

ESSAYS

ON THE

ORIGIN AND ANTIQUITY

OF

FREEMASONRY

HUGO.

ORIGIN

AND

ANTIQUITY

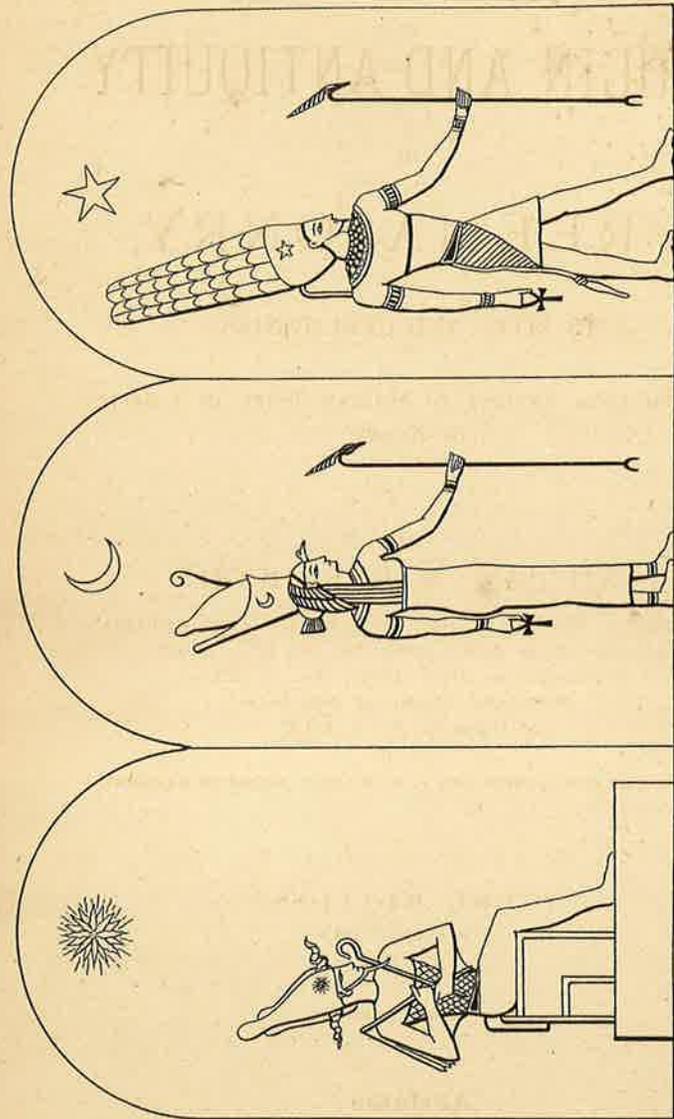
OF

FREEMASONRY

HUGO.

10/6

W. G. White,
Member Commercial Lodge, No. 39,
S. A. C.



HORUS.

ISIS.

OSIRIS.

THE OSIRIAN TRINITY.

THE
 ORIGIN AND ANTIQUITY
 OF
 FREEMASONRY,
 ITS RITES AND CEREMONIES;

TRACED FROM ANCIENT TO MODERN TIMES, IN A SERIES
 OF ESSAYS.

BY

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 WITH FRONTISPIECE.

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THE FOLLOWING ESSAYS ARE, WITH SENTIMENTS OF THE MOST
PROFOUND RESPECT AND ATTACHMENT,

DEDICATED

(BY PERMISSION)

TO THE

MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND MASTER MASON,
BROTHER THE HONORABLE SAMUEL JAMES WAY, CHIEF JUSTICE,
CHANCELLOR OF THE ADELAIDE UNIVERSITY, &C.;

ALSO, TO THE

MEMBERS FORMING THE FIRST GRAND LODGE OF
ANCIENT FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS
IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA,

(INAUGURATED APRIL 17, A.D. 1884; A.L. 5884.)

AND TO THE

CRAFT IN GENERAL,

BY THE COMPILER,

WILLIAM MARKS HUGO.

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PREFACE.

THE following "Essays" were not originally intended for the public eye, but prepared for Lodge instruction only; at the solicitation of several friends, however, they have been carefully revised for the press, and will be found to contain, in a condensed form, some deeply interesting information on Masonic and other abstruse subjects. In their preparation, the best and most unprejudiced Authors have been consulted and largely drawn from, as will be explained in the "Compiler's Preface" and "Introduction to the Work," further on.

I hope that my labors will shed more *Light* on the origin of the "Ancient Craft," and on our System of Morality, so beautifully veiled in Allegory and Illustrated by Symbols, and that they will create a greater interest in "Speculative Masonry," and Masonic Literature generally.

Addressed, as these "Essays" are, to a body of intelligent and thoughtful men, it is hoped they will be appreciated in the sincere and fraternal spirit in which they have been conceived and written.

I perceive in Freemasonry a charming *Moral Arena* for the edification of mind, and the development of the great Masonic principles of Brotherly Love, Relief, and

Truth; these *Three* grand principles were further concentrated by the Right Royal Most Worshipful Grand Master of England, Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, when lately laying the *Foundation Stone* of Truro Cathedral, in Cornwall, into the *Two* weighty and memorable words of *Loyalty* and *Charity*.

For the satisfaction of scrupulous Brethren I may here state that no one, without an absolute practical knowledge of Freemasonry, personally obtained by initiation, and subsequent study, can make any improper use of the knowledge contained in these "Essays" to deceive, for of the actual secrets of Masonry, none have been improperly disclosed; but as guides toward a better knowledge of the subject, I am sure they will be welcomed by a very large class of Brethren and friends, whose sincere love of the Order is impeded by the constant care of active business life, and who have little leisure or taste for training themselves in its peculiar observances and technicalities. It is true these "Essays" contain much genuine Masonry; but it is not marked by a distinguishing type, and is distributed with so much precaution as to render fruitless any attempt on the part of an uninitiated person to determine where it is concealed; whilst to the *true Mason's* view it lies open and exposed, darting its pure rays to enlighten and invigorate the mind. I may add that Freemasonry has now taken its legitimate place amongst those liberal Sciences to which, at the present day, a competent portion of popular favor is freely extended. False friends and deceitful Brethren have endeavored to overwhelm it with ridicule, and to weaken its influence by disseminating fictitious rituals

and counterfeit revelations; while open enemies have attempted to cover its professors with confusion by charges of *disloyalty*, *infidelity*, and other *crimes*. Its principles and practices have now, however, become better known, and more clearly understood, and the accusations of its opposers neutralised, if not extinguished; our antagonists have been our helpers, as the proportion of learned and scientific candidates has abundantly increased in recent times; and, as the Institution contains nothing but what is really excellent, both in doctrine and practice, its principles are developed and carried out in South Australia and other parts of the world with an energy and zeal unknown at any former period; and it is demonstrable that the perusal of genuine authentic works on Freemasonry has induced many to join the Society who would otherwise have never entertained the most distant idea of being initiated, while they remained perfectly unconscious that it affords the means of extending their enjoyments and imparting a taste for the peaceful pursuits of science and morality.

It may not be out of place to say in this connection, that in the different countries of Europe and America the Brethren adopt a variety of methods in relation to Lectures, Essays, &c., used in Lodge instruction. In France it has long been the custom to permit of historical disquisitions being laid before the Fraternity in open Lodge; and in Germany, where the system of Masonic Clubs flourish to a great extent, philosophical papers of greater or less merit are not infrequently submitted for discussion and exchange of thought, and this appears to have been the usual custom among Masons.

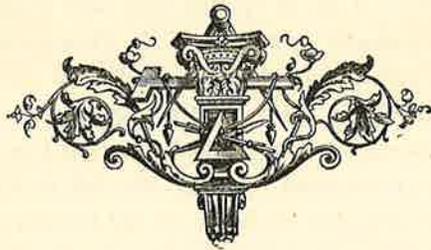
I would ask the simple question—Had there been no *Ancient Thought*, where would *Modern Thought* have been to-day? With all our boasted Modern Thought, have our morals improved? Is there anything new in the speculation of *Modern Philosophy* which was not comprehended by the people thousands of years ago? And, therefore, it may be safely maintained that an Institution such as ours, which places morality and human kindness, forbearance and brotherly affection, prominently and plainly before the world, can be in no danger of being set aside by Ultramontanism and the various modern Social systems propounded for gain, and which are on the marked increase in our times. In all ages of the world there have been imitators; in all ages postulates and acolytes of the Temple of Light and Righteousness; history attests it; humanity maintains it, and rightly hands it down in undiminished glory to the future.

In life and actions philosophers of all ages have tried to trace the causes, and indicated the cure for many of our social inequalities; but it devolved on the quiet and noble simplicity of the Freemasons' Lodge to put these ideas into practical illustration, and use them for the general benefit of mankind. Creeds may alter; forms of government and social ideas change; but the invariable laws of Masonry pursue their course to ameliorate morals, soften and correct the heart, suggest nobler ideas in connection with real culture; while at the same time they materially aid in saving the *Orphan*, drying the *Widow's* tears, and advancing humanity towards a better light and knowledge of the Great Father of All, the *Grand Master* of Heaven and Earth, "Who liveth and reigneth for ever."

The subtle philosophy of Freemasonry is supplementary to the greatest moral doctrines underlying all Religions that have ever existed in the world, and should be so accepted and treated. As a moral and social Institution Freemasonry reconciles men of the most opposite views in a neutral arena, and silently does in an effective way that *Good* which the greatest humanitarians and true philosophers have ever striven to do. The history of Freemasonry is replete with incidents proving the truth of this assertion.

It is the sincere hope of the compiler of these "Essays" that they will tend to extinguish prejudice, and assist in extending a true knowledge of Masonic science throughout the world. I am of opinion that such examinations of the fundamental principles of the Order, when done in a right spirit, are calculated to do real service, not alone to individuals, but to the Craft at large. And any attempt to elucidate the origin and objects of Freemasonry can only be condemned by those who fail to appreciate the real grandeur and sublimity of the noblest and most Ancient Society ever instituted by man for the benefit of mankind in general. I have tried to make these "Essays" easily understood, and here and there, when it seemed apposite and desirable, have thrown out a few hints and interspersed certain observations on the matter in hand; not as in any way claiming high (or any) authority, but because they appeared naturally to arise from the context. If my readers will, therefore, accept what is herein imparted in the spirit it is offered, a great and good purpose will have been attained.

I now leave this Work to the judgment of a generous public, only adding, that I have endeavored to perform it with sincerity, conciseness, and a warm and fraternal regard for the real interests of the Fraternity, and of society at large.



COMPILER'S INTRODUCTORY PREFACE.

TO MY READERS.

IF I were not very well known among the Masons of this Colony I should hesitate to appear before you; and, even under the influence of this feeling, would scarcely have ventured to solicit your attention if I had not been impressed with the idea that I could tell many of our Brethren and friends something not generally known—matters of such deep interest, that I feel sure there are many persons, old and young, who would travel half over Australia, and think themselves well rewarded for their trouble in acquiring the information thus collected, and probably rescued from oblivion.

29
 Much labor and expense has been devoted to collecting the materials for these "Essays," compiling, and so arranging them as to form throughout the series a continuous history, and thus communicate the result of my labors and researches to you in a concise and interesting manner.



AUTHORS CONSULTED.

