorance. To attempt to elucidate their use or application among the Patriarchs and Idolaters, in the Tabernacle or in the Temple, would only involve the subject in additional difficulty and obscurity. An enlightened Jewish Rabbi (Bechai) has observed, that God was declared to have been seated *above* them, lest any person should imagine that such was the form of God himself, who alone is to be worshipped. He further avers that their wings were stretched upwards to show that they were only appointed to receive the divine influence coming on them from God above.\* It is indeed evident that they could not be the form of the Deity himself, because they are described,† as constantly employed in paying homage to Him that sat on the Throne; which is the unquestionable quality of an inferior being.

“The Ark of the Covenant,” says Archbishop Tenison, “considered in all the appendages of it, God vouchsafed to the Jews in place of all the Statues or Creatures, or appearances of Dæmons, which their fancy was apt to adore, and in which Dæmons did already, or might afterwards counterfeit some shows of the Glorious Shekinah of God. The whole of the Ark seems to some, the triumphant chariot of God moved by Angels, set forth by the form of beasts who drew

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\* Wait's Antiq. vol i. p. 166.

† Rev. iv. 8.



the chariots of the eastern kings; whose pomp the poets exalted into heaven in the chariots of their gods. This of the true God is represented as moving by angels in the clouds, not as any fixed Throne in itself; the power and providence of God, whose chariot hath *wheels with eyes*, making all the world its circle; though often it took its way to the Tabernacle and Temple. Why Cherubims were added, the cause hath been often intimated already; to wit, by reason that the Logos appearing as God's Shekinah, was attended with angels and especially with Cherubim."\*

To Adam and his posterity this symbol was familiar, for it was continually before their eyes. And though withdrawn at the flood, its application was not forgotten by the sons of Noah. Shem and a certain portion of his descendants transferred it, along with the Science which they alone preserved in its original purity. Ham and Japheth were also acquainted with this sublime emblem; and in the mysteries established by them on the broad foundation of Masonry, and disseminated by their posterity, it was consequently adopted, but with an erroneous reference. The results were such as might be anticipated. When the true invisible God was renounced and forgotten, this symbol furnished mankind with plausible substitutes; and hence in almost all the heathen nations of which we have any account, the Supreme Being was worshipped under

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\* Tenison's *Idolatry*, p. 339, 340.

the corporeal form of one or other of its component parts ; and they all ultimately referred to the Sun, as the visible likeness of that divine Shekinah by which the Mercy Seat had been overshadowed ; and hence this luminary, in connection with the Cherubic animals became a chief object of gentile worship throughout the world.

The Ox was adored in Egypt, India, and Britain ; China and Japan ; Persia, Greece, and Peru ;\* his head being considered the representation of the Solar Orb ; the eyes referring to the Fire, and the horns to those rays of Light and Glory which are usually portrayed as proceeding from a celestial object ; for Fire and Light were esteemed the general appearances by which God had always chose to manifest himself to his creatures. Hence not only Osiris and Isis,† Ammon and Bacchus,‡ not only Alexander and Atila,§ but even Moses himself, the prophet and messenger of the true God, is represented with horns or rays of glory encircling his head, as an unequivocal indication of his sacred and supernal character.

As the Ox was the predominating figure in the Cherubim, so it was the most universal symbol of idolatry, and was frequently worshipped in a compound

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\* Plin. Nat. Hist. l. viii. c. 46.—Asiat. Research. vol. i. p. 250.—Dav. Druids. p. 128.—Coupl. præf. ad Tab. Chron. p. 3.—Kæmpf. Hist. Jap. p. 418.—Bryant's Anal. vol. ii. p. 425.—Nonni Dion. l. i.—Purch. Pilgr. b. ix. c. 10.

† Vid. Serv. En. 8.

‡ Ov. Ep. Saph. Eurip. in Bacch.

§ Brown's Vulg. Err. b. v. c. 9.

form. It is probable that the fabled bulls with brazen feet, which breathed fire from their nostrils, and were the guardians of Jason's golden fleece,\* were taken from the bovine Cherubim. The Ox was an emblem of the great father or Noah; and the Ark was called *Ken-Tauros*, the stimulator of the Bull.† He was worshipped with splendid Rites, at that season of the year particularly when the Sun was in Taurus.

In India, the Bull was held in high veneration; and honoured with diurnal worship in conjunction with the Linga or Phallus, as an united emblem of justice and prolific power. The Ammonitish idol Moloch was depicted with the head of a Bull, as was also the Egyptian Apis; and the goddess Astarte, as well as Isis, was represented with the horns of the same animal.‡ The Persian *Dive* or Evil genius *Arzshenk*, had a human body with the head of a Bull.§ A Bull was also the well known symbol of Bacchus; who is styled in the Orphic Hymns, "the deity with two horns, having the head of a Bull."|| The veneration for this animal was carried to such an extent, that in Egypt the blood of a Bull was considered an abomination; and the Indian idolaters of the present day, have the greatest aversion, not unmixed with horror, to the custom of using the flesh of an ox for food.

The LION was adored in the east and the west, by

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\* Ovid. Met. l. vii.

† Bryant. Anal. vol. ii. p. 440.

‡ Sanch. in Euseb. præp. evan. l. i. c. 10.

§ Richardson's Dissert. on East. Nat. p. 171.

|| Hymn 29.

the Egyptians and the Mexicans as a most powerful divinity.\* The chief Druid in Britain was styled a Lion;† whence it was certain that this animal was an object of worship with our remote ancestors, because the High Priest had frequently assigned to him the title of the deity. The same animal was emblematical of the Sun in Tartary and Persia;‡ the head, surrounded with a glittering mane, being the representative object of the divine light; and hence, on the national banner of Persia, a Lion was emblazoned with the Sun rising from his back.§

In every country where the Lion was known, he would be esteemed the lord of the creation, if not superior to a created being. His eyes which sparkle fire; his shaggy mane which encircles the whole countenance, were likened to the splendid irradiations of the Deity; and his strength and firmness, were symbolical of the oppressive power of the Sun, in those torrid regions where he darts his rays of perpendicular heat, with resistless effulgence on the heads of his devout worshippers. The Egyptian astronomers taught

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\* Diod. Sic. Bibl. l. i. c. 6. † Gododin. Song, 22. ‡ Hesych.

§ “The Sovereigns of Persia have for many centuries preserved as the peculiar arms of their country, the sign or figure of Sol in the constellation Leo; and this device, which exhibits a Lion couchant and the Sun rising at his back, has not only been sculptured upon their palaces, and embroidered upon their banners, but has been converted into an order, which in the form of gold and silver medals, has been given to those who have distinguished themselves against the enemies of their country.” Sir John Malcolm’s *Hist. of Pers.* c. xxv. These modern customs have emanated from the ancient superstitions of Persia, in which the Lion bore a prominent character.

that the creation of the world took place at the precise period of time when the Sun rose in Leo ; which sign was hence esteemed the peculiar habitation of the Sun ; and this belief gave an additional stimulus to the veneration which mankind entertained for the king of animals.\*

The EAGLE was sacred to the Sun in many countries, particularly in some parts of Egypt,† Greece,‡ and Persia.§ In our scriptures the king of Babylon is termed an eagle.|| It was reputed to have fed Jupiter with nectar in the Cretan cave, and was certainly an emblem of his dominion. With the British Druids it formed a symbol of their supreme god ;¶ it was embroidered on the consecrated standard of the Mexican princes ;\*\* and the common ensign of the Roman Legions was a golden eagle. Indeed the peculiar property which this noble bird possesses of beholding with impunity the undiminished vigour the Sun's meridian rays, would naturally procure for it an emblematical distinction.

The MAN, or idol in human shape, was worshipped

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\* Mr. Bryant observes in reference to this superstition ; “ as the chief increase of the Nile was when the Sun was passing through Leo, the Egyptians made the Lion a type of an inundation. All effusions of water were specified by this characteristic. And from hence has been the custom of making the water which proceeds from cisterns and reservoirs, as well as spouts from the roofs of buildings, come through the mouth of a Lion.” Bryant's *Plagues of Egypt*, p. 86, note.

† Diod. Bibl. p. 78.

§ Montf. Ant. vol. ii. p. 368.

¶ Dav. Druids, p. 119.

‡ Ovid. *Metam.* l. x.

|| Ezekiel xvii. 3.

\*\* Purch. *Pilgr. b.* viii. c. 10.

all over the world ; for which custom this reason has been assigned by Porphyry, when charged with worshipping God under the figure of a man. He allowed the deity to be invisible, but thought him well represented in that form ; not because he is like him in external shape, but because that which is divine is rational.\* But Tenison says “this was not the common cause, but an inclination to a sensible object, and an apprehension of human figure as that which was most excellent, and which belongeth to a king and governor, under which notion, in the grosser idea of it, their reverence of earthly potentates had pictured God in their heads.”†

The confined limits of a single Lecture preclude a more extended disquisition on these particular heads. Enough, however, has been said to render the conjecture extremely probable, that the worship of these symbols by heathen nations, had been adopted from a tradition of the *divine presence* connected with the Cherubim, perverted from its original purpose ; the *visible* image being substituted for the supreme but *invisible* God, represented in the Shekinah which overshadowed this glorious symbol. A probability which is increased by the consideration, that these animals were not only worshipped separately, but, in imitation of the prototype, they were adored in absolute union, Clement of Alexandria conjectures that the

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\* Porph. in. Euseb. de præp. evan. l. iii. c. 7.

† Ten. Idol. p. 74.

Egyptian Sphynx and other compound hieroglyphics were borrowed from them;\* and an extraordinary proof of this derivation is in that famous deity of Orpheus, which Damascius, quoted by Cudworth,† tells us was a winged Serpent, with the three heads of a Man, a Bull, and a Lion. This divinity could have no reference but to the Jewish Cherubim.

I am very much inclined to think that the Lion Avater of Hindostan, may also be referred to the same source. In this manifestation, a primeval Indian Monarch, named Hirinakassap, having violated the commands of God, and cast off his allegiance to that great being, was destroyed by the divinity in the form of a compound animal, consisting of a Man with the head of a Lion, from whose mouth issued flames of devouring fire. The Cherubim which expelled Adam from Paradise assumed two forms, and wielded a sword of fire, says the sacred historian, which turned every way to keep the Tree of Life;‡ or in other words to prevent our apostate progenitor from attaining the privilege of immortality, which would have closed the avenues to the divine favour, and condemned him to exist for ever in a state of wickedness and sin. It is, in fact, probable, that every one of the Indian Avaters were derived from recollections of traditional accounts of this glorious symbol of the Deity. The tenth is

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\* Strom. l. v.

† Intel. Syst. b. i. c. 4.

‡ Gen. iii. 24.

most certainly a mythological representation of the second coming of our Saviour Jesus Christ.\*

In the celebration of the mysteries, as we are told by Proclus, the candidates beheld many objects of MULTIFORM SHAPES, which prefigured *the first generation of the Gods*.† The Persian fire worshippers dedicated each month to a protecting angel, in whose honour certain ceremonies were instituted, all of which had a distinct connection with the Cherubim.‡ The bull-man of the Zend Avesta, was represented in the compound form of a man, a bull, and a horse. And the Persian Dive Munheras, in his first encounter with Sohrab the son of Rostam, is depicted with the head of a hog; and in the next as a *bifrons*, one side resembling the head of a lion, the other that of a wild boar.§ Even the Israelites in the wilderness, not content with the pure and sober worship as instituted by God himself, sighed after the splendid superstitions of the neighbouring nations,|| and it has been conjectured that they adored the Tabernacle as a *compound* form of the Deity; the tabernacle itself being worshipped as *Moloch*, the cherubim as *Apis*, and the Shekinah as *Remphan*.

In a word, all the multiform animals which we view in connection with idolatry, derive their origin from

\* Vid. Maur. Hist. Hind.—Asiat. Res. vol. i. p. 236.

† Wait's Ant. vol. i. p. 158.

‡ In Plat. Thol. l. i. c. 3.

§ Richardson's Dissert. on East. Nat. p. 171.

|| Amos v. 25, 26.



the same source. They were misrepresentations of the doctrines of the mysteries; in which, legends of these overshadowers of the Mercy Seat, were certainly retained. What were the Satyrs, the Centaurs, the Sphinges, the Chimærae, Garuda, and others? They have deformed every system of pagan theology, and certainly originated from the hallowed, yet misunderstood remembrance of these Hebraic Symbols.\*

In all the ancient mysteries which attended the religious practice of every region in the idolatrous world, one principal *secret* consisted of dissertations on the form and worship of God, as the best incentive to the practice of moral virtue. In these Lectures the component parts of the cherubic symbol formed prominent subjects of disquisition; perverted indeed and gradually receding from the truth, as they were conveyed by uncertain tradition from the apostate sons of Noah down to the extirpation of idolatry. The practice was derived from a similar usage amongst the faithful worshippers of the true God, who transmitted the sublime science of Lux; and it has descended to our times pure and unadulterated. In the Lectures of Masonry this glorious emblem is copiously illustrated, and placed before the imagination, arrayed in awful splendours, and surrounded with unfading beauties, as the scriptural representation of the glory of that great Being,† who is the universal Father of

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\* Wait's Antiq. vol. i. p. 149.

† Ezekiel i. 28.

mankind, and into whose presence good Masons and virtuous men, hope equally to be admitted at the final consummation of all sublunary things.

Confine your attention steadily to this symbol, which is the pride and ornament of Masonry, and you cannot surely deviate from the practice of pure morality. We are told that Moses made two Cherubim, and fixed them permanently to the Mercy Seat, which was the sacred cover or lid of the Ark of the Covenant;\* and that Solomon constructed two larger ones, which stood upright in the Sanctum Sanctorum on each side of the Ark, and stretched their expanded wings over it, to improve the general appearance of the Most Holy Place, and render the hallowed repository of the Ark more beautiful and sublime.† Their wings formed a seat or throne over the Ark, in which God did not disdain perpetually to reside; and hence he is said to dwell between the Cherubim.‡ This magnificent idea is happily expressed by Sternhold, in his version of the eighteenth Psalm.

The Lord descended from above,  
 And bow'd the heavens high,  
 And underneath his feet he cast  
 The darkness of the sky.  
 On cherubs and on cherubims,  
 Full royally he rode,  
 And on the wings of mighty winds,  
 Came flying all abroad.

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\* Exod. xxv. 18—22.

† 1 Kings vi. 23—28.

‡ Psalm lxxx. 1. and xcix. 1.

Every posture of the Cherubim has a moral reference which is exceedingly profitable and worthy of our serious consideration. They hid their faces with their wings to express an innate dread of the divine majesty of God. Their wings stretched out denoted a readiness to execute celestial commissions. They were "full of eyes," to denote God's all-seeing providence; the wheels intersecting each other at right angles,\* expressed the revolutions of God's providence, regular and uniform, though apparently intricate and complicated. When they moved it was in a direct course, to represent their steadiness in performing the divine will. The spirit was in the wheels,† that they might be capable of yielding instant obedience. Their faces placed towards each other, were an emblem of unity and concord; and they overshadowed the Mercy Seat with their wings, as a sign of the protection afforded by the Deity to the invaluable contents of the Ark; the chief of which was the Sacred Law of God, written by inspiration, and deposited here as a place of perfect security, worthy of such a treasure. This treasure, we possess, with an inestimable addition, where those *truths* are plainly revealed, of which, even the Jews, favoured as they undoubtedly were in being the authorized keepers of the Oracles of God, had no absolute certainty;—*truths*, which point the way, not merely to peace and comfort in the present life, but to

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\* Ezekiel x. 11.

† Ezekiel i. 21, 22.

eternal happiness in the life to come. This perfect volume is not now hid in an Ark ;—it lies open on our pedestal for every body to read ; and is almost universally disseminated throughout the christian world. A written revelation is a public blessing ; because it excludes all doubts and fears about the terms of salvation ; and is subject to none of the defects of oral tradition. Immured within the tyled recesses of the Lodge, we spread forth the leaves of this holy book with confidence and hope ; and looking on each other as Brethren cemented by the most endearing ties, we consider *the open Lodge* as the abode of peace, and no unfit emblem, surrounded as we are by every incentive to virtue, of the celestial mansion of bliss.

We are told from very high authority, and I insist on it here, because it is peculiarly satisfactory to us as christians to know and understand, that “it was the *Logos*, or Jesus Christ himself, whose glory shone on the Ark, as appears by the many places of scripture which speak no otherwise of the Ark than as of the type of *God incarnate*. Christ before his incarnation sitting on the Propitiatory as his Throne, with the Ark and Law at his feet ; for that holy vessel is in scripture called his footstool,\* seemeth to show himself beforehand in the Offices of King, and Prophet, and Priest. As King, whilst he sits on his Golden Throne, and exhibiteth the Law ; as Prophet, whilst he answer-

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\* Psalm xcix. 5. and cxxxii. 7.—Isaiah lx. 13.

eth when consulted from between the Cherubim ; and as Priest, establishing his seat as a Propitiatory or Mercy Seat.”\* This is the opinion of Archbishop Tenison, and it appears to receive the sanction of scripture ; for the divine Shekinah vouchsafed to the prophet Isaiah,† is declared by St. John to be the actual glory of Jesus Christ the Saviour of mankind.‡ And we must consider further, that the *human* body of Jesus Christ is the Ark of the Christian Covenant ; over which the Shekinah appeared in the cave at Bethlehem, in the form of a supernatural Star in the East, which hence is placed in the *centre* of our Lodges ; again at his baptism by John the Baptist, as a celestial Dove surrounded by a shining cloud of glory ; and again at his transfiguration and ascension, in the ancient form of a cloud ; which at length received him ; and, overshadowed by this Shekinah, he returned to his legitimate seat in heaven, there to remain as our intercessor till the day of judgment, when he shall again appear in a cloud to pass the final sentence on all mankind.

Such are the peaceful investigations of Masonry :—such are the objects which engage our attention in open Lodge. Let those who have no relish for these intellectual pursuits seek for pleasure and gratification amidst other scenes, where they fancy happiness may be found ; we, meanwhile, will be satisfied with the

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\* Ten. Idol. p. 342.

† Isaiah vi. 1, 2.

‡ John xii. 41.

enjoyments we possess ; peace, harmony, and brotherly love, joined with the study and practice of moral virtue ; and employ our leisure in humble attempts to illustrate the attributes and perfections of a Deity in whom we implicitly believe, and the nature and reality of those expressive symbols by which his glory has been manifested to his creatures. And we will prize our immaculate science, symbolized by the purity of our *clothing*, which leads to results that cannot fail to be highly beneficial to every true and faithful Brother, if received with fidelity, and practised uniformly and conscientiously in every circumstance and situation of life.

## LECTURE V.

## ON THE DELUGE.

“ ————— Far the rest above,  
 Of ghastly nature, and enormous size,  
 One form assaults my sight, and chills my blood,  
 And shakes my frame. *Of one departed world*  
*I see the mighty shadow: oozy wreath*  
 And dismal sea-weed crown her: o'er her urn  
 Reclined, she weeps her desolated realms,  
 And bloated sons, and weeping, prophesies  
 Another dissolution, soon, in flames.” *Young.*

WE have now arrived by a systematic gradation, at that terrible event which almost annihilated the human race; and though the subject rather belongs to a collateral Degree than to genuine Masonry; yet as the Ark of Noah, the Rainbow, and the Dove and Olive Branch have been introduced amongst our legitimate emblems, a Lecture on the subject may not be improperly introduced, as the Deluge forms a prominent feature in all the ancient mysteries; and a tradition of this signal judgment was universally prevalent in every region of the world.

In the concluding period of the antediluvian world, human wickedness, originating in the apostacy of Cain, had been increasing for many centuries. New modes of outrage were daily invented, which tended to alienate

man still farther from original purity, until at length the world became universally corrupt, and the unlimited vengeance of God, was poured out on the whole creation. This judgment had been denounced by a succession of holy men without producing the desired effect; and it has been observed, that in the age immediately preceding the deluge, the wickedness and presumption of mankind exceeded the impiety and corruption of any succeeding age. Noah was deputed to give these sinners a final warning, which, as usual, they rejected, and made the holy man a bye-word and a reproach. An Ark was therefore directed to be built for the preservation of Noah and his house; but the workmen who constructed this stupendous vessel perished in the flood. "While Noah was employed about the building the wicked rallied him saying, to what purpose is a vessel made in the open plain at such a distance from the water? Others said to him in the way of ridicule, which has passed into a proverb, you have made a ship, now therefore bring the water to it. Others again insulted him, telling him, that after having practised for a long time the trade of a husbandman, he was at last reduced to that of a carpenter. But his answer to them was, I shall have my turn, and you will learn at your expense, who it is that punishes the wicked in this world, and reserves chastisements for them hereafter in another."\*

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\* Calmet, Hist. Dic. vol. i. p. 192.



The form of the Ark, like that of a Mason's Lodge, was an oblong square ; so long, says Calmet, that few European Churches exceed it. In this Ark were saved Noah, his three sons and wives ; in all *eight persons*. Some say that they embarked near the place where Babylon was afterwards built ; others tell us that they embarked in the Indies ; and during the time they continued in the Ark, they compassed the whole world.\*

And now the fountains of the great deep were broken up and the rain descended in overwhelming torrents. The roaring of the elements, the gushing of the mighty waters, and the universal confusion of nature's works struck the inhabitants of the earth with compunction and horror. But it was too late. What was the pitiless situation of the mockers and unbelievers, when they saw the waters bursting with irresistible violence from the caverns of the earth, and from the fountains of the deep ? What were their sensations when they beheld the inundating torrents of rain incessantly pouring from the heavens for the space of forty days and nights ? With what dismay must they have been covered, if it be true, as is conjectured from the second chapter of Genesis and the fifth and sixth verses, that there was no rain before the flood, and that consequently this was the first instance of the kind they had ever witnessed ? An

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\* Calmet, vol. i. p. 192.

awful display of the tremendous wrath of God upon obdurate sinners! "How were they amazed at the strangeness of Noah's preservation, so far beyond all that they looked for. Repenting and groaning for anguish of spirit, they said within themselves, this was he whom we had sometime in derision, and a proverb of reproach. We, fools, accounted his life madness, and his end to be without honour. How is he numbered among the children of God, and his lot is among the saints!"\*

It is quite unnecessary that I should enlarge on a subject so well known. Suffice it to say, that when the waters had subsided, the Ark rested on Ararat, a high three peaked mountain in Armenia, and Noah with his family descended into the open plain to supply the wants of nature, and to re-people the renovated world. The precise time of Noah's egress from the Ark, has been a subject of controversy with the learned; but it appears now to be generally understood that this event happened early in the month of May, probably on May Day, because commemorative diluvian rites were annually celebrated on that day, by almost every ancient nation. That learned antiquary and mythologist, Mr. Faber, pronounces this to have been the day of Noah's deliverance. "May Eve running into May Day, was very generally adopted as the season of the Great Father's principal festival; and

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\* *Wisd. v. 3, 4, 5.*

India, Babylonia, Britain, and Ireland have agreed in celebrating at that time the orgies of their chief divinity. *The reason of this choice I take to have been that Noah then quitted the Ark.*"\* And a great naturalist, Woodward, declares, "among all the remains of the antediluvian world, I have found such a uniformity and general consent, that I was able to discover at what time of the year it was that the deluge began. The whole tenor of these bodies, thus preserved, clearly pointing forth the month of May."† I shall not trouble you with an abstract of the different and contradictory theories, which philosophers have advanced, to account for the geological alterations which the earth sustained at that calamitous period, because the subject does not properly come within my design ; but I shall take the account of the deluge precisely as it is related by Moses ; and enquire in what manner it has been preserved or corrupted in the different mysteries of the idolatrous world.

In this enquiry, wheresoever we find a system of mysterious initiation *there* we are sure to find also a tradition of the deluge, often obscure indeed, and not unfrequently fantastical, but possessing sufficient marks of a common original, to satisfy the most sceptical mind, that the deluge of Noah, and no other event, is intended to be perpetuated amidst the adventitious

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\* Fab. Pag. Idol. b. v. c. 6. s. 8.

† Miln. Physico-Theological Lect. apud Hale's Chron. vol. i. p. 337.

embellishments which the genius or ignorance of a people may have thrown around it.

The events which attended this great convulsion of nature, were engrafted by designing men, on the pure system which was practised by the pious patriarchs of the antediluvian world ; and constituted the chief line of distinction between ancient Masonry, and the surreptitious mysteries which were formed on its model and enjoyed the triumph of superior veneration for many succeeding centuries. The former directed its undivided attention to the One invisible God, the Creator and Governor of the world, including the rites of worship offered to that omnipotent Being, according to principles instituted by himself ; while the latter, at the greatest extent of its departure from the truth, acknowledged a multiplicity of deities, the chief of which were indeed capable of a resolution into the patriarch Noah,\* as an incarnation of the divinity, and his three sons as a triplication of himself, who were therefore elevated into objects of divine worship, in contempt and consequent rejection of the true and

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\* Almost all the deities of heathen nations have been deduced by late mythologists to Noah or the Sun, and his symbolical consort the Ark or Moon, for "when colonies made any where a settlement, they engrafted their antecedent history upon the subsequent events of the place. And as in those days they could carry up the genealogy of their princes to the very source of all, it will be found, that, under whatever title he may come, the first king in every country was Noah. For as he was mentioned first in the genealogy of their princes, he was in after times looked upon as a real monarch ; and represented as a great traveller, a mighty conqueror, and sovereign of the whole earth."—*Preface to Bryant's Analysis.*

only God. Hence, in most nations, the superior deities were represented as seated on a lotos leaf, as upon a throne consecrated by its symbolical reference to the Ark, which bore them safely on the surface of the troubled waters, while the rest of mankind were involved in one common destruction. And the reasons which were deemed of sufficient weight to decree divine honours to Noah, were at least, plausible and very attractive. God had always been represented as the Great Father of the human race. Noah was esteemed, and actually was, according to the flesh, the great father of mankind. God is said to have hovered over the face of the waters at the creation ; and Noah actually floated on the face of the waters at the deluge, which was universally accounted a new creation. The Lord Jehovah was to be the seed of woman and the produce of a pure virgin ; and Noah, the universal father, was at once the seed of a woman, and born of the virgin Ark, without the intervention of any human creature. Hence Noah was elevated into an object of idolatrous worship, and became the chief deity of the gentile world.

The mysteries were, most of them, conservators of this tradition ; for their great founders, the Cabiri, could not carry their votaries beyond the period of the deluge, without involving a question, which, in those early ages, would probably have been fatal to their own private views. And thus, though they actually taught the doctrine of an endless succession of worlds, of which

the Phoenix was made a significant emblem, yet the deluge was pronounced the creation of the present world, and as such it was described and perpetuated in the diluvian mysteries. And not only were the Deluge, the Ark, and the Ogdoad the main objects of these secret celebrations ; but they also constituted the chief reference in all the *astronomical* as well as religious speculations of the whole heathen world. The learned and elaborate Bryant tells us, that “ the Ark was looked on as a kind of Temple, a place of residence of the Deity, in the compass of Eight Persons.”\* And again, “ The Egyptians did, in reality, make the history of the Ogdoas, the chief subject *of the sphere*. They esteemed the Ark an emblem of the system of the heavens. And when they began to distinguish the stars in the firmament, and to reduce them to particular constellations, there is reason to think, that most of the asterisms were formed with the like reference.”† Hence we find that as the lower apartments of the Tower of Babel were dedicated to the purpose of initiation into the mysteries, so the uppermost tier were appropriated solely to astronomical researches ; for the first arrangement of the fixed stars into constellations, was effected before the dispersion of our brethren from the plains of Shinar ; and Nimrod was placed in the heavens under the name of Orion.

The consequences of an open renunciation of the

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\* Anal. vol. ii. p. 233.

† Anal. vol. ii. p. 244.

Deity, which was the probable cause of the general deluge, were however, concealed by the crafty founders of idolatry, under the same veil which obscured the Great First Cause ; and every thing relating to that event, though transmitted with unequivocal exactness, was studiously enveloped in a web of mystery, calculated to lead the enquirer astray. Hence the jargon about Deucalion, the Atlantians, Typhon and Osiris, the Argonauts, and all the various fables with which different nations have been equally amused and misled. The truth was concealed with great art under imposing ceremonies and fearful denunciations. Solemn oaths were administered to restrain the enquiry within certain prescribed limits ; and the dictatorial hierophant, invested with uncontrollable authority, could draw the line with his magic wand, and say, even to the initiated, “ this is the boundary of your knowledge ; thus far shall ye come, and no farther.” And this accounts for the comparative ignorance of the adept himself ; for the ineffable secrets were entrusted to none but kings and priests ; and were conveyed, almost solely, by oral communication. Thus an extraordinary ceremony, referring to the deluge, was used in the initiations, which shows how mysteriously that event was preserved and transmitted. The violent death of some unhappy individual was here celebrated, whose body they affected to have lost ; and much time was expended and many ceremonies used in the search ; even the aspirant himself was made figuratively to die

and to descend into the infernal regions, for the purpose of ascertaining the fate of him, whose disappearance they ceased not to deplore. This part of the ceremony was performed in *darkness*; and was accompanied with loud and ceaseless wailings and lamentations. The body at length being found, the aspirant was passed through the regenerating medium, and thus was said to be raised from the dead and born again. This was the commencement of joy and gladness; and the initiated was invested with his symbols amidst universal rejoicing and acclamation.