THE task of preparing a series of "Essays" with a view to trace Freemasonry to its origin and its connection with the various Ancient Nations and their mysteries, it will be admitted, is an undertaking of no ordinary character, inasmuch as it is absolutely beyond the power of any single individual mind to fully grasp the subject. I have, therefore, in the preparation of them, been compelled to consult and largely draw from the works of the undermentioned authors, viz. :—

Mysteries of Freemasonry, by Jno. Fellows.
Sharpe's History of Egypt.
Chambers' Encyclopædia.
Chas. Knight's Works.
The Treasury of Knowledge.
The Stones Crying Out.
Abbe Pluche's History of the Heavens.
Masonic Magazine.
Arrowsmith's Ancient Geography.
The Land and the Book.
Land of the Pharoahs.
Royal Masonic Cyclopædia.
Kenning's Cyclopædia.
Bruesch's History under the Pharoahs.
Half-hours of English History.
The Writings of Dr. Oliver, Carlisle, and others.
Also, Extracts from *S. A. Register*, *S. A. Advertiser*
S. A. Rough Ashlar, and other Masonic sources.

I return my sincere thanks, and request the indulgence of any living author from whose stores I have selected without direct permission, and apologise for the liberty taken, in some instances, with the original text, by making such alterations or additions as became necessary in the compilation of the series. It is my intention throughout, not to confine myself uniformly to any one of the above-named authors, but to take the purport of them from either work as best suits the purpose. My respect for the rights of literary property will always prevent me from abusing any indulgence thus accorded.



OUTLINES OF THE WORK.

S my readers, doubtless, desire to gain knowledge and derive amusement from a perusal of this Work, to simplify matters, we have arranged these "Essays" so as to confine their attention to only one department of antiquity before proceeding to another, and to prevent as far as possible confusion by a too great variety of similar subjects. It was some years before I myself overcame the perplexity arising from the old-fashioned custom of reading history backwards—that is, from our own Era to those more remote. To avoid that error in the present case, I will entirely reverse the plan and take the Egyptians first, as they were unquestionably one of the most ancient nations of whom we possess any account.

These researches will extend from the Epoch of the Gods and Demi-gods, and the dynasty of the mysterious Manes, or departed souls, which closes the antediluvian and pre-historic times, all of whom the Ancient Egyptians asserted had been born in their country, and the knowledge of whom had in time been conveyed from Egypt to every other nation. These Gods, &c., were said to have reigned in that country many thousand years before the time of *Menes*, their earliest traditional mortal king. His reign is placed by the Egyptians 17,000 before the Christian Era, and by the advocates of the *Long Chronology* at 5,702 years, by others at 3,892 and 2,717 years, or thirty dynasties of the Pharaohs before the Christian Era, respectively.

This Chronology is drawn from ancient and modern sources. The reason for this is obvious. The early chroniclers tell so much that is fabulous, conflicting, and unreliable, that they afford comparatively little assistance, and we are thus compelled to unravel fables in order to sustain truth. Still, these ancient narratives possess charms for the student rarely found in any modern Historical Digest.

From the nature of the work, these "Essays" will, as previously stated, be so chronologically arranged as to supply a continuous history, but will chiefly afford a succession of the most graphic parts of the Ancient Religious Mysteries and their relationship to Freemasonry throughout. We shall also endeavor to confine our selections to such scenes as convey the true knowledge to be learnt from this important and interesting subject. That is, a knowledge of the principles and passions by which men in various ages of the world have been influenced, agitated, and swayed, and by which events have been brought about.

In reviewing the Religious aspect of the question, I shall endeavor to show, not only the Dogmas and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians, but their identity with our cherished "Craft;" trace out our secret rites, and try, so far as allowable, to unravel the intricate web in which our Mystery is involved. To trace the Order back to its source, by showing its intimate connection and similitude to Institutions more antique, and put it beyond a doubt that it sprung from, and is, though much distorted, a continuation of the rites and ceremonies observed in those obsolete establishments, is a matter of the greatest importance.

In order to do this, in addition to the former chronological arrangement, the subjects will, as far as practicable, be arranged and carried through five distinct periods of time, viz.:—That of the Gods, Demi-gods, and Manes, before the Pharaohs; that of the Pharaohs while Egypt was an independent kingdom; the Perso-Egyptian period, when the country was subject to the Persians, by Cambyses, B.C. 525; and the Greco-Egyptian period during the reign of the Ptolomies, which ends with the death of Cleopatra. (This beautiful princess, having supported the cause of Brutus, was summoned to Tarsus by Antony to answer for her conduct; but he became so enamoured of her that he divorced his wife Octavia, the sister of Augustus, and having publicly married Cleopatra, gave her the greater part of the *Eastern* Provinces of the Roman Empire. This behaviour produced a rupture between Augustus Cæsar and Antony, which ended in the famous battle of Actium, where Antony was defeated in consequence of Cleopatra's "flying with sixty ships." Antony, finding his cause desperate, took refuge in Egypt, where he stabbed himself, B.C. 30, and Cleopatra, to avoid falling into the hands of Augustus, poisoned herself by the bite of an Asp. From this time Egypt became a Roman province.) The next period is termed the Roman-Egyptian.

In pursuance of this course, it is necessary in the first instance to take a transient view of the dogmas and customs of Egypt, as this country was the salient point from which all the religious observances of the ancient world commenced. What are emphatically termed "Mysteries," is but another name for Religion, and an exposition of what they consisted is, of course, embraced in the subject in hand, as forming a parallel with the rites of

Masonry. Independent of the main design of these "Essays," such topics in themselves possess great interest as matters of legendary lore and curiosity, enhanced by observing the close affinity they bear to the practices of the Craft at the present day.

Among all the ancient nations, none are more worthy of our notice than the kingdom of Egypt, for, if not the birthplace, it was the protector of the Arts and Sciences, and cherished every species of knowledge known or cultivated in remote times. Egypt was the chief source whence the Grecians derived *their* information, and after all its windings and enlargements we may still trace the stream of our own knowledge to the banks of the Nile.

In examining the old authors we are often amazed at the conformity found in many respects between the practices of the Hebrews, and those nations in existence before them, who were given to the grossest idolatry. Most of the learned, in order to account for such a similitude of usages, say that false religions only copied and mimicked the true. Sir John Marsham, however, states that this cannot be so in this instance, as from a multitude of evident proofs, the sacrifices, the ceremonial, and the very objects themselves of idolatry, were prior to Moses and the Holy Scriptures, and maintains that the laws and ceremonies of the Hebrews were an imitation of the customs of Egypt and the neighboring nations, but were adapted to the worship of one God. (This subject will be fully treated of in our "*Second Series of Essays*," now in course of preparation.)

Whatever may be thought of the doctrines of the Mysteries, they enforced the principles of morality, by the most terrible scenic representations of the wicked on

one hand, and of the most pleasing spectacles of the happiness of the righteous on the other, in a future state of existence. *Fellows*, in his "Mysteries of Freemasonry;" Pluche, a Professor of Languages in the University of Rheims, 1688, in his "History of the Heavens;" and Bruschi in his "History under the Pharaohs," having treated more minutely of these topics, and having explained them more satisfactorily than any other authors, I shall commence with extracts from their valuable works, especially as critical histories of the fabulous Gods of Paganism, under semblance of truth, have been transmitted from age to age, and generally received as narratives of real facts.

"Pluche" has unveiled many of these poetic fictions, and pointed out the source whence they were derived; he says:—"The men most celebrated, who have treated of the formation of the Heavens and the earth, or of their mutual relations, were Pagans; philosophers of different nations; and sacred writers. Those systems which were given by the Egyptians, Phœnicians, Greeks, and Romans, are mostly obscured by fabulous recitals, full of absurdity; they formed ideas so strange on the government of the heavens, and on the powers which sustain the human species, that there is no need to combat them with argument. But from the depth of this frightful darkness it is possible to elicit light."

The first fixed point we have to treat of, is the signification of the names and figures which served from the highest antiquity to characterize the Sun, Moon, and Stars, according to their different situations. The usages of the ancients, and an inspection of Nature will aid us in this discovery; and its knowledge lead us to immediately

perceive the enormous abuse made of the Institutions of the first men, and place in sufficient light the idolatry of our fathers, who worshipped the Bull, the Ibis, the Cat, the Dog, the Hawk, the Crocodile, and even the Onion, from a conviction that more holy things were represented under these palpable signs. A temple was built at Leontopolis, 173 B.C., named Onion, by Onias, son of the High Priest of Jerusalem.

These "Essays" are intended to be useful to young persons, by unveiling to them those fabulous personages whose names are so often mentioned but seldom explained, and we have still greater hopes, perhaps with presumption, that they may be of use to teachers themselves. Teachers, however well qualified, generally require leisure to undertake researches of any considerable length, and the more judicious they are, the more disagreeable it is to them perhaps, to be a for a long series of years handling fables, almost always absurd or scandalous, without being recompensed for the tediousness of such ridiculous stories in the satisfaction of at least finding out the origin of them. There are many good Masons, well acquainted with the Ritual, and even the Lectures, but they fail from lack of taste and opportunity to grasp the subtler philosophy of Freemasonry. That this class of individuals may be roused from apathy is my earnest wish, though the chief gratification I shall derive from these labors will be, the facilitating of the study of the history of Nature and Science, and as previously stated, the probability of rescuing a valuable mass of useful information from oblivion.

In the following "Essays," I shall derive all the branches of idolatry from one and the same root, and endeavor to show that the same error has given birth to the Gods,

Goddesses, Metamorphoses, Auguries, Sybels, and Oracles. The fables thus reduced to their true value will then amuse and instruct, without danger to morals.

After this rather long, though necessary introduction, to clear the way for the important subjects to be treated of, I will commence "Essay No. 1" with a brief description of Egypt, claiming neither the vocation nor ability of a professed historian, or that these "Essays" possess any literary merit, but contenting myself with the subordinate position of being a conscientious compiler and faithful representative of other men's labors.

W. M. H.



SYNOPSIS.

ESSAY I.

The Ancient Egyptians—Kami, or the Black Land—Nile Inundations—Papyrus—Agriculture—Population—Climate—Political States—Alexandria—Pyramids—Labyrinth—Arts and Sciences—Astronomy—Literature—Historical Description of various Cities—Wars—Recent Discoveries—Egyptian and other Ancient Writers—Comments.

ESSAY II.

Treats of Signs, Symbols, Emblems, Allegories, and Symbolical Writing; also, The Zodiac—Anubis (the Dog Star)—Blazing Star—The Hawk and Hoop—Canopi—Python—Typhus—Serpents—Comments, &c.

ESSAY III.

Osirus, the Great Sun God—Legend of his Death—Symbols of the Sun—Isis, the Moon Goddess—Horus—Symbolical Dresses of Isis—Mosaic Work—Feasts—Queen of Hell—Hecate—The Moon—Ancient Mysteries—Sidonian Builders—Comments.

ESSAY IV.

Further Interpretation of the Symbols and Ceremonies of the Ancient Nations—Water Monsters—Giants—Feasts and Processions—Three Maids—Ceres—Lake Acherusia and Charon, the Ferryman—Elysian Fields—Cerberus—Funeral Ceremonies—Mummying, &c.

ESSAY V.

Some of the Egyptian Gods—The Bearded Bacchus of India—Processions and Feasts—The Phœnicians—The Garden of Hesperides—Three Golden Balls, &c.

ESSAY VI.

"Mysteries," properly so-called, of the Ancient Nations, beginning with those of the Egyptians—Their Literature (Toth, or Hermes), and Sciences—Comments, &c.

ESSAY VII.

FIRST PART.

Dissertation on the Origin, Nature, and Objects of the Lesser Mysteries—A future and prior State of Existence—Chaldeans—Hebrews and Greeks—Polytheism, &c.—Comments.

ESSAY VIII.

SECOND PART.

Dissertation continued—The Greater Mysteries—Protogonus and Aon—Ouranus—Dr. Anderson's Legend, or Traditional History of Genesis—Noah—Babel—Nimrod—Kteis and Phallos—Similitude between the Egyptian and Grecian Mysteries—Sacerdotal Order—Similarity in the Institutions of the Egyptians, Jews, and Freemasons—Comments.