3 Such is the pattern on which all the mysteries were formed; and it may be needless to repeat that the ceremony bears an evident reference, amongst other remarkable occurrences, to the descent of Noah into the darkness of the Ark, which was his emblematical Coffin,\* where he was figuratively said to have been in a state resembling death;† and his egress thence considered as a new birth, and a restoration to the blessings

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\* Or Hell, according to the Scandinavian system; for "Helle signifies sepulchrum. It is derived from *Helan*, to cover or conceal, and therefore properly expresses *the Grave*, that common covering or concealment of mankind.—(*Farmer's Worship of Human Spirits*, p. 366, note n.) According to Faber, (*Pag. Idol.* vol. i. p. 377.) Hell was the invisible world of departed spirits, whether *good* or *bad*; and in this sense corresponded equally with the Hela of the Goths, and the El-ysium of classical antiquity.

† A passage of an ancient writer, preserved by Stobæus, contains the following remarkable words. "The mind is affected in DEATH, just as it is in the INITIATION into the mysteries. And word answers to word, as well as thing to thing; for *τελευταν* is, TO DIE; and *τελεισθαι*, TO BE INITIATED." Warb. Div. Leg. b. ii. s. 4.



of life and liberty. The door of the ark represented the medium of regeneration, and the passage of Noah through it into the renewed world, was imitated in the initiations by passing the candidate through certain ambrosiæ petræ or consecrated stones, which were supposed to convey a title to the favour of the gods, and an assurance of their continual protection.

I now proceed to notice a few traditions which have been preserved in the mysteries of different nations; and transmitted, in some instances, down to the present time. In the prosecution of this part of the subject, I shall not detain you by reciting the Egyptian legend of Osiris taking refuge in an Ark to escape the rage of Typhon, (the sea) which overflowed his dominions; or the Greek fable of Deucalion; or the Chaldean account of the preservation of Xisuthrus, which are all too well known to need repetition. I shall rather choose to repeat a few of the most rare and curious traditions which we find recorded concerning this signal judgment.

The Brahmins of India, preserved an account of the deluge with some degree of accuracy; and united with it a description of the primitive peace and happiness of a former world. Men, say they, in the very first ages enjoyed full perfection, and conversed familiarly with the gods. Piety, truth, and every other virtue flourished amongst them uncontaminated by the malignant influence of any unholy passion. The ground produced its fruits spontaneously, and men were not constrained by the wants of nature, to endure the pains

and privations, necessarily resulting from toil and labour. This state of universal repose, at length produced discontent, which was soon followed by active rebellion, and the commission of every species of crime. Such a state of depravity elicited the summary vengeance of the offended gods. The ground was deprived of a large portion of its fecundity, and men were condemned to labour in order to supply their increasing necessities. The wickedness of mankind at length rendered their utter destruction inevitable. To purify the earth from the pollutions thus heaped upon it, the two regenerating elements fire and water were used. First a torrent of fire was sent upon the earth, which melted all mineral and vegetable matter, and consumed every thing in its progress. Then followed a deluge of water, which covered the whole face of the earth, that its pristine purity might be restored by a general ablution. During the prevalence of the waters, the god Vishnu stretched at length, slept beneath the surface on the bosom of Devi, who for that purpose had assumed the shape of a monstrous serpent, *whose folds were coiled up in the form of a boat*. A lotos plant issued from his navel, and ascending to the surface, spread its leaves and flowers on the expanse, and produced the god Brahma; who, seated in state upon its calix, claimed to be the first born of men and gods.\*

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\* At the death of Brahma, says Moor, (*Hind. Panth.* p. 103,) the world is deluged with water, and Vishnu places himself on the lotos as a little child with the toe of his right foot in his mouth, as an emblem of eternity. When the deluge is about to subside, a lotos springs from his navel as before, from which Brahma is reborn.

When the waters had subsided, the navicular Serpent Devi was grounded on Mount Meru; Vishnu was seen gloriously arrayed as *the Rainbow*; and Devi flew away in the form of *a Dove*.\*

You will smile, when I relate the tradition, as it was preserved in China; but I have good authority to bear me out, and will therefore hazard the consequences of exciting your mirth. The inhabitants of the island Maurigasima, says the legend, becoming enriched by successful traffic, grew irreligious, neglected the rites of divine worship, and held the gods in sovereign contempt. These slighted beings therefore to revenge themselves on such an impious race, revealed to the king, who was a just and virtuous monarch, that whenever he should observe the faces of the two idols, which stood before the temple *to turn red*, he should immediately, with all his family and substance escape from the island, to avoid the impending destruction of its inhabitants. This vision he made known to his subjects, that they might profit by the communication. But they ridiculed the good king; and a short time afterwards, one of them, in the delirium of unbelief, daubed the faces of these idols with red paint. The king beholding the portent, lost no time in escaping from the devoted island with his family and friends, amidst the ridicule of all who were con-

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\* Vid. Maur. Ind. Antiq.—Moor's Hind. Panth.—Fab. Pag. Idol.—Wilf. on Mt. Cauc. &c.

cerned in the imposition. No sooner however was he departed, than the island was swallowed up by the waters, and all the inhabitants were drowned. The king arrived safe in China, where his escape is still commemorated by an annual festival.\*

In the remotest times, before the Moon accompanied the earth, according to the mythology of the Muysca or Mozca Indians, the inhabitants of the plain of Bogota lived like barbarians, naked, without agriculture, without any form of laws or worship. Suddenly appeared among them an old man, who came from the plains situate on the east of the Cordillera of Chingasa, and who appeared to be of a race unlike that of the natives, having a long and bushy beard. He was known by three distinct appellations, Bochica, Nemquetheba, and Zuhe. This old man, instructed men how to clothe themselves, build huts, till the ground, and form themselves into communities. He brought with him a woman, to whom also tradition gives three names, Chia, Yubecayguaya, and Huythaca. This woman, extremely beautiful, and no less malignant, thwarted every enterprise of her husband for the happiness of mankind. By her skill in magic, she swelled the river of Funzha and inundated the valley of Bogota. The greater part of the inhabitants perished in this deluge; a few only found refuge on the summits of the neighbouring mountains. The old man, in anger, drove the beau-

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\* Kämpfer's Japan, Append. p. 13.

tiful Huythaca far from the earth, and she became the Moon, which began from that epocha to enlighten our planet during the night. Bochica, moved with compassion for those who were dispersed over the mountains, broke with his powerful arm the rocks that enclosed the valley, on the side of Canoas and Tequendama. By this outlet he drained the waters of the lake of Bogota; he built towns, introduced the worship of the Sun, named two chiefs, between whom he divided the civil and ecclesiastical authority, and then withdrew himself, under the name of Idacanzas, into the holy valley of Iraca, near Tunja, where he lived in the exercise of the most austere penitence for the space of two thousand years.\*

The Indians of Cholula have a similiar tradition, but they extend it to the general dispersion of mankind. All those who did not perish in the inundation, say they, were transformed into fishes, save *seven*, who fled into caverns. When the waters subsided, one of these called Xelhua, surnamed the architect, went to Cholollan; where, as a memorial of the mountain Tlaloc, which had served for an asylum to himself and his six brethren, he built an artificial hill in form of a *pyramid*. He ordered bricks to be made in the province of Tlamanalco, at the foot of the Sierra of Cocotl, and to convey them to Cholula, he placed a file of men, who passed them from hand to hand. The gods beheld with wrath this edifice, *the top of which was to reach*

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\* Humboldt's Researches in America, vol. i. p. 74.

*the clouds.* Irritated at the daring attempt of Xelhua, they hurled fire on the pyramid. Numbers of the workmen perished; the work was discontinued, and the monument was afterwards dedicated to Quetzalcotl, the god of the air.\*

The Savages of South America, believed that a priest called Tezpi, was saved from a general inundation, by retiring with his wife and children into a box made of wood, in which he had also gathered together a many animals, and excellent seeds of all sorts; and that after the retreat of the waters he let fly a bird called Aura, which returned not back; and successively several others which also came not back; but that the least of those birds, that which the Indians esteemed the most, soon appeared again *with the branch of a tree in its mouth.*† These accounts, preserved by men in almost a savage state; in a quarter of the globe unknown in ancient times, and certainly debarred by nature from any communication with the inhabitants of the eastern continent, approximate very nearly to those of Moses.

Enquire we now what was the belief of the British Druids in this particular; for, on every subject, I studiously bring before your notice the creed and practice of our ancestors,‡ because their opinions cannot fail to be peculiarly interesting.

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\* Mexican MS. in the Vatican.—Humb. Resear. in America.

† Howard's Thoughts on the Structure of the Globe, p. 120.

‡ The ancient Scandinavians taught that the world was produced from the breath of the giant Ymer; that a man and a woman proceeded from

In the mysteries of Britain, a tradition of the deluge was undoubtedly preserved, perverted indeed and localized like those of other nations, but bearing characteristic marks of the same event. In the time of the great god Hu, mankind were involved in an universal profligacy of manners. A communication was therefore made from heaven that the corruptions of the world should be purified by fire and water; that the Lake Llion should burst, and overflowing its banks, the torrent of water, with irresistible violence, should deluge the land, and destroy all its inhabitants. In consequence of this revelation, a vessel was constructed *without sails*, in which were preserved a male and female of every species of animals, and also a man and a woman named Dwivan and Dwyvach. When these were safely enclosed within the womb of the vessel; a pestilential wind arose, replete with poisonous ingredients, which spread devastation and death throughout the land. Then followed a fiery deluge, which melted the rocks, and split the earth asunder. After this the Lake Llion burst forth,\* inundated the earth, and destroyed the whole creation of men and animals, except

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his side during his sleep; that a deluge afterwards destroyed all mankind except one family, who succeeded in keeping a boat floating on the surface of the waters; and that the world was repopled by the descendants of this family. The Deity was represented as being invisible, and residing in the lonely solitude of sequestered forests; that he punished the sins of men by divers plagues; but that his anger might be appeased by prayer and repentance.

\* Dav. Celt. Res. p. 157.

the favoured few who had sought protection in the sacred vessel. And thus the world was purified by fire and water from the pollutions which the sins of men had accumulated upon it. When the destruction was complete, the Avanc or Beaver, a symbol of the floating Ark, was drawn to land by the oxen of Hu Gadarn; Gwidion (the British Mercury) formed the *Rainbow*, as a fair attendant on the Sun; and an assurance was given to the man and woman, by whom the world was to be re peopled, that the Lake should burst no more.\*

In all these several legends, we have sufficient traits of similarity to enable us to detect their origin in the deluge of Noah. The bursting of the Lake evidently refers to the true account contained in the seventh chapter of Genesis, where it is said that the fountains of the great deep were *broken* up. And this was a much more rational belief than was entertained by some other nations. In the Hindoo mythology, the disruption is referred to the act of quitting the Ark after the waters had subsided. The body of Sita, the wife of Maha Deva is said to have burst, and the hero gods, or Noah and his sons are violently thrown from her womb.† In the parallel superstition of Scandinavia, the giant Ymer is represented as slain, and the blood bursting from the wound, formed a deluge which drowned all the families of the giants, except one who

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\* Dav. Druids, p. 95.

† Asiat. Research. vol. vi. p. 477.



saved himself in his bark.\* And in Egypt the “bursting” was applied to an Egg, broken by Typhon during his contest with Osiris. But the bursting of a lake was the most prevalent belief.

In tracing the mysterious institutions of different nations, we are surprised with a wonderful variety of fables, all bearing a reference to this same transaction. Thus in one system the deity is said to have remained for a specific period in the belly of a fish; in another to have sailed over the sea in a golden cup; in a third to have been enthroned on the broad leaf of the lotos. Again, he was believed to have been saved from drowning by a princess, who humanely used for that purpose, a rope made of her own hair; and many other traditions of a similar nature were taught, equally alluding to the salvation of Noah.† And, whether the deity were fabled to have been preserved from the effects of a general destruction in a vessel without sails, on the back of a crocodile, in a navel, in a cup, upon a mare, by a dove, or by a rainbow;—whether he were said to be born from a cavern, a cloud, or a door; hewn out of a rock, produced from the side of a virgin without the co-operation of a father, from an egg, a cow, or the moon, the reference is undoubtedly the same. All these legends owe their origin to Noah and the Ark;

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\* Voluspa.

† *Asiat. Research.* vol. vi. p. 479.—*Apollod. Bibl.* i. ii. c. 5.—*Jambl. de Myst.* s. 7.

for the foundation of every known system of idolatry was the worship of the Great Father and the Great Mother, symbolized by the sun and moon.\*

But the great father and mother were often confounded, and made to represent the same person; for the deity, in all the countries which practised an idolatrous worship, was considered as possessing both sexes in common.† This being the case, the worship of the great father was probably introduced with some reference to the first prophecy of the Messiah, for Noah was considered an incarnation of the divinity. And there is nothing very repugnant to the principles of sound analogy in the ultimate reference to the Sun, Moon, and Planets, which soon became objects of divine worship. Every principle of false religion rested on some foundation of truth, either direct or implied; and the worship of the host of heaven might be derived from the highly figurative language by which the true God was usually described by the early patriarchs. Some remarkable specimens of this style are found in our sacred writings. Baalam describes him under the title of A STAR;‡ David calls him A SUN;§ and so does Malachi.|| If then Noah, or the Great Father was worshipped as the Sun, his consort and the rest of the

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\* Fragm. Stesich. in Fab. Cab. c. vii.—Asiat. Research. vol. vi. p. 521.—Hyg. Fab. 62.—Just. Mart. dial. cum Tryph. p. 168, &c.

† Cudw. Int. Syst. l. i. c. 4.—Ordin. of Menu. Sir W. Jones's Works, vol. iii. p. 70.

‡ Numb. xxiv. 17.

§ Psalm lxxxiv. 11.

|| Mal. iv. 2.

Ogdoad would be assimilated with the Seven Planets, of which the Moon was the chief.

Not a few of these nations unite in blending the Creation and Deluge so intimately, that the fable will aptly apply to either event; and it is probable that from this confusion has arisen the various applications which have been emblematically made to the mundane Egg,\* which, as an universal symbol, is another great and unerring testimony to the fact of a common origination. The figurative meaning of this expressive emblem may be traced to the creation of the world; for the Spirit of God is truly represented at that period as hovering over the face of the waters, in the same manner as a bird broods or flutters over her eggs; an idea which is most beautifully expressed by Milton.

“ ————— THOU —————  
 ————— with mighty wings outspread,  
 Dove-like sat'st brooding o'er the vast abyss,  
 And mad'st it pregnant.”†

This truth was conveyed through the antediluvian world, and introduced by Noah and his family amongst the new race of men who peopled the earth after the

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\* The egg which contains the rudiments of life, and was hence esteemed no unimportant symbol of the resurrection, was no other than the Ark, and the reference in the text corresponds exactly with the belief of all nations. Dionusus was fabled by the Greeks to be born from an egg, (*Orph. Hymn v.*) and he and Noah were the same person; therefore the birth of Dionusus, or Brahma, or any other hero god from an Egg, was nothing more than the egress of Noah from the Ark.—Vid. *Fab. Pag. Idol.* b. i. c. 4.

† *Paradise Lost*, b. i. l. 20.

flood, amongst whom the Egg soon became a significant and universal symbol. Thus in the Ordinances of Menu, the origin of all things is ascribed to an Egg. "He (the Creator) having willed to produce various beings from his own divine substance; first, with a thought created the waters, and placed in them a productive seed; *that seed became an Egg*, as bright as gold, blazing like the luminary with a thousand beams; and in that Egg *he was born himself*, in the form of Brahma, the great forefather of all spirits."\* In China it is believed that Puoncu, the first man, *was born out of an Egg*. The heavens were formed from the shell, the atmosphere from the white, and the earth from the yolk.

In the Orphic Mysteries, the doctrine was promulgated that the sun was produced from an Egg, which, floating on the ocean was tossed about by the waves, until he burst forth in full splendour, endowed with power to *triplicate* himself by his own unassisted energies. Here is a direct reference to Noah and his three sons; as well as to the three appearances of the Sun; in his rising, southing, and setting. In the Hymns attributed to Orpheus, at one time Venus, the universal parent of gods and men, is said to have been born from an Egg;† and at another Cupid is produced from the same Symbol.‡ In both these instances, the Egg represents the Ark of Noah, which,

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\* Sir W. Jones's Works, vol. iii. p. 66.    † Hymn 2.    ‡ Hymn 5.

while floating on the abyss, contained every living creature, and was in effect, *a world* in itself. And this reference was not attended with any violent or improbable stretch of conjecture, for it was a tenet even to the Jewish creed that the earth was founded on the floods,\* and as it was known to the gentile world that the Ark had floated on the waters of the deluge, the Earth and the Ark were frequently mistaken for each other, and the Egg was a symbol common to both. To corroborate this explanation; in one system, Cupid, thus said to be born of an Egg, is represented as seated on a *Rainbow*; and in another, *the Dove*, the bird of Venus, is seated on an Egg.†

Thus it appears that with the migrating descendants of Noah, the Egg had an undoubted reference to the Ark; and in this acceptation it bore a prominent feature in all the diluvian mysteries; for the Ark when floating on the waters was a world in miniature; as it not only contained all living creatures, but was the sole visible substance remaining of the terrestrial creation. Hence, if Brahma, or Bacchus, or the corresponding god of any other nation was fabled to be born of an Egg, the symbol applied to the Ark of Noah. In truth, the Egg was the foundation of all the symbolical machinery of idolatry. The world was formed from an Egg; it was subsequently destroyed; and as destruction was considered but as a prelude to

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\* Psalm xxiv. 2.

† Ampel. c. 2.

reproduction, the same symbol was again resorted to as an emblem of a new creation. For it was an universal belief, that at the conclusion of certain stated periods, the world was to be destroyed either by fire or water, or both ; that the same progenitors appeared on the stage in each successive creation ; and that the same race of men, were re-born and acted the same parts on the great theatre of the world, as they had before done in a former state.\* And from this belief doubtless originated the doctrine of the Metempsychosis.

It remains that I elucidate the Symbols attached to this subject ; which will bring the whole matter to a conclusion. These are the Ark and Anchor ; the Dove and Olive Branch ; and the Rainbow.

The Ark and Anchor are emblems of a well grounded hope and a well spent life. They are emblematical of that divine Ark which triumphantly bears us over this tempestuous sea of troubles ; and that Anchor which shall safely moor us in a peaceful harbour, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.†

The Dove with an Olive Branch in its mouth is an emblem of peace, and in connection with the Rainbow, points out to desponding mortals that divine justice is satisfied, and mercy extends her golden sceptre to a guilty world. The Dove, when liberated by Noah, brought back in its mouth, say the Jewish Rabbins, a Branch of Olive plucked from the Groves of Eden,

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\* Desatir. Book of Abad.

† Star in the East, p. 135.

near which the Ark most probably rested. Thus the Dove and Olive Branch became a permanent symbol of peace; and implied the removal of a calamity and the substitution of a benefit. In remembrance of this wonderful escape, the token of union on the plains of Shinar, was, a broad Banner, on which a Dove bearing the Branch of Olive in its mouth, encircled by a Rainbow, were curiously embroidered. Dr. Owen, in his natural history of Serpents,\* says that "Semiramis, being conquered by Staurobates, antiquity feigned she was changed by the gods into a Dove, the bird of Venus, which is the reason why the Dove was worshipped by the Babylonians, and *why they gave it in their Ensign.*" This is erroneous, for the banner doubtless proceeded from a recollection of the benefits derived from Noah's Dove; and it was actually used by Semiramis herself before and during her unfortunate expedition into India; for the Dove was the favourite bird of this empress, and hence she was figuratively said to have been nourished in her infancy by doves in the wilderness.†

This bird being universally held in high veneration, was said to have conveyed the Mysteries to many different nations. From the information which it gave to Noah while he was confined within the gloomy recesses of the ark, it was accounted an interpreter of the Divine will; and hence the priests and prophets of idolatry were frequently styled doves.

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\* p. 3. c. vi.

† Diod. Sic. Bibl. l. ii. c. 1.

The Rainbow was an emblem common to every species of religious mystery; and was probably derived from an old arkite tradition, that the divinity was clothed in a Rainbow. For thus is he represented by Ezekiel the prophet. "As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord."\* St. John saw in a vision, the throne of God encompassed by a rainbow.† A Rainbow was, in fact, the usual emblem of a divine Saviour throughout the world. Some christians, "from the irradiation of the sun upon a cloud, apprehend the mystery of the Sun of Righteousness in the obscurity of flesh;—by the colours *green* and *red*, the two destructions of the world by *water* and *fire*; or by the colour of blood and water, the mysteries of baptism, and the holy eucharist."‡

In India the Rainbow was an emblem of peace, and in the Third Avater of Vishnu, it is represented as issuing from the troubled waters of the deluge. It was esteemed the principal instrument used to compose the agitation of the elements, which produced and attended that awful event. In the British mysteries it was an emblem of protection; figuratively said to surround the aspirant, when delivered from his confinement in the Pastos or Ark; and hence he was called the offspring of the Rainbow. The Bards

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\* Ezekiel i. 28.

† Rev. iv. 3.

‡ Brown's Vul. Err. b. vii. c. 4.



frequently introduced this symbol, which is compared to "a stream of light, which scares away violence from the earth, and causes the bane of its former state round the circle of the world to subside."\*

I shall conclude with a few practical comments on the awful event which has formed the subject of this Lecture. And do not imagine that I am deviating from the pure principles of our Order, when I endeavour to apply the truths inculcated by Freemasonry to a higher object than present felicity, for the connection between Masonry and Religion is absolute, and cannot be destroyed. Masonry contributes to produce the social happiness of mankind in this world by the practice of moral virtue. Religion gives us happiness in a future state, emanating partly from the same cause, but rendered perfect by the atonement of Christ. Hence Masonry must be considered as the handmaid of Religion, because the practice of moral virtue, though it cannot absolutely save, is an essential condition of salvation. With this illustration in view, I shall endeavour to incite you to *christian* morality, that the peace you derive from your Masonic pursuits, may be contemplated by the practice of religion, and produce its final and lasting reward at the resurrection of the dead.

You have seen how the whole world was destroyed, and the race of men almost exterminated for a rejection

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\* Chair of Ceridwen.

of the very morality which Masonry recommends. Divine Revelation informs you that it shall undergo a second destruction for the same cause; when a different agent shall be employed to consume and burn up this earth with all that it contains. Do not then like the profane antediluvians, scoff at the terms of salvation, and say, the threatened punishment will never be inflicted. Do not, like them say, we will eat, drink, and be merry, and all will yet be well; for you may be assured that nothing but practical righteousness founded on faith in the atoning Mediator, can bear you up in that day when the ripened iniquities of men shall bring on the long suspended deluge of fire, which shall drown the wicked in everlasting destruction. The Ark in which you and all mankind must be saved from this fiery purgation is inscribed with three important words, REPENTANCE, FAITH, and OBEDIENCE, which like a brilliant Rainbow surround and overshadow the vehicle of your preservation; and with an efficacy more significant than the Dove and Olive Branch, proclaim your everlasting peace.

## LECTURE VI.

## ON THE MYSTERIOUS DARKNESS OF THE THIRD DEGREE.

“ The pale beam struggled through the shade  
 That black'd the cavern's womb ;  
 And in the deepest nook betray'd,  
 An altar and a tomb.  
 Around the tomb in mystic lore,  
 Were forms of various mien ;  
 And efts, and foul-wing'd serpents, bore  
 The altar's base obscene.”

*Mickle.*

By the dispensations of an All-wise Providence it is ordained, that a state of Darkness resembling death, shall precede the attainment of all the different degrees of perfection. Thus the dense vacuum of chaos introduced the formation of the world as it came from the hand of its Maker pure and perfect. Thus the whole creation annually sinks into itself; the trees are stripped of their leafy covering, the waters are locked up in the frosts of winter, and nature seems consigned to the embraces of darkness and death. But this dreary pause is only a fit preparation for the revival of the new year, when the earth again displays her charms, and cheers us with all the animation and glory of a revived existence. Thus also man, the nobler work of

the Deity, is subject every day to an oblivion of sense and reflection, which, however, serves but to invigorate his faculties, and restore to reason all its energy and force. And thus, even death itself, though terrible in prospect, is but the prelude to our restoration in a more improved state, when eternity shall burst upon us in full effulgence, and all the glories of absolute perfection encircle us for ever.

In like manner the emblematical darkness of Masonry is but the precursor of superior illumination ; and hence our science is aptly denominated *Lux* or *Light*, because it removes the mists of error and prejudice from the understanding, and leaves the soul open to impressions which awaken all the energies of Faith, and Hope, and Charity. This *Light* is partly communicated by the assistance of hieroglyphical emblems ; for Masonry, correctly defined, is “ a beautiful system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols.” Thus if we wish to recommend justice and morality, we point to the *Square*, which is the emblem of these virtues ; if equality be our theme, the *Level* is displayed ; if integrity, the *Plumb*. Do we wish to illustrate our respective duties to God and man, the *Three Great Lights* are on the Pedestal, and are easily brought before the active Mason’s view ; and the *Three Lesser Lights* point out the excellent scheme of government adopted by our ancient brethren, and still practised in our Lodges. Do we enlarge upon a life well spent in acts of piety and devotion, the

*Perfect Ashler* is the elucidating emblem ; if we refer to the comfort and perfection of God's revealed word, it is done through the medium of the *Tracing Board*; if the pure and perfect road to Heaven be the subject of our Lecture, we have a *Ladder* composed of staves or rounds innumerable, each pointing out some moral or theological virtue ; and even when elevating our thoughts to the Deity himself, our eyes involuntarily rest on the *Glory in the Centre* ; then, with hearts overflowing with gratitude and love, we bow reverentially before the All-Seeing-Eye of God, which the sun, moon, and stars obey ; conscious that it pervades their inmost recesses, and tries our thoughts, words, and actions by the unerring touchstone of truth and eternal justice.

In the ancient mysteries, the Epoptes, or perfectly initiated aspirants, were reputed to have attained a state of pure and ineffable *Light*, and pronounced safe under the protection of the celestial gods ;\* while the unhappy multitude who had not undergone the purifying ceremonies, were declared reprobate ; said to wander in all the obscurity of *Darkness*, to be deprived of the divine favour, and doomed to a perpetual residence in the infernal regions, amidst a cheerless and overwhelming contamination.†

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\* Diod. Sic. Bibl. l. v. c. 3.

† Plato Phædone.—Arist. Eleusinia, et apud Stobæum. Serm. 119, &c.—Schol. Arist. Ranis.—Diog. Laert. in vita Cog. Cynici. apud Warb. Div. Leg. b. ii. s. 4.

During the Persian initiations, this doctrine was enforced *ex cathedra*. The Archimagus informed the candidate at the moment of illumination, that the *Divine Lights*\* were displayed before him ; and after explaining the nature and purport of the mysteries in general, he taught that the universe was governed by a good and evil power who were perpetually engaged in contest with each other, and as each in turn prevailed, the world was characterized by a corresponding succession of happiness and misery ; that uninitiated and immoral men were votaries of the evil power, and the virtuous initiated of the good ; and at the end of the world, each, with his followers will go into a separate abode ; the latter with *Yazdan* shall ascend *by means of a Ladder* to a state of eternal LIGHT, where exists unalloyed happiness and the purest pleasures ; the former with *Ahriman* shall be plunged into an abode of DARKNESS, where they shall suffer an eternity of disquietude and misery, in a desolate place of punishment situated on the shore of a stinking river, the waters of which are black as pitch and cold as ice. Here the souls of the uninitiated eternally float. Dark columns of smoke ascend from this stream, the inside of which is full of serpents, scorpions, and venomous reptiles.†

The multitude, being thus amused with fables, and

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\* Psell. in Schol. in Orac. Zoroast.

† Hyde. de relig. vet. Pers. p. 399.

terrified with denunciations, were effectually involved in uncertainty, and directed to paths where error only could be found; for every proceeding was mysterious, and every mythological doctrine shrouded under a corresponding symbol. These allegorical fables becoming popular, the simple rites of primitive worship soon assumed a new and more imposing form; and religion was at length enveloped in a veil so thick and impervious, as to render the interpretation of their symbolical imagery extremely difficult and uncertain. The slender thread of truth being intimately blended and confused with an incongruous mass of error, the elucidation was a task so complicated and forbidding, that few had the courage to undertake it; and men were rather inclined to bow implicitly to popular tradition, than be at the pains to reconcile truth with itself, and separate, with a nice and delicate hand, the particles of genuine knowledge from the cumbrous web of allegory and superstition, in which they were interwoven.

The Darkness of Masonry is invested with a more pure and dignified reference, because it is attached to a system of truth. It places before the mind a series of the most awful and impressive images. It points to the darkness of death and the obscurity of the grave,\* as the forerunners of a more brilliant and never-fading

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\* Job x. 21, 22.

Light which follows at the resurrection of the just. Figure to yourselves the beauty and strict propriety of this reference, ye who have been raised to the Third Degree of Masonry. Was your mind enveloped in the shades of that darkness? So shall you again be involved in the darkness of the grave, when death has drawn his sable curtain round you. Did you rise to a splendid scene of intellectual brightness? So, if you are obedient to the precepts of Masonry and the dictates of Religion, shall you rejoice, on the resurrection morn, when the clouds of error and imperfection are separated from your mind, and you behold with unveiled eye the glories which issue from the expanse of heaven, the everlasting splendours of the throne of God!

It is an extraordinary fact, that there is scarcely a single ceremony in Freemasonry, but we find its corresponding rite in one or other of the idolatrous mysteries; and the coincidence can only be accounted for by supposing that these mysteries were derived from Masonry. Yet however they might assimilate in ceremonial observances, an essential difference existed in the fundamental principles of the respective institutions. The primitive veneration for *Light* accompanied the career of Masonry from the creation to the present day, and will attend its course until time expires in eternity; but in the mysteries of idolatry, this veneration soon yielded its empire over men's



minds, and fell before the claims of Darkness; for a false worship would naturally be productive of impure feelings and vicious propensities. It is true indeed that the first Egyptians worshipped ON as the chief deity, who was supposed to be the eternal *Light*; and hence he was referred to the Sun as its great source and emanation. Thus it was said that *God* dwelt in the *Light*, his *Virtue* in the Sun, and his *Wisdom* in the Moon. But this worship was soon debased by superstitious practices. The idolaters degenerated into an adoration of serpents and scorpions, and other representatives of the evil spirit; and, amidst the same *professions* of a profound reverence for *Light*, became most unaccountably enamoured of *Darkness*; and a temple near Memphis was dedicated to *Hecate Scotia*,\* which was styled the Lord of the Creation, and in some respects deemed oracular. Hence we deduce the strict propriety of the ninth plague inflicted by Almighty vengeance on that infatuated people; in which it is most remarkable to observe that the same terrific sights were exhibited before their affrighted senses; the same unearthly noises sounded in their ears, as usually attended the rites of initiation into the Egyptian Mysteries.†

With the same reference in view, the Almighty, many centuries afterwards, denounces his vengeance on Pharaoh and the Egyptians.

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\* Diod. Sic. l. i. c. 7.

† Vid. Book of Wisdom, c. xvii.

“ I will cover the heavens when I quench thee,  
 And I will clothe the stars thereof with black ;  
 I will cover the sun with a cloud,  
 And the moon shall not give her light.  
 All the shining lights of the heavens will I clothe with  
     black over thee,  
 And will set DARKNESS upon thy land,  
 Saith the Lord Jehovah.”\*

This superstition, which assigned divine honours to Darkness, was not peculiar to Egypt, but spread, by a kind of fatality, throughout the idolatrous world ; and was justified on the principle that Darkness or Night, which had an existence in Chaos long before the creation of Light, was hence of superior antiquity.† Thus in their calculations they gave precedence to the Night ; and to signify one full revolution of the earth on its axis, they used the phrase, *a night and a day*, which the Greeks expressed by the word *Nuchthemerion*. Even the Jews began their calculations from the evening, because God is said by Moses to have created Light *out of* Darkness.‡ And they beheld the Darkness itself with the most awful sensations, and considered it as the incomprehensible veil of the Deity.§ They thought the greatest mystery of religion was expressed by adumbration, viz. the Cherubim *shadowing* the Mercy Seat. Life was considered but the shadow of death ; and souls departed but the

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\* Ezekiel xxxii. 7, 8. Bp. Lowth's Translation.

† Plut. Sym. l. iv.

‡ Genesis i. 2, 3.

§ Vid. 1 Kings viii. 12.—2 Chron. vi. 1.—Psalm xviii. 9, &c.

shadow of the living ; the sun itself but the dark simulachrum : and Light but the shadow of God.\*

The honours thus conferred on Darkness, are plainly set forth in the Orphic Fragments, where Night is celebrated as the parent of gods and men, and the origin of all things.† And hence in the initiations, Darkness was always hailed with *three distinct acclamations or cheers*, (*τρεις και τουτο επιφημιζοντες*.)‡ For these united causes, Jesus Christ says, that in his time, at the extreme point of degeneracy which mankind were suffered to attain, “*men loved Darkness rather than Light*, because their deeds were evil.”§ And speaking of the implacable and revengeful spirit inculcated by idolatry, St. John, the beloved disciple of Christ says, “*he that hateth his brother, is in Darkness*, and walketh in Darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that Darkness hath blinded his eyes.”|| The same reference is abundant in all St. Paul’s Epistles which are addressed to the heathen converts.

From these observations, the customs that follow may be satisfactorily accounted for.

In all the ancient mysteries, before an aspirant could claim to participate in the higher secrets of the institution, he was placed within the *Pastos*, or *Bed*, or *Coffin* ; or in other words, was subjected to a solitary confinement for a prescribed period of time, that he

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\* Brown’s Gard. of Cyrus, c. iv.

† Euseb. de præp. evan. l. iii. c. 9.

‡ Damascius, in Bryant’s Plagues of Egypt, p. 170.

§ John iii. 19.

|| Ephesians ii. 11.

might reflect seriously, in seclusion and *darkness*, on what he was about to undertake ; and be reduced to a proper state of mind for the reception of great and important truths, by a course of fasting and mortification. *This was the symbolical death of the mysteries*, and his deliverance from confinement was the act of regeneration or being born again ; or, as it was also termed, *being raised from the dead*.\* “Clement of Alexandria tells us, that in the formulary used by one who had been initiated he was taught to say, I have descended into the bed chamber. The ceremony here alluded to was doubtless the same as the descent into Hades ; and I am inclined to think, that when the aspirant entered into the mystic cell, *he was directed to lay himself down upon the bed, which shadowed out the tomb or coffin of the Great Father*. This process was equivalent to his entering into the infernal ship ; and while stretched upon the holy couch, *in imitation of his figurative deceased prototype*, he was said to be wrapped in the deep sleep of death. *His resurrection from the bed was his restoration to life*, or his regeneration into a new world ; and it was virtually the same as his return from Hades, or his emerging from the gloomy cavern, or his liberation from the womb of the ship-goddess.”†

The candidate was made to undergo these changes

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\* Vid. Bryant's Anal. vol. ii. p. 257.

† Fab. Pag. Idol. b. v. c. 7.

in scenic representation ; and was placed under the Pastos in perfect Darkness, generally for the space of three days and nights. The time of this solitary confinement however varied in different nations. In Britain *nine* days and nights was the specified period ;\* in Greece three times nine days ;† while in Persia it extended to *fifty* days and nights of darkness, want of rest, and fasting!‡ To explain the nature of these places of penance and mortification, I need not carry you to distant shores ; the remains in our country are both numerous and open to public inspection ; for I have no doubt but the British Cromlech was the identical vehicle of preparation for the druidical mysteries.

A celebrated piece of antiquity was recently standing near Maidstone, called Kit's Cotti House. This was a dark chamber of probation ; for Kit is no other than Ked, or Ceridwen, the British Ceres ; and Cotti or Cetti meant an Ark or Chest ; hence the compound word referred to the Ark of the diluvian god Noah, whose mysterious Rites were celebrated in Britain ; and Ceridwen was either the consort of Noah, or the Ark itself ; symbolically the great mother of mankind. The peculiar names which these monuments still retain throughout the kingdom, are a decisive proof that they were appropriated, almost exclusively, to this purpose.

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\* W. Arch. Tri. 50 apud Dav. Druids, p. 404.

† Porph. vit. Pyth.

‡ Porph. de abst. c. vi. s. 18.

Had they been commonly used for *Altars*, some marks of the operation of fire would still have been visible on their upper surface, which is not the case. Were they merely sepulchral monuments, the remains of interred bodies would be discovered under all of them without exception; and such interments have been very rarely found.

To establish this point more satisfactorily, I will enumerate a few of them. At a village in Somersetshire called Stanton Drew, or *Druid Stones*, we find a specimen of this structure, which consisted originally of three circles of stones and a *Pastos* or *adytum*. Another in Cardiganshire, called Llech y Gowres, *the flat Stone of the Giantess*. (Ceridwen.) At the village of Shap in Westmoreland, is another termed Carl Loft, a name also applicable to the *Pastos*. The Phallus was the gross symbol under which Noah, or the Great Father of the mysteries was worshipped; and it was usually represented by a pyramidal stone. Now in some of the most ancient dialects of Britain, *Kal* signified the Phallus, and *Llyv*, the Deluge; and hence according to this etymology, *Kal-Llyv*, modernized into Carl-Loft, simply meant, the Phallus or memorial of the Deluge. The list might be increased almost indefinitely.

Coincidences like these are too striking to be overlooked; particularly when we consider that the initiations formed a most important and essential part of religious worship; and no person could hold any dignified appointment as a priest, or legislator, without

passing through these forms, which included, as an indispensable preliminary rite, *the solitary confinement of the darkened Pastos*. Warburton says that the Pagans appear to have thought initiation as necessary as the Christians did baptism.\* The initiations were therefore very numerous, and the places where they were performed not only abounded in every part of the island, but were invested with a high degree of imaginary sanctity; particularly the adytum, which was represented as being the peculiar abode of spirits and guarded by a vindictive divinity, armed with the sword of justice. A devotional feeling for these consecrated places would descend from father to son for many generations after the knowledge of their particular use (which was known only to the initiated) had been lost, or obscured by time, or the prevalence of the Christian Religion, whose complete success was involved in consigning to oblivion, every vestige of these ceremonial rites which might tend to keep alive in the mind, the object of every mystical celebration. Hence from the inhumation of the aspirant, which was esteemed equivalent with an actual interment, the Cromlech was said to be sepulchral; but this conjecture, after many revolving ages, having fallen into disrepute from the ill success of antiquarian research, which was almost universally disappointed in its attempts to discover the crumbling remains of decayed bodies within the area of

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\* Div. Leg. b. ii. s. 4.

its inclosure ; it was then assumed that these monuments must necessarily have been altars for sacrifice ; for the notion of their being sanctified appendages to Religion was never lost ; and it was not supposed that they could be applied to any other purpose in the rites of divine worship.\*

The emblems here offered to your notice are the Coffin with the Skull and Cross Bones ; the Hour Glass, the Scythe, the Beehive, and the Sprig of Acacia. *The Coffin, Skull, and Cross Bones* are emblems of mortality, and cry out with a voice almost more than mortal, *prepare to meet thy God*. “ *The Hour-glass* is an emblem of human life. We cannot without astonishment behold the little particles which are contained in this machine, pass away almost imperceptibly, and yet, to our surprize, in the short space of an hour all are exhausted. Thus wastes human life. At the end of man’s short hour, death strikes the blow, and hurries him off the stage to his long and darksome resting place.”†

“ *The Scythe* is an emblem of time, which cuts the brittle thread of life and launches us into eternity. What havoc does the Scythe of Time make among the human race ! If by chance we escape the numerous evils incident to childhood and youth, and arrive in perfect health and strength at the years of vigorous manhood ; yet decrepid old age will soon follow, and

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\* Vid. Dav. Druids, p. 391—410.

† Star in the East, p. 136.



we must be cut down by the all-devouring scythe of time, and be gathered into the land where our fathers are gone before us.”\*

The *Beehive* is an emblem of industry, and recommends the practice of that virtue to all created beings, from the highest seraph in heaven to the lowest reptile in the dust. It teaches us that as we came into the world rational and intelligent beings, so we should ever be industrious ones ; never sitting down contented while our fellow creatures around us are in want, when it is in our power to relieve them without inconvenience to ourselves.

This was a famous symbol in the Orphic mysteries, into which it had been introduced with a mysterious reference well worthy of our consideration. “ We learn from one of the ancient Oracles collected by Opsopèus, that *Honey* was used in the sacrifices to Bacchus and the Nymphs ; and Sophocles informs us, that libations of honey and water were made in honour of the Erinnues, which tremendous deities were in reality, arkite deities. According to Porphyry, *honey was introduced into the mysteries as a symbol of death*, on which account it was offered to the infernal gods. This notion will show us the reason why the Chaldeans, who were deeply versed in the Cabiric orgies, were accustomed to embalm their dead with honey. *The death, however, celebrated in the mysteries, of*

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\* Star in the East, p. 138.

*which honey was the symbol*, was not, I apprehend, a literal, but merely an allegorical death; the death, in short of Bacchus, Adonis, and Osiris; or, in other words, *the confinement of Noah within his Ark or Coffin*; such a death as this, therefore, was very naturally described as being *sweet*, for it was, in fact, a preservation from danger.\* In allusion to the symbolical honey, Samothrace, the grand seat of the Cabiric superstition, was once denominated Melita; and for precisely the same reason, Jupiter was sometimes feigned to have been fed, during his infancy, by a *swarm of bees*. These bees, as we learn from Porphyry, were nothing more than the mystic priestesses of the infernal Ceres, who were called Melissæ, or Melittæ, a name, which according to a custom familiar to the Pagans, they seem to have assumed from the deity whom they served. Ceres, Venus, or Astartè, was styled by the Babylonians, Mylitta, or the goddess of generation; and as the Cabiric priests assumed the title of Cabiri, Curetes, or Corybantes, so the priestesses of Mylitta called themselves Melissæ or Melittæ. The name was afterwards extended to Bees, which animals, from their great vigour, activity, and liveliness,

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\* Honey was universally used as a symbol of death. The ancients made libations to the dead of honey, wine, and blood. Funeral cakes were placed by the Greeks in the mouth of deceased persons, to appease the wrath of Cerberus. Thus Virgil; *Melle sopocatam et medicatis frugibus offam*. Ποναυα, or round, broad, and thin salt cakes, with honey, made a part of the funeral offerings to Hecate or the Moon.

were thought to be proper emblems of what the Epoptæ termed, *new born souls*. Porphyry concludes his remarks upon the Bees of the mysteries by observing that the Epoptæ did not consider them emblematical of all souls in general, but only of the just. The reason why this distinction was made is evident; the bees symbolized only *the just man and his pious family*, not the incorrigible race which perished beneath the waves of the deluge.”\*

The *Sprig of Acacia* points to that state of moral obscurity to which the world was reduced previously to the appearance of Christ upon the earth; when the reverence and adoration due to the divinity was buried in the filth and rubbish of the world, when religion sat mourning in Israel in sackcloth and ashes, and morality was scattered to the four winds of heaven. In order that mankind might be preserved from this deplorable state of darkness and destruction, and as the old law was dead and become rottenness, a new doctrine and new precepts were wanting to give the key to salvation, in the language of which we might touch the ear of an offended deity, and bring forth hope for eternity. True religion was fled; those who sought her through the wisdom of the ancients were not able to raise her; she eluded the grasp, and their polluted hands were stretched forth in vain for her restoration. Those who sought her by the old law were frustrated,

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\* Fab. Mys. Cab. c. x. with authorities.

for death had stepped between, and corruption had defiled the embrace ; sin had beset her steps, and the vices of the world had overwhelmed her. The Great Father of all, commiserating the miseries of the world, sent his only Son, who was innocence (*acacia*) itself, to teach the doctrines of salvation ; by whom man was raised from the death of sin unto a life of righteousness ; from the tomb of corruption unto the chambers of hope ; from the darkness of despair to the celestial beams of faith ; and not only working for us this redemption, but making with us the covenant of regeneration whence we become the children of God, and inheritors of the realms of heaven.\*

I cannot conclude this Lecture without adding a few words by way of application on the Darkness of Death which will as certainly precede your resurrection, as it did figuratively when your Masonry was completed. Are you rich, and blessed with an abundant superfluity of earthly possessions? To you the approach of death will be bitter indeed, if it find you unprepared, because it will deprive you of all your temporal comforts, without the promise of an equivalent in eternity. Are you poor? Still the apprehension of this event conveys a portion of dismay, which it is difficult entirely to remove. We anticipate with a strong feeling of horror, those bitter agonies, those dreadful pangs, which precede and accompany dissolution. We behold with

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\* *Star in the East*, p. 141.—*Hutch. Sp. of Mas.* p. 159. Ed. 1775.

terror the angel of death approach our dwelling ; and when he lays hold on us to hasten our struggling nature away, we shrink from his grasp, and cling to the world with a delirious embrace, as if all our hopes and wishes were centred in its riches and gratifications. We do not reflect with sensations of pleasure on that event which excludes us from the light of heaven, and consigns us to the damps and darkness of the grave, in which our body must eventually be deposited to be food for worms, and to encounter corruption and decay. We shudder at the thought of being placed in the earth and covered over with mould ; and when the green sod is laid upon our grave, to have taken a last, an eternal farewell of the world and its inhabitants. But we have a still greater dread of this event when we reflect on the eternal destruction of the soul. We know it must be separated from the body ; we know that its doom, once pronounced, is irrevocable ; and we recoil from the prospect of the second death, with consternation and horror. A few brief instructions how to subdue these feelings, may be neither improper nor unacceptable at the conclusion of this Lecture. Fear God and keep his commandments, says a certain Degree of Masonry, after king Solomon, for this is the whole duty of man.\* I would recommend to you the practice of Temperance, not so much to preserve your

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\* Eccles. xii. 13.

constitution untainted, as to prepare for its final dissolution. I would recommend the practice of the golden rule, *do unto others as you would have them do to you*, not so much to preserve the peace and order of civil society, (which notwithstanding it cannot fail to do,) as to inspire in your own bosoms a love of virtue and good will to man. I would recommend Benevolence and Charity, not merely to provide for the necessities of indigence, but to introduce into your soul the fine feelings of humanity, and an extended philanthropy which may embrace in the bonds of love the whole human race. In a word, I would press upon you the practice of Virtue, and not so much for its own sake, as in obedience to the divine command; and in humble imitation of Jesus Christ, whose beneficence was extended to his most obdurate enemies; and who has promised everlasting happiness to all who follow his pure and holy example. If then to your faith you add the virtues of a good life; if you do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God, you have a protection against the fear of death, which nothing earthly can remove or take away; for you have the promise of scripture, that in this case, your latter end shall be in peace.\* Death is divested of his sting; and as your pulse advances to its dying throb, you will serenely await the awful moment when the soul takes

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\* Psalm xxxvii. 37.

wing into the boundless and unexplored expanse ; and in silent meditation you will reflect, I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith ; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day.\*

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\* 2 Timothy iv. 7, 8.

## LECTURE VII.

ON THE THREE PILLARS, WISDOM, STRENGTH, AND BEAUTY.

“ When orient WISDOM beam’d serene,  
 And pillar’d STRENGTH arose ;  
 When BEAUTY tinged the glowing scene,  
 And Faith her mansion chose ;  
 Exulting bands the fabric view’d,  
 Mysterious powers adored,  
 And high the TRIPLE union stood,  
 That gave the mystic WORD.”

*Stanfield.*

THE emblematical foundation of a Mason’s Lodge is Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty. These three noble Pillars give it a stability which no exertion of art or ingenuity can subvert, no force can overthrow. They were thus named in allusion to the perfection with which our system has been endowed by the Almighty Architect ; because without Wisdom to contrive, Strength to support, and Beauty to adorn, no structure can be perfect. And this is illustrated by a reference to the most splendid and awful images which can be presented to the human mind. The universe is the temple of the Deity whom we serve ; Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty are about his Throne as Pillars of his work ; for his wisdom is infinite, his strength



is omnipotence, and his beauty shines forth through all his creation in symmetry and order. He hath stretched forth the heavens as a canopy, the earth he hath planted as his footstool ; he hath crowned this superb temple with stars as with a diadem, and in his hand he extendeth the power and the glory ; the sun and moon are messengers of his will, and all his laws are concord.\* This universal harmony of nature and nature's works, emblematical of the peace and unity which subsists in a Mason's Lodge, is produced from the union of those sublime qualities by which our fabric is supported, Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty.

The first Pillars used by the primitive inhabitants of the earth, were merely trunks of trees, placed upright on stones to elevate them above the damp, and covered at the top with a flat stone to keep off the rain. On these the roofs of their huts were placed, covered with reeds and plastered with clay to resist the effects of tempestuous weather. From such simple elements sprang the noble Orders of Architecture. But Pillars were not confined to this use alone. In primitive times they were appropriated to the purpose of perpetuating remarkable events ; and were erected as monuments of gratitude to divine Providence for favours conferred, or for dangers avoided. By the idolatrous race who first seceded from the true worship of God, Pillars were dedicated to the *Host of Heaven*. Of this nature

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\* Hutch. Sp. of Mas. p. 93.

were the Pillars set up by Hypsouranios, and Ousous to Fire and Air before the Flood, which were termed *βαεινλια*.\* Osiris set up Pillars in commemoration of his conquests, on which were hieroglyphical inscriptions, importing the degree of resistance made by the inhabitants of those countries which he subdued. The ancient kings of Egypt followed this example, and usually engraved records of their conquests, power, and magnificence, on obelisks or pillars.† Sesostris, in his military progress through the nations he had vanquished, erected pillars, on which hieroglyphical inscriptions were engraven, accompanied by certain emblematical devices, expressive of the bravery or pusillanimity of the conquered people.‡ And, if Proclus may be believed, all extraordinary events, singular transactions, and new inventions, were recorded by the Egyptians on stone pillars. Hiram, king of Tyre, according to Menander, dedicated a pillar of gold to Jupiter, on the grand junction he had formed between Eurichorus and Tyre.§

¶ This custom was also in use amongst the descendants of Seth and Shem; who erected Pillars to the honour of the true God, the creator and preserver of all things. Enoch erected two Pillars, in order to transmit his knowledge to posterity, by inscriptions engraven on such materials as were calculated to resist

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\* Sanch. in Euseb. de præp. evan. l. i. c. 10.

† Diod. Sic. l. i. c. 4.

‡ Diod. Strabo. &c.

§ Ios. con. Apion.

the element by which the world was to be destroyed. The Pillar of Jacob at Bethel,\* was constructed to commemorate his most extraordinary vision and covenant with God. On this pillar he poured oil, whence arose the custom amongst the heathens of consecrating their idols by anointing them with oil. A similar monument was erected by the same patriarch at Galeed, to perpetuate the treaty of amity with his uncle Laban;† by Joshua at Gilgal, on his miraculous passage over the river Jordan;‡ and by Samuel, between Mizpeh and Shen, on a remarkable defeat of the Philistines.§ Absalom erected a Pillar in honour of himself,|| which, as we are told by modern travellers, remains to this day; but Dr. Lloyd says that the passers by throw stones at it in detestation of his memory. And Solomon set up two Pillars at the entrance of the Porch of the Temple, to remind the Jews of their dependance upon God for every thing they possessed; evidenced by their escape from Egypt, and their miraculous wandering and preservation in the wilderness for a period of forty years.¶

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\* Genesis xxviii. 18.

† Genesis xxxi. 45.

‡ Joshua iv. 20.

§ 1 Samuel vii. 12.

|| 2 Samuel xviii. 18.

¶ “The pillars erected at the porch of the temple,” says Hutchinson, in his *Spirit of Masonry*, published under the sanction of the Grand Lodge, “were not only ornamental, but also carried with them an emblematical import in their names. Boaz being in its literal translation, *in thee is strength*; and Jachin, *it shall be established*; which by a very natural transposition may be put thus: O Lord, thou art mighty, and thy power is *established* from everlasting to everlasting. Or, otherwise, they might imply, as Boaz was the father of David, the house of David shall be

It is needless to add that commemorative Columns were used by every nation of the world; and never with more propriety and effect than in our own country at the present day.

The particular Pillars which are the subject of this Lecture, are emblematical of three great Masonic characters, whose united abilities rendered an essential service to true religion, by the construction of a primitive Temple, then first dedicated to the exclusive purpose of religious worship; for they jointly possessed the essential properties which characterize the three great sustaining Pillars of our Lodge; the one had Wisdom to contrive; another had Strength to support;\* and the third possessed genius and ability to adorn the edifice with unexampled Beauty. The result of this union was "a building which highly transcended all that we are capable to imagine, and has ever been esteemed

established for ever. I am justified in this latter application by the express words of Nathan the Prophet unto David, inspired by the vision of the Lord, (2 Sam. vii. 12, 13, 16.) And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish thy kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. *And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee; thy throne shall be established for ever.*"

\* "Tatian, in his Book against the Greeks, relates, that amongst the Phœnicians flourished three ancient historians, Theodotus, Hysicrates, and Mochus, who all of them delivered in their histories, an account of the league and friendship between Solomon and Hiram, when Hiram gave his daughter to Solomon, and furnished him with timber for building the Temple. The same is affirmed by Menander of Pergamus."—*Sir Isaac Newton's Chron.* p. 114.

the finest piece of masonry upon earth, before or since.”\* “This magnificent work was begun in Mount Moriah, on Monday the second day of the month Zif, which answers to the twenty-first of our April, being the second month of the sacred year ; and was carried on with such speed, that it was finished in all its parts in a little more than seven years, which happened on the eighth day of the month Bul, which answers to the twenty-third of our October, being the seventh month of the sacred year, and the eleventh of king Solomon. What is still more astonishing, is, that every piece of it, whether timber, stone, or metal, was brought ready cut, framed, and polished to Jerusalem ; so that no other tools were wanted nor heard, than what were necessary to join the several parts together. All the noise of axe, hammer, and saw, was confined to Lebanon, and the quarries and plains of Zeredathah, that nothing might be heard among the masons of Sion, save harmony and peace.”†

These Pillars refer further to the three governors of the Lodge. The pillar of Wisdom represents the W. M. whose business is to exert his judgment and penetration, in *contriving* the most proper and efficient means of completing the intended work, of what nature soever it may be. The pillar of Strength refers to the S. W. whose duty is to *support* the authority, and facilitate the designs of the Master with all his in-

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\* Noorth. Const. p. 26.

† Noorth. Const. p. 25.

fluence amongst the Brethren, and to see that his commands are carried into full and permanent effect. The pillar of Beauty is the J. W. whose duty it is to *adorn* the work with all his powers of genius and active industry; to promote regularity amongst the Brethren by the sanction of his own good example, the persuasive eloquence of precept, and a discriminative encouragement of merit. Thus by the united energies of these three presiding Officers, the system is adorned and established firm as a rock in the midst of the ocean, braving the malignant shafts of envy and detraction; its summit gilded with the rays of the meridian sun, though stormy winds and waves beat eternally on its basis.

In the British and other mysteries, these three Pillars represented the great emblematical *Triad of Deity*, as with us they refer to the three principal officers of the Lodge. We shall find however that the symbolical meaning was the same in both. It is a fact, that in Britain, the *Adytum* or Lodge was *actually* supported by three stones or pillars, which were supposed to convey a regenerating purity to the aspirant, after having endured the ceremony of initiation in all its accustomed formalities. The delivery from between them was termed a *new birth*.\* The corresponding Pillars of the Hindu mythology were also known by the names of Wisdom, Strength,

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\* Hanes Taliesin. c. iii.—Dav. Druids, p. 230.

and Beauty, and placed in the east, west, and south, crowned with three human heads. They jointly referred to the Creator, who was said to have planned the Great Work by his infinite *Wisdom*; executed it by his *Strength*; and to have adorned it with all its *Beauty* and usefulness for the benefit of man. These united powers were not overlooked in the mysteries, for we find them represented in the solemn ceremony of initiation by the three presiding Brahmins or Hierophants. The chief Brahmin sat in the east, high exalted on a brilliant throne, clad in a flowing robe of azure, thickly sparkled with golden stars, and bearing in his hand a magical rod; thus symbolizing Brahma, the creator of the world. His two compeers, clad in robes of equal magnificence, occupied corresponding situations of distinction. The representative of Vishnu, the setting sun, was placed on an exalted throne in the west; and he who personated Siva, the meridian sun, occupied a splendid throne in the south.