ESSAY IX.

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ESSAY X.

SECOND PART.

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ESSAY XI.

Apuleius' Allegory—Fall of Lucius—His Transformation into the shape of an Ass—His Appeal to Isis—Her Reply and Instructions—The Chaplet of Roses—The Procession—Lucius devours the Roses, and is restored to his proper shape, and covered with a white garment—The Mason's Apron—Lucius' Prayer—Comments, &c.

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ESSAY XIII.

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ESSAY XIV.

FIRST PART.

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ESSAY XV.

SECOND PART.

Further opinions of Masonic Writers on Freemasonry—The Persian Mysteries—The Pastos—Noah—The Phallos—Brahma—Vishnu—Siva—Dionysian Artists at the Building of King Solomon's Temple—Cato's Philosophy—Valhall—Thor—Mystical Dance of the Druids—Comments.

ESSAY XVI.

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ESSAY XVII.

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ESSAY XVIII.

SECOND PART.

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A COROLLARY.

True and Spurious Freemasonry—Doctrines of the Patriarchs—Primitive Masonry—Probable Chronological Order of the Ancient Mysteries—Spurious Masonry—Priesthoods—Nimrod's Apostacy—Transmigration of Godama—Essenes—True Masonry Coeval with Creation—Use and Import of the Mysteries—Application of the whole matter—The Groundwork of the Apocalypse probably derived from the Ancient Mysteries—Advice to Modern Freemasons—Theory v. Practice—"All Glory to the Most High."





ESSAY I.

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF EGYPT.

NO country has taken a more prominent place than Egypt in the world's history; for centuries it has been what it is now,—a bone of contention between the nations who have an interest in the East. Many battles have been fought over it, and it is quite possible that the world has not yet seen the last campaign. Egypt has been used as an instrument to fulfil God's designs very frequently, and it may be used again. Let us pass in brief survey, first, of the country.

Egypt is situated in the North-east of Africa, extending from the Mediterranean to the first Cataract of the Nile. It contains one hundred and twenty-two thousand square miles, five-sixths of which is a barren desert; the name is derived from the Greek, "Aigyptos;" a word of uncertain derivation, and as old as the age of Homer. In the Hieroglyphs and Coptic, it was designated "Kami," or the black land, from the color of the soil, and by the Oriental nations it was called "Misr," a corruption of Mizriam, the son of Ham. The country may be described as the bed of the Nile, the cultivated territory only extending to the limits of the annual inundation.

The Nile (the longest river in the world with which the ancients were at all acquainted), runs from the Cataract of Assouan, in a northerly direction to Denderah, where there is a great bend to the west, and a few miles north of Cairo divides into two main streams, forming the Rosetta

and Damietta branches; the other five mouths which existed in antiquity have silted up. The alluvial district enclosed by these mouths is supposed by the ancients to have been gained from the sea and formed the ancient Delta. The Nile has no high tides, but has a current that runs at the rate of two or three miles an hour, which makes it deep enough for navigation at all times. On its banks grows a sedgy weed called papyrus, or paper, from the Egyptians having used it to write upon. Papyrus became an important article of commerce among the ancient nations. The plant is now almost extinct. The basin, or valley of the Nile, is eighty miles broad in its widest part, and about two in its narrowest. Through the centre of this fertile valley runs the Nile, so many ages the great mysterious river. It is formed by the ranges of Arabian hills on the east and the Lybian on the west side; on the south by Ethiopia; and north by the Mediterranean sea; the rate of deposit of black slimy mud in which the principles of vegetation are fully contained is supposed to be about six inches in a century. The great peculiarity of Egypt is the absence of rain, the land being only irrigated by the annual overflow of the Nile; the climate is remarkably mild, and sound, especially south of the Delta, and in the Desert from Cairo to Alexandria, the air contains more moisture than to the south. From the middle of August to December, westerly winds prevail, easterly winds from that time till March, after that very unhealthy south winds, (or Khamsins) till June, and from June till August, the north (or Etesian) winds.

Earthquakes are occasionally felt, and the temperature varies from 32° to 84°. The most remarkable phenomenon is, however, the regular increase of the Nile, fed by the fall of tropical rains, which commence in the 11° north lat.

in the spring, and falling first into the White, and then into the Blue Nile, reach Egypt in the middle and the Delta in the end of June. In the middle of July the Red Water appears, and the rise may be dated from that time; it attains its maximum at the end of September, and begins to decline visibly in the middle of October, and subsides to its minimum in April. At the end of November, the irrigated land has dried, and is sown, and covered with green crops which last till the end of February. The harvest is in March, and two or three crops a year have been garnered in the luxuriant Nile Valley. The Nile is called the parent of Egypt, and it is that, in a sense, for an Egypt without its Nile would be a sandy waste. So beneficial are its visits, that the Egyptians adore it just as the Hindoos do their sacred Ganges. Many of them prefer its waters to the most costly beverages. The great branch of industry in Egypt is agriculture, and the exportation of corn has been very extensive. Alexandria was once the great corn market of the East, and Egypt the granary of the world. Corn seems to grow there with barely any cultivation. If the British farmer gets eighty grains for his one he is satisfied; but the Egyptian fellah gets three hundred grains for his one, and that occasionally two or three times a year. The Nile is by far the best corn grower in the world, and in its periodical inundations we very plainly see the hand of a merciful God. Who but the Almighty could make of such a sandy waste one of the richest cornfields in the world? The state of the Nile marks the season more accurately than any variation of temperature. Modern Egypt is generally in a very unsettled state politically, and by no means healthy, as in addition to the visitations of plague and cholera, ophthalmia, diarrhoea, dysentery, and boils often prevail, and European and even Negritic races cannot be acclimatized.

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before the
horse!*

The population of the country must have been large at the earliest period ; as three hundred and seventy thousand men were employed for twenty years in constructing the Great Pyramid, which was supposed to have been built during the Fourth Dynasty. Its population under the Pharaohs, has been placed at seven millions, distributed in one thousand eight hundred towns, which had increased to two thousand under Amasis, and upwards of three thousand under the Ptolemies ; in the reign of Nero it amounted to seven million five hundred thousand without the natives of Alexandria, which at the time of Diocletian contained three hundred thousand inhabitants. The original population appears, both from the language and physical conformation of the Mummies, to have been of Asiatic origin, afterwards blended with Ethiopian by subsequent irruptions and conquests ; but there appears to have been an aboriginal race at an earlier period, of copper color, fair proportioned, although with rather thin legs, large feet, high cheek-bones, and large lips.

They are about the earliest people known to us. When Abraham went to Egypt for corn, the Egyptians were then very advanced in laws and agriculture. They had their farms even at that early age. The Jewish nation was comparatively weak until the time of David, and the real history of Greece begins with the Trojan war, about 1100 B.C. ; but long before the time of David and Agamemnon, Thebes and its glory had almost passed away ! The land of the Pharaohs was an old country in the infant age of Greece ; Thebes and its hundred gates were objects of wonder. The Egyptians were an ancient people before the wisdom of Athens was heard of, and a mighty nation before the foundations of Rome were even laid. Who its present inhabitants are, it very is difficult to decide, for it

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is probable that the pure Egyptian race no longer exists. The Copts are perhaps, the nearest descendants of this ancient people. They are but few in number, and well educated. The fellahs, or peasants are very ignorant ; and for the most part laborers ; but the intelligent Copts are scribes and accountants. The present inhabitants are a heterogeneous mass of Turks, Arabs, Armenians, Copts, Negroes, and Europeans.

The prophecies against this people as well as those against the Israelites and their terrible fulfilments form a striking field for Biblical study. Thus Ezekiel (xxix., 12) declared the word of the Lord : "I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and will disperse them through the countries." They have been scattered, for there only remain about one hundred and fifty thousand of the real descendants of the ancient Egyptians. "It shall be the basest of kingdoms." (Ezek. xxix., 15.) And the prophecy has been fulfilled to the letter. Even Gibbon, the infidel historian, says that it has suffered perpetual servitude at the hands of invaders, and to-day it is the basest of kingdoms, and all its stamina gone. So also it is said : "There shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt ; the sceptre of Egypt shall pass away." (xxx., 13.) And what are the facts ? Every effort to create an Egyptian prince has proved abortive. Strangers from Persia, Turkey, Arabia, and Rome, have been its rulers ever since, and England is its *de facto* ruler to-day. Is not this truly marvellous ? The Word of God cannot be bound, the fulfilment of prophecies cannot be hindered !

The chief city in ancient, and in later times the metropolis of all Egypt was Alexandria, founded by Alexander the Great. In order to make this new city at once the general

place of trade, Alexander compelled all the merchants of the neighboring Canopus to remove to it. Alexandria thus rose to great eminence, from the circumstance of the Ptolemies having chosen it as their ordinary residence. The Royal Palace stood on the eastern side of Alexandria, and covered a large space of ground. In it was the famous "Library" of seven hundred thousand volumes, the largest in the world, collected by Ptolemy Philadelphus and his successors, which was foolishly burnt by the Saracens, at the order of the Calif Omar III. A.D. 642, when the numerous works are said to have furnished all the Public Baths with fuel for six months. We talk of our Public Libraries, but there were immense libraries in Thebes and Memphis before the Trojan war. No Greek was esteemed truly learned unless he had spent a period on the banks of the Nile, conversing with philosophers and legislators, and studying the institutions and eternal monuments of these wonderful people. Alexandria had its schools and philosophers, and men eminent in all branches of science resorted thither for their education. These schools produced Clement and Origen, the great writers. It was here that the Greek version of the Old Testament, called the Septuagint, was prepared by seventy scholars; and some Alexandrine MSS. of the Bible written by a lady named Thecla are still to be found in the British Museum. Who could say this in looking at the Alexandria of to-day in its ruins, and its classic streets trodden by ignorant Arabs? How has the gold become dim? How has the fine gold changed? Glancing at the religion of this people, we find that in olden times they worshipped idols, for often do we read of the Hebrews getting contaminated by the idols of Egypt. The cities, the rivers, the months, and the days, had their gods; and the sun and the moon were deified. They had

eight gods of the first order, many gods of the second order, and their rites of worship were an utter abomination. Strange, that a nation so learned in arts and sciences should be so steeped in the foulest Paganism! As one writer states, "The Hebrews were men in religion, and children in everything else; but the Egyptians were babes in religion, and giants in secular pursuits."

To the west of Memphis, likewise called Moph, or Noph, were raised those masterpieces of architecture almost bordering on the miraculous, those gigantic and immortal monuments of human labor, which have amazed the world, already referred to,—the "Pyramids," or Pharaoh Mountains. They are many in number, and two of them are reckoned among the "Seven wonders of the world." They were of such high antiquity that even Diodorus, who flourished 44 B.C., has recorded that in his time neither natives nor foreigners were able to ascertain their origin, or age. The first and largest is eight hundred Greek feet square at base, and as many in height. It occupies fourteen acres of ground. The stones are very skilfully cemented and never less than thirty feet long. It is said that the masonry in these pyramids has never been surpassed. And what are these pyramids think you? [Some opine that the word is derived from the Greek *pyr*, a flame, the pyramid being something in the form of a flame. Some Coptic scholars assert that the word comes from *pawro*, a king (from which Pharaoh is derived) and *missi*, a kingly race, and that they were erected to keep in memory the kings who founded them and their families.] Some say that the pyramids were temples to the gods, others, that they were astronomical observatories; others that they were the monuments of Egypt's power, genius and wealth; others, that they

were the graves of kings; and others, that they were erected during the national disturbances in order to give work to the people. Some say, they were built by the Hebrews during their captivity; others, that Nimrod erected them; others, assert that some Egyptians built them before the Deluge. One, we are told, is the grave of Seth, and another the grave of Enoch; but these conjectures cannot be depended upon. In the absence of authentic history, we must confess that the origin of these pyramids is mysterious. But whatever their origin their magnitude and durability are amazing. The Great Pyramid alone contains five million tons of hewn stones, and is probably the highest, oldest, and largest mass of masonry in the world. Huge stones many tons in weight are to be found on the top of this pyramid. How were they lifted up; for mechanical science at that time is generally supposed to have been in its infancy? All is now a mystery. Its cities and temples were almost as wonderful as its pyramids. The few relics we have in the sands of Egypt go to prove that Egyptian architecture cannot be excelled even in this day.