The Masonic Lodge, bounded only by the extreme points of the compass, the highest heavens, and the lowest depth of the central abyss, is said to be supported by Three Pillars, Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty. In like manner the Persians, who termed their emblematical Mithratic Cave or Lodge, the Æmpeyrean, feigned it to be supported by Three Intelligences, Ormisda, Mithra, and Mithras, who were usually denominated from certain characteristics which they

were supposed individually to possess, *Eternity, Fecundity, and Authority*.\* Similar to this were the forms of the Egyptian deity, designated by the attributes of *Wisdom, Power, and Goodness*;† and the *Sovereign Good, Intellect, and Energy* of the Platonists which were also regarded as the respective properties of the divine Triad.‡

It is remarkable that every mysterious system practised on the habitable globe, contained this Triad of Deity, which some writers refer to the Trinity; and others to the triple offspring of Noah. The Oracle in Damascius asserts that “throughout the world a *Triad shines forth, which resolves itself into a Monad*,”§ and the uniform symbol of this threefold deity was, an equilateral triangle; the precise form occupied by our pillars of Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty. In the mysteries of India, *Brahma—Vishnu—Siva*, were considered as a tri-une god, distinguished by the sig-

\* Vid. Ramsay's Travels of Cyrus, and Dissertation thereto annexed.

† Plut. de Isid. and Osir. p. 373.

‡ Plat. in Timæo.

§ It is probable that the idea of Unity was not merely attached to the true God, but to the personification of Adam and Noah, who were equally worshipped in India under the name of Brahma, or the Creative power, because the parent of mankind; for Brahma was confessedly only a created being. If he represented Adam or Noah, the triad Brahma—Vishnu—Siva, was either Abel—Seth—Cain, or Shem—Japheth—Ham; and there exists considerable doubt, after all, whether the being to whom the rites of Hindoo adoration are still devoutly paid, be any thing more than a mere deified mortal. See *Faber's Pagan Idolatry*, (b. i. c. 2.) where many powerful arguments are used to this effect.



nificant appellation of Tri-murti.\* Brahma was said to be the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver, and Siva the Judge or Destroyer. In the East, as the pillar of Wisdom, this deity was called Brahma; in the West, as the pillar of Strength, Vishnu; and in the South, as the pillar of Beauty, Siva; and hence, in the Indian initiations, as we have just observed, the representative of Brahma was seated in the East; that of Vishnu in the West; and that of Siva in the South. A very remarkable coincidence with the practice of ancient Masonry.

Mr. Faber offers the following reasonable conjecture on the origin of these idolatrous Triads. "Adam was born from the *virgin* earth; Noah was produced from his allegorical mother the Ark, without the co-operation of a father. Each was a preacher of righteousness; each dwelt upon the paradisiacal mount of God; each was a universal parent. If Adam introduced one world, Noah destroyed that world and introduced another; and as the actual circumstance of two successive worlds led to the doctrine of an endless mundane succession, each patriarch was alike received as a Creator, a Preserver, and a Destroyer."† Sir William Jones very strongly reprobates the principle

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\* "The word MURTI or FORM, is exactly synonymous with εἰδωλον; and in a secondary sense means an image; but in its primary acceptation it denotes any shape or appearance assumed by a celestial being."—*Wilford in Asiat. Res.* vol. iii. p. 359.

† *Fab. Pag. Idol. b. vi. c. 6.*

which would resolve these triads, into the doctrine of the Trinity. In his essay on the gods of Italy, Greece, and India,\* he says, "Very respectable natives have assured me, that one or two missionaries have been absurd enough, in their zeal for the conversion of the gentiles, to urge, that the Hindus were even now almost Christians, because their Brahma, Vishnu, and Mahesa, (Siva) were no other than the Christian Trinity; a sentence in which we can only doubt whether folly, ignorance, or impiety predominates. The three powers, *creative, preservative, and destructive*, which the Hindus express by the trilateral word OM, were grossly ascribed by the first idolaters to the *heat, light, and flame* of their mistaken divinity the Sun; and their wiser successors in the East, who perceived that the sun was only a created thing, applied those powers to its Creator; but the Indian Triad and that of Plato, which he calls the *Supreme Good, the Reason, and the Soul*, are infinitely removed from the holiness and sublimity of the doctrine which pious Christians have deduced from texts in the gospel." "In another point of view," says Captain Wilford,† "Brahma corresponds with the Chronos or *Time* of the Greek mythologists; Vishnu represents *Water*, or the humid principle; and Iswara (another name of Siva) *Fire*, which recreates or destroys as it is differently employed."

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\* Asiat. Research. vol. i. p. 272.

† Asiat. Research. vol. iii. p. 359.

It seems not altogether improbable, however, but these Triads which are quaintly termed by Purchas, "an apish imitation of the Trinity, brought in by the devil;"\* might *originate* from a tradition of the Holy Trinity, revealed to Adam, and propagated by his descendants through the antediluvian world. Known consequently to Noah and his family, this doctrine would spread with every migration of their posterity; and as it certainly formed a part of that original system which is now termed Masonry, so it was introduced into every perversion of that system, until the doctrine of a divine Triad resolvable into a monad, was universally disseminated in every nation, and was admitted by every people in the world. In successive ages the true purport became lost or misunderstood, but the principle remained, though its application ceased to be made to the true God and Father of all, and was generally transferred to the three sons of Noah, as a triplication of the mortal Father of the human race.†

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\* Purch. Pilgr. b. ix. c. 10.

† "Nearly all the Pagan nations of antiquity, in their various theological systems, acknowledged a kind of Trinity in the divine nature, has been fully evinced by those learned men, who have made the heathen mythology the subject of their elaborate enquiries. The almost universal prevalence of this doctrine in the gentile kingdoms must be considered as a strong argument in favour of its truth. The doctrine itself bears such striking internal marks of a Divine original, and is so very unlikely to have been the invention of mere human reason, that there is no way of accounting for the general adoption of so singular a belief, but by supposing that it was revealed by God to the early patriarchs, and that it was transmitted by them to their posterity. In its progress, indeed, to remote countries, and to distant generations, this belief became depraved and corrupted in the highest

The Grecian Triad consisted of Jupiter—Neptune—Pluto;\* the Orphic of Phanes—Uranus—Chronus; the Platonic of Tagathon—Nous—Psyche; the Eleusinian of Bacchus—Proserpine—Ceres;† the Egyptian of Trismegistus or Osiris—Isis—Horus, perhaps of Eicton—Cneph—Phtha; the Persian of the triplasian Mithras or Ormisda—Mithra—Mithras; the Phenician of Ashtaroth—Milcom—Chemosh;‡ the Tyrian of Belus—Venus—Thammuz; the Celtic of Hu—Ceridwen—Creirwy; the Gothic of Woden—

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degree; and He alone 'who brought life and immortality to light,' could restore it to its original simplicity and purity. The discovery of the existence of this doctrine in the early ages, among the nations whose records have been the best preserved, has been of great service to the cause of Christianity, and completely refutes the assertion of infidels and sceptics, that the sublime and mysterious doctrine of the Trinity owes its origin to the philosophers of Greece. 'If we extend,' says Mr. Maurice, 'our eye through the remote region of antiquity, we shall find this very doctrine, which the primitive Christians are said to have borrowed from the Platonic school, universally and immemorably flourishing in all those countries, where history and tradition have united to fix those virtuous ancestors of the human race, who, for their distinguished attainments in piety, were admitted to a familiar intercourse with Jehovah and the Angels, the Divine heralds of his commands.'"—*Bp. Tomline's Theol.*

\* In this triad it is worthy of remark, that Jupiter is distinguished by the *three-forked lightning*; Neptune by the *trident*; and Pluto by Cerberus the *three-headed dog*.

† In a temple mentioned by Pausanias, (*Attic. p. 6.*) Bacchus, Ceres, and Proserpine were worshipped together. In another temple Ceres, Proserpine, Minerva, and Apollo; and in a third the West Wind, Ceres, Proserpine, Minerva, and Neptune were united objects of adoration.—*Jul. Firm. de Error. Prof. Rel. p. 89, 91.*

‡ This was the form of that abominable Triad worshipped by King Solomon in his dotage, on the three peaks of Mount Olivet.—*2 Kings xxiii. 13.*

Friga—Thor;\* the Peruvian of Tangatanga, or Three in One and One in Three; and the Mexican of Vitzliputzli—Tlaloc—Tescalipuca.†

In our own country the Triad was usually represented by THREE PILLARS; and many monuments remain which show to what an extent this system of devotion was carried by the British Druids. These pillars were not always uniform either in dimensions or situation, but were differently placed, either triangularly or in a right line; and were certainly objects of adoration to the superstitious natives.‡ The celebrated Pillars at Boroughbridge were of this nature. They consist of three colossal, upright stones placed at about two hundred feet distant from each other; and stand about twenty-two feet above the surface of the ground, measuring on an average sixteen feet in circumference. They are termed by the country people, The Devil's Arrows, which corroborates the opinion that they were British deities; for it is a singular fact, that every monument which has this name attached to it, is supposed to have been peculiarly sacred.§ Leland

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\* Olaus Magnus, in his history of the Goths, tells us that the Lithuanians worshipped a Triad consisting of Fire, Wood, and Serpents.

† The tenets of religion amongst our ancestors were founded on *three* fundamental articles, viz. reverence for the Deity—abstaining from evil—behaving valiantly in battle; and the triad rule for the preservation of health was, cheerfulness—temperance—exercise.—(*Smith. Gael. Ant.* p. 80.) Aristotle and Plutarch say that the number three was held mysterious because it comprehended the beginning—middle—end.

‡ Pennant's Tour from Alston Moor to Harrogate, p. 96.

§ The reasons for this belief are fully discussed in my "Antiquities of Grimsby," p. 59, 60.

tells us\* that there were originally *four* Pillars, and that one of them has been destroyed.† This might have been of still more extensive magnitude, and designed to express the triad completed in a monad. The three‡ stones which formed one of the Adyta in the stupendous Druid Temple at Abury in Wiltshire, said by Gough in Camden, to have served for a Chapel, are called by Aubrey, The Devil's Quoits. A Kist-vaen in Clatford bottom in the same county, is also composed of three upright stones, and is called, The Devil's Den. In the parish of Llan Rhwy-Drus, in that grand depository of Druidical superstition, Anglesey, are the remains of this species of idol. Gibson in Camden informs us that they are placed triangularly; one is eleven feet, and the others ten and nine feet in height. On a mountain near Kil y maen lhwyd in Caermarthenshire, is another specimen of this kind of monument, placed near a circular temple. In Penrith church-yard, in the county of Cumberland, still remain Three Pillars placed triangularly, and erected on other stones to avoid the supposed contamination of the earth. Two of them are about twelve feet, and the third about six feet in height. The two former enclose a space of ground which is traditionally denominated the Giant's Grave; and the latter is

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\* Itin. v. 8.

† Vid. also Drake's Hist. of York, p. 27.

‡ The Druids had an extraordinary veneration for the number *three*; and on this principle, says Vallancey, it was, that the mistletoe was held so sacred by them, since not only its berries, but its leaves also, grow in clusters of three united on one stalk.

The Giant's Thumb. Now the British deities were all esteemed giants ; and the tradition in this instance corresponds with the fact. Besides, the Pastos, or symbolical grave, in which the candidate suffered a mythological interment, was said to be guarded by the gigantic deity Buanwr, and if these three pillars formed constituent parts of an adytum, which is highly probable, the name it now retains is perfectly consistent with the pure principles of British mythology. Much has been written on the subject of these Pillars by all our best antiquaries, who seem to agree that they were of British erection, though they puzzled to account for their being inscribed with a Cross. But this doubtless arose from the anxiety uniformly displayed by the first christian missionaries to transfer the devotional attachment of the natives from a lifeless image to the eternal God, by assuming *the great emblem of christianity*, which had indeed been previously used by the Druids, but with a different allusion. And this conjecture is strikingly exemplified by the fact, that a christian church was erected within the actual bounds of this sanctuary of idolatry.

Such were the representatives of Hu—Ceridwen—Creirwy, the principal deities of the ancient inhabitants of this island, or their substitutes the three presiding officers of the British mysteries, who were denominated Cadeiriath, Goronwy, and Fleidwr Flam, seated in the east, west, and south. Before these senseless blocks of unhewn stone, the more senseless inhabitants of

Britain prostrated themselves daily in humble adoration ; firmly persuaded that their prosperity in every undertaking, nay, even the preservation of their lives and liberties was dependant on the beneficent agency of these shapeless idols!

I shall conclude the present Lecture with a brief consideration of the ultimate reference which the Three Masonic Pillars bear to your moral and religious duties. As the Doric, the Ionic, and the Corinthian Orders of Architecture are said to support your Lodge, so let your conduct be governed by the qualities they represent. Let *Wisdom* guide your steps to that fountain of knowledge, and source of truth, the Holy Bible. There shall you find rules for the government of your actions ; and the path that leads to eternity. Even the science you profess instructs you, that if you be conversant in the doctrines of this Holy Book, and strictly adherent to its precepts, it will conduct you to a building not made with hands, eternally in the heavens. Proceed in this career armed with the *Strength* of faith and hope, assured that if your faith in the Deity be securely founded, your constancy can never fail ; so shall your charity shine forth in all the *Beauty* of holiness ; your acts of piety and virtue shall emit a brilliancy like the Sun pursuing his daily course in the heavens, and finally secure you a place in the Grand Lodge above, where Peace, Order, and Harmony eternally abide.



## LECTURE VIII.

## ON THE MASONIC LADDER.

“ ————— Far distant he descrys,  
 Ascending by *Degrees* magnificent  
 Up to the wall of heaven, a structure high,  
 At top whereof, but far more rich, appear'd  
 The work as of a kingly palace gate.

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The *Stairs* were such as whereon Jacob saw  
 Angels ascending and descending.”

*Milton.*

WE have now contemplated the great object of our FAITH and HOPE ; we have beheld the unlimited power exhibited in the expulsion of our first parents from the garden of Eden, and the subsequent destruction of the antediluvian world ; events which have been uniformly grafted into all the mysteries of heathen nations. And we have considered with feelings of surprise and regret, how mankind renounced the true and living God in conjunction with LIGHT, and devoted themselves to imaginary deities, who were worshipped in union with *Darkness*; which elicited the vengeance of insulted Purity in a series of scourges inflicted on them by war, pestilence, and famine. But in the midst of justice He always remembered mercy. After the first great dis-

play of power in the general destruction of mankind, this gracious Being placed his bow in the clouds, as a divine token that mercy should now prevail ; and that he would no more destroy the earth by a flood of waters. And when mankind had degenerated to the lowest point of human depravity, he sent his Son to make atonement for them, that lost purity might be restored, faith and hope placed on a firm foundation, and his fallen creatures readmitted within the sphere of his favour and protection. Thus the dark clouds of divine wrath are dissipated, the heavens are opened ; and we enjoy a ray of his glory in the *celestial covering of the Lodge*. And more than this ; the same divine Being has taught us how to attain the summit of the same, by means which are emblematically depicted by a ladder consisting of three principal ROUNDS or STAVES, which point to the three Theological Virtues, FAITH, HOPE, and CHARITY. We are now to consider the origin and application of this Symbol, by which a communication is opened between the creature and his Creator, with the gracious design of restoring to man that supreme happiness which was forfeited by Adam's transgression.

The application of this emblem is said to be derived from the vision of Jacob. When the Patriarch, to avoid the wrath of his brother Esau, fled to Padanaram ; benighted and asleep, with the earth for his bed, a stone for his pillow, and the cloudy canopy of heaven for his covering, he beheld a LADDER, whose

foot was placed on the spot where he lay, and its summit lost in the subtile ether. On this Ladder, angels continually ascended and descended, to receive communications from the Most High, who visibly appeared above the uppermost round of the Ladder; and to disseminate their divine commissions over the face of the earth. Here God graciously condescended to enter into a specific covenant with the sleeping Patriarch; who was hence so impressed with the feelings of gratitude and devotion, that when he awoke, he pronounced this consecrated spot, "the house of God, and the gate of heaven."\*

The history of an event of such importance, connected with a very significant emblem, which was probably a square pyramid with steps on every side, might with unequivocal effect, be introduced by Jacob into the system of Masonry which he taught to his children,† and from them be transplanted into the mysteries of Egypt, whence it might spread into other countries, until the symbol became common to the mysteries of all. I rather incline to the opinion however, that its origin may be ascribed to a much earlier period; even to the first institution of Masonry in Paradise, when the communication between God and man, was immediately and unrestrainedly practised by the common parents of mankind. The ascent to the summit of the paradisiacal mount of God, by means of a pyramid

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\* Genesis xxviii. 17.

† Vid. Antiq. of Masonry, p. 204.

consisting of seven steps, was an old notion, certainly entertained before the vision of Jacob; for it prevailed amongst the Mexican Savages;\* and the original settlers on the vast continent of America could have no knowledge of this vision, either by tradition or personal experience. The Jewish Cabalists entertained a belief that the paradisiacal mount was the place of residence chosen by the children of Seth, while the contaminated descendants of Cain resided in the plains below; and its altitude was said to be so great, that from its summit might be heard, the angels of heaven singing their celestial anthems before the throne of God!

In ancient Masonry, the Ladder was figuratively said to rest on the Holy Bible, and to consist of three *principal* staves, although the general number was indefinite, pointing to Faith, Hope, and Charity, as the fundamental virtues which exalt mankind from earth to heaven. But in subsequent ages, the Essenes increased the number to *seven*, and subsequently to *ten* principal steps, which were denominated the *Sephiroth*.

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\* In the midst of a thick forest, says M. Humboldt, called Tajin, near the gulf of Mexico, rises the pyramid of Papantla. It had ~~seven~~ <sup>seven</sup> stories; was built of hewn stone, and was very beautifully and regularly shaped. ~~Three~~ <sup>three</sup> stair cases led to the top. The covering of its steps was decorated with hieroglyphical sculpture and small niches, which were arranged with great symmetry. The number of these niches seems to allude to the three hundred and eighteen simple and compound signs of the days of the Com-pohualihuitl, or civil calendar of the Toltecks.—*Researches in America*, vol. i. p. 86.

In the emblematical representation of these divine splendours, we find the three great hypostases of the godhead surmounting the seven steps of the Ladder, and by regular gradations ascending to the celestial abodes. The names of the Seven Sephiroth were, *Strength, Mercy, Beauty, Victory or Eternity, Glory, the Foundation, and the Kingdom.* Initiation was considered absolutely necessary to intitle the candidate to a participation in these divine splendours; which communicated with each other by progressive stages; until, from the summit of the Ladder, the three hypostases of the divine nature were attained whose consummation was a crown of glory and the throne of God.



Amongst the heathen this Ladder always consisted of seven steps or gradations ; probably as a memorial of the seven magnificent Stories of the Tower of Babel ; or it might have been derived from a tradition respecting the establishment of the Sabbath, in commemoration of the great day of rest which followed the creation and received the peculiar benediction of the Most High.\* This division of time and consecration of the seventh day was known to the sons of Noah, as we may gather from our own scriptures, for it was practically enforced by the patriarch while he continued in the Ark.† Hence the sacred nature of the seventh day was universally acknowledged by all nations of their posterity;‡ and consequently many mysterious properties were ascribed to the number itself.§ The extreme probability that the number seven was applied to the Theological Ladder with this reference, may be deduced from the fact, that each gradation was appropriated to *a day in the week*, and also to a particular planet ; and it is observable that the seven days, and the seven planets, were made to

\* Genesis ii. 3.

† Genesis viii. 10, 12.

‡ Dion. Cass. l. xxxiii. Acosta and Humboldt are of opinion that no nation of the New Continent was acquainted with the week or cycle of seven days. But Garcilasso, Bailly, and Lalande unite in believing that the natives of America did compute their time by this cycle like the inhabitants of the Old World.

§ The Druids assigned to man seven senses. Thus Taliesin says, “ of seven faculties, one is what I know by instinct ; with the second I touch ; with the third I call ; with the fourth I taste ; with the fifth I see ; with the sixth I hear ; with the seventh I smell.”—*Owen's Dict. v. Rhyddaw.*

correspond in almost every country in the world. Our own names of both may be referred to as a corroboration of the system. Thus Sunday is so called from the Sun; Monday, from the Moon; Tuesday and Wednesday, from Tuisco and Woden, the Gothic Mercury and Mars; Thursday, from Thór, the Jupiter of the same people;\* Friday, from the goddess Friga, who amongst the Getæ corresponds with the Grecian Venus; and Saturday, from the idol Seater, who represented Saturn amongst the northern nations of Europe.†

The Ladder with seven steps was used in the Indian mysteries to designate the approach of the Soul to perfection. The steps were usually denominated *gates*. The meaning is undoubtedly the same; for it is observable that Jacob, in reference to the lower *stave* of his Ladder, exclaimed, “this is the house of God, and the *gate* of heaven.” Here we find the notion of ascending to heaven by means of the practice of moral virtue, depicted by the Hebrew Patriarchs and by a remote idolatrous nation under the idea of a *Ladder*; which we may hence conclude was a Masonic symbol

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\* There exists some degree of confusion relative to the appropriation of these days. Tuisco may be more properly assimilated with the Roman Mercury, and Woden with Mars. But Tertullian says (Apol. c. ix.) that Thór was the same as Mercury; and Brady tells us that (Clav. Calend. vol. i. p. 117.) “the Romans dedicated Wednesday to Mercury, from which cause it was called *Dies Mercurii, feria quarta*; and the Roman Mercury and the Saxon Odin have from thence, and in despite of the Roman Idol not having been a warrior, usually been regarded as the same deity.”

† Verst. Rest. of Dec. Intell. c. iii.—Brady’s Clav. Calend.

much earlier than the time of Jacob. These gates were said to be composed of different metals of gradually increasing purity; each being dignified with the name of its protecting planet. The first and lowest was composed of lead, and dedicated to Saturn; the second of quicksilver, sacred to Mercury; the third of copper under the protection of Venus; the fourth of tin, typical of Jupiter; the fifth of iron, sacred to Mars; the sixth of silver, dedicated to the Moon; and the uppermost stave, which constituted the summit of perfection, and opened a way to the residence of celestial deities, was composed of the pure and imperishable substance of gold, and was under the protection of their Most High God, the Sun.

In these mysteries, during the ceremony of initiation, the candidate was passed successively through seven dark and winding caverns;\* which progress was

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\* In every country under heaven the initiations were performed in caverns either natural or artificial. Several of the former are still in existence in this country. There is a remarkable one in Somersetshire, called *Wokey hole*; which is described as *a very dark and dismal cavern consisting of various apartments*, amongst which one is now called a hall, another the kitchen, others the ball room, cellar, &c. There are also resemblances of a man's head, a monument or tombstone, a dog, the statue of a woman (in white stone), called the old witch, a table, and many other artificial things in the natural rock. *There are two cisterns always full of clear water, which trickles from the top of the rock, but never runs over in great quantities.* A huge stone, which when lifted from, and let fall to the ground, makes a noise like the report of a cannon, has for that reason got the appellation of the great gun. There are also two rivulets abounding in trout and eels, which run through this cave making a tremendous noise; one of them turns several mills after it is out. The inside of this cave is rocky



mystically denominated, *the ascent of the Ladder*. Each cavern terminated in a narrow stone orifice, which formed an entrance into its successor. Through these gates of purification, the mortified aspirant was compelled to squeeze his body with considerable labour; and when he had attained the summit, he was said to have passed through the transmigration of the spheres, to have accomplished the ascent of the soul, and to merit the favour of the celestial deities. These seven stages of initiation, emblematical of the seven worlds, are thus explained. "The place where all beings whether fixed or moveable exist, is called earth, which is the *First World*. That in which beings exist a second time, but without sensation, again to become sensible at the close of the period appointed for the duration of the present universe, is the *World of Re-existence*. The abode of the good, where cold, heat, and light are perpetually produced, is named *Heaven*. The intermediate region between the upper and lower worlds, is denominated the *Middle World*. The heaven, where animals, destroyed in a general conflagration, at the close of the appointed period, are born again, is thence called the *World of Births*. That, in which Sanaca

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and uneven, the surface ascending and descending, as is the case in most other subterraneous places. It is in some places, eight fathoms, or forty-eight feet, high, and in others not above six. Its length is computed to be about six hundred and forty feet; in some parts the water dropping from the rock, hangs down like icicles, which has a very beautiful effect. The rock inside is of different colours, being in some parts of a silvery hue, while in others it glitters like diamonds.

and other sons of Brahma, justified by austere devotion, reside exempt from all dominion, is thence named the *Mansion of the Blessed, Truth*, the Seventh World, and the abode of Brahma,\* is placed on the summit above other worlds. It is attained by true knowledge, by the regular discharge of duties, and by veracity: once attained it is never lost. Truth is indeed the seventh world, therefore called *the sublime abode.*"†

In the Persian mysteries, the candidate, by a similar process, was passed through seven spacious caverns, connected by winding passages, each opening with a narrow portal, and each the scene of some perilous adventure to try his courage and fortitude before he was admitted into the splendid Sacellum, which being illuminated with a thousand torches, reflected every shade of colour from rich gems and amulets, with which the walls were copiously bedecked. The dangerous progress was denominated *ascending the Ladder of perfection.*

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\* This being was identified with LIGHT, for the Brahmins say, "because the being who shines with *seven* rays, assuming the forms of time and fire; matures productions; is resplendent; illuminates, and finally destroys the universe; therefore he who naturally shines with seven rays is called Light, or the effulgent power." (*Colebrook. Asiat. Res.* vol. 5. p. 350.) Thus Brahm is Light; and Light is the principle of life in every created thing. "Light and darkness are esteemed the world's eternal ways; he who walketh in the former path, returneth not, *i. e.* he goeth immediately to bliss; whilst he who walketh in the latter, cometh back again upon the earth," or is subjected to further tedious transmigrations.—*Bhagvat. Geeta.* p. 76.

† Colebrooke, in *Asiat. Research.* vol. 5. p. 351.

From this doctrine has arisen the tale of Rustam, who was the Persian Hercules, and Dive Sepid, or the White Giant.\*

“ Cai-Caus, the successor of Cai-Cobab, the first monarch of the Caianian dynasty, is instigated by the song of a minstrel to attempt the conquest of Mazenderaun, which is celebrated as a perfect earthly Paradise.”

This celestial abode refers to the splendid sacellum of the Persian Epoptæ, which was an emblematical representation of heaven.

“ It lies in the regions of Aspruz, at the foot of which, with respect to Persia, the Sun sets; and in literal geography it is determined to be a province bordering on the Caspian Sea. Hence it is part of that high tract of country denominated the Tabaric or Gordyeân range, within the limits of which the groves of Eden were planted, and the Ark rested after the Deluge. Cai-Caus fails in his enterprise; for the sacred country is guarded by the White Giant, *who smites him and all his troops with blindness, and makes them his prisoners.*”

This is a literal account of the first stage of initiation, which, in the mysteries, always commenced with *Darkness*. In those of Britain the candidate is designated as a *blind man*. He is commanded to prepare the Cauldron of Ceridwen, *three drops* of whose contents,

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\* Fab. Pag. Idol. vol. iii. p. 328.

properly concocted, were said to possess the faculty of *restoring the sight*, and infusing a knowledge of futurity. Being unsuccessful, Ceridwen (*the giantess*) strikes the unfortunate aspirant a violent blow over his head with an Oar, and causes one of his eyeballs to fall from the socket.\* And the captivity of Cai-Caus and his Persians in the Cavern, under the rigid guardianship of the Dive, is but a figurative representation of the candidate's inclosure under the Pastos; and this place of penance in the Celtic Mysteries, which had many ceremonies in common with those of Persia,† was said to be guarded by the gigantic deity Buanwr, armed with a drawn sword, who is represented as a most powerful and vindictive being, capable in his fury of making heaven, earth, and hell, to tremble.‡ In the Gothic mysteries, the same place of captivity and penance is fabled to be guarded by Heimdall, whose trumpet emits so loud a blast, that the sound is heard through all the worlds.§

“ In this emergency the king sends a messenger to Zaul, the father of the hero Rustam, begging his immediate assistance. For the greater dispatch, Rustam takes the shorter, though more dangerous road, and departs alone, mounted on his charger Rakesh.”

Here Rustam enters upon the dreadful and dangerous business of initiation, mounted, says the legend,

\* Hanes Taliesin. apud Dav. Druids, p. 213, 229.

† Borl. Ant. of Corn. b. ii. c. 22.

‡ Dav. Notes on Taliesin's Cad Goddeu.

§ Edda Fab. 15.

upon the charger Rakesh, or more properly Rakshi. This was a horrible winged animal, whose common food is said to have been serpents and dragons. Now these reptiles, together with monsters compounded of two or more animals, were the ordinary machinery used in the mysteries to prove the courage and fortitude of the aspirant, during his progress through the seven stages of regeneration.

“ The course which he chooses is styled, *THE ROAD OF THE SEVEN STAGES* ; and at each of the first six he meets with a different adventure by which his persevering courage is severely tried.”

At each of the seven stages the candidate really encountered many dangers ; and vanquished a multitude of dives, dragons, and enchanters who in succession opposed his progress to perfection.\* Being pantomimically enacted during the process of initiation, and the reiterated attacks prosecuted with unrelenting severity, instances have occurred where the poor affrighted wretch has absolutely expired through excess of fear.

“ Having at length however fought his way to *the seventh*, he discovers his prince and the captive Persians ; when he learns from Cai-Caus, that nothing will restore his sight but the application of *three drops of blood* from the heart of the *White Giant*.”

The symbolical *three* drops of blood, had its coun-

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\* Shah name, in Richardson's Dissert. East. Nat.

terpart in all the mysteries of the ancient world ; for the number three was ineffable, and the conservator of many virtues. In Britain, the emblem was three drops of water ; in Mexico, as in this legend, three drops of blood ; in India, it was a Belt composed of three triple threads ; in China, the three strokes of the letter Y, &c. &c.

“ Upon this, he attacks his formidable enemy *in the Cavern* where he was accustomed to dwell ; *and having torn out his heart*, after an obstinate combat, he infuses the prescribed three drops into the eyes of Cai-Caus, *who immediately regains his powers of vision.*”

In this tale we have the theological Ladder connected with the system of Persian initiation transferred from mythology to romance ; and the coincidence is sufficiently striking to impress the most ordinary observer with the strict propriety of the application. The candidate comes off conqueror and is regularly restored to light, after having given full proof of his courage and fortitude, by surmounting all opposing dangers. Father Angelo, who went out as a missionary into the East about 1663, says, that in the midst of a vast plain between Shiraz and Shuster, he saw a *quadrangular* monument of stupendous size, which was said to have been erected in memory of this great enterprise of the hero Rustam. The fact is, that this quadrangular inclosure was an ancient place of initiation ; and from a confused remembrance of the scenes of mimic adventure which were represented within its

*seven secret caverns*, the fabulous labours of Rustam had doubtless their origin.

It is not the least singular part of this enquiry, that the followers of Mahomet still use the same form of expression to convey an idea of the progressive state of torment in the infernal regions. This is only a continuation of the doctrine of the mysteries, which taught, that the initiation of candidates was in reality a representation of the descent of the soul into Hades, and of its passage through the seven stages of purification preparatory to its admission into the abode of light and purity. They say that Hell has *Seven Gates*, each containing a different degree of punishment. The first and least severe they call *Gehennem*, which is prepared for all mussulmen who are sinners. The second called *Ladha*, is for the Christians. The third is the Jewish Hell, and called *Hothama*. *Sair*, the fourth, is for Sabians; and *Sacar*, the fifth for Magians. Pagans and Idolaters occupy the sixth, which they call *Gehim*; and the lowest and most horrible depth of hell they assign to hypocrites, who pretend to more religion than their neighbours, and set themselves up as patterns of perfection, while inwardly they are full of all kinds of wickedness and impiety. This dreadful *gate*, or place of eternal punishment is called *Haoviath*.\*

You will much wonder at these very extraordinary

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\* Calm. Hist. Dict.

coincidences, which are exceedingly valuable, because undesigned ; and render the conjecture highly probable that they were but an imitation of the Masonic Ladder, as used in our science before the mysteries had a being. But I have yet to introduce to your notice a coincidence still more remarkable, because proceeding from a country where such a tradition could scarcely be expected to exist. Yet it is no less true that distinct traces of this Ladder, attended by the very same references, are found in the inhospitable regions of Scandinavia, which have been indubitably preserved in the Gothic mysteries, though the application is somewhat more obscure.

The court of the gods, says the Edda, is ordinarily kept under a great Ash Tree called Ydrasil, where they distribute justice. This Ash is the greatest of all trees ; its branches cover the surface of the earth ; its top reaches to the highest heavens ; and it is supported by three vast roots, one of which extends to the ninth world, or hell. An eagle, whose piercing eye discovers all things, perches upon its uppermost branches. A squirrel is continually running up and down to bring news ; while a parcel of serpents, fastened to the trunk, endeavour to destroy him. The serpent Nidhogger continually gnaws at its root. From under one of the roots runs a fountain, wherein wisdom lies concealed. From a neighbouring spring, (the fountain of past things,) three virgins are continually drawing a precious water, with which they



irrigate the Ash Tree; this water keeps up the beauty of its foliage; and after having refreshed its leaves, falls back again to the earth, where it forms the dew of which the bees make their honey.\*

Mr. Mallet offers no conjecture on this mysterious tree, and Mr. Cottle fairly gives it up. I pronounce it however to have been the Theological Ladder of the Gothic mysteries. Mr. Cottle in the preface to his interesting version of the Edda of Saemund, says, "the symbolical purport of this Tree is inexplicable amidst the dearth of information respecting the ancient religion of Scandinavia." And without a reference to the various systems of initiation into the religious mysteries of other nations, I should incline to that gentleman's opinion. But by comparing the qualities and characteristics of this sacred Tree with the Ladder of the mysteries, the difficulty vanishes, and the solution appears at once simple and natural.

The basis of Ydrasil, like that of Jacob's Ladder, was the earth, where it was firmly established by three vast roots; one of which extended to the central abyss. These roots evidently referred to the three lower gates, or chambers of initiation; the last of which was Hades, or the region of the dead. Its branches covered the earth and its top reached to the heavens, where sat enthroned, an eagle, the representative of the supreme God. The court of the inferior gods was said to be

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\* Mall. North. Ant. vol. i. c. 6.

under this tree ; and Jacob said of the place where the foot of his ladder was situated, this is the house of God and the gate of heaven. On its summit sat the emblematical eagle, as Jehovah appeared on the ladder of Jacob, or on the paradisiacal mountain ; and this bird, as we have already seen, was actually a component part of the visible symbol of the true God, as exhibited in the Jewish Cherubim ; and the universal representation of the deity in almost every nation under heaven. A squirrel, or messenger, continually ascended and descended to carry celestial commissions from the eagle-deity, to the council of inferior gods seated below ; whence they were supposed to be disseminated over the face of the earth. And the same subordinate deities were said to take cognizance of the actions of mortals, and to convey an impartial account thereof by the squirrel to the deity seated on the summit of the Tree ; which was also the office of the angelic messengers on Jacob's Ladder. A parcel of serpents, symbols of the evil power, unceasingly endeavoured to intercept the communication between God and man, by the destruction of the messenger. The monstrous serpent NID-HOGGER, who is the representation of the prince of darkness himself, we are further told,\* continually gnaws its root for the same purpose, willing to sever the connection between the Creator and his fallen creatures, by the total demolition of the medium

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\* Edda. Fab. viii.

through which the benevolent communication is carried on. In the Hindu mythology, the prince of the evil dæmons is represented as a large serpent, whose name is NAGA. And the Hebrew name for the tempter of Eve in Paradise, translated in our version of the Bible, "the serpent," was NACHASH. These were both the Nidhogger of the Gothic mysteries. In the Essenian mysteries, the Holy Bible was figuratively said to be the consecrated foundation of Jacob's Ladder, because the covenants and promises of God are permanently recorded in that sacred book; and this basis the old serpent who deceived Eve, is continually endeavouring to destroy, by subverting the faith of mankind in its contents.

The three roots are emblems of Faith, Hope, and Charity, because it is by the exercise of these virtues alone, that man can enjoy a well grounded expectation of ascending from earth to heaven. Three Virgins, symbols of Past, Present, and Future, continually watered this Tree from *the fountain of Past Things*; which is expressive of the solemn truth, that the deeds of men shall be kept in perpetual remembrance until the last day, when they shall be rewarded or punished according to their works. From the surplus of this water which fell to the earth after having refreshed the leaves of the Ash, the bees made their honey. In all the ancient mysteries, *Honey* was an acknowledged symbol of death; and is said in this case to have been produced from *the refuse* of the water; which, being

rejected by the sacred Tree, referred unquestionably to the *evil deeds* contained in the water of Past Things, (the *good actions* having been absorbed by the Ash, and consequently accepted by the supreme Being, personified in the eagle ;) and hence the honey which was concocted from it, was emblematical of that second death, which forms the eternal punishment of sin.

In illustration of the contents of this Lecture, I here introduce the following Table, which will exhibit the SEVEN STEPPED LADDER of the mysteries in all its various and extensive application.

NO.	METALS.	COLOURS.	STONES.	PLANETS.	GOTHIC DEITIES.	DAYS OF THE WEEK.	VIRTUES.	ELEMENTS.	JEWISH SEPHIROTH.	INDIAN WORLDS.
7	Gold.	Yellow.	Topaz.	Sol.	Sun.	Sunday.	Charity.	Light.	Kingdom.	Truth.
6	Silver.	White.	Pearl.	Luna.	Moon.	Monday.	Hope.	Water.	Foundation.	Mansion of the Blessed.
5	Iron.	Red.	Ruby.	Mars.	Tuisco.	Tuesday.	Faith.	Fire.	Glory.	World of Births.
4	Tin.	Blue.	Sapphire.	Jupiter.	Thor.	Thursday.	Justice.	Air.	Victory.	Middle World.
3	Copper.	Green.	Emerald.	Venus.	Friga.	Friday.	Fortitude.	Life.	Beauty.	Heaven.
2	Quick-silver.	Purple.	Amethyst.	Mercury.	Woden.	Wednesday.	Temperance.	Thunder-Bolt.	Mercy.	World of Re-existence.
1	Lead.	Black.	Diamond.	Saturn.	Seater.	Saturday.	Prudence.	Earth.	Strength.	First World.

You have here a most extraordinary coincidence of custom with respect to the Masonic Ladder, existing in every region of the world, and all equally applicable to a gradual ascent to heaven by the practice of moral virtue. Amongst us this practice is founded on the strong basis of FAITH, which is the first step of the Ladder resting on the word of God. It produces a well grounded HOPE of sharing the promises recorded in that Sacred Volume; and this is the second step of the Masonic Ladder. The third or more perfect step is CHARITY, by which we attain the summit of the Ladder; metaphorically speaking, the dominion of bliss, and the mansion of pure and permanent delight.

## LECTURE IX.

## ON THE POINT WITHIN A CIRCLE.

“ But though past all diffused, without a shore  
 His essence ; local is his Throne, as meet  
 To gather the dispersed, as Standards call  
 The listed from afar ; to fix a point,  
 A *central point*, collective of his sons,  
 Since finite every nature but his own.

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If earth's whole orb by some dire distant eye  
 Were seen at once, her towering Alps would sink  
 And levell'd Atlas leave an even sphere.  
 Thus earth and all that earthly minds admire,  
 Is swallow'd in *Eternity's vast round*.”

*Young.*

THE progress of error is rapid and uniform, when the restraints imposed on man's depravity by a pure and peaceable religion, are exchanged for the wild dreams and enthusiastic figments of human invention ; and like a spherical body precipitated with violence from the summit of an inclined plane, acquires additional force and velocity at every revolution, until its progress is irresistible. An illustration of this principle will be contained in the present Lecture on that most important emblem of Masonry—A POINT WITHIN A CIRCLE.

Whether we regard this symbol in the purity of its

legitimate interpretation; or consider the unlimited corruption which it sustained in its progress through the mysteries of idolatry, the general principle will be found equally significant. It was originally the conservator of a genuine moral precept founded on a fundamental religious truth; but innovation followed innovation, until this degraded symbol became the dreadful depository of obscenity and lust.

The use of this emblem is coeval with the first created man. A primary idea which would suggest itself to the mind of Adam, when engaged in reflections on his own situation, the form of the universe, and the nature of all the objects presented to his view, would be, that *the creation was a circle and himself the centre*. This figure, implanted without an effort, would be ever present in all his contemplations, and would influence his judgment to a certain extent, while attempting to decide on the mysterious phenomena which were continually before him. To persons unacquainted with the intricate philosophy of nature, as we may fairly presume Adam was, this is the plain idea conveyed to the senses by a superficial view of nature's works. Ask an unlettered hind of the present day, and he will tell you that the earth is a circular plane; and perhaps he will have some indistinct notion that the expanse above his head is spherical, but he will assuredly look upon *himself* as the common centre of all. This is consistent with the general appearance of things; for if he look around, he finds the horizon, unless intercepted by



the intervention of sensible objects, equally distant from the point of vision in all its parts. And the experiment uniformly producing the same results whether made by night or day, he relies on the evidence of his senses, and pronounces his own judgment correct and irrefutable. So the first created man. Himself the centre of the system, he would regard Paradise as the limit of the habitable earth, and the expanse as the eternal residence of the omnipresent Deity. A little reflection however would soon bring him nearer to the truth. The garden of Eden was of a circular form, and the Tree of life was placed in the centre;\* now, as the fruit of this tree was reputed to convey the privilege of immortality, the centre would hence be esteemed the most honourable situation, and be ultimately assigned to the Deity, who alone enjoys the attributes of immortality and eternity; for Adam, in his progress to different parts of this happy abode, would soon conclude, that, however he might be deceived by appearances, *he* himself could not be a permanent centre, because he was constantly changing his position.

To this august Circle, the two forbidden Trees were the accompanying perpendicular parallel lines,† point-

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\* Genesis ii. 9.

† Bishop Newcombe, in his Notes on the Prophet Ezekiel, gives an exemplification of these perpendicular parallel lines. In that prophet's description of the Cherubim, the following passage occurs, "they turned not when they went; they went every one straight forward;" (Ez. i. 9.) on which the learned prelate thus remarks. "The wheels and horses of chariots bend and make a circuit in turning; but this divine machine, ac-

ing out God's equal *justice*, and *mercy*. When Adam had violated the divine command, and eaten of the tree of knowledge, *justice* demanded that the threatened penalty should be paid. But here *mercy* interposed, and he was expelled from the abode of purity and peace, now violated by transgression, "lest he should put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and live for ever"\* in a state of wickedness and sin. Hence arose the Masonic Emblem of a Point within a Circle.

This emblem, united with the Masonic Ladder, was reduced to practice very soon after the universal deluge; and made the basis of a stupendous design which was intended to render man independent of his God, and prevent the misery of being dispersed and scattered abroad in private companies over the face of the earth.† In a former publication,‡ I quoted a passage from Noorthouck's Constitutions, which assigns a square form to the celebrated Tower of Babel; but on more mature consideration, I am inclined to think that the opinion is erroneous. The first huts built for the

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tuated by one spirit, moved uniformly together; *the same line being always preserved between the corresponding cherubs and wheels, the sides of the rectangle limiting the whole, being always parallel, and the same faces of each cherub always looking onward in the same direction with the face of the charioteer. This proceeding directly on, in the same undeviating, inflexible position, seems to show their steadiness in performing the Divine will, which advances to its destined goal right onwards.*" And again, (v. 17.) "the axis of the former wheels was always parallel to that of the latter. The wheels are supposed to express the revolutions of God's providence; which are regular, though they appear intricate."

\* Genesis iii. 22.

† Genesis xi. 4.

‡ Ant. of Freem. p. 136.

habitation of man, are supposed by Vitruvius to have been erected on a *circular base*, as we know the cabins of the primitive Britons were, with a post *in the centre* to support the roof. This disposition is in perfect accordance with the principle referred to above; and the form might not sustain any material alteration before the flood; for the first colonisers of every country after the dispersion, used, with one consent, the same plan in the construction of their domestic edifices. The Tower of Babel may be supposed therefore to have partaken of this figure not only from common usage, but also from its similiarity to the spiral flame; for it was dedicated to the sun, as the great agent, according to the belief of these impious architects, employed in drying up the waters of the deluge. Verstegan has given a plate of this edifice in the Title Page to his *Restitution of Decayed Intelligence in Antiquities*; and it is there represented as the frustum of a cone with *seven gradations*. Calmet has followed this author, and has given also an engraving with the same design. And indeed this was the most convenient form for the construction of such a stupendous work. According to Verstegan, “the passage to mount vp, was very wyd and great, and went *wynding about* on the outsyd: the middle and inward parte for the more strength being all massie; and by carte, camels, dromedaries, horses, asses, and mules, the carriages were borne and drawn vp: and by the way were many logings and hosteries both for man and beast. And some authors reporte

the space for going vp to haue bin soo exceeding wyd; that there were feildes made all along besydes the common passage or highway, for the nuriture of cattel and bringing foorth of grain, but how-euer it were, an almost incredible great woork, may it well be thought to haue bin.”\*

Here then we have a superb specimen of the Point within a Circle, supporting the Seven Stepped Ladder, delineated in characters which cannot be mistaken; acknowledged by the whole race of men, and occupying their united and undivided energies, to confer upon it the indisputable qualities of magnificence and durability.

The primitive explanation of this mysterious emblem amongst the gentiles, did not widely differ from the elucidation still used in the Lectures of Masonry. The Circle referred to *eternity*, and the central Point to *time*, to show that time was only a *point* compared with eternity, and equidistant from all parts of its infinitely extended circumference; because eternity occupied the same indefinite space before the creation of the world in which we live, as it will do when this world is reduced to its primitive nothing.

When mankind had transferred their adoration from the Creator to his works, they advanced specious reasons to justify a devotion to spheres and circles. Every thing great and sublime which was continually

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\* Rest. Dec. Int. p. 4.

presented to their inspection, partook of this form. The Sun, the unequivocal source of light and heat, was a primary object of attention, and became their chief deity. The earth, the planets, and fixed stars, proceeding in all their majestic regularity, excited admiration, and implanted devout feelings in their hearts. These were all spherical; as was also the arch of heaven, illuminated with their unfading lustre. The next progressive observations of mankind would be extended to the unassisted efforts of nature in the production of plants and trees; and these were found to exhibit, for the most part, the same uniform appearances. From the simple stalk of corn, to the bole of the gigantic lord of the forest, the cylinder and cone, and consequently the circle were the most common forms assumed by the vegetable creation. Every fruit he plucked, every root he dug from the earth for food, was either globular, cylindrical, or conical, each partaking of the nature of a circle. If a tree were divided horizontally, the section uniformly exhibited the appearance of a Point within a succession of concentric Circles. The same will be true of an onion, a carrot, and many other vegetables. Similar results would be produced from an inspection of animal bodies. The trunk is a cylinder; and the intestines, so often critically examined for the purposes of augury, presented to the curious enquirer, little variation from the general principle. Hence statues bearing these forms were subsequently dedicated to the Olympic

Gods; a Cylinder to the Earth, and a Cone to the Sun.\*

In this figure, Nature, in her most sportive mood, appeared exclusively to delight. If a bubble were excited on the water, it was spherical; and if any solid body were cast upon the surface, the ripple formed itself into innumerable concentric circles rapidly succeeding each other, of which the body, or moving cause was the common centre. If water were cast into the air they found that the drops invariably arranged themselves into a globular form. This uniformity was soon observed, and thought to be a preternatural indication of divinity; for if Nature assumed one unvarying character in all her works, that character must be an unquestionable symbol of the God of Nature. Hence the Circle with its centre distinctly marked, became a most sacred emblem with every nation of idolaters; adopted perhaps from the same symbol used by their forefathers on the plain of Shinah; referring primarily to the immeasurable expanse occupied by infinite space; a proper type of eternity, but now justified by a reference to the works of Nature. This was the general belief, though the expression varied in different ages, and amongst the inhabitants of different nations.

The tribes contiguous to Judea, placed a Jod (י) in the centre of a Circle, as a symbol of the deity surrounded by Eternity, of which he was said to be the

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\* Porph. apud. Euseb. de præp. evan. l. iii. c. 7.

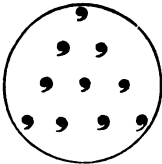
inscrutable author, the ornament and the support. The Samothracians had a great veneration for the Circle, which they considered as consecrated by the universal presence of the deity; and hence Rings were distributed to the initiated, as amulets possessed of the power of averting danger.\* The Chinese used a symbol which bore a great resemblance to that which is the subject of this Lecture. The Circle was bounded north and south by two serpents, (equivalent to the two perpendicular parallel lines of the Masonic symbol;) and was emblematical of the *Universe* protected and supported equally by the *Power* and *Wisdom* of the Creator. The Hindus believed that the supreme Being was correctly represented by a perfect sphere, without beginning and without end.† The first settlers in Egypt transmitted to their posterity an exact copy of our Point within a Circle, expressed in emblematical language. The widely extended Universe was represented as a Circle of boundless light, in the centre of which the deity was said to dwell; or in other words, the circle was symbolical of his *eternity*; and the perpendicular parallel lines by which it is bounded, were the two great luminaries of heaven, the Sun and Moon; the former denoting his *virtue*, the latter his *wisdom*. And this idea was generally expressed by a hawk's head in the centre of a circle, or an endless serpent inclosing an eye.

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\* Plin. Nat. Hist. l. xxxiii. c. 1.

† Holwel. Hist. Events.

But the most expressive symbol to this effect used by any people who had renounced the true religion, was the famous emblem of Pythagoras, who contrived not only to express the only One God residing in the midst of eternity, but united with it an idea of the divine Triad, and blended emblems of regeneration, morality, and science. For this purpose he added to the central Jod, nine other Jods disposed about the centre in the form of an equilateral triangle, each side consisting of the number FOUR. The disciples of Pythagoras denominated this symbol *Trigonon-mysticum*, because it was the conservator of many awful and important truths.\*



1. The *Monad*, or active principle.
2. The *Duad*, or passive principle.
3. The *Triad*, or world proceeding from their union.
4. The sacred *Quaternary*, involving the liberal Sciences, Physics, Morality, &c. &c.

Of this remarkable Emblem, a full explanation may be equally interesting and instructive.

The symbol of all things, according to Pythagoras, was *one* and *two*. One added to two make *three*; and once the square of two make FOUR, which is the perfect *Tetractys*; and  $1+2+3+4=10$  the consummation of all things; and therefore the amount of the points contained within the Pythagorean Circle, is exactly Ten. Hence, because the first *four* digits added into each other made up the number *ten*, this philosopher called

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\* Jennings. Jew. Ant. b. i. c. 12.



the number *four* πάντα ἀριθμὸν, *all number*, or the *whole number*; and used it as the symbol of universality.\* To ascertain, however, the entire meaning of this symbol, it will be necessary to take the numbers included within the Circle in their natural order, and hear what hidden mystery the philosophy of Pythagoras attached to each.

The number ONE was the point within the circle, and denoted the central fire, or God, because it is the beginning and ending; the first and the last. It signified also love, concord, piety, and friendship, because it is so connected that it cannot be divided into parts. Two meant darkness, fortitude, harmony, and justice, because of its equal parts; and the moon, because she is forked. THREE referred to harmony, friendship, peace, concord, and temperance. All these, and many other virtues depended on this number and proceeded from it. FOUR referred to the deity, for it was considered *the number of numbers*. It is the first solid figure; a point being 1, a line 2, a superficies 3, and a solid 4. It was also the *Tetractys*; a WORD sacred amongst the Pythagoreans, and used as a most solemn

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\* The sum of all the principles of Pythagoras is this. "The Monad is the principle of all things. From the Monad came the indeterminate Duad, as matter subjected to the cause Monad; from the Monad and the indeterminate Duad, numbers; *from numbers, points; from points, lines; from lines, superficies; from superficies, solids*; from these solid bodies, whose elements are four, Fire, Water, Air, Earth; of all which transmuted, and totally changed, the World consists."—*Stanley. Hist. Phil.* vol. 3. pp. 1, 100.

oath, because they considered it the root and principle, the cause and maker of all things. Plutarch interprets this word differently. He says it is called *Κοσμος*, the world, and therefore refers to the number Thirty-six, which consists of the first four odd numbers, added into the first four even ones, thus ;

$$\begin{array}{r}
 1 + 2 = 3 \\
 3 + 4 = 7 \\
 5 + 6 = 11 \\
 7 + 8 = 15 \\
 \hline
 36 \\
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 \end{array}$$

The Tetractys of Pythagoras, however, was doubtless represented by the number Four, because this was the number of perfection, the divine mind, the image of God, &c; and the Tetractys was no other than the glorious Tetragrammaton of the Jews.

The number FIVE,\* was Light, nature, marriage, &c. SIX, health. SEVEN, was said to be *worthy of veneration*, because it referred to the creation of the world. EIGHT, was the first cube, and signified friendship, council, prudence, and justice. NINE, was called *τελειος*, because a perfect human being undergoes nine

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\* The Druids applied this number to the elements. "Five elements there are; that is to say, Earth, Water, Fire, Air, and the Heavens; and out of the four first comes every inanimate matter; and out of the heaven God, and all of live and living; and from the conjunction of these five came all things, or animate or inanimate they be."—*Owen's Diot.* v. Nev.

month's gestation in the womb; and TEN, was denominated Heaven, because it was the perfection of all things.\*

The Point within the Circle, afterwards became an universal emblem to denote the temple of the Deity, and was referred to the Planetary Circle, in the *centre* of which was fixed the Sun, as the universal god and father of nature; for the whole circle of heaven was called God.† Pythagoras esteemed the central fire the supernal mansion of Jove;‡ and he called it *Μεσοῦραβεο* because the most excellent body ought to have the most excellent place; i. e. *the centre*.§ And Servius tells us it was believed that *the centre* of a temple was the peculiar residence of the Deity; the exterior decorations being merely ornamental.|| Hence the astronomical character used to denote or represent the Sun, is a Point within a Circle; because that figure is the symbol of perfection. The most perfect metal gold, is also designated in chymistry by the same character.

With this reference the Point within a Circle was an emblem of great importance amongst the British Druids. Their temples were circular; many of them with a single stone erected in the centre; their solemn processions were all arranged in the same form; their

\* Jambl. vit. Pyth. c. xxviii.—Macrob. in Somn. Scip. 1. 6.—Porph. vit Pyth. p. 32.—Plut. Plac. Phil. 1. i.—Nicom. Arith. p. 7.—Diog. Laert. vit Pyth. &c. &c.

† Cicero de nat. deor. 1.

§ Plut. Simplic.

‡ Stob. Phys.—Aristot. de Cælo. 1. ii.

|| Serv. Georg. 3.

weapons of war, the circular shield with a central boss, the spear with a hollow globe at its end, &c. all partaking of this general principle; and without a circle it was thought impossible to obtain the favour of the gods. The rites of divination could not be securely and successfully performed unless the operator were protected within the consecrated periphery of a magical circle. The plant vervain was supposed to possess the virtue of preventing the effects of fascination, if gathered ritually with an iron instrument, at the rising of the dog-star, accompanied with the essential ceremony of *describing a circle on the turf, the circumference of which shall be equally distant from the plant, before it be taken up.*\*

Specimens of British temples founded on the principle of a point within a circle are still in existence to demonstrate the truth of the theory. "There are in Pembrokeshire several *circular* stone monuments,—but the most remarkable is that which is called *Y Gromlech*, in Nevern parish, where are several rude stones pitched on end, in a *circular* order; and *in the midst of the circle, a vast rude stone* placed on several pillars."† Near Keswick in Cumberland, is another specimen of this druidical symbol. On a hill, stands *a circle* of forty blocks of stone placed perpendicularly, of about five feet and a half in height; and one stone *in the centre* of greater altitude. But the most stu-

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\* Borl. Ant. Corn. p. 91, from Pliny.

† Gibson's Camd. Col. 635.

pendous circular temples were those of Stonehenge and Abury, the latter being three miles in length.\* The body of the temple at Classerniss, in the island of Lewis, sacred to the Sun and the Elements, will also illustrate the principle before us. This curious Celtic temple was constructed on geometrical and astronomical principles, in the form of a Cross and a Circle. The circle consisted of twelve upright stones, in allusion to the solar year, or the twelve signs of the Zodiac; the east, west, and south are marked by three stones each, placed without the circle, in direct lines, pointing to each of those quarters; and towards the north, is a double row of twice nineteen stones, *forming two perpendicular parallel lines*, with a single elevated stone at the entrance. *In the centre of the circle*, stands, high exalted above the rest, the gigantic representative of the Deity, to which the adoration of his worshippers was peculiarly directed.†

This extraordinary symbol was also used by the ancient inhabitants of Scandinavia; and had an undoubted reference to *the Hall of Odin*, or the Zodiac; which, the Edda informs us,‡ contained *twelve seats disposed in the form of a circle*, for the principal gods, besides an elevated throne *in the centre* for Odin, as the representative of the Great Father. One important

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\* Stukeley's Letter to Gale.