Egypt was really the cradle of the Arts and Sciences, and these with literature, were here, in a very advanced state. The artistic work found in its temples, was superb. Long before Greece was heard of, art swayed its sceptre in Egypt and the famed Grecian art is only an imitation of its more ancient neighbor. Bronze statues were first erected in Egypt. We read on its mural sculpture that long, long ago it could boast of the carpenter, the boat-builder, the potter, the leather-cutter, and the glassblower. Glass was manufactured in Egypt as early as 1445 B.C. The existence also of tin and zinc, can also be proved from the monuments, as well as the process of making

flax into thread, ropes, and cloth. The plough, the hoe, and the sickle were also used, and the Egyptians were very experienced agriculturists long before the time of Abraham. We read of the "fine linen of Egypt" in the time of Moses,—*fine* linen—how perfect must the art have been there! They were also highly skilled in tempering metals for tools—for their workmen were able to carve the hardest granite, and cover with finely chiselled sculptures the walls and ceilings of their ancient temples. How many generations contributed their share to this perfection in metal tempering! Cleopatra's Needle, now on the Thames Embankment in London, is a proof of the majesty of Egyptian art. That monolith is one piece of granite, sixty-four feet high, covered with hieroglyphics! On one of the grandest squares of Paris there stands the Luxor obelisk, another splendid monument of Egyptian art. The first cities in the world esteem it an honor to adorn their public places with these Egyptian wonders.

In science, the Egyptians were greatly advanced. The science of figures belongs to them, and to them we are indebted for the scheme of arithmetic subsequently communicated to Europe. Two thousand years B.C. they used duodecimals, as well as decimal numbers, and weights and measures adjusted to a pound of one thousand four hundred grains. Is it not marvellous? Even in the days of Moses we hear of the "wisdom of Egypt." Medical science was in vogue there long ere the days of Herodotus. In its holy processions, as shown in mural sculpture, we see the singer, astronomer, scribe, teacher, and the priest. A nation ignorant of mathematics and chemistry could not have accomplished its prodigies, nor the pyramids and obelisks been reared without the aid of such mechanical

powers as have their origin in the calculations of philosophy. Thales, Solon, and Pythagoras visited Egypt, and learnt at its schools; Plato also went there in search of knowledge.

Literature stood very high in the land. It is said that the Greeks got their alphabet from Egypt. Cadmus conveyed sixteen letters across the Mediterranean, and thus laid the foundation of Greek literary fame. The Greeks first learnt how to write history by perusing Egyptian annals. Heaven only knows what we have to thank Egypt for. It has given us figures and letters, without which there would be neither science nor literature.

About midway between Arsinoe and the Nile was the famous Labyrinth constructed by the twelve kings who ruled Egypt in common. These twelve kings having resolved to leave behind a monument of their fame, built this enormous Labyrinth, of three thousand chambers, one half above, the other below ground. In the latter of these the kings and sacred crocodiles were buried.

Tradition asserts that when Osirus was King of Egypt (?) he invented writing and sacrifices, and was the first who became acquainted with the motions of the host of heaven. However this may be, there is no doubt that the Egyptians were amongst the earliest people to discover the apparent path of the sun and moon, with the motions of other heavenly bodies, and the true length of the solar year, viz., three hundred and sixty-five days. All this learning seems to have been exclusively in the hands of the priests, who preserved and cultivated it by means of secret writing. Hieroglyphics, intelligible only to them-

selves, though the priests caused them to be carved on the walls of their temples, where many of them have been recently discovered, and will in due time be interpreted and explained.

Near Memphis is the city of Leontopolis, so called from the religious worship there paid to the Lion; there is also, a celebrated and magnificent temple of *Isis*; and Tanis, a very ancient city, at one time the capital of all Egypt, and original residence of its kings; it is called Zoan in Scripture, and was the place where Moses performed his miracles before Pharaoh.

Here also adoration was paid to the "Ichneumon," because it destroyed the asp, the most venomous of all serpents, as well as the eggs of the crocodile. Opposite stood Cynopolis, where the Deity "Anubis" was adored in the shape of a dog. To the east, on the right bank of the Nile, was Besa, so called from the worship paid there to the Egyptian god, Besa.

In the immense deserts of sand which extend from the banks of the Nile to the western ocean, there are at intervals, insulated spots of cultivation (three in number) named "Oases" by the Egyptians—they are named, "the Oases of Ammon, Major and Minor." The greater is reckoned by the ancients as seven days' journey (or one hundred and sixty miles) from Thebes. A little to the south of Thebes was Hieraconpolis, a city sacred to the hawk; the inhabitants of which worshipped Apollo, and were inveterate enemies to the crocodile, which they took in nets and destroyed.

Bernice, on the Red Sea, was founded by Ptolemy Philadelphus, who called it so in honor of his mother, and

it became the haven for all ships trading to the East, and of which, during the reign of Augustus, there were often one hundred and twenty riding here at one time.

The earliest writer on Egyptian history was *Manetho*, a learned priest of Heliopolis, who flourished about two hundred and sixty-one years before the Christian era (long chronology four hundred years). He wrote in Greek, and his work is often quoted and commended by the ancients, particularly by Josephus. Fragments only of his writings are extant. He claims for the Egyptians a national existence of nearly fifty-four thousand years, and reckons from twenty-six to thirty dynasties or races of sovereigns, from Menes, deemed the same as Mizraim, the son of Ham, Noah's grandson, who settled with his father in this country, to the invasion of the Persians under Cambyses (as before stated). Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus, with whose names you are doubtless familiar as ancient writers both took great pains to ascertain early Egyptian history, but could obtain no continuous information.

Consider next the wonderful history of this country. As for the early part, it is lost in the mists of a pre-historic age. Like its beautiful Nile, its origin is shrouded in mystery. However, we may say that no country has perhaps been more frequently overrun by invading hosts. Its fertile fields have been successively a prey to Persians, Arabs, Saracens, Greeks, Romans, Mamelukes, Turks, Franks, and Britons. About 1500 B.C., Egypt was seized by Chaldean and Phœnician herdsmen, who levied a tribute upon the people, and it was not until 1450 that these bold shepherds were vanquished, and after that for ages the shepherds were hated in Egypt.

For many centuries the great Thebian kings ruled the land, and one, Zesostris, literally covered Egypt, Ethiopia, and the coasts of the Red Sea with his temples, obelisks and statues. The wealth and magnificence of the Egyptians at this period were amazing. It was then that the Israelites settled in the Delta, and Joseph became chief Minister to the King of Memphis.

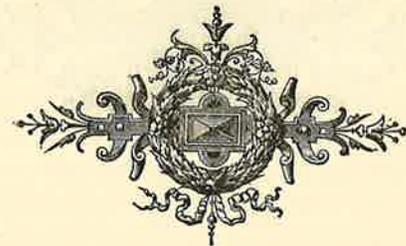
About 900 B.C., Egypt was torn asunder by civil wars, until at last the kings of Ethiopia seized it, and ruled it for three hundred years. It again gained its independence, but only for a short time. About 523 B.C. it was reduced by Cambyses to the rank of a Persian province. For two hundred years the people were harshly treated, and the Persians robbed their temples, broke their statues, and scourged their priests. Four times successively were they conquered by the Persians, until at last the Persians themselves were conquered by Alexander the Great. Egypt then fell into the hands of the Greeks, and for three hundred years a race of kings called Ptolemies reigned with great success. At last the Greeks sank before the rising power of Rome, and in the year 30 B.C., Egypt became a Roman province, and for centuries it was the home of learning. In the year A.D. 337, when the Roman Empire crumbled, Egypt fell to the lot of the Turks. The country sank year by year in population and strength, as all countries do under the blighting influence of the Ottoman, and at last it was conquered by Arabs in 640. In 1250 the Mamelukes overran it, and these despots destroyed the last remnant of its greatness. In 1516 the Turks again conquered the Mamelukes, and held the country until 1798, when the French became its masters. In 1801 the British drove out the French, and the Turks again became supreme rulers. The Egyptians became

discontented, and in 1839 they gained a victory over the Turks, and ever since Egypt has a Viceroy who is a fief of the Ottoman Porte. Latterly the British entered the country in order to put down a military movement. Thus the country has been a veritable battle-field from the earliest ages; and the blood of Phœnicians, Ethiopians, Persians, Macedonians, Romans, Turks, Arabs, Mamelukes, French, British, and Egyptians, has often dyed its plains. No prize was ever fought for more tenaciously than this land of Mizraim.

Every acre of Egypt is historic ground; even the Bible is full of it. When Abraham marched out of Canaan because of the famine, he went to Egypt with his beautiful wife, Sarah, to buy corn. When Joseph was sold by his brethren, he was taken to Egypt, where he soon rose to a seat near the throne. When Jacob and his sons were hard driven for bread in Canaan, they went down to Egypt for corn, which they not only found, but Jacob found his long lost Joseph, and the guilty brethren found their victimised brother. When the male children of the Hebrews were destroyed by the tyrant Pharaoh, it was the river of Egypt that saved the life of little Moses in the ark of bulrushes. It was in Egypt that Moses ascended so high in royal favor that he was looked upon as the heir apparent to the throne; it was in Egypt that those ten mighty plagues were set free—those ten terrible proofs of the superiority of Israel's God over the Egyptian gods; it was from Egypt that Abraham got his bondswomen Hagar who is such a prominent figure in Biblical history.

It is reported that very valuable historical inscriptions have recently been discovered in Egypt, but as they have not yet been properly deciphered, or made public, we must

for the present content ourselves with such as we have and the accounts given by these old authors. Should time and circumstances, however, permit, these subjects will be fully treated in another series of Essays.





ESSAY II.

WE are told in our Lectures, that “the usages and customs among Freemasons have ever corresponded with those of the ancient Egyptians, to which, indeed, they bear a nearer affinity than many suppose. Their philosophers, unwilling to expose their mysteries to vulgar eyes, concealed their peculiar tenets and principles of polity and philosophy under hieroglyphical figures, and expressed their notions of government by signs and Symbols, which they communicated to their Priests or Magi alone, who were bound by oath never to reveal them.”

“Pythagoras appears to have established his system on a similar plan, and many Orders of a more recent date, have copied their example.” We are also told that Freemasonry is a peculiar system of Morality, veiled in Allegory and illustrated by Symbols. As there is a considerable difference between a Symbol and an Emblem, an explanation here is necessary.

An Emblem is a concrete visible picture or sign, representing principles, or a series of principles recognisable by those who have received certain instructions. An Emblem very often comprises a larger series of thought than a Symbol, which may be said, rather to illustrate some single special idea. All esoteric (or secret and mysterious) Societies have made use of Emblems and Symbols, similar to those of the various

ancient nations, the Pythagorean Society, the Hermetic, the Rosicrucians, and the Freemasons. Many of these Emblems it is not proper to divulge to the general eye, and a very minute difference may make the Emblem or Symbol differ widely in its meaning. The magical Sigillá being founded on certain principles of numbers, partake of this character, and although monstrous and ridiculous in the eyes of the uninstructed, convey a whole body of doctrine to those trained to recognize them.