† Olaus Magnus, apud Borl. Ant. of Corn. p. 193.—Toland. Druids, vol. i. p. 90.

‡ Fab. vii.

purpose to which the circular monuments of this people were appropriated, was, the election of the Gothic sovereign chieftains. They were usually composed of twelve unhewn stones, placed on end in *a circular form*, with one taller and more massive than the rest, pitched *in the centre* as a seat or throne for the object of their choice. The upper surface of these stones was usually flat and broad; for it was from thence that the Drottes or Priests harangued the people, congregated around the inclosure, on the comparative merits of the respective candidates for this exalted office. The suffrages being taken, the fortunate chieftain was elevated on high, and publicly exhibited to the view of his assembled subjects. This was the probable origin of our custom of chairing newly elected Members of Parliament. Three of these rude monuments remain to this day; one near Lunden in Scania; another at Lethra in Zealand; and a third near Virburg in Jutland.\*

It is remarkable that in all the ancient systems of mythology, the Great Father, or the male generative principle was uniformly symbolized by a Point within a Circle. This emblem was placed by the Scandinavian priests and poets, on the central summit of a Rainbow, which was fabled to be a bridge leading from earth to heaven; the emblem therefore represented Valhall, or the supernal palace of the chief

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\* Vid. Mall. North. Ant. vol. i. c. 8.

celestial deity. It is said in the Edda,\* that this bridge "is all on fire; for the giants of the mountains would climb up to heaven by it, if it were easy for every one to walk over it." The palace thus elevated, was no other than the celestial system, illuminated by a central Sun, whose representative on earth was Thor, a god depicted by Verstegant† with a crowned head placed in the centre of twelve bright stars, expressive of the Sun's annual course through the Zodiacal Signs.

But however this emblem might have a general reference to the Deity or his temples; in the later ages of idolatry it bore a more immediate relation to the generative principle of nature, symbolized by the union of the sexes. I am ashamed to stain my page with the discussion which this part of my subject necessarily introduces; but it cannot be wholly avoided, as the point within a circle, with an unequivocal allusion to the Phallic worship, was the principal object of devotion with every people in the world. In India, the adytum or most holy place in the temples of the deity, always contained the Linga or Phallus, which had a prominent situation assigned to it, amongst the innumerable emblems with which the walls were covered.‡ In Egypt, the same practice was observed.§ Belzoni says of the temple at Tentyra; "The shafts of the

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\* Fab.-viii.

† Rest. of Dec. Int. p. 74.

‡ Maur. Ind. Ant. vol. ii. p. 245.

§ Diod. Sic. l. i. c. 6.

columns are covered with hieroglyphics and figures in the front and lateral walls.—On all the walls, columns, ceilings, or architraves, there is no where a space of two feet that is not covered with some figures of human beings, animals, plants, emblems of agriculture, or of religious ceremony.\* Amongst these the Phallus is a conspicuous emblem. The places of initiation in Chaldea were precisely of the same nature. Ezekiel thus describes them: “The Spirit of God brought me to the door of the court, and when I looked, behold, *a hole in the wall*. Then said he unto me, Son of man, dig now in the wall; and when I had digged in the wall, behold, a door. And he said unto me, go in, and behold *the wicked abominations that they do here*. So I went in and saw; and behold, every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and *all the idols of the house of Israel*, portrayed upon the wall round about.”† In Greece, the Phallus was an universal amulet. It was thought to prevent every species of calamity; and was accordingly hung at the doors of houses, offices, and workshops. It was visible in every situation, and was even suspended from the necks of children to preserve them from the effects of fascination.‡ “The same indecencies,” says Faber, “were practised in the rites of the Cabiric Ceres, as in those of Bacchus, Osiris, and Maha-Deva. Her deluded votaries vied with each

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\* Belz. Researches in Egypt, p. 34.

† Ezekiel viii. 7—10.

‡ Varro. l. vi.



other in a studied obscenity of language, and her nocturnal orgies were contaminated with the grossest lasciviousness.\* And Diodorus the Sicilian,† says that such language was used under the impression that it was pleasing and acceptable to the goddess.‡ Even the Israelites themselves were not entirely free from the contamination of such abominable practices; for the Linga of the Hindus, the Phallus and the Priapus of the Greeks and Romans, and the Baal-Peor of the idolatrous Israelites, was one and the same monstrous emblem, which was equally represented by *a point within a circle*. Jerom says,§ that the idols worshipped by the latter, were most of them dedicated to Baal-Peor, who was portrayed in a gross and indecent attitude. Denique interpretantur, Beelphegor idolum tentiginis, habens in ore, id est, summitate pellem, ut turpitudinem membri virilis ostenderet. This deity was chiefly honoured by female votaries. The good king Asa saw and lamented the wide spreading abomination, which was even practised under the regal sanction; for his mother Maacha had herself actually erected an altar to this unnatural divinity.|| This worship was the last and lowest stage of human

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\* Fab. Mys. Cab. vol. ii. p. 93.

† Bibl. l. v. c. 1.

‡ It may be here remarked, as creditable to the ancient Druids, that obscene and improper language was disallowed in their mysteries. The candidates were for ever disgraced if they "uttered one word of unseemly import." Song of Hywell, in the W. Archaiol. translated by Mr. Davies, Druids, p. 285.

§ In Osee. c. ix.

|| 1 Kings xv. 13.

debasement; and evinces the strict propriety of those scripture phrases which refer to the universal depravity of mankind when given up to the defilements of idolatry.\*

Mr. Maurice thinks this disgraceful emblem was derived from Egypt; for Diodorust deduces its origin from the search instituted by Isis for the body of her husband, which had been divided by Typhon into fourteen parts, and distributed over the face of the whole earth. For a long time the disconsolate widow could not succeed in finding the genitals of her dismembered husband, which had been committed to the waters of the Nile by his murderer. Being at length discovered, they were buried with great solemnity; and a commemorative festival was instituted, in which long poles, with figures of this emblem attached to the summit, were carried about in procession; and a legend to the same purpose, was recited during the initiations.‡

Captain Wilford,§ gives another account of its origin. This gentleman says, it was believed in India, that at the general deluge, every thing was involved in the common destruction, except the *male* and *female* principles, or organs of generation, which were destined to produce a new race, and to re-people the earth when

\* Vid. Leviticus xviii. xix. and xx.—Deuteronomy xii. 31.—Patrick on 1 Kings xiv. 24.—Romans i. 18, ad fin. &c.

† l. i. c. 2.

‡ Psellus, ap. Taylor's Dissert. in Pamphleteer, vol. viii.

§ On Mount Cauc. Asiat. Res. vol. vi.

the waters had subsided from its surface. The female principle, symbolized by *the Moon*, assumed the form of a *lunette* or crescent ; while the male principle, symbolized by *the Sun*, assuming the form of the *Linga*, placed himself erect in the centre of the *lunette*, like the mast of the Ship. The two principles, *in this united form*, floated on the surface of the waters during the period of their prevalence on the earth ; and thus became the progenitors of a new race of men. Hence they were received as objects of adoration under the imposing names of the Great Father and Mother of mankind ; and the acknowledged symbol of this mysterious union was, a *Point within a Circle*.

The true origin of this infamous worship, may, perhaps, be more correctly derived from the sin of Ham, who discovered and exposed his father's nakedness ; and the use of the degrading symbol might proceed from the curse inflicted on his posterity, who were thus reduced below the level of their species.

Such were the absurd and dangerous systems, founded however in truth, which deformed the religion of heathen nations, and degraded celestial reason to a level with brutal instinct. To the true Mason, on the contrary, this emblem points out the most useful and invaluable lessons ; and while he keeps his wishes and hopes bounded by the rules and ordinances of the Sacred Code, he may be assured that his character will be venerated amongst men, and the fragrance of his virtue will ascend to the throne of his father who

is in heaven like an evening sacrifice. And when the shades of age and imbecility shall have damped those energies which were once employed in the ardour of active virtue; his declining strength shall be cheered by the *retrospect* of what his benevolence effected while health and vigour remained, and by the *prospect* of the bright reward which lies before him; and while he considers this life but as the very beginning of his existence, he looks forward to that smiling world he is about to enter; and anticipates, with inexpressible gratification, the cheering welcome he will receive from saints and angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect.

If you would enjoy such happy anticipations when advanced in years, and your bosom is becoming dead to the fascinations of life, you must circumscribe your thoughts and actions by the instruction of this significant emblem. Even your reputation amongst mankind, is principally dependent on the rectitude of your moral conduct. If you wish for the commendation of the wise and good; and, what is still of greater importance, the favourable testimony of your conscience, you must be honest and true, faithful and sincere, and practice all the virtues enjoined equally by Masonry and Christianity. You must keep within the compass, and act upon the square with all mankind; for your Masonry is but a dead letter if you do not habitually perform its reiterated injunctions. You may boast of its beauties; (and you have just reason to do so,) you

may attend its Lectures ; you may be an enthusiast in its forms and ceremonies ; but unless you reduce it to practice ; unless its incitements be brought to bear upon your moral conduct, you can enjoy no advantage over those who are still in darkness, and the benefits of Masonry have been extended to you in vain. Circumscribe your actions then within the boundary line of your duty to God and man, and convince the world that the System of Masonry is something more than a name.

## LECTURE X.

## ON THE MASONIC APRON.

“ We know thee *by thy Apron white,*  
 An architect to be ;  
 We know thee by thy trowel bright,  
 Well skill'd in Masonry.”

*Solomon's Temple, an Oratorio.*

THE chief business of Masonry is to direct and guide the judgment to the practice of virtue ; for it is chiefly by being able to distinguish between right and wrong, that depravity is avoided, and purity of mind cherished and ensured. The understanding is the parent of virtue ; and by gradually nurturing the genius, and improving the intellect ; the brightest fruits of a good life may be reasonably anticipated ; for though worldly wisdom may exist in the absence of virtue, the instances are of very rare occurrence where virtue is found in a heart occupied by selfish prejudices, and contracted by sloth and habitual indolence.

In advancing through the different Degrees of Masonry, your stock of information is progressively increased, and the practice of virtue is enforced by a reference to the symbols in which Masonic knowledge lies imbedded. With this illustration in view, a

primary ceremony of the First Degree is, the investiture of *the Apron*, an unequivocal symbol, which accompanies every step of your progress. And lest any misunderstanding should give an improper bias to the mind respecting its moral application, the candidate is told that it is an emblem of innocence, of high antiquity and unequalled honour.

The great design of the Apron is to point out a figurative division of the human body into two distinct parts; separating the noble portion which contains the head and the heart, as the seat of reason and the affections, from the more base and corporeal parts, which are merely intended to perform the carnal functions of nature; and while the spiritual man stands erect and open to the view, the natural man is veiled in obscurity, that no impediment may interrupt the speculative avocations and pursuits of Masonry. The Freemason thus clothed is a striking emblem of truth, innocence, and integrity; for the parts only which are the conservators of these virtues are supposed to be in operation, while exploring the hidden mysteries of the science, in the tiled recesses of the Lodge.

Hence the Apron or Girdle, in ancient times was an universally received emblem of Truth and Passive Duty. The Israelites, when preparing to effect their escape from Egyptian captivity, were enjoined to eat the Passover with *their loins girded*.\* Job is commanded

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\* Exodus xii. 11.

to gird up his loins like a man,\* when the Almighty is about to reward his patience and constancy. At the consecration of Aaron, he is invested with this symbolical article of apparel.† And the prophets, on all occasions, before they performed any remarkable act of duty, carefully complied with this important ceremony.‡ When Samuel was received into the ministry, though but a child, he was girded with a linen ephod.§ David, in the height of his exultation on the recovery of the Ark, danced before it, invested with the same garment.|| Elijah the Tishbite and John the Baptist, were both girded with an Apron of (white) leather.¶ It was said of Jesus Christ, that his Girdle should represent equally Righteousness and Fidelity.\*\* And in conformity with these authorities his principal disciples exhorted the Christian converts to *gird up the loins of their mind*, to be sober, and *hope to the end*;†† and to stand firm in the faith, having their loins girt about with *Truth*.‡‡

Amongst the primitive Masons, this badge received a characteristic distinction from its peculiar colour and material; and was indeed an unequivocal mark of superior dignity. The investiture of the Apron formed an essential part of the ceremony of initiation, and was attended with rites equally significant and

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\* xxxviii. 3.—xl. 7.

† Leviticus viii. 7.

‡ 2 Kings iv. 29.—ix. 1.—Jeremiah i. 17.

§ 1 Samuel ii. 18.

|| 2 Samuel vi. 14.

¶ 2 Kings i. 8.—Matt. iii. 4.

\*\* Isaiah xi. 5.

†† 1 Peter i. 13.

‡‡ Ephesians vi. 14.



impressive. With the Essenian Masons, it was accomplished by a process bearing a similar tendency, and accompanied by illustrations not less imposing and satisfactory to the newly initiated enquirer. He was clothed in a long WHITE robe, which reached to the ground, bordered with a fringe of blue ribbon\* to incite personal holiness; and fastened tightly round the waist with a girdle or zone, to separate *the heart* from the lower and more impure parts of the body. With *feet bare* and head uncovered, he was considered a personification of modesty, humility, and the fear of God.

It was the firm opinion of the Essenes, that internal purity and rectitude of conduct, were most strikingly evidenced by a person's outward appearance. This belief was probably derived from that famous precept of king Solomon, who had constantly the same emblematical reference on his lips; "*Let thy garments be always WHITE.*"† At his investiture the candidate was exhorted to the practice of moral virtue from the incentive, not merely of happiness in this world, but of an expected recompense in a future state. This exhortation, enforced by the resistless efficacy of *good example*, produced in the initiated, a practical righteousness, which was "worthy of admiration above all others that pretended to virtue; for they were, in their manners and course of life, the very best of men."‡

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\* Numbers xv. 38, 39.

† Ecclesiastes ix. 8.

‡ Jos. Ant. l. xviii. c. 2.

Their chief employment was to learn to rule and govern their passions, to keep a tongue of good report, and to practise secrecy united with universal charity and benevolence. Hence their deviations from moral rectitude were not frequent. But if an instance did occur, in which the purity of the White Garment was sullied by intemperance or excess, the offender was formally excluded from all social intercourse with his former brethren, and declared unworthy of the Robe which he had disgraced by violated vows and shameless profligacy. This exclusion was considered a punishment of such a dreadful nature, that Josephus says, it was commonly followed by a lamentable death.\*

Thus also in the institutions of heathen nations, the aspirant was honoured with a similar investiture; and shared in all the benefits and privileges which were accessible to the wearer of this widely celebrated badge of innocence. The garments of initiation were uniformly *White*, and they bore a common reference to innocence of conduct and purity of heart. When a candidate was initiated into the ancient mysteries, he was esteemed *regenerate*; for these institutions were the sole vehicles of regeneration amongst idolaters; and he was invested with a White Garment and Apron, as a symbol of his newly attained purity. White victims were offered in sacrifice to the gods; for the heathens were of opinion, that they could do nothing

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\* Jos. de bel. Jud. l. ii. c. 1.

more agreeable to the Supreme Being, than to serve him in White. But as for the infernal deities, they imagined them to be wicked to the last degree, and to take pleasure in the misfortunes of mankind ; and as they lived in everlasting Darkness ; they must doubtless be of a sad and gloomy complexion ; so they paid them such adoration as they imagined suitable to their tempers ; and for that purpose clothed themselves in BLACK.\*

Amongst the Greeks, the garment of initiation was White, because, says Cicero, white is a colour most acceptable to the gods. This Robe was accounted sacred, and a never-failing source of protection in every emergency. As an invaluable relic, it was used by the fortunate possessor until resolved to rags ; and when no longer fit for use, his children were invested with the tattered remnants, as undoubted preservatives against the malign effects of all diseases to which they were by nature exposed.†

In Persia, the investiture was exceedingly splendid, *and succeeded to the communication of Light.* The candidate after having entered into the usual engagements for keeping secret the mysteries of Mithras, was ceremonially invested with the insignia of the Order ; the *Girdle*, on which were depicted the Twelve Signs of the Zodiac, with a golden *Leo* in the centre ; the *Tiara*, or lofty crown,‡ the *White Apron*, and the

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\* Dissert. on Rel. Worship, p. 6.

† Varro. l. vi.

‡ Vid. Ezekiel xxiii. 15.

*Purple Tunic.* The latter being thickly studded with stars of burnished gold, and flowing loosely from his shoulders, gave a splendid appearance to the initiated, and conferred an unequivocal mark of the distinction which he had just attained. He was now passed through the sacred *petræ* as a general purgation from all his former defilements ; and installed by proclamation, a *Lion of Mithras*. A sort of baptism was administered to him, which referred to that universal lustration by which the world was washed from its pollutions at the deluge ; and was consequently expressive of his newly acquired purity, symbolised by the renovated earth emerging from the transparent bosom of the purifying wave.\* A Crosier or Pastoral Staff was given, and a Crown presented to him on the point of a sword, bearing this inscription, *Mithras is my Crown*. And as a concluding ceremony, he was invested with the sacred *Cross*, which being a symbol of the Ark, was “*a badge of innocence on the one hand, and of life on the other.*”†

In Hindustan, the aspirant, with similar ceremonies, was solemnly invested with the consecrated Sash or Girdle, which being inserted over his left shoulder, descended on the right side, and hung as low as the extremity of the fingers could reach. This Girdle he was directed to wear next his skin. It consisted of a cord composed of *three times three* threads twisted

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\* Vid. 1 Peter iii. 20, 21.

† Faber's Mys. Cab.—Hyde de rel. vet. Pers.—Bryant's Anal.—Faber's Pag. Idol.—Dow's Hind.—Desatir. &c.

together, and fastened at the end with a knot. It was manufactured with many mysterious ceremonies, and said to possess the power of preserving the wearer from personal danger. The Arch Brahmin, with solemn dignity, then presented the candidate with the consecrated Chaplet, endowed with the virtue of neutralizing the evil machinations of malignant dæmons. This charmed wreath was composed of magical herbs, particularly the *cusa* and *darbbha*, gathered under some fortunate aspect of the planets. It possessed also a most wonderful sanative power; and was an antidote against the poison of serpents. He was also invested with the *Kowsteke-Men*, which was a magical Jewel, to be worn on the breast; streaming with *rays of Light in the midst of darkness*, and endowed with the secret properties of averting calamities. And as a last, invaluable present, a charmed label was firmly bound on his left arm, in which the most powerful talismanic words were inscribed. This amulet was believed to endow the fortunate possessor with wisdom, strength, beauty, health, and riches; and from its influence, every private suggestion of the heart was gratified, by the immediate agency of the god to whom it was consecrated.\*

Proceeding in our course still farther to the East, we find the Japanese using rites and ceremonies cor-

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\* Asiat. Res.—Sir W. Jones's Works.—Maurice's Ind. Ant.—Faber's Pag. Idol. and Myst. Cab.—Bryant's Anal.—Moor's Hind. Panth.

responding essentially with those already specified. The initiations were performed with the utmost secrecy. All probationers were carefully excluded, though their *unanimous* consent was necessary before the ceremonies could legally commence. The candidate was then strictly examined; his bodily purity was rigidly investigated; and his mental perfections ascertained by a philosophical scrutiny. If approved, he was clothed in the Garments of ceremony, which consisted of a loose tunic and *White Apron* bound round the loins with a zone or girdle, and initiated ceremonially into the two first degrees. When pronounced competent to receive the last and highest dignity of the Order, it was conferred with solemn pomp, and concluded by a public festival.\*

In the extreme West, we are at no loss to find these rites existing in their full vigour. The mysteries of Scandinavia were exclusively of a military cast, and therefore we find *a shield* substituted for the apron; but its colour and emblematical reference were the same with the civil decoration of other more peaceable nations. Immediately after the *obligation*, which was sealed by drinking mead out of a human skull, the candidate was invested with a sword and *shield*. This piece of defensive armour was *White*, and termed "the shield of expectation." A specific period was assigned for his probation; and if he failed to dis-

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\* Kæmpfer's Japan.—Universe Displayed.

tinguish himself in battle before the expiration of his noviciate, the phrase *Niding* was applied to him, equivalent to “ a good-for-nothing fellow ;”<sup>\*</sup> and he was studiously shunned by all his former associates. This however, did not often happen. When he had performed any distinguished martial achievement, he was permitted to have a design painted or engraven on his shield, as a public testimony of his prowess ; and was solemnly invested with the insignia of the Order, declared equal to the toil of combat, and left by his parents to the independent gratification of hunting and providing for his own subsistence.†

And lastly, in our own country, the Druids were not behind other nations in the use of emblematical garments, which were of different colours, appropriately adapted to the nature of each Degree. In the first degree, the aspirant was clad in a Robe, striped alternately with the three sacred colours of Druidism, white, sky-blue, and green. White, was the symbol of *Light* ; Blue, of *Truth* ; and Green, of *Hope* ; all highly figurative of the expected attainments which the eager novice anxiously anticipated. When the rites of initiation into this degree were completed, the striped robe was exchanged for a vestment of *Green*. In the second degree he was clothed in *Blue* ; and having fearlessly surmounted all the difficulties and

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<sup>\*</sup> Mal. North. Ant. vol. i. p. 218.

† Mallet's North. Ant.—The Eddas of Snorro and Saemund.—Runic Odes, &c.

actual dangers of the third, or degree of perfection, the aspirant was received triumphantly on May-day, by the Archdruid and his companions, who invested him with a red tiara, and a flowing robe of the purest *White*, ornamented with amulets and gems of gold, as badges of the highest order that could be conferred ;\* for none were admitted to the honour of this clothing, but such as were deemed *absolutely cleansed from all impurities* both of body and mind, which could only be effected by the process of initiation.†

Such, in all nations, has been the importance attached to investiture, as a significant completion of the formula of initiation. To detail the ceremonies in use amongst us, would be equally presumptuous and unnecessary ; I return therefore to the Masonic Apron itself, and shall endeavour to illustrate its several properties, by considering their symbolical application.

The Apron is made of a *Lamb's Skin* ; its colour, *White*. These are understood amongst us as joint emblems of *Innocence* ; by which we are properly and constantly reminded, that while clothed in that distinguishing badge, our conduct should be uniformly marked by the corresponding duties of innocence and

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\* These ornaments consisted of chains of gold and amber beads, as magical amulets ; and many little gold, amber, and ivory trinkets, each possessing some mystical property, or some protecting influence, which conveyed a sacred character to the wearer, that rendered his person inviolate.

† Owen's Dict.—Davies's Druids.—Borlase's Cornwall.—Maurice's Ind. Ant. vol. vi.



integrity. The lamb was always esteemed an emblem of the purest innocence; and hence the Redeemer of mankind received the significant appellation of "the Lamb of God," because he was immaculate, and without spot or blemish.\* And the colour *White*,† as an unequivocal symbol of Light and Purity, has been honoured and venerated in all ages, by every nation and every people since the creation of light out of darkness. Even the primitive christians adopted a custom so universally prevalent, so consonant with reason, sanctioned by the usage of all antiquity, and authorized by the solemn ordinances of a religion which had been instituted by the Deity himself; for not only did the Jewish Prophets symbolize purity‡ and impeccability§ by this colour; but the spotless Author of our religion is said to have been clad in raiment *White as Light* at his transfiguration,|| and *White as snow* after his resur-

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\* John i. 29.—1 Peter i. 19.

† A *white* robe, emblematic of truth and holiness, was the distinguishing dress of a Druid. The exterior ceremonies of a system must appear to strangers as the most prominent part of it; thus ancient authors, occasionally touching on bardism, have chiefly recognized the Druid observing some of his most superficial trappings, and now and then some faint glimmerings of the groundwork of his principles. But the Bardic system is attested to have kept extremely clear from superstition; and what little it did acquire, must have adhered wholly to the Druidic character; for he being the residentiary pastor amongst the people, would, from interest and policy, endeavour to gain influence amongst those under his care; but he must have exerted much caution, as the whole of his principles were universally diffused in the Gorsezau.—*Owen's Dict. v. Derwys.*

‡ Daniel xi. 35.—xii. 10.      § Isaiah i. 18.      || Matthew xvii. 2.

rection.\* And the angelic messenger who appeared to the holy women at the sepulchre, was invested with a garment of the same colour.† Many years after this, the divinity condescended to promise that every christian who should overcome the temptations of the world, should be rewarded with a WHITE STONE,‡ as an undeniable passport into the paradise of God. In a region blest with everlasting perfection, this colour receives its final and most exalted mark of distinction. The glorified inheritors of those heavenly mansions, after being washed and *purified* in the blood of the LAMB,§ shall be clothed in *White Raiment*,|| ride on *White horses*,¶ and be seated on *White thrones*\*\* for ever and ever.

Supported and encouraged by these animating authorities, the early followers of Jesus Christ, invested the catechumens with a *White Robe*, like that worn by the heavenly vision which encouraged Judas Maccabeus to purge his country of its impurities,†† accompanied by this solemn charge; “Receive the *White* and undefiled Garment, and produce it without spot before the tribunal of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you may obtain eternal life.”‡‡ In like manner Freemasons, when they invest a candidate with this distinguishing

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\* Matthew xxviii. 3.            † Mark xvi. 5.            ‡ Revelations ii. 17.

§ Revelations vii. 14.            || Ibid iii. 5.—vi. 11.            ¶ Ibid xix. 14.

\*\* Ibid iii. 21 compared with xx. 11.            †† 2 Maccabees xi. 8.

‡‡ Star in the East, p. 154.

badge of their profession, tell him that it is the most exalted dignity that can be conferred; and exhort him not to disgrace it by actions which may reflect discredit on the Order into which he has had the honour to be admitted.

The Masonic Apron is said to be more ancient than the badge of any other honourable institution. It was used before the Greeks or Romans had a name. The Argonautic expedition is now generally believed to be only a figurative account of the Deluge; and the Apron is unquestionably more ancient than that event; it was therefore worn before the establishment of the idolatrous mysteries. We are certain, from undeniable authority, that the Apron was the first species of clothing with which mankind were acquainted, and was adopted before the expulsion of our great progenitors from the garden of Eden. When they had violated the original compact, their eyes were opened to a sense of guilt and shame, and they saw that they were naked. Decency suggested the necessary expedient of covering themselves with Aprons.\*

The Apron worn by the Levitical Priesthood, was composed of the three Masonic colours, blue, purple, and crimson.† And all the ancient statues of the heathen gods, which have been discovered in Egypt or Greece, Persia, Hindustan, or America, are uniformly deco-

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\* Genesis iii. 7.

† Exodus xxxix. 1.

rated with superb Aprons.\* Hence is deduced the antiquity of this article of apparel.

It is further declared to be “more honourable, &c.” The Apron appears to have been, in ancient times, an honorary badge of distinction. In the Jewish economy, none but the superior orders of the priesthood were permitted to adorn themselves with ornamental Girdles, which were made of blue, purple, and crimson, decorated with gold upon a ground of fine white linen;† while the inferior priest wore only plain white. The Indian, the Persian, the Jewish, the Ethiopian, and the Egyptian Aprons, though equally superb, all bore a character distinct from each other. Some were plain white, others striped with blue, purple, and crimson; some were of wrought gold, others adorned and decorated with superb tassels and fringes.‡ In a word, though the *principal honour* of the Apron may consist in its reference to innocence of conduct and purity of heart, yet it certainly appears, through all ages, to have been a most exalted badge of distinction. In primitive times it was rather an ecclesiastical than a civil decoration, although in some cases the Apron was elevated to great superiority as a national trophy. The Royal Standard of Persia, (Durufsh-e-Kawancee,) was ori-

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\* Vid. the Plates to Belzoni's Operations and Discoveries in Egypt.—Humboldt's Researches in America, vol. i. p. 133, &c.

† Exodus xxviii. 8.

‡ Vid. Belzoni, ut supra.

ginally *an Apron* in form and dimensions.\* At this day it is connected with ecclesiastical honours; for the chief dignitaries of the Christian Church; wherever a legitimate establishment, with the necessary degrees of rank and subordination is formed, are invested with Aprons, as a peculiar badge of distinction; which is a collateral proof of the fact, that Masonry was originally incorporated with the various systems of divine worship used by every people in the ancient world. Masonry retains the symbol or shadow, it cannot have renounced the reality or substance.