Having thus defined the nature of an Emblem, we may state that to Symbols, at all times, have been attributed great value, and in religious and esoteric matters they play a prominent part; but an Emblem is of later date than a Symbol, the former being associated with a refined literature, while the latter may rudely convey a simply pictorial idea. A Parable is a spoken Symbol, and in Freemasonry most of the teaching is conveyed by Symbolism.

That mankind from the earliest period of their existence worshipped the one true God, we have every evidence that can be given. This pure worship continued for a considerable time, being handed down from father to son, and from age to age, until it became corrupted by the introduction of numerous objects of adoration, some of which were regarded as adverse or destroying agencies; others, as beneficent or creative and preserving powers. The first Symbols in use were doubtless rude attempts to portray the image of the thing they were intended to represent. In the Chinese language, which is of greater antiquity than is commonly supposed, every word has its symbol or sign, intended to convey its meaning in a pictorial form, corrupted and abbreviated by use and

necessity. The ancient Egyptians in their several writings or hieroglyphics, followed a somewhat similar practice, though they retained the form and outline of the thing thus pictorially written.

Having briefly traced Symbolism through various phases, as it bears on writing as a mode of conveying and perpetuating facts and ideas, let us now trace it in its relation to the ancient nations in various ages with whose history we are more or less conversant. By them the pure worship of the Most High, the Great Creator and Preserver of all things, was by degrees corrupted, and the visible adored instead of the invisible—they worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator. The flame that points upwards, the obelisks of Egypt, the sun, moon, and stars, or the tall spires of minarets and churches spread over the world, are symbolical of *Him*, and though worshipped at different ages and in different ways, by man, in his ignorance, are but the reflection of the Great Architect of the Universe.

The most ancient Egyptians were acquainted with the Signs of the Zodiac. Their monuments, known to be of the earliest antiquity, are covered with figures, among which the Crab; Wild Goat; Balance; Scorpion; Ram; Bull; Kid; Lion; Virgin, and the rest, are frequently found. The twelve symbolical names, signifying the twelve portions of the year and the Heavens, were a prodigious help in regulating the beginnings of sowing, mowing, harvest, and the other works of mankind. It was found very convenient to expose in public as a signal, a small figure, or a single letter, to notify the exact time when certain general works were to be begun in common, and when certain feasts were to be celebrated. The use

of these figures appeared so convenient that they by degrees extended it to more things than the order of the calendar. Several symbols, fit to inform the people of certain truths, by some analogy, or relation between the figure and the thing they had a mind to have understood, were devised. This method of saying or showing one thing to imitate others, is what induced among Eastern nations a taste for allegories; they preserved for a long time the method of teaching everything under symbols calculated by a mysterious outside to excite curiosity, afterwards recompensed by the satisfaction of discovering the truths which they concealed. Pythagoras, who had travelled among Eastern nations, thence brought that custom into Italy.

Ham, and those of his descendants who came to inhabit the banks of the Nile and Lower Egypt, first tried to cultivate the earth according to the order of the year, and in the manner used in other countries, but no sooner were they ready to cut their harvest, in the driest season of the year and without the least appearance of rain, the river swelled, to their great amazement, flowed on a sudden over its banks, and took from them those provisions which they thought themselves already sure of. The waters continued to rise to the height of twelve, fourteen, and even sixteen cubits, covered all the plains, carried away cattle, and even the inhabitants themselves. These inundations lasted ten or eleven weeks and oftentimes longer. It is true the overflowing left on the land a mud which improved it, but the difficulty of obtaining a harvest,—since the summer, the only time proper for it, brought the storm and inundation—caused Ham to quit both the Lower and Middle Egypt, and retire to the Higher.

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He there founded the City of Thebes, originally called Ammon-No or, Ammon's abode. But many finding it inconvenient to remove from Lower Egypt, which, after the retiring of the waters, was throughout the remaining portion of the year like a beautiful garden, and a delightful place to dwell in, endeavored to fortify themselves against a return of the waters. They observed year by year that the overflowing was always preceded by an Etesian (annual) wind, which, blowing from north to south about the time of the passage of the Sun under the stars of the Crab, drove the vapours toward the south, and gathered them in the middle of the country, Ethiopia (now Nubia and Abyssinia), whence the Nile came, which there caused plentiful rains that swelled the waters of the river and brought on the inundation of Lower Egypt. But they wanted the means of knowing the exact time when it should be necessary for them to prepare for the inundation. The flowing of the river beyond its banks happened some days sooner or later, when the Sun was under the stars of the Lion. Near the stars of Cancer, though pretty far from the band of the Zodiac, towards the south, and a few weeks after their rising, they saw in the morning one of the most brilliant, if not the largest star in the whole heavens ascending the horizon. It appeared a little before the rising of the sun, which had rendered it almost invisible for a month or two before. The Egyptians then pitched upon the rising of this magnificent star as an infallible sign of the sun's passing under the stars of Leo, and the beginning of the inundation. That star became a public mark, on which everyone was to keep a watchful eye, so as not to miss the instant of retiring to the higher grounds. As it was visible but a short time above the horizon, towards the dawning of the Aurora, which becoming every instant

clearer, soon made it disappear, it seemed to show itself to the Egyptians merely to warn them of the overflowing which soon followed. They then gave the star two names, having a very natural relation to the help they borrowed therefrom. It warned them of the danger, whereupon they called it "The Dog," and also "The Monitor," or in Egyptian, "Anubis." The connection of this star with the rising of the river caused the people commonly to term it the "Nile-Star," or barely the Nile. The inhabitants retiring into their towns on the warning of the north wind and the Dog-Star, remained idle for two months or more, till the waters had returned to their channels. Therefore, the *prudence* of the Egyptians before the overflowing, chiefly consisted in observing the termination of the vernal winds; the return of the northerly, which began with the summer; and at last the *rising of the Dog-Star*, which circumstance was to them a most remarkable point of the heavens.

During their inaction after the rising of the river beyond its banks, their attention was directed to the observance of the return of the southerly winds—more moderate than those of the spring—and which facilitated the flowing of the river towards the Mediterranean, by the conformity of their blowing with its direction from south to north; also to measuring the depths of the river, in order to regulate their husbandry according to the quantity of mud, which was always proportioned to the degree of the increase. We may here remark that the Anubis, or Dog-Star, so useful to the Ancient Egyptians, is identical with the Blazing Star of Masonry in our day, a Symbol of Divine Providence, and emblematical of Prudence; and, although the Craft are ignorant of its origin as a Masonic Symbol, they are

actually taught the moral drawn from its original emblematic use.

The Blazing Star represents that prudence which ought to appear conspicuous in the conduct of every Mason. You may ask, "What connection can possibly exist between a star and prudence?" We answer, "None whatever," except allegorically in reference to the *caution* that was indicated to the Egyptians by the first appearance of this particular luminary which gave them timely warning of approaching danger.

The meaning then, that has been handed down to Masons, of their Blazing Star completely identifies it with the Anubis, the Dog-Star. The same necessity which rendered the Egyptians astronomers made them also painters and writers. The inspection of the heavens had taught them at least how to regulate the tillage, so strangely crossed by that disposition which was peculiar to Egypt. The custom of giving symbolical names to the objects that served them as rules most naturally led them to delineate in a rude manner the figures of these symbols, in order to inform the nation of the works in common to be done, and of the annual events with regard to which it was dangerous to misreckon. This important service was performed by a number of persons appointed for that purpose, and maintained at the public expense, whose duty it was to study the revolutions and aspects of the heavenly bodies, and to communicate the necessary information to the people. Such is the original of the *Sacerdotal Order*, so ancient in Egypt; the chief functions of which always were the study of the heavens and the inspection of the motions of the air. This is also the origin of the famous tower, the

Labyrinth, where that company was lodged, and where the characters of the several works, and the symbols of the public regulations were carefully delineated, which symbols appeared in time very mysterious when the meaning of them was forgotten.

Now, if we would, in a reasonable manner unriddle some of the most usual of the Egyptian symbols, we ought to consult the wants of the Egyptian colony. It is there we must naturally look for the meaning of the figures which were exposed to the eyes of the whole assembled nation. Two well-known birds were chosen for this purpose, viz:—the *Hawk* and the *Hoop*, or Heron; these were the names and symbolical figures given to the two winds, the return whereof the Egyptians were most concerned to observe. The *Hawk* signified the Etesian northerly wind, which in the beginning of summer drives the vapours towards the south, and which, covering Ethiopia with thick clouds, there resolves them into rains, and makes the Nile swell all along its course. The *Hoop*, on the contrary, signified the south wind, which promoted the draining of the waters, and the return of which proclaimed the measuring of the lands and the time of sowing. We must here produce some analogy and peculiar resemblance between a Hawk and a northerly, and a Hoop and a southerly wind.

Naturalists observe that the Hawk delights in the North, but that at the return of mild weather, and when she casts her feathers, she makes southward with her wings spread, and looks towards the place whence a warm air comes, which may assist the falling of her own feathers, and restore her the beauties of youth. In times of remotest antiquity, the Arabians, who were neighbors and

allies of the Egyptians, had an idea of the Hawk in all respects like that which naturalists give us. This bird, on account of the direction of its flight at the return of the heats was the most natural emblem of the annual wind, which blows from north to south about the summer solstice, and which on account of the effects of this direction, was of so great importance to the Egyptians. The Hoop, on the contrary, makes her way from south to north; she lives on small worms, an infinite number of which are hatched in the mud of the Nile. She takes her flight from Ethiopia towards Memphis, where the Nile divides. She always follows the course of this river, as it retires within its banks, quite down to the sea. From this method of hers, she was perfectly fit to characterize the direction of the south wind.

The warning given by the Dog-star being their most important concern, the Egyptians, from its rising, anciently dated the beginning of the year, and the whole series of their feasts. Wherefore, instead of representing it under the form of a star, which might not distinguish it from another, they delineated it under the figure relative to its functions and name. When they wished to express the renewal of the year, they represented it under the form of a doorkeeper (or Dog), easy to be distinguished by the attribute of a key, or else they gave it two heads back to back, the one of an old man which marked the expiring year; the other of a young one which denoted the new. When the people were to be warned of the time of their retreat, at the approach of the inundation, instead of the two heads they put on the shoulders of a human body, the head of a dog. The attributes, or subordinate symbols added thereto were the explication of the warning it gave. It was in order to give the

Egyptians to understand they were to take with them a store of provisions, and repair with all speed to high ground, or their raised terraces, and there to remain quiet by the waterside, that Anubis had on his right arm a *kettle* or *porridge-pot*, wings to his feet, in his right hand, or under his arm a large feather, and behind him a tortoise or duck, both amphibious, and which live on the earth by the waterside.

The Egyptians expressed the several increases of their swelling river by a column marked with one, two, or three lines in the form of a cross, and surmounted with a circle (the symbol of God), to characterize Providence which governs this important operation. More commonly instead of a column, they made use of a pole terminated like a T or crossed with one or more transverse pieces. To abridge these remarks, they were often contented with one small cross, which, put upon a vessel or elsewhere, might signify the increase of the water. It is certain that the column marked as before stated, to signify the progress of the water, became in Egypt, the ordinary sign of the *deliverance from evil*. They hung it on the *neck of sick persons*, and put it into the hands of all beneficial deities. They painted the devastation made by the overflowing water under the figure of a Dragon, a Crocodile, a Hippopotamus, or a water monster, which they called "Ob,"—that is swelling and overflowing, and which they afterwards designated "Python," the enemy.