To you, Brethren, who are clothed in this exalted badge, I need not recommend a systematic adherence to the virtues which it represents. At your initiation you were taught that innocence of conduct and purity of heart, were expected to be your peculiar characteristics from the moment of your investiture with the Apron. Is it necessary for me to add that Masonry expects from you an obedience to her precepts, if you are ambitious to share in her peculiar benefits? If any one of you should fail to become a *perfect Master* in the mysteries of Masonry, (which is the lot of but few,) you still cannot be at a loss to understand the value of her moral precepts;—if you cannot fathom her deep and abstruse secrets, you may practise the benevolence and good will, the innocence and purity, which she recommends. It is not expected that every

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\* Malcolm's Hist. Per. vol. i. p. 174.

Mason should be perfectly versed in all her occult mysteries, but it is imperiously required that he practise the great and prominent virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity, Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence, and Justice; that he may attain the *reputation* of a good and worthy Mason upon earth, and the *reward* of it in another and a better world. This is the perfection of the system. Your Faith and Hope must be made perfect by Charity, or all your attainments will be nothing. You may speak with the tongues of men and angels; you may have all wisdom and knowledge, but if your Masonry, though founded on Faith and Hope, be not animated by Charity, it is only a worthless skeleton, and adds no brilliancy to your moral reputation.

While your body then, is girded with the Masonic Apron, let your soul be clothed with innocence; let your thoughts be pure, your desires holy, your wishes sanctified; assured that health and true pleasure depend solely on temperance; and that the privations of abstinence bear no proportion to the pain and misery arising from sloth, voluptuousness, or habitual intoxication.

## LECTURE XI.

ON THE GOVERNMENT OF THE LODGE.

“ Order is heaven’s first law, and this confest,  
Some are, and must be, greater than the rest.”

*Pope.*

IN the article of government and discipline, Masonry stands high. We find in the earliest times, that all government was *threefold*; though until the time of the Jewish dispensation, the high offices of King, Priest, and Prophet, were united in one person. In Masonry however a distinction was made much earlier; for at the flood Noah, Shem, and Japheth, were the presiding Officers of our Order; and the same disposition has continued unaltered and unimpaired down to the present day.

The Wisdom, the Strength, and the Beauty, of this arrangement may be estimated, by considering that a similar form of government was dictated by the divinity for the observance of the Jewish and Christian Churches; the former being governed by the High Priest, the Priests and Levites; and the latter by Bishops, Priests, and Deacons.

If we turn to the idolatrous mysteries, we find the same unvarying traces of government, which were doubtless derived from the mysteries of Noah, or in other words, from the science of Freemasonry. In the mysteries of Greece, the principal Officers were Three. The chief person was the *Hierophant*, or revealer of holy things; the next in rank and importance was the *Daduchus*, or Torch-Bearer, so named from the custody of the *Great* and *Sacred Lights*, which were placed under his superintending care; the duty of the third, denominated *Ceryx*, was to proclaim, in a public manner, the will and pleasure of the Hierophant. There was also another important personage in these mysteries, who, without any portion of supreme authority, was usually employed about the Altar, and called *Oepiboma*. The three principal Officers were supposed to represent the Sun, the Moon, and Mercury. The inferior Officers appointed to superintend the less important departments of the mysteries, and to assist the chief governors in the execution of their respective duties, were *four*; and usually denominated *Epimeletes*.\*

The principal directors or superintendents of the *Persian* mysteries were also three in number; the Priest or Archimagus, the Archpresule, and the Presule; because the number *three* was esteemed perfect, and included many extraordinary virtues; and it is said in the reputed Oracles of Zoroaster, "The mind of the

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\* Potter's Arch. Grec. b. ii. c. 20.



Father decreed that all things should be divided into THREE.”

We have already seen that the same arrangement prevailed in *India*,\* the chief Officer being placed in the East to represent Brahma, or the rising Sun; his two colleagues in the West and South, representing Vishnu and Siva, as the setting and meridian Sun. The attendant Mystagogues clad in sacred vestments, having their heads covered, each with a pyramidal cap, emblematical of the spiral flame, or the solar ray, were seated around in respectful silence. Thus disposed in solemn guise, the well known signal from the holy bell, summoned the aspirant into the centre of this august assembly; and the initiation commenced with an anthem to the great god of nature, whether as the Creator, Preserver, or Destroyer.

The three superior orders of men under whose presidency the *Gothic* mysteries were placed, called the *Drottes*, the *Scalds*, and the *Diviners*, were believed to possess many supernatural endowments, which invested the mysteries with a distinguished celebrity, that made every candidate for military fame anxious to participate in their privileges.

The presiding officers in the Druidical mysteries were also three, and named *Cadeiriaith*, the Principal, stationed in the East; *Goronwy*, who represented the Moon, occupied a place in the West; and *Fleidor*

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\* Page 137.

*Flam*, the meridian Sun, stationed in the South. Other subordinate officers were necessary to the due celebration of the mysteries. Amongst these were principally *Sywedydd* the mystagogue, who assisted the Archdruid in illustration; and *Ys yw wedydd*, a Revealer of Secrets, who communicated to the initiated aspirant the mysterious tokens of the Order. The two great Lights of heaven were of some importance in these rites. The Sun was a symbol of the superior god Hu, because he is the great source of Light, and the Ruler of the day. The mild sovereign of the night typified the supreme goddess Kyd or Ceridwen, in whose sacred cauldron were involved all the mysteries of this complicated superstition. In fact, "*the Cauldron*" was a technical term comprising the entire system, whether considered under the denomination of doctrine or discipline, philosophy, legislation, or morality, of which these mysteries were composed. Hence, *the Sun, the Moon, and Cadeiriaith or the Archdruid*, formed indispensable and constituent parts of Druidism; the two former as patrons, and the latter as the authorized dispenser of the contents of the sacred cauldron.

It may be unnecessary to enumerate any other instances in detail; suffice it to say, that the government of all the mysterious institutions known in the world has been invariably the same.

The government of a Mason's Lodge in like manner is vested in *Three Superior Officers* who are seated in

the East, West, and South to represent the rising, setting, and meridian Sun. They are distinguished by significant Jewels which are highly emblematical of their respective duties ; and depicted by Three Lesser Lights which symbolize the Sun, the Moon, and the Master ; to intimate that as the Sun rules the day, and the Moon the night with undeviating regularity, so ought the Master to rule with equal precision ; that order and harmony may be as visibly displayed in a Mason's Lodge, as in the uniform movements of the celestial system. Hence we find that the Master's authority in the Lodge, is despotic as the Sun in the firmament, which was placed there by the Creator, never to deviate from its accustomed course till the declaration is promulgated that time shall be no more.

To this purpose, the old Regulations of Masonry provide that "the Rulers and Governors, supreme and subordinate of the ancient Lodge, *are to be obeyed* in their respective stations by all the brethren, according to the old charges and regulations, *with all humility, reverence, love, and alacrity.*" And in the same code, directions are given to the brethren as follows: "You are not to hold private Committees, or separate conversation, *without leave from the master*, nor to talk of any thing impertinently or unseemly, nor interrupt the Master or Wardens, or any other brother speaking to the Master : nor behave yourself ludicrously or jestingly while the Lodge is engaged in what is serious and solemn ; nor use any unbecoming language on any

pretence whatsoever; *but to pay due reverence to your Master, Wardens, and Fellows, and put them to worship.*"

Towards the well governing of a Lodge of Masons, I would recommend moderation in the superior Officers, and subordination in the Brethren; for without mutual good-will, equanimity of temper, and reciprocal forbearance, the superstructure will crumble to decay, and the Lodge, sooner or later, be inevitably dissolved. Be scrupulously cautious in the choice of candidates; for the admission of one improper person may bring discredit on Masonry, cause confusion amongst brethren, introduce disputes and needless controversies into the Lodge, and finally banish from your Society many worthy and excellent associates. Let none be initiated into Masonry but those who are *literally* "good men and true, free born, and of mature and discreet age, no bondmen, no immoral or scandalous men, but of good report." Let the requisitions of the Grand Lodge on this point be strictly adhered to. Mr. Hutchinson very judiciously says, "The principles which alone should attend a candidate for initiation into our society, are pathetically represented in the fifteenth Psalm."\* I subjoin for your considera-

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\* Sp. of Mas. p. 192. Ed. 1775.

PSALM XV.

1 Lord, who shall dwell in thy tabernacle; or who shall rest upon thy holy hill?

2 Even he, that leadeth an uncorrupt life: and doeth the thing which is right, and speaketh the truth from his heart.

tion, the judicious remarks of Brother Noorthouck on this important subject, as worthy of being written in letters of gold.

“ It is to be lamented that the indulgence subjoined to this wholesome injunction (no Lodge shall ever make a Mason without due enquiry into his character) should weaken the regard seriously due to it; for as no man will build his house upon a bog or a quicksand, a man of suspicious integrity will be found equally unfit to sustain the character of a true Mason: and if some corresponding regard to worldly circumstances were included, it would operate more for the welfare and credit of the Society.—Charity is a leading feature in the Masonic character; we deem ourselves bound to assist a distressed brother to the utmost of our power; but surely this humane obligation does not extend to receiving men amongst us, whose imprudence and precarious circumstances obviously tend to reduce them to be objects of charity. Nothing is more common than for giddy young men just entering into life, to join the society with the mere sinister view of extending their connections: such men dissipate their

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3 He that hath used no deceit in his tongue, nor done evil to his neighbour: and hath not slandered his neighbour.

4 He that setteth not by himself, but is lowly in his own eyes: and maketh much of them that fear the Lord.

5 He that sweareth unto his neighbour, and disappointeth him not: though it were to his own hindrance.

6 He that hath not given his money upon usury: nor taken reward against the innocent.

7 Whoso doeth these things shall never fall.

time, money, and attention, in running about from one Lodge to another, where they rather aim to distinguish themselves in the licentious character of jolly companions, than in the more discreet one of steady, good Masons ; and finally close their Masonic career by loading the table in the Committee Room with petitions for charity ! The number of these applications reduces our benefactions to such scanty portions, that instead of being of effectual service in extricating men from the occasional difficulties of life, they seldom amount to more than the instant supply of pressing necessities, without reaching the cause of those necessities ; whereas, were the brethren more select, fewer distresses would come before them, those which did come would be more deserving of relief, and might obtain it from a more liberal hand.

“ Once more ; the fraternity of Masons being every where distinguished by their kind reception and friendly assistance of strange brethren on journies, or, on their arrival to settle among them, gives rise to another abuse, teeming with evil effects. A man on the point of removing to a distant country, recollects that the certificate of being a Mason, will be a convenient general letter of recommendation. He accordingly gets himself proposed through a second, third, or fourth hand, and must be hurried through all the degrees in one evening, because he is to set off early the next morning. Thus, by trusting to a vague recommendation, a Lodge prostitutes the institution for a paltry fee ; vests an

utter stranger with a character he knows nothing of, and furnishes him with a credential, empowering him, should he be basely disposed, to abuse the generous confidence of the brethren wherever he goes ; *to the injury of worthy men who may afterwards travel the same road.*"\*

As a fundamental recommendation, let both Officers and Brethren be, on all occasions, strictly observant of the immutable Rules of Masonry, and the ordinances of the Grand Lodge. Without an uniform attention to discipline, no society can expect to be permanently successful ; and discipline can only be supported in all its beauty, and all its efficacy, by pursuing, in an un-deviating course, that line of conduct marked out by the wisdom of our superior governors ; and laid down, in broad characters, in the Book of Constitutions. Subordination to lawfully constituted powers is the law of nature. It may be traced in every civil institution which divine or human wisdom has established for the common good of man. The primitive patriarch was the legitimate head of his family ; and he officiated, by divine command, as king and priest. Every national scheme of government is invigorated with a supreme ruler, either elective or hereditary, to whose authority all the members are necessarily subordinate. In domestic life, children are placed by nature under the control of their parents ; the brethren of the Lodge

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\* Noorth. Const. p. 393, note.

in like manner, are under the domination of its Master; who, in his turn, though supreme in his own Lodge, is amenable to the Grand Lodge for every undue and improper exertion of power. The laws and ordinances promulgated by the Grand Lodge, being the source and fountain of our protection, are entitled to the utmost reverence and respect from every denomination of Masons. "A Lodge is a place where Masons assemble and work; hence an assembly, or duly organized society of Masons, is called a Lodge: and every brother ought to belong to one, and ought to be subject to its bye-laws, and the general regulations. All the tools in working shall be approved by the Grand Lodge, &c."\*

There are many minor points necessary to be observed towards ruling and governing a Lodge of Masons with complete success. The Master and Officers should always be punctual in their attendance, and observe the hour of meeting with scrupulous exactness; for correct conduct in Officers will invariably produce a corresponding accuracy in the brethren. I know nothing which tends more to disgust and sour the mind than the unprofitable employment of waiting impatiently for the attendance of the superior Officers, with a probable expectation of being disappointed at last. If there be not an absolute certainty that the Lodge will be opened at the proper hour, it must be expected that the members will visibly relax in point of punctuality,

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\* Ancient Charge.



and in the end fall away altogether. If the system is to be kept vigorous and healthy; activity and address, perseverance and energy are required on the part of its principal functionaries; for if once they allow the body, of which they are the head, to become lax and feeble; decay and dissolution are the inevitable consequences. Let the three superior Officers diligently and conscientiously perform *their* duty, and then there will be little fear of irregularity or defection on the part of the inferior members.

The same policy will dictate the impropriety of exceeding the prescribed time of closing the Lodge. Late hours are always objectionable, but they are more particularly so when applied to Masonry. The institution being founded in secrecy, a natural prejudice arises and is cherished in the bosom of our families, which can be softened and nullified only by early hours and correct conduct in all our Masonic transactions. But how are those suspicious prejudices nourished by an untimely return to our homes, after a meeting, protracted perhaps by intemperate discussions, in which hostile and unbrotherly passions have prevailed, wholly dissonant with the benign principles of the order we professedly meet to illustrate and enforce. The usual routine of business may always be performed within the proper limits. And I would recommend to all Masters, never so far to lose sight of the best interests of Masonry, as to suffer any cause to interfere with the judicious regulations enforced in the Bye-Laws respect-

ing the very important duty of closing the Lodge at the prescribed hour. This is of vital consequence to the reputation of the craft; for, as a body of Masons, we ought assiduously to cultivate, by strict regularity and decorum in our proceedings, the commendation of the worthy and the good amongst whom we live. The public have no cognizance of what passes in the tyled recesses of the Lodge, except through the indiscretion of unworthy brethren; but the hour of departure is most carefully marked; and if it be uniformly protracted beyond a seasonable time of night, the character of Masonry will suffer a depreciation commensurate with the imprudence of the erring brethren. And this is wholly chargeable on the Master, for it is to him alone that the hour of dismissal is entrusted. If he be weak enough to allow the brethren a latitude in this point, he betrays the interests committed to his charge, and is unworthy to retain a distinguished office in this ancient and honourable fraternity.

Let the Master be very cautious about expulsions. If a brother grossly misconduct himself, let him be admonished privately; try every gentle means to convince him of his errors; probe the wound with a delicate hand, and use every mild expedient to work his reform. Perhaps he may save his brother, and give to society a renewed and valuable member. If this fail of its effect, and he remain incorrigible, the Master will grieve to use stronger means; but rather than the reputation of Masonry should suffer, these

must be resorted to: and at the final extremity of expulsion, let him show his brother, when he is bidding him a last farewell in that character, that it is for the benefit of the order alone, and not from any vindictive motive of private resentment, that the ultimate measure has been determined on, by the deliberate and unanimous sentence of the whole Lodge.

One other caution I would offer, against a practice teeming with fatal consequences. Let the Master of a Lodge, discourage, on all occasions, that itching propensity which incites a brother to *make motions* on indifferent or trifling subjects. Any motion, on which the Lodge is divided, must be to a certain extent injurious, amongst so many various habits, views, and propensities, as usually constitute a Lodge of Masons: but there are times and subjects when this is unavoidable, and if circumscribed within the proper limits, the evil effects may be counteracted by policy; but if a Master once gives way to a habit of debate; and members, fond of displaying their rhetorical powers, meet with encouragement from the chair, the growing evil carries ruin in its train; division disunites the brethren; parties are formed by a systematic canvass to carry improper motions into effect, and distrust are the mildest consequences to be expected; for every division leaves a certain portion of the members discontented; in the warmth of debate, strong and objectionable phrases and reflections may be indiscreetly used, which leave a thorn rankling in the bosom of those at whom they are levelled; and in the end, the

*minority* are certain to relax in their attendance, if not to withdraw themselves altogether from an institution where their counsels are rejected and their opinions treated with contempt.

Let not these hints be despised, or deemed useless and impertinent. They are the result of long experience in the art of governing a Lodge; which is a much more difficult task than unskilful brethren are willing to admit. Something more is necessary to constitute a perfect Master than the mere competency to repeat certain forms of opening, closing, qualifications, and lectures. These, though absolutely essential, are but the technical trappings of a ruler in Masonry. Sterling good sense, accomplished manners, long experience, a perfect knowledge of men and things, calmness and command of temper, prudence and foresight added to a graceful and natural flow of eloquence, are unitedly necessary to form a governor of the Craft; and he who assumes this high and most important office without possessing the greater part of these essentials, is in danger of exposing himself to the animadversion, if not to the ridicule of his brethren.

I subjoin by way of Note, a few further observations on the important subject of the above Lecture. The possession and exercise of authority is a matter of honourable and proper ambition in every Brother who really prizes the institution into which he has been initiated, and who wishes to render his Masonry productive of its legitimate fruits, the moral improvement of his mental faculties. It is to be regretted, however, that this ambition, so praiseworthy when exercised within its due bounds, is too frequently indulged, even to an unlimited extent, by brethren who, though in other respects worthy, do not possess the requisite talent or industry to confer

distinction. Or, in other words, the ambition is more frequently for the office, than for the qualification to execute it with credit to themselves, or benefit to the community over which they have been called on to preside. If the superior officers of a Lodge be unacquainted with the principles of the institution it can scarcely be expected to prosper. Should the Master be ignorant of his work, the brethren will soon learn to despise his authority. To speak in the technical language of Masonry; if he be unpossessed of the art of drawing designs, how are the Fellow Crafts to execute, or the Apprentices to be instructed? In the discharge of his momentous duties, he is expected to rule and govern his Lodge with the same precision and effect as the sun rules the day, and the moon the night; else how can he be consistently classed with those two grand luminaries? Why is he stationed in the east, but because, as the east is a place of light, it is his duty to enlighten the understanding of his brethren? And how can he discharge this paramount obligation, unless he himself is fully imbued with the true principles of Light? To maintain his authority, the Master of a Lodge must possess talent—moral virtue—and courtesy blended with firmness. He must teach both by precept and example, Faith the most lively, Hope the most pure, Charity the most unfeigned. He must inculcate Temperance unmoved except by the delights of science; Fortitude unshaken alike by prosperity and adversity; Prudence united with inflexible Justice; and he is bound to instruct the brethren in the development of that mysterious and important fact, that man was not created to promote the selfish purposes of his own interest alone, but to use his best endeavours to advance the welfare of others; and above all, to elucidate that leading secret of Freemasonry—the absolute necessity of acquiring a practical knowledge of ourselves.

If, then, it be the Master's province to instruct others, he must be conscious that ignorance in himself is totally inexcusable. He cannot enforce on the younger brethren the necessity of ruling and governing their passions—of keeping a tongue of good report—of practising all the duties of morality and social order—unless he exhibit an example of these virtues in his own person. If he be insincere, his praise of Truth will stand for nothing; if he be not charitable, he cannot consistently recommend the practice of relief; nor if he be factious, can he dilate, with any effect, on the exercise of the most beautiful feature in the Masonic system, Brotherly Love or Charity; that glorious emanation of the Deity, divested of which, Freemasonry would be unworthy of attention. Without these essential qualifications, the Chair will be bereft of its influence; the Master's authority will be disregarded by the brethren; and disorder and disunion, though delayed, will not be the less certain to ensue.

## LECTURE XII.

## CONCLUSION OF THE COURSE.

“ ————— VIRTUE thus  
 Sets forth and magnifies herself, thus feeds  
 A calm, a beautiful, a silent fire  
 From the incumbrances of mortal life,  
 From error—disappointment—nay from guilt,  
 And sometimes, so relenting Justice wills,  
 From palpable oppressions of despair.”

*Wordsworth.*

HAVING now arrived at the conclusion of my labours, I flatter myself that the results of the whole investigation will be apparent and intelligible. The antiquity of Freemasonry may be deduced from the similarity of our rites to those of the mysteries; and we can only account for the resemblance which the ceremonies and doctrines of distant nations bear to each other, by supposing that they were all derived from some great primitive system which was practised when mankind lived together as a single family. It is morally impossible on any other principle, that the same events, perpetuated by the same ceremonies and symbols, and the same secret system of communication, could subsist

in nations so widely separated as to preclude all possibility of intercourse between the inhabitants.

But the antiquity of these mysterious institutions falls before the superior claims of Masonry, as the idols of Memphis were precipitated from their pedestals at the appearance of the infant Saviour.\* The deductions of reason produce a result absolutely asserted in the sacred volume, that all modes of false worship emanated from Shinar, where genuine Masonry was originally practised by the descendants of Noah. The reasons of that variety which diversified the practice of religion amongst different nations may be reduced within a very narrow compass. The apostacy began on these extensive plains, and the seed of every new religion was here scattered. Each ambitious and enterprising individual, whose abilities enabled him to collect a party, would set off with his followers, east, or west, as his inclinations might lead, and forming a colony at no great distance from the place of departure, would, as its ostensible king and priest, deliver, *ex cathedra*, his own speculative opinions on the subject of religion, which would of course be adopted as the system of the newly planted tribe. When the population of a colony thus formed became too abundant for the settlement, new migrations would take place, moving to a greater distance from Shinar, each family under its respective leader, whose religious tenets would doubtless possess

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\* Vid. A prophecy of this remarkable event in Isaiah xix. 1.

some peculiarity. Thus the sentiments of mankind as they separated more widely from each other, would diverge by insensible degrees from the true mode of worship until at length, great nations would be formed in every part of the world by the union of many small tribes, as policy or conquest might prevail, each practising a religion of its own, which, though differing essentially from the rest of the world, would still retain many characteristic marks which unequivocally point out a common derivation.

The great and important truths which I have collected in these Lectures, necessarily proceeded from a system of theology more ancient, and were derived from a source of greater purity than the mysteries in which they were preserved. In point of fact they could scarcely be obliterated, as they were fundamental principles from which all religious obedience radiated, and naturally refer to the patriarchal mode of worship instituted by God himself, to preserve men from the paths of error in this world, and to produce their eternal salvation in the next. With this pure system of truth our science was coeval, and in these primitive times was usually identified. But human reason was too weak to retain just impressions of the sublime truths revealed by the divinity, when that revelation was either doubted or finally rejected; and therefore, though the visible symbols were retained in every mysterious institution which flourished throughout the heathen world, the true interpretation was entirely lost.



The idolatrous mysteries, then, emanated from that pure fountain of Light, which is now denominated Freemasonry; because they contain innumerable references to some system more ancient than idolatry itself, which could be nothing but an institution of unequivocal purity attached to the true and only acceptable mode of paying divine worship to the supreme and invisible God.

I rejoice however in the hope that I have accomplished a still more useful object than merely proving the antiquity of Freemasonry. I have drawn forth and illustrated some of the moral beauties of our science, which may shed a lustre over it in the estimation of the uninitiated; and also tend to make my brethren wiser masons and better men. This has occupied my most anxious attention, and if I have been unsuccessful, the failure must not be attributed to a want of diligence and assiduity in the pursuit to which some portion of my leisure has been for many years devoted.

Before I take a final leave, however, I will offer a few brief observations on some of the ceremonies, emblems, and jewels, which have not been comprehended within the general design of these Lectures; and by so doing I hope to furnish an epitome of the science, which, though wholly incomprehensible to the uninitiated, may be useful to the young mason, while grounding himself in the mysteries of symbolical knowledge.

The institution of Freemasonry is founded on silence, and the mind is instructed and improved by meditating

on a variety of visible objects. They are all invested with a moral reference, and read him a lecture by which he is made a wiser and consequently a better man.

The true Mason, wherever he may be, finds himself always surrounded by objects which forcibly draw his attention to the science into which he has been initiated. If he survey the heavens, the sun in his apparent motion majestically rolling through the expanse; the moon and the planets performing their accustomed courses with order and regularity, the golden stars thickly studded in the blue vault of liquid ether, all are included in his system of Freemasonry, whence he is directed by his speculation on the glorious works of nature up to the Great First Cause, the bountiful Creator of immeasurable space and all that it contains. If he take a view of the productions of nature and art on the face of the planet which we inhabit, the same result follows.

All is Freemasonry, all is replete with the divine principles of the Order. There is not a mountain or valley; a tree, a shrub, or a blade of grass, there is not a magnificent structure of polished marble rich in the splendid decorations of gorgeous architecture, or a refuse stone rejected from the quarry, there is not an object, animate or inanimate in universal nature, but it is instinct with the genius of Freemasonry; and the learned brother may find an instructive Masonic lecture in the wing of a moth as well as in the motions of the august lights of heaven.

As the Deity is the first and most important object

of our attention, I shall commence this interesting disquisition with a few observations on the custom of uncovering the feet and bending the knee while offering up devotions to this august and beneficent Being. In the early ages of the world, one important indication of pure worship consisted in *taking off the shoes* when about to enter a temple dedicated to God. This custom was of very ancient observance, as we may infer from the interview with which Moses was favoured at the burning bush. The heathen nations used the same method of expressing the humility of their devotion. Not only did the wise and judicious Pythagoras command his disciples to worship with bare feet,\* as an expressive symbol of humility and contrition of the heart; but even the grosser worship of the Greeks and Romans enjoined the same practice. In public religious processions, the priests walked barefooted; the high-born Roman ladies did not dare to enter the temple of Vesta with covered feet; and in Greece, the female votaries walked barefooted in the processions of Ceres. The same usage prevailed equally in India, and the islands to the west of Europe; and even the American savages thought that uncovering the feet while in the act of devotion, was a sublime method of paying honour to the deity. Going barefoot, says Killet,† was a sign of much sorrow; assumed by David to express his woeful expulsion from his own country

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\* Jambl. vit. Pyth. c. xxviii.

† Tricæn. p. 38.

by his rebellious son;\* and distressed captives used it in their bondage in another country.†

Allied to this reasonable practice, we find another custom which appears to have been enforced in ancient times. The devout worshipper was obliged to enter his temple with *the right foot placed first* over the threshold; and Vitruvius, in reference to this ceremony, tells us, that the steps which lead to any hallowed fane should be composed of *an odd number*; that the right foot, being used for the first step, might necessarily first enter the building.

*Genusflexion*, was used in the infancy of the world, as an act of devout homage to God; for it is in reality a just expression of humility and reverence from a created mortal to the Great Author of his existence. Pliny says,‡ that “in the knees of man there is reposed a certain religious reverence, observed even in all the nations of the world. For humble suppliants creep and crouch to the knees of their superiors; their knees they touch, to their knees they reach forth their hands; their knees they worship and adore as religiously as the very altars of the gods.”

In the system of christianity, this custom is universally prevalent in obedience to the repeated injunctions of Christ and his Apostles.§ Here it is described as a proper and approved act of devotion; and one of the

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\* 2 Samuel xv. 30. † Isaiah xx. 2, 3, 4. ‡ Nat. Hist. l. xi. c. 45.

§ Luke xxii. 41.—Philippians ii. 10.—Romans xiv. 11.—Ephesians iii. 14.—Acts ix. 40, &c. &c.

Fathers of the Church has conferred a still higher character upon it. He says, "when we bow the knee, it represents our fall in Adam; and when we rise, having received the benefit of prayer addressed to the throne of grace, it is a type of our restoration in Christ by the grace of God, through whom we are able to lift up our hearts to heaven." The candidate for Masonry is directed to bend his knee with a similar reference. He is in a state of intellectual darkness, as far as regards the science into which he is about to receive initiation. His mind unenlightened with the bright rays of Masonic knowledge, bends before the *divine illuminator*, in the humble hope that his understanding may be opened and his mental faculties improved by the process of initiation, commenced with a devout supplication to, and a firm reliance on, that Great Being whose favour alone can convey protection and assistance in every difficulty and danger he may be called on to sustain, as a trial of his patience, fortitude, and zeal.

While thus engaged, he is placed with his face towards the east. For this custom, Masonry affords many substantial reasons. The ancients thought the east peculiarly sacred, because the Sun, the source of light and life, commenced his daily career in that quarter.\* The practice may perhaps be more correctly

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\* This elucidation, strictly speaking, may be erroneous; for in reality the east and west points are but imaginary, and stand on very doubtful ground when compared with the claims of north and south; for the north

deduced from some or all of the following considerations, accounting those points for east and west, which are commonly received in that acceptation. The camp of Judea was placed by Moses in the east as a mark of honorary distinction. The first public temple dedicated to the exclusive service of God, was the Tabernacle of Moses, which was placed due east and west; and in the east our holy religion was first promulgated to mankind. This custom was not peculiar to any nation or people, but was practised throughout the world. The Egyptian and Mexican pyramids were erected according to the four cardinal points; and the idolaters usually built their temples due east and west, that when a sacrifice was offered on the altar, the people might conveniently direct their devotions to the east and thus adore the rising Sun.\* Virgil says,

*Illi ad surgentem conversi lumina solem,  
Dant fruges manibus salsas.*

En. xii. 173.

### Christian Churches and Masonic Lodges are built

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and south poles are the invariable terms of that axis whereon the heavens move; and are therefore incommunicable and fixed points, whereof the one is not apprehensible in the other. But with the east and west it is quite otherwise; for the revolution of the orbs being made upon the poles of north and south, all other points about the axis are mutable; and wheresoever therein the east point be determined, by succession of parts in one revolution every point becomes the east. And so, if, where the Sun rises, that point be termed the east; every habitation differing in longitude, will have this point also different; inasmuch as the Sun successively rises unto every one. Vid. more of this in Brown's *Vulgar Errors*, b. vi. c. 7.

\* Vid. *Ezekiel* viii. 16.

due east and west, and the most holy place is in the east. Tertullian informs us,\* that the early christians prayed with their faces turned to the east, in imitation of a like practice observed by St. John the Evangelist.† The reason assigned for it is, that when placed in this posture, we should reflect on the creation of the world, and the crucifixion of Christ; because the garden of Eden, an emblem of that celestial paradise which is the object of all our hopes and wishes in this world, was placed in the east; and Christ being crucified with his face to the west; it follows, that when we turn to the east, we behold, as it were, the Saviour suspended on the cross, working out the salvation of sinners by the sacrifice of himself. An opinion anciently prevailed, founded perhaps on the sixty-eighth Psalm and the thirty-third verse, that the visible glory of Christ was situated in the eastern part of the heavens. The passage as translated by the Seventy, runs thus, “Sing unto God, who ascendeth above the heaven of heavens *on the east.*” It was indeed a generally received opinion of the early christians, that God was worshipped towards the east, and Satan renounced towards the west.‡ When consigned to our last retreat, the corpse is laid in the grave due east and west, with its feet to the former quarter; that at the resurrection the renovated man may at once behold the bright vision of

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\* Apologet. c. xvi.

† Prochor. vit. 8. Joh. c. v.

‡ Hierom. ad c. vi. Amos.—Damascen. de fid. Orth. 4. 13.—Dion. Areop. de hier. eccles. c. ii. &c. &c.

judgment; for we are certain, from the express declaration of Christ himself, that at the last day he shall appear in the east,\* seated on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.†

Hence we deduce the propriety of the custom which is used in many of our peculiar ceremonies. The candidate in each degree is placed with his face to the east for the purpose of receiving instruction. During the Lectures, the brethren necessarily face the east. Should a brother desire to address the Lodge, he must still turn towards the east; and even during our social refreshments we uniformly observe the same practice. For these united causes, I have been somewhat particular in enumerating a few of those reasons which induced our ancient brethren to adopt a custom equally rational and consistent with the primitive rites of genuine religion.

It was an ancient custom to use *Circumambulation* during the performance of religious ceremonies. In Greece, while the sacrifice was in the act of consuming, the priests and people walked in procession round the altar thrice, singing the sacred hymn, which was divided into three parts, the Strophe, the Antistrophe, and the Epode. While the first part was chanted, they circumambulated in a direction from east to west, emblematical of the *apparent* motion of the heavenly bodies; at the commencement of the second part, they

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\* Matt. xxiv. 27.

† Ibid. xxiv. 30.



changed their course and proceeded from west to east, pointing out their *real* motion ; and during the performance of the Epode, they remained stationary round the altar, a symbol of the *stability* of the earth, waiting for some propitious omen which might announce the divine acceptance of the sacrifice.

In Britain the devotional exercises of the insular sanctuary were conducted on a similar principle. Ceremonial processions moved round it, regulated by the mystical numbers, and observing the course of the Sun ; sometimes moving slowly and with solemn gravity, chanting the sacred hymn to Hu ; at others, the devotees advanced with great rapidity, using impassioned gestures, and saluting each other with secret signs. This was termed, “ the mystical dance of the Druids.”\* The circular movement was intended to symbolize the motion of the earth, and to give an idea of God’s immensity which fills the universe.

The foundation stone of every magnificent edifice was usually laid in the *north east* ; which accounts in a rational manner for the general disposition of a newly initiated candidate when enlightened but uninstructed,

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\* Or the Deasiul. “ In the Highlands of Scotland,” says Smith, (Gal. Ant. p. 38.) “ women with child perform the *Deas’iul* thrice round some chapels to procure an easy delivery. Sick persons do the same round some cairns, to charm back health. The phrase is still more used in conversation than the ceremony is in practice. If the milk or meat which a child swallows, come but a little against the breath, its nurse is immediately alarmed lest it may go *tua’l*, and pronounces the word *deas’iul*, to give it the same direction. On numberless other occasions this word is used in the same manner.”

he is accounted to be in the most superficial part of Masonry. This stone to which some portion of secret influence was formerly attributed, is directed in Alet's Ritual to be "solid, angular, of about a foot square, and laid in the north east."

Behold these instruments of labour, the Square, the Compasses, and the Twenty-four Inch Rule. When I hold up *the Square*, what virtues are presented to your view! As an appendage to an operative mason,\* it is indeed used merely to try and adjust all irregular angles, and to assist in bringing rude matter into due form. But as a speculative mason's jewel, it teaches morality and justice; it shows the beauty of order and sobriety, and displays the advantages arising from a mutual communication of benefits. In a word, we are instructed by this instrument, to act upon the square with all mankind, by doing to others, as in similar circumstances we would have them do to us. The obvious use of *the Compasses* is for the formation of plans and designs from which all noble works of art are completed in their just and elegant proportions. In Masonry however they have a reference to something

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\* Our excellent Brother Hutchinson says, "I am induced to believe the name of *Mason* has its derivation from a language, in which it implies some strong indication, or distinction of the nature of the Society; and that it has not any relation to architects. The French word *maison* signifies a family, or particular race of people. It seems as if the name was compounded of *Maw-Σωαν*, *quero saluum*; and the title of Masonry no more than a corruption of *Μεσορραβωω*, *sum in medio coeli*, or *Μαζορβοωθ*, *signa caelestia*, (Job xxxviii. 32.) which conjecture is strengthened by our symbols."

more than this. They admonish us to walk righteously and soberly amongst our brethren ; to avoid every degree of intemperance which may degrade the man into the brute, and to render to every one his due, tribute to whom tribute is due, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour. Lastly, *the Twenty-four Inch Rule*, whose apparent use is merely to measure lines and distances ; amongst Masons, refers more particularly to the twenty-four hours of the day, and points out the necessity of a regular distribution of Time, one portion of which must be applied to labour, another to rest and refreshment, and a third to prayer and meditation. Thus that excellent monarch and Grand Master of Masons, Alfred the Great, made a regular and judicious appropriation of his hours, after he had vanquished all his enemies, and sat in peace on the throne of his hereditary dominions. It is indeed of primary consequence to ascertain the progress of time. Time does not appear to move. Look at the hour index of your watch. It stands still ; you cannot see the process by which time is divided ; and yet hour after hour passes on ; the index still moves round, and is as actually advancing as if it were visible to your eye. In like manner the Sun in the firmament measures days, and weeks, and months, and years ; and yet, how attentively soever it is observed, you have not the least visible perception of its course. It rises in the east, and you behold it in the purple morn ; it attains its meridian in the south, still imperceptibly to the human

eye, and you know that half the day is gone. It moves majestically towards the end of its daily course, and when setting in the west, you perceive that you are another day nearer to that event which must ultimately close all your connections with this world, and introduce you to another where the division of time will cease, and an endless eternity be open to your view. Let this consideration be the spur and incentive to virtuous pursuits, that your admission into eternity may be glorious, and full of peace and joy unspeakable.

Contemplate the boundless extent of a Mason's Lodge. High as the heavens, deep as the central abyss, its right hand stretching to the east, and its left to the utmost limits of the west; what can all this signify? It points to brethren in every clime, and companions diversified with every tint of complexion, from the delicacy of European beauty, to the swarthy blackness of the African savage. It shows also the universal character of Masonry, and the unbounded influence of its rules and orders, and points out that comprehensive *benevolence and goodwill*, which Masons usually display towards their worthy brethren in distress. It is not however by pecuniary bounty alone that the precept is fulfilled, for this is not in every one's power. Acts of kindness and commiseration may sometimes heal the breaking heart; and these are within the reach of the most indigent of our species. Benevolence and charity must be discriminative to be beneficial; for relief to the common vagrants who daily haunt our doors is

charity misapplied, and only adds strength and permanency to vicious habits, which a firm and uniform resistance of their claims might effectually correct, and even induce their return to virtue. The universal benevolence of a Mason, recommended from a consideration of the extent of his Lodge, consists *generally* in unaffected courtesy, and uniform affability and gentleness of manners. These qualities will always convey the mild feeling of brotherly love, and induce relief and charity to every worthy and destitute object within their reach. The pleasing effects of courtesy and kindness can never fail. They will pour balm, and oil, and wine, into the bleeding heart, and leave behind a load of gratitude which can never be obliterated.

I will now call your attention to a Board with a few lines, angles, and perpendiculars designed upon its surface. This is the Tracing Board; and though it may appear rough and of little use, is yet an immoveable jewel, and contains a lesson of inestimable value. This board is for the Master to draw his plans on, for the direction of his workmen; but its mystic reference is to the great charter of our religious privileges, which, in all our open Lodges is displayed on the Master's Pedestal with its leaves unfolded as the visible standard of our Faith, subscribed with the hand of the divinity; the very ground and pillar of Truth.

You have now before you an unhewn block of marble, rough as when taken from the quarry. This is another immoveable jewel, which points to the infant mind,

rough and uncultivated as this stone; and as the marble can alone be brought into a definite and useful form by the skill and judicious management of the expert workman; so the mind can only be trained to the practice of virtue by the sedulous care, and insidious instruction of parents, guardians, and teachers. Thus the ripening man becomes fitted for his station in society, and qualified to act his part with the approbation of his fellow men. These reflections lead us to contemplate this stone in another and a more perfect form. It has been under the chissel of the expert workman, and now assumes the shape of a true die square, polished according to art, which can only be tried by the nice application of the square and compass. The mind of man, after its previous cultivation, and progress through the chequered scenes of good and evil with which this life abounds, is here represented. He has attained a good old age, and his time has been spent in acts of piety and devotion; the blessing of the fatherless is upon him, and he has caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. His soul therefore ripened for glory, may be aptly compared to this superb stone, for it can now only be tried by the square of God's holy word, and the compass of his own conscience.

Cast your eyes downwards and contemplate the pavement on which you tread. It is Mosaic, chequered with black and white, emblematical of good and evil fortune; like the life of man, sometimes favoured by prosperity, sometimes bending before the

blasts of adversity ; now elevated on the billows of hope, and now plunged in the depths of despair. This is a most merciful dispensation of our All Wise Creator ; for a continued course of prosperity would tend to deprive a man of those ideas of dependence on a superior Being which are natural to him in his present state of mortality ; and thus forgetting his allegiance, he might advance to atheism, and work for himself a portion of misery and pain. Adversity prevents this degeneracy, and places man in his proper situation, as an inferior and dependent being. But perhaps you will say, that affliction is so galling to the soul, and comes upon us so suddenly, and with such tragical attendants, that its uses can scarcely be pronounced sweet and salutary. You are however mistaken. God is the benignant author of unmingled good, and if he brings adversity upon the soul, it is for some beneficial purpose ; it serves to correct the exuberance of vice, and to promote the operation of virtue ; it reproveth the pernicious consequences of perpetual ease and comfort, and prepares the mind for the return of smiling happiness to cheer and relieve mankind while journeying on the road to heaven. Take a retrospective view of your past life, and you will find that in the article of happiness and misery, the former has very largely preponderated. If you have been sometimes hungry, you have been more frequently full ; if you have been sometimes in want, you have often enjoyed the blessing of plenty ; you have had some sickness, but more health ;

a beloved child may have been snatched from you untimely by the hand of death, but perhaps you have several surviving children who are a comfort to your declining years. Besides, if you look round amongst mankind, you will find great numbers whose afflictions exceed the whole aggregate of yours in vast proportion. Let these considerations induce you to receive with the cheerfulness of gratitude every calamity which may befall you. Prosperity is but a fading flower; and though to-day you have health, and friends, and riches, and honours; to-morrow your friends may prove false, your health may be changed into sickness, and your riches and honours may vanish like a dream. Such is man in every station of life, whether crowned with a royal diadem, or enduring the lot of a scourged slave. But the time will come when all will be on a level; death will destroy all distinctions, and the dust of the rich and poor shall be blended in one indiscriminate mass. The superiority of an after state will be that of virtue. Let us then endeavour while on this side the grave to copy that bright pattern of every excellence which is set before us in the gospels; and, as far as we are able, let us act according to the dictates of right reason; and cultivate harmony, maintain charity, and live in unity and brotherly love.

One of the most insignificant objects, in its external appearance, though not perhaps the most useless, which has been adopted by our ancient brethren, is *the Rod or Wand*; and I shall conclude this course



of lectures with a brief sketch of its history and symbolical application.

The earliest mention of this appendage is traditional. It is said that when our first parents, by transgression fell from their original state of innocence ; and were expelled from paradise into a world of woe ; Adam, bending under the oppression of guilt, supported his weary limbs by taking in his hand a branch of that fatal tree which occasioned his disgrace. The Almighty foreseeing the miserable consequences of sin, and the necessity of divine interference for counteracting its effects, not only permitted Adam to take with him this rod, but afterwards miraculously preserved it, by natural means, for his own purposes. By Adam it was bequeathed to Methusaleh the son of Enoch ; who, in like manner, left it to Noah, by whom it was preserved in the ark. After the death of Noah, it passed to his grandson Mizraim, who founded the city of Memphis ; he deposited it in the celebrated college there, and it remained under the guardianship of the priests for many generations ; until the time when Jethro, a tutor of Moses was consecrated, and sent from this college to be a priest of Midian ; and he conveyed away the rod by stealth. He did not however profit by it in the slightest degree ; for shortly after his arrival in Midian, when walking in his garden, he struck the lower end of the rod deep in the earth ; from which situation he was never able to remove it. While wrapt in wonder and astonishment at this ex-

traordinary circumstance, he received a supernatural indication that the rod should remain immoveable until the Deity himself should commission a certain individual to take it away, in whose hands it should be *a symbol of his power and glory*. It happened therefore that Moses, when he had slain the tyrannical Egyptian, fled for concealment and safety to Jethro; and as they were walking together in the garden, and employed in earnest conversation on the subject of his flight, by accident Moses laid his hand upon this rod, and without any exertion drew it out of the ground. Jethro immediately acquainted Moses with every circumstance relating to this divine staff; and he, considering it as an assurance of the favour of heaven, immediately took the rod into his own possession, which proved not only a symbol of his authority, but the agent by which all the miracles were performed that preceded and accompanied the great deliverance of the children of Israel from their Egyptian bondage; and its extraordinary powers were brought into requisition at the BURNING BUSH, to convince him of his holy mission, and the certain protection which would be extended to him by the omnipotent I AM. The stupendous miracles which wrought out the emancipation of his brethren, were performed by the agency of this rod.

The imitations effected by Pharoh's magicians were produced by natural causes only. They were in possession of a secret to tame serpents and render them innocuous. A little dexterity was therefore only ne-

cessary to substitute real serpents, and conceal the rods under their long garments. Frogs might be procured in any numbers, for they swarmed throughout the land of Egypt; and the art of changing the colour of different substances was then known in the eastern countries; so that water might be easily tinged with a red colour, to give it the appearance of blood.

Some learned men are of opinion that these rods were actually converted into serpents, and the other two miracles performed by the power of God; that “the Egyptians had no reason to think their incantations would produce serpents; but they would try all experiments in order to judge further of the matter; and upon their attempting it, God was pleased in some cases to give an unexpected success to their endeavours in order to serve and carry on his own purposes and designs by it.” But the passage does not appear to favour this conjecture, for these serpents are said to be produced by *enchantments*; that is, by certain ceremonies and forms of words muttered between the teeth,\* after the manner of our modern jugglers; subsequently to which, each magician threw down his serpent before Pharaoh and his court. For it is repugnant to our ideas of God’s attributes to suppose that he would lend his assistance to such gross deceptions. Besides, the incapacity of these jugglers would have been better displayed, if no appearance of a miracle had been produced;

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\* Isaiah viii. 9.

nor would they have been induced to attempt the performance of a miracle with the vengeance of Amenophis before them, who appears to have possessed little government of his passions, without some certain prospect of success ; for it was a custom of the eastern kings to destroy those magicians who failed to perform a miracle dictated from the throne.\* But Moses actually knew the real state of the case from his Egyptian education, and therefore his serpent devoured theirs. The sorcerers too in the third plague confessed that Moses wrought his miracles by the finger of God ; which amounts to an acknowledgement that theirs were works of sleight, done by the power or dexterity of man ; and not by any interference on the part of God.†

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\* Dan. ii. 13. Herod. Clio.

† The works of art now in common use, would in ancient times, have been referred to the power of magic. Stuffed birds are made to fly through the air with great velocity ; wooden images to perform upon several kinds of musical instruments ; and to draw landscapes with great correctness and dispatch, by means of an ingenious complication of machinery. Archimedes was esteemed a powerful magician, for he performed works, which though now perfectly understood, were in those ages esteemed supernatural, and beyond the attainment of unassisted human abilities. Archytas the Pythagorean made a wooden dove to fly ; and Boetius made brazen serpents to hiss, and birds of brass to sing ; and they were hence accounted Magicians.

The most inexplicable doubts were however entertained by the wiser heathens about the power of magicians to invoke evil spirits and make use of their agency. Eusebius\* quotes an epistle from Porphyry to Anebonus the Egyptian, in which he proposes nine doubts on this subject. How can it be reconciled to common sense, says he, that magicians invoke spirits as their superiors, and afterwards command them as inferiors ? Why do the spirits refuse to answer the calls of any but men of strict virtue ; and yet will lend their assistance to the commission of any wickedness ? Why will they

\* Euseb. de prep evan. l. 5, c. 6.

St. Jerome says, *signa quæ faciebat Moses imitabantur signa Ægyptiorum, sed non erant in veritate.* And this observation is doubtless correct, for the rod of Moses devoured the serpents substituted for the rods of the magicians; and therefore they were real serpents; and not an illusion as is the opinion of many.

The magicians themselves, might consider that Moses and Aaron produced these effects from natural causes like themselves; and therefore boldly opposed sleight against sleight, or miracle against miracle; and hence the king, regarding Moses and Aaron only as expert magicians, refused to comply with their demands. But when their dexterity failed in its effect, they gave up the contest, and acknowledged that Moses was an agent in the hands of God.

Before this time, however, the staff was an emblem of rule and authority; for Jacob, when he had received the blessing of royalty for himself and his descendants, was sent into the land of Padanaran with his staff only,

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not hear the sorcerer unless he abstain from venery; and afterwards inflame him to unnatural lust? Why do they prescribe fasting, and yet delight in the smell of sacrifices? Why do they forbid the magician during the rites of incantation to touch any dead body, when some magical ceremonies are performed with parts of a dead body? Why do they endeavour to terrify the spirits with threats, who are represented as not afraid of them? Why do they address the spirits with invocations and prayers like these—Thou who art engendered from the slime of the earth; thou whose throne is in the waters; thou who canst assume new shapes at pleasure, appear and aid us! when these kind of prayers are little regarded by them? Why do they use barbarous and strange words, as if the spirits understood only the Scythian, or some other language equally barbarous? And as the spirits are immaterial, how can they be tempted by sensible and material things?

as the visible symbol of his high character.\* It was exhibited to his numerous posterity at his death; when, as the patriarch of his race, he blessed the sons of Joseph, who had become the ruler over all the land of Egypt. It was the subject of Balaam's prophecy respecting the regal dignity to be enjoyed by his descendants;† and afterwards referred to as a token of royalty,‡ and an agent of national punishment;§ and the utter destruction of a kingdom is expressed by the metaphor of a broken staff;|| which denoted the annihilation of power, and a state of absolute slavery.

The rod was a symbol of the authority of Moses and Aaron at the deliverance, and the subsequent wanderings of the Israelites; and was denominated the rod of God;¶ as displayed in numerous instances,\*\* but particularly in that remarkable case when 'the princes of Israel disputed this authority, and it was confirmed by a miracle; for the rods of the twelve tribes being placed in the tabernacle to await a display of the divine will and pleasure; the rod of Aaron "brought forth buds and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds."†† David

\* Gen. xxxii. 10    † Ib. xlix. 10.    ‡ Jer. x. 16. Rev. ii. 27.

§ Job. xxi. 9. Isaiah x. 24, 26.

|| Isaiah xiv. 5.

¶ Exod. iv. 20.—xvii. 9. To the same effect the Psalmist says, "thy throne O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre." (Psalm xlv. 6.) The staff or *emblem* of power, was sometimes put for the oracle or power itself. (Hosea, iv. 12.)

\*\* Exod. viii. 5—xiv. 16—xvii. 9.

†† Exod. xvii. 8. This rod was in such esteem with the celebrated Jacob Behmen, that he incorporated its type into the significant emblem which he had engraven and used on all occasions as his private seal. The device was

uses the same instrument in a beautiful metaphor to express the consolations which he derived from the grace of God. "Though I walk," said this pious man, and excellent brother, "through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me. Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me."\*

Rhabdomancy, or divination by the use of a rod, was practised by the Israelites; and is termed by the prophet Hosea an abomination. It was performed† by setting up two sticks, which from the efficacy of a charm were supposed to be supernaturally directed in their fall to the right hand or to the left; and were thus accounted lucky or unlucky. Nebuchadnezzar, when consulting the Gods about the invasion of Judea, used either the above, or divination by shooting an arrow into the air, and marking the direction in which it fell; by which means he determined whether to make the expedition, or to defer it to a more favourable opportunity.‡

Throughout the whole ancient and modern world, the symbol of power, was always a staff or sceptre. In Egypt, Omnipotence was denoted by a sceptre crowned

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"a hand reached out from heaven with a stalk of full blown lilies, being the *Raptum Magicum*, (*πάβδος, virga*) the rod of Aaron which budded; the kingdom of the lily in the paradise of God, which is to be manifested and displayed in the last time, when the end shall have been brought back to its beginning, and the circle closed." (Okely's *Behmen*, p. 20.)

\* Psalm xxiii. 4.

† Theophylact. in *Hosea*, iv. 12.

‡ Vid. *Ezek.* xxi. 21.

with an eye. The royal sceptre of Egypt was surmounted by the head of a jackall as an emblem of the power of Osiris. The Tau or handled cross was also a staff, and a sacred symbol. The same idea was conveyed equally by the cypress sceptre of Jupiter ; the trident of Neptune ; the thyrsis of Bacchus ; the club of Hercules ; the caduceus of Mercury ; the mace of Thor ; the staff of the Brahmins ; the Druid's wand, and the Persian crosier. The magical rod used in the mysteries of Osiris, and deposited in the temple of Isis, was an acknowledged substitute for the rod of Moses, which tradition said had been stolen from the college of Memphis. Even the golden twig or staff of Eneas, constituted a symbol of protection in his fearful descent into Hades ; or in other words, his initiation into the mysteries. During the celebration of the Dionysiaca, "the thyrsis or rod of Bacchus was elevated, to perpetuate the remembrance of two remarkable miracles which the god was reputed to have performed with this all powerful instrument. On one occasion he cast his rod upon the ground and it became a serpent ; and afterwards he struck the two rivers Orontes and Hydaspes with it, and the waters immediately receded, and he passed over dryshod. The assembly which celebrated these orgies, was composed of men, women, and children of all ranks ; amongst whom, during the continuance of the festival distinction was unknown. This was intended to commemorate the



manner of Israel's departing out of Egypt, accompanied by a mixed multitude from all the neighbouring nations."\*

When mythology became converted into romance, we find the same virtue transferred to the wand of the magician; without which he would have been accounted powerless, and his art vain. Even the rod of forked hazel which, in the middle ages, was supposed, in the hand of an adept, to be capable of discovering hidden treasure, or detecting concealed springs of water, was dignified with the name of Moses' Rod.

From the above collection of facts and reasonings, we may gather whence our ancient brethren, whose example we have copied in this particular, derived the use of wands as ensigns of office; for the custom unquestionably accompanied all the genuine masonry which we find in the purer ages of the world. It still continues to be an emblem of authority in every grade of civilized society, though under different appellations. When wielded by a monarch it is termed *a sceptre*; in the hands of a bishop, it is *a crozier*; of a general, *a baton*; and the civic *mace* of our municipal corporations, and the constable's *staff*, have precisely and severally the same reference.

All these examples bear on the Masonic rod or wand, which is used as an ensign of office or dignity; and the Director of Ceremonies in our Lodges, is dis-

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\* Hist. Init. p. 267, with authorities.

tinguished by a Jewel bearing *two rods saltire-wise*. This emblem teaches moderation to rulers, and obedience to the brethren. Subordination is the broad and imperishable basis on which alone can rest the stability of any institution. This has been well expressed by Dr. Hemming in his celebrated charge to a newly initiated Brother ; and it is a lesson of such value, that every lover of the science ought to retain it in his constant recollection. “As a Mason,” says this important document, “there are many excellencies of character to which your attention may be particularly and forcibly directed. Among the foremost of these are, *secrecy, fidelity, and obedience*.”

“Secrecy may be said to consist in an inviolable adherence to the obligation you have entered into, never improperly to reveal any of those Masonic secrets which have now been, or may at any future time be, intrusted to your keeping ; and cautiously to shun all occasions which might inadvertently lead you so to do.

“Your fidelity must be exemplified by a strict observance of the constitutions of the Fraternity ; by adhering to the ancient landmarks of the order ; by never attempting to extort, or otherwise unduly obtain, the secrets of a superior degree ; and by refraining to recommend any one to a participation of our secrets, unless you have strong grounds to believe that, by a similar fidelity, he will ultimately reflect honour on our choice.

“So must your obedience be proved by a close con-

formity to our laws and regulations ; by prompt attention to all signs and summonses ; by modest and correct demeanour whilst in the lodge ; by abstaining from every topic of religious or political discussion ; by a ready acquiescence in all votes and resolutions duly passed by the brethren ; and by perfect submission to the Master and his Wardens, whilst acting in the discharge of their respective offices.”

To define this authority and obedience in the clearest and most simple manner, our ancient brethren made them the subjects of a series of general exhortations ; which is one of the most valuable legacies, that in their wisdom, they have bequeathed to us. I allude to the *ancient charges*, which have been so judiciously incorporated into our book of constitutions ; and which every Mason would do well to study with attention, that they may be reduced to practice whenever their assistance is needed.

These charges are sufficiently comprehensive, and embrace an epitome of every duty which the Mason is enjoined to perform. And as a commentary on them, the Grand Lodge has thought proper, in its constitutions, to enumerate these various duties more minutely, and to make the breaches of them penal ; whilst honours and rewards are held out to those worthy brothers who have been distinguished by regularity and decorous conduct. By such means the proper balance is maintained in the several grades of the institution ; and by a happy blending of interests

and employment, Freemasonry has existed in all ages unimpaired by the convulsions which have shattered States and Empires, and annihilated mighty nations. This consideration involves an assurance that its stability can never fail, and that it will exist till time shall be no more.

The tower sky-pointing, and the dome sublime,  
 Rais'd by the mystic rules and forming power,  
 Shall long withstand the iron tooth of time,  
 Yet still their fall is sure:  
 But Masonry,  
 The art sublimely free,  
 Founded by God himself, through time shall firm endure.  
 Still shall its sons their grateful voices raise.  
 And joyful sound their Great Grand Master's praise.  
 At thy shrine, O Masonry !  
 Shall admiring nations bend ;  
 In future times thy sons shall see  
 Thy fame from pole to pole extend.  
 To worlds unknown thy heav'n born light dispense.  
 And systems own thy sacred influence.

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