Another method of communicating to the people information respecting inundations, was by publicly exposing three vessels, or measures, being pitchers of unequal capacities well-known to them by the name of "Canob," or "Canopus." Canob signifies the

"fathom," the measure of the overflowing, from *cane* a perch, a fathom, a rod, or cane to measure, and from "Ob" the Dragon. The Canopi are very commonly terminated by one or two crosses. The top of the vase is also oftentimes surmounted with several bird's heads, to signify and characterize the several winds which they know, and which either assisted or retarded the increase or the lowering of the waters. Sometimes they put upon the Canopus the head of a dog to signify the state of the river, or the time of the rising of the Dog-star. At another time they put thereon the head of a maid, to mark out the state of the Nile under the sign of the Virgin, and at the approach of the draining or retiring of the water. It appears that the ancient Egyptians, after they had ascertained the great benefit of the inundation when they were properly prepared for it, changed the name of their Evil Genius, the water monster, from Ob to *Python*, which had reference to the deadly effects of the miasmata arising from the stagnant waters left on the lowlands after the retiring of the inundation. Python is derived from the Greek, *pytho*, to purify. The serpent Python being slain by Apollo, is thus interpreted—by Python is understood the ruins of waters, but Apollo (that is the sun) dispersing the vapours by his arrows, (that is, his beams) slew the serpent.

Typhus, a species of continued fever, has the same origin. It may be occasioned by the effluvia arising from either animal or vegetable substances in a decayed or putrid state, hence it is that in low and marshy countries it is apt to be prevalent, when intense and sultry heat succeeds any great inundation. The convenience of that language which renders itself intelligible to the eyes, and in some sense made animals and even

stones themselves to speak, by degrees became more common. It was extended to everything. The symbolic writing soon served as a rule of morals, as well as for the regulation of husbandry. It was used to perpetuate among the people the knowledge of the most important truths, and to inculcate their principal duties.

The character of the Egyptian writing designed to signify God, was not a simple flame or blaze, as was the general usage of the East, but a circle, or rather a *Sun*. They added to the circle, or solar globe, several marks or attributes, which served to characterize so many different perfections. For instance, to indicate that the Supreme Being is the Author and Preserver of life, they affixed to the circle sometimes two points of flame, but more commonly one or two serpents. This reptile was always, among the Egyptians, as in other countries, the symbol of life and health; not only because the serpent makes itself look young again every year by casting its old skin, but because among many Eastern nations, as the Phœnicians, Hebrews, Arabians, and others, with the language of whom that of Egypt had an affinity, the word "Heve" or "Heva" equally signifies the life, and a serpent. The name of *Him, who is*, the great name of God, "Joy," or Jehovah, thence draws its etymology. "Heve," or the name of the common mother of mankind, comes likewise from the same word. When Moses lifted up a brazen serpent in the wilderness, the afflicted Hebrews understood that it was a sign of preservation. To express the wonderful fecundity of Providence, they added to the symbolical circle the figures of the most fruitful plants, and commonly two or three large leaves of the lotus, and banana tree.

To a true Freemason, the *Sun*,—the eternal fountain of light, the unwearied ruler of the day,—shines symbolically

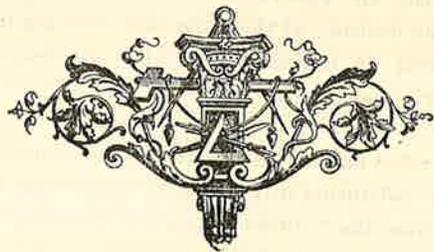
in his lodge, a bright exponent of the great Creator's power, while the *Moon*, the glorious orb of night, repeats the lesson of Divine munificence. Here too, we are taught that the vast universe over which this Omnipotence presides, was no work of chance, but that its foundations were laid in wisdom, ~~is~~ supported by strength ^(and are) and adorned by beauty. And finally, as this world, vast in extent, and complicated in its motions, is governed and regulated with unceasing concord and harmony, so should our Lodges be controlled and directed by the same spirit of Peace, which emanating from the exercise of Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth, reap its fruits in Universal Charity.

All the Decorations and Symbols of our cherished *Craft* are borrowed from the ancients, and the phraseology we use from the Art of Architecture; which serve to characterise an Institution which might justly claim more noble devices; at the same time they are used either as Emblems or indications of the simplest and most important *moral* truths.

With reference to the origin and transmission of our venerable institution it is traced by many—and with some reason—from the "*Ancient Egyptian Mysteries*."

The aim and object of these Essays is to make Freemasonry more fully understood by those who have been privileged to enter its Temples, ~~also~~ to prove that our Lodges have been, in the remote past, the receptacle, ^{and} depository, and custodian of the principal moral virtues which confer blessings upon the human race; and that although those cardinal virtues should, in the history of the world be again nearly extinguished, they will still be

preserved pure and unsullied in the Sacred depository and safe keeping of our Masonic Lodges, as they were in the dark ages past, when Truth was reduced to its lowest ebb, and emphatically kept alive by our ancient brethren under different denominations, in various countries. It is the wish also that the uninitiated may better appreciate the Truths it preserves and promulgates, so that Freemasonry may be acknowledged to be something more than an empty name.



ESSAY III.

 **OSIRIS** (or many-eyed), the husband of Isis, was a celebrated Egyptian Deity, or King-God, whose worship was universal throughout Ancient Egypt. This name appears in the Hieroglyphical texts, and is expressed by a *throne* and an *eye*, and under the Romans, the pupil of the eye for the eye itself. On the monuments of antiquity he is called "Great God, Eternal Ruler, dwelling in the West and Lord of Abydos." Even at the most remote period individuals after death were supposed to become an Osiris, and all the prayers and ceremonies referred to their future life and resurrection.

The mythological legend of this mysterious personage was, that he reigned on the earth, and so great were the benefits he bestowed on mankind in general and on Egypt in particular, that he was honored with the special designation of the "Good Being," and having been murdered by *Set*, (or Typhon) the latter became the type of all evil. Osiris's body was cut to pieces by Typhon, and cast into the Nile, but was found at Byblos, on the shore, by Isis, and embalmed by Anubis. Isis revenged his death by the aid of her son Horus. In form Osiris is generally represented swathed or mummied, in allusion to his embalment; a network suggestive of the net by which his remains were fished out of the Nile, covers his dress; on his head he wears the cap "Atf" having on each side the feather of *truth*, of which he was Lord; this cap is

placed on the horns of a goat, his hands hold the crook and whip, to indicate his governing and directing power, and his feet are based and he sits on the Cubit of Truth. (See frontispiece). A panther's skin on a pole, is often placed before him, and festoons of grapes hang over his shrine. As the "*Good Being*," or *meek-hearted*, the celestial or "*King of Heaven*," he wears the white or upper crown. Another and rarer type of him, represents him as the *Tat* or emblem of stability, wearing the crown of the two truths on his head. His worship, at a later period extended over Asia-Minor, Greece, and Rome, and at an early age had penetrated into Phœnicia, traces of it being found on the coins of Malta and other places. Considerable diversity of opinion existed among the ancients themselves as to this mythological Osiris. He represented (according to Plutarch) the inundation of the Nile. Isis represented the irrigated land; Horus, the vapours; Anubis, the barren soil, and Typhon the sea. Such are the naturalistic interpretations of Plutarch, but there appears in it the dualistic principles of Good and Evil, represented by Osiris and Typhon.

We shall now endeavor to trace out the relationship between this great Sun-God and the Solar Year.

We are told in our Lectures that "the Blazing Star refers us to that grand luminary, the sun, which, by its benign influence enlightens the world, and dispenses blessings to mankind in general." Let us see what the symbols of the Sun, as understood by the ancient Egyptians, was.

That great luminary being the grandest object in nature, had also its peculiar character or mark, in their

symbolical writing; the word "Osiris," according to the most judicious and learned among the ancients, signified the inspector, the coachman, the leader, the king, the guide, the moderator of the stars, the soul of the world, the governor of nature. From the energy of the terms of which it was composed, it signified in general the Governor of the Earth, which amounts to the same sense; and it is because they gave that name and function to the Sun that it was expressed in their writing—sometimes by the figure of a man bearing a sceptre, sometimes by that of a coachman carrying a whip, or plainly, by an eye.

They were often contented with setting down the *marks* of his dignity, such as a sceptre surmounted with an eye, or a sceptre with a serpent twined round it; the symbol of life, which the sun maintains, or barely the whip and sceptre united; sometimes the royal cap of Osiris on a throne, with or without a sceptre. The Egyptians everywhere saw, and especially in the place of their religious assemblies, a circle or figure of the Sun. Near the Sun, over the head of the symbolical figures were visible sometimes one or two serpents,—the symbol of life; sometimes certain foliages—the symbols of the bounties of nature; sometimes beetle's wings—the emblems of the variations of the air. All these things being connected with the object of their adorations, they entertained a sort of veneration for the serpent, which they besides saw honorably placed in the small chest which was a memorial of the state of the first man, and the other ceremonies whose meaning began to be lost. Having already contracted a habit of confounding the Most High with the sun they by little and little mistook the symbol itself of the sun, Osiris, the moderator of the year, for a man. Osiris, from the letter, or symbolical

personage he was before, becoming in the minds of the people a real personage or man who had formerly lived amongst them, they made his history to relate to the attributes which attended the figure. So soon as Egypt was possessed with the ridiculous notion that the statues of Osiris, Isis, and Horus, which served to regulate society by their respective significations, were monuments of their founders, that Osiris lived in Egypt and had been interred there, they framed stories agreeable to this belief. For want of a tomb containing in reality the body of Hammond, or Osiris, they were content with an empty one. A vast concourse of people gathered near these pretended tombs, and with pomp celebrated an annual feast there. Plutarch often mentions the feasts of Osiris's tomb, and informs us that when the Egyptians were reproached with placing in heaven gods whose tombs they showed, their reply was, that the bodies of these gods had been embalmed and interred in Egypt, but that their souls resided among the stars.

I here give a complex illustration as I have seen it, representing the death and resurrection of Osiris. "The sign of the Lion, one of the signs of the Zodiac—is transformed into a couch upon which Osiris is laid out dead; under this are four canopi or earthen jars of various capacities, indicating the state of the Nile at different periods. The first is terminated by the head of the Dog-star, giving warning of the overflow of the river; the second by the head of the Hawk, the symbol of the Etesian wind, which tends to swell the waters; the third with the head of the Hoop (or Heron) the sign of the south wind, which contributes to propel the waters into the Mediterranean Sea, and the fourth by that of the Virgin, which indicated that when the sun had passed that sign the

inundation would have nearly subsided. To these are super-added a large Anubis, who, with an emphatic gesture turning towards Isis, who has an empty throne on her head, intimates that the sun by the aid of the Lion had changed the difficult pass of the Tropic of Cancer, and was now in the sign of the latter, and although in a state of exhaustion, would soon be in a condition to proceed on his way south; at the same time gives to the husbandman the important warning of retiring to avoid the inundation. The empty throne is indicative of its being vacated by the supposed death of Osiris.

We may distinguish two points in the heavens, which limit the duration of the creative action of the sun, and these points are where day and night are of equal length. All the grand work of vegetation, in a great part of the northern climates, appears to be compressed between these two limits, and its progressive march is found to be in proportion to that of light and heat. Scarcely has the sun in his annual route attained one of these points than an active and prolific force appears to emanate from his rays, and to communicate movement and life to all sublunary bodies which he brings to light by a new organization. It is then that the *resurrection* of the Great God takes place, and with it that of all nature.

Having reached the opposite point, that power seems to abandon him, and nature becomes sensible of his weakness. This is the true Atys, whose mutilation Cybele deplored; this is the Adonis wounded in the virile parts of which Venus deplored the loss, and this is the Osiris precipitated into the tomb by Typhon, and whose organs of generation the disconsolate Isis never found.

What picture more effectual to render man sorrowful than that of the earth, when by absence of the sun, she finds herself deprived of her attire, of her verdure, of her foliage, and when she offers to our regard only the wreck of plants dried up or turned to putrefaction; of naked trunks, of arid lands without culture, or covered with snow; rivers overflowed in the fields, or chained in their beds by ice; or of violent winds that overturn everything! What has become of that happy temperature which the earth enjoyed in spring and during summer; that harmony of the elements in accord with that of the heavens; that richness, that beauty of our fields loaded with grain and fruits, or enamelled with flowers, whose odour perfumed the air, and whose variegated colors presented a spectacle so ravishing? All, all has disappeared, and the happiness of man has departed with the Sun-god, who by his presence embellished our climes. His retreat has plunged the earth into mourning, from which nought but his return can free her. The sun was then, in their minds the creator of all these benefits, since they were deprived of them by his departure. He was the soul of vegetation since it languished and ceased as soon as he quitted us. What will be the term of his flight, and his descent into other regions? Is he going to replunge nature into the eternal shade and chaos from which his presence had drawn it? Such were the inquietudes of these ancient people, who seeing the sun retiring from their climate feared that it might one day happen that he would abandon them altogether. Thence arose the "Feasts of Hope," celebrated at the winter solstice, when they saw him check his movements and change his route to return towards them. But if the hope of his approach was so sensibly felt, what joy would not be experienced when the sun, already remounted towards the middle of heaven, had

chased before him the *darkness* which had encroached upon the *light*, and usurped a part of its empire! Then the equilibrium of the day and night is re-established, and with it the order of nature. A new order of things as beautiful as the first re-commences, and the earth rendered fruitful by the heat of the sun, who had renewed the vigor of youth, embellishes herself under his genial rays. On our 24th July, the birth of a renewed sun was celebrated by a grand "feast" to Horus Apollo, another name for Osiris. He is identified in some instances with Pluto, Judge of Hades.

ISIS, the name of an Egyptian Deity, the sister and wife of Osiris, the dread Goddess of Nature among the ancient Egyptians, and the subject of the mysteries in all countries under various names, was the mother and "nurse" of all things. After the murder of Osiris, as before stated, by Typhon, and the dismemberment and throwing of him into the Nile, Isis sought and found all the portions except the Phallos, which had been eaten by fish. Whenever she found any of the limbs she set up a tablet, or sent an embalmed portion, deposited in a figure of the God, to the principal cities of Egypt, each of which subsequently claimed to be the birth-place of Osiris. The soul of Isis was supposed to have passed into the star Sirius. Her worship was universal throughout Egypt, where special festivals were celebrated to her, and her tears were believed to have the effect of causing the inundation of the Nile.

In the monuments she is called the "Goddess Mother," the "Mistress of Heaven," sister and wife of Osiris, and nurse of Horus, the mourner of her brother, the "Eye of

the Sun," and "Regent of the Gods." In her *terrestrial* character she wears upon her head the throne which represented her name; in her *celestial*, the disc and horns, or tall plumes. She is often seen suckling Horus; sometimes she has the head of a cow (Athor), indicating her identity with that animal of whom the "Sun" was born. Occasionally she is identified with other female deities. On her head she also wears the Vulture, symbol of maternity. Her attributes were assumed by the Queen of Egypt, and Cleopatra sat and gave responses in the character of Isis. In Rome she was represented with a rattle, a bucket, and a dress with fringed border knotted at the chest. The festivals, seclusion, and rules of chastity attracted many followers, but the worship was not considered altogether reputable by the Romans. It was more extended in Asia Minor, where she was worshipped as the giver of dreams, and in the twofold character of restorer of health, and inflictor of disease.

The myth of Isis, as given by Plutarch, appears to be a fusion of Egyptian and Phœnician traditions, and the esoterical explanations offered by that writer and others show the high antiquity and unintelligibility of her name. She was thought to mean the cause, seat, or the earth; to be the same as the Egyptian "Neith," or Minerva, and the "Athor" or Venus; to be the Greek "Demeter" or Ceres, "Hacate," or even Io. Her representations under the Roman Empire are the most numerous, being figured as all the principal goddesses of the Pantheon.

We shall now observe that the figure of a man who rules over everything on earth, had been thought the most proper emblem to represent the sun, which enlivens all nature, and when they required a characteristic of the

production of the earth, they pitched upon the other sex. The changes of nature, the succession of seasons, and the several productions of the earth which no doubt were the subject of the common thanksgivings might easily be expressed by the several dresses given this woman.

When the sacrifice was intended to be made in the day Isis was dressed in *white*, but if in the night she was clothed in *black*. A sickle was placed in her hand to denote the time of harvest. When the purpose was a *feast*, to remind the people of the security afforded by their dwellings, Isis was crowned with small *towers*. To intimate the winter Neomonia, the head of Isis was crowned with little fillets, and with skins sewn together; sometimes with feathers ranged over one another, or with *small colored shells neatly set by each another*. (This is the very first intimation we have of Mosaic work.) There were sometimes on the head of Isis a crayfish, or crab, sometimes the horns of a wild goat, according as they had a mind to signify either the entering of the sun into the sign "Cancer," or the feast that was solemnized on his entering into that of Capricorn. In Egypt, where the inhabitants can with certainty judge of the product of the year by the state of the river, they proclaimed a plentiful crop by surrounding Isis with a multitude of breasts; on the contrary if the presage of fertility was not favorable, they exposed an Isis with a single breast, thereby to warn the people to make amends for the smallness of the harvest by the culture of vegetables, or by some other industry.

All these changes had each its peculiar meaning, and Isis changed her dress as often as the earth. Next to the symbolical King, or emblem of the sun, the Egyptians

had no figure that appeared more frequently in their assemblies than Isis, the symbol of the earth, or rather the sign of their feasts. In looking for the origin of this woman, they ran into the same mistake which had caused them to take the Governor of the Earth (the symbol of the sun), for Ammon, their common father. Isis was looked upon as his wife; she partook of the titles of her husband, and being in their opinion raised to a real person, and a considerable power, they invoked her with confidence. They gave her the honorable titles of the "Lady; Queen; Governess; the Common Mother; Queen of Heaven and Earth." What contributed most to seduce the Egyptians was the frequent joining of a crescent or full moon to the head-dress of Isis. Thence they took occasion to give it out that Osiris' wife, the common mother of the Egyptians had the moon for her dwelling-place. It was formerly a general custom to make sacrifices and public prayers upon *eminent places*, and more especially in groves to shelter the people from the heat of the sun. At the feasts Isis was worshipped with solemnity, and placed in the finest woods. Crowds of people flocked to the religious feasts of the lovely Queen, who loaded them with blessings; no doubt they had everything from her, the place where she was worshipped had no less an influence on the assistants, than the attire of the Goddess, and instead of calling her the "Queen of Heaven," they often styled her the "Queen of the Groves." She also became "Queen of Herds," "Queen of Fishes," and "Queen of Corn and all Harvests," holding the horn of a goat, that horn being always full could not but proceed from a goat which had done some important service to mankind. But the *god* Osiris, and the *nurse* Isis are really both alike; the one really existed as little as the other did.

The Egyptians did not fail also to put in places consecrated to religion, the symbol of the prosperities of their tillage. They placed a figure, sinking under the burden of the goods he had reaped in the assembly of all the feasts that were solemnized after the harvests of corn, wine, fruits and vegetables. He carried on his head *three pitchers* of wine, surmounted with three loaves of bread and accompanied with leaves, vegetables, and several fruits. The bread, wine, &c., wherewith they decked his head lay immediately on the two great horns of a wild goat. He is most commonly seen with a single pitcher instead of three, and with one horn instead of two. The Greek sculptors, who did not much like these enormous head-dresses, disposed the whole with more comeliness and decorum. They placed the goat's horn in one of the hands of the figure, and made some fruits come out of it; hence Cornucopia.

The common people have at all times, and in all countries been fond of quibbles, equivocations, and puns. If the change of figure has often made several gods of one and the same symbol diversified, a simple variety of names—nay, difference of pronunciation, has, more than once produced a like multiplicity. It is not difficult to guess how the same Isis is sometimes a terrestrial deity; sometimes the moon, and at others the "Queen of Hell." What contributed most to the strange notions people formed of this "Triceps Hacate," which was at the same time the earth, the moon, and the wife of Pluto, is this:—So soon as the first phase of the moon was perceived in the evening, ministers for that purpose went and proclaimed it in all the crossways and public places, and the feast was celebrated either that evening or the next day. When the sacrifice was to be made at night, they put an

owl near the figure that proclaimed it. The Isis then was called Lilith, that is, the Owl. A cock was put in the room thereof when the sacrifice was to be made in the morning. Nothing could be more simple or convenient than this practice. But when once the deified Isis had been regarded as a woman, or queen, dwelling in the moon, and there governing the heavens in conjunction with Osiris, the proclamation of the return of the new moon, which was a thing extremely plain before, assumed a mysterious and stately air. Hacate was invisible for many days, her return was expected with ceremony. The goddess at last left the empire of the dead to come again into the heavens. Imagination had a vast field to explore here, and Isis, as Hacate, never failing to visit successively those two districts, it could not be doubted that she ruled both in heaven and in the invisible abodes. On the other hand they could not but be sensible of the palpable relation she had to the earth and its productions, whereof she always bore the several marks either on her head, or in her hands. She then became the fourfold Hacate which is at one and the same time, the Earth, the Moon, the "Lady of Heaven," and the "Queen of Hell." All the heathens of antiquity likewise imagined she was perfectly well acquainted with future things, and that she never appeared without foreboding by certain marks what was to befall husbandmen, families, and whole kingdoms. People have not as yet fully shaken off the persuasion they anciently had of the influences and presages of the moon. Thus we have shown that the moon has been the innocent cause of much superstition from the earliest times, and that the term "moon-struck" possesses a legitimate origin.

The sum of the whole matter appears to be, that Osiris (the sun) is a type of the active, generating, and beneficent

force of nature, and the elements. Isis (the moon) on the contrary, is the passive force, the power of conceiving and bringing forth into life in the sublunary world. Osiris was particularly adored in the sun, whose rays vivify and impart new warmth to the earth, and who, on his annual return in spring appears to create anew all organic bodies. Isis was the earth, or sublunary nature in general, or, in a more confined sense, the soil of Egypt inundated by the Nile, the principle of all fecundity, the goddess of generation and production. United to one another Osiris and Isis typify the Universal Being, the Soul of Nature, the Pantheus of the Orphic verses.

Although there are but meagre statements in the classic authors respecting the mysteries of Egypt, there is a little of which use can be made. It is only certain that these mysteries were very secret, very severe in their trials, and connected with the esoteric worship of the deities of Egypt. The chief seat of the mysteries was Memphis, the ancient capital of Lower Egypt. They were of two kinds—the greater and the less; the former devoted to Osiris and Serapis, the latter to Isis. The mysteries of Osiris were celebrated at the autumnal equinox, those of Serapis at the summer solstice, and those of Isis at the vernal equinox. The character of the candidate was rigidly enquired into, and if report was unfavorable, exclusion was certain. He was prepared for initiation by a period of fasting, and by particular ceremonies calculated to inspire him with a sense of religious awe. One, who had been initiated into all the mysteries, speaks of those of Isis as follows:—"The priest—all the profane being removed to a distance—taking hold of me by the hand, brought me into the inner recesses of the sanctuary itself, clothed in a new linen garment. I would tell you, were it

lawful for me to tell you what was then said and done. You should know it, if it were lawful for you to hear. But both the ears that heard those things and the tongue that told them would reap the evil results of their rashness; but believe what is truth. *I approached the confines of death*, I returned therefrom, being borne through all the elements. At midnight I saw the sun shining with its brilliant light, and I approached the presence of the gods beneath and the gods above, and stood near and worshipped them. Behold, I have related to you things of which, though heard by you, you must necessarily remain ignorant." It is most probable that the mysteries of Isis alluded to her personification of nature. In addressing the candidate she says—"I am Nature; the parent of all things; the sovereign of the elements, the primary progeny of Time," and Plutarch informs us that on the front of the Temple of Isis was placed this legend. "*I, Isis, am all that has been, that is, or shall be, and no mortal hath ever unveiled me.*"

The Isiac mysteries would seem to be the first degree among the Egyptians. The second degree consisted of the mysteries of Serapis, but of their nature we know scarcely anything. It is certain that in the mysteries of Osiris, which completed the series of Egyptian esoteric teaching, the lesson of death and resurrection were symbolically conveyed. The legend of the murder and restoration of Osiris was displayed to the affiliate in a scenic manner, as the Judge and Father of the world of spirits.

The mysteries of Isis are peculiarly interesting to Freemasons, as being the foundation of those of the Sidonian builders, or Dionysian Architects, from whom so many symbolic rites have emanated, and of which not a few are perpetuated in the various degrees of Freemasonry.

ESSAY IV.

THE symbolical writing of the ancient nations, as previously shown, so commonly and usefully employed to teach in a compendious and popular manner the important truths for the preservation of good manners and promoting the good of mankind, served also from the beginning to conserve the memory of histories and publicly to expose the object or motives of the feasts to which some great event had given occasion.

The ancients always opened their festivals and public prayers with *woes* and *lamentations* for what they had lost, though they were used to conclude the same by a general repast, where singing, the sound of instruments, and joy, succeeded their mourning. Whence it comes that the cries usual in the most ancient feasts, even those which in process of time became expressions of joy, and set forms of acclamations being traced to their primitive origin, signify only tears, and expressions of grief addressed to Almighty God.

The objects and motives of this mournful practice are more easy to discover among the Egyptians than among other nations; not because the Egyptians having less mingled with other people, have made fewer alterations in their ancient customs, but because their practices being strictly connected with public and certain symbols engraved in stone, or carried in ceremony at the feasts, were better fixed or less disfigured in Egypt than in other

parts of the world. There, they lamented with Isis the death of the Governor who had been taken from them, and killed by a dragon rising from under the ground, and by a water monster. They then rejoiced for the resurrection of Osiris, though he was no longer the same, and had lost his strength.

The Egyptians, and most eastern nations had an allegory, or picture which became famous, and which is everywhere met with. It represented the water monster slain, and Osiris restored to life; but there sprung from the earth hideous figures who endeavored to dethrone him. They were monstrous giants, one of which had many arms; another pulled up the largest oaks; and a third had in his hands the fourth part of a mountain which he hurled against heaven. They were all distinguished by some singular attempt, and by frightful names. Osiris got the better of them, and Horus, after he had been much abused by Rechus (or the wind) happily got rid of his pursuits by appearing before him with the jaws and claws of a lion.

As to the figure of Horus, who assumes the head and claws of a lion, to rid himself of the wind that ruined all his hopes, it is a symbol peculiar to the husbandry of the Egyptians. Thus, the necessity of personifying the objects they desired to paint soon introduced the use of allegorical pictures, and of fabulous recitals. They, at that time could not write otherwise than by delineating the figures of the objects intended. But they thought themselves masters of ordering the whole, in the manner they judged fittest to make an agreeable impression, and to be well understood. The difficulty of conveying the ideas of intellectual things into the mind by the eye, first

induced them to have recourse to symbolical figures, and the use of these figures afterwards authorised the taste for fictions. But what was obscure in them was cleared by the simplicity and propriety of the names given to each piece. We could produce new instances of this in the fables of Andromeda and Bellerophon, which are pure allegories, the interpretation of which must be deduced from a signification and meaning of the names of all the personages concerned therein. But this would take us too much from that part of the ancient writings, and of the public ceremonies relating to the representation of past disasters, and to the regulations of mankind.

The ancients not only expressed certain truths by figures delineated on stone, but also joined thereto dramatic ceremonies, wherein the objects and names of the actors were significant and served to recall the memory of things past. "The feast of the ancient state of Mankind," assumed a more shining form in Egypt and Syria, by means of the symbolical figures which had been multiplied there much more than anywhere else. Such having become common to all nations, on this account deserves more ample illustration than what has already preceded it. We cannot explain these symbols without casting a useful light on an infinite number of monuments and traditions remaining in our hands which have hitherto been regarded as unintelligible.

They carried at this *feast* a basket or small chest containing the monuments of the progress of husbandry. The chest was neither mysterious nor significant in itself. It only served to receive the memorative symbols of things past. *First* they found therein the *marks* of the weakening of Osiris, and of the loss of fecundity. They were

called in Greece "Phallica." The indiscretion of that symbol unfortunately gave birth to all sorts of extravagances and licentiousness. Then came sesame-seeds, poppy-heads, pomegranites, bay-berries, branches of fig trees, dry stalks, cakes of several kinds of grain, salt, carded wool, cakes of honey and cheese, and lastly a *child*, a *serpent*, and a *winnowing van*. The whole was accompanied by a flute or some other musical instrument.

The drum or flute, which were inseparable from the celebration of the feasts, were the symbols of gratitude which on certain days invited men to meet together to praise God in concert. The small chest, the van in which they afterwards discovered so many mysteries, and the whole representation before enumerated, passed from the Egyptians to the Phœnicians, and by their means spread far and wide. Nothing is more commonly found in the monuments of the heathen feasts than a small chest, a van, a serpent, a human head (or skull), and a flute or drum.

When the feast representing the ancient state of mankind and the progress of industry, was celebrated, the figure of the earth and that of work obtained several names in different countries, though we find the same purpose and relations in all these names. The Isis, representing the earth, was called Ceres, Themis, Nemesis, Semele, and Adrastia.

An explanation of the Isis or Ceres will be given in a future essay. The Isis, Nemesis, simply signified the earth preserved from the waters; Semele signified the representation of the ancient condition of men, torches were always carried next to Ceres, or the symbol of the mourning earth, and this caused Isis, thus accompanied,

to be called Themis and Adrastia, which appellations signify the excellency of fire.

A multitude of ancient monuments testify to the use of the little portable chest of the Van, the Child, and the Serpent. They added to these figures the "sorry grains," on which they in the beginning had been obliged to feed, and the marks of the "crosses" they had been necessitated to overcome. Those who in the ceremony carried the chest wherein all these memorials were contained likewise assumed to themselves significant names, and made part of the representation. They became actors, and everything concurred with the symbolical pieces to convey certain truths to the minds of the spectators.

The representative child was called simply "the child," *liber*, the beloved son, sometimes the child of the representation, at others Horus (as before explained), Hippocrates, Bacchus, Apollo, &c. He bore many names whereof an exposition will be given in due time. The three *maids* who carried this child had names relating to husbandry, the symbols of which they bore in their hands; their names interpreted mean *Rain*, *Dew*, and *Fair Weather*. It is sufficient for us to understand that to the alternative of rain, dew, and fair weather, husbandry is indebted for the life it affords us.

In order to render these representations more complete, they did not in Egypt forget, any more than in other places, the necessity the first men had been under of defending their houses and the fruits of the earth from wild beasts. They preserved the memory of this particular circumstance by hunting, which they renewed every three years throughout the East. The same Feast was not

celebrated every year, because wild beasts did not multiply annually so as to alarm the neighborhood. This hunting being merely a representation, and not much in earnest, it made the sanctity of feasts to degenerate into tumultuous ramblings, succeeded by the greatest disorder. True, they began by a sacrifice and the invocation of the true God, as may be proved from their warlike cries, signifying that "the Lord is mighty; the Lord is my strength; the Lord is an host to me; the Lord is my guide, &c." All these we find again in the mouths of the Hebrews, because their tongue and religion were originally identical with other nations. The Hebrews have altered their notions, while the form of prayer still remains the same.

From the knowledge we possess of the genius and taste of the ancient Eastern nations, and chiefly the Egyptians, for symbolical figures and significant ceremonies, we are authorised to think that the singular practices observed among them were so many emblems of certain astronomical, moral, and other truths. We no longer run any risk in saying that the Ram they revered in Thebais and Lybia; the Bulls they respected and regarded at Memphis and Heliopolis; the Kids honored at Mendes; the Lion, Bear, Fishes, and other animals they worshipped in several provinces, were very plain symbols in their first origin. They were no more than the ancient signs of the Zodiac, and the different marks of the situation of the sun. The Dog being the symbol of the Dog-star, which formerly opened the year, they put a living dog at the head of the whole ceremonial of the first new moon. Diodorus recounts this fact as having been an eye-witness of it. They therefore took the habit of calling these Feasts, the Feast of the Ram, of the Bull, of the Dog,

and of the Lion. There are few things so deeply interesting to the living as the disposal of those they have loved and lost; and there is, perhaps, nothing so distinctive of the condition and character of a people as the method in which they dispose of their dead. These methods have been so various, and connected with so many ceremonials and observances dictated by affection, religious conviction, or superstition, that it will not be out of place here to consider the subject as it affected the ancient nations.

There were near ancient Egyptian towns certain grounds appointed as the common burial-place; that at Memphis was on the other side of the Lake Acherusia. The dead person was brought to the shore of that Lake, and at the foot of a tribunal consisting of forty-two Judges who enquired into his life and conversation. When he had not faithfully observed the laws, the body was unburied and very likely thrown into a ditch called Tartarus. When no accuser appeared, or he who deposed against the deceased was convicted of falsehood, they ceased to lament the dead person, and his encomium was made. They, for instance, commended his excellent education, respect for religion, equity, moderation, chastity, and other virtues. His birth, which was supposed to be the same with all men, was never allowed as any merit in him. All the assistants applauded these praises, and congratulated the deceased on account of his being ready to enjoy an eternal repose with the virtuous.

There was on the shore of the lake a severe and incorruptible waterman, who, by order of the Judges, and never on any other terms, received the deceased into his

boat. The very kings of Egypt were treated with the same rigour, and not admitted into the barque without leave of the Judges, who sometimes deprived even them of burial. The waterman carried the body to the other side of the lake into a plain embellished with meadows, brooks, groves, and all the rural ornaments similar to modern cemeteries. This place was called the "Elysian Fields," that is, full satisfaction, an habitation of repose or of joy. There was at the entrance of that abode the figure of a dog, with three pairs of jaws, which they called Cerberus. The whole ceremony ended by thrice sprinkling sand over the opening of the vault wherein they had put the corpse, and by bidding him thrice adieu.

These words and practices, almost everywhere copied, were so many instructions to the people. They gave them to understand by such ceremonies, as by so many speeches or very significant symbols, that death was followed by an account which we were to give of our life before an inflexible tribunal, and that what was indeed dreadful to the wicked was only a passage to a happier state for the good. Wherefore death was called the deliverance, alleviation, and end of evils.

As to the earth thrown upon the corpse, and the tender adieus of relations, they were no more than natural duty, and a simple expression of their regrets. They were not only content to pay them by the way this honor, but placed at the entrance to the cemetery and over the door of the deceased's tomb the symbol of the value and tender affection they had for him. The dog, being of all animals the most attached to man, is the natural emblem of friendship and attachment. They gave the figure of the dog three heads or throats to express the three cries they

made over their friend's grave, according to the custom which granted that honor to none but good men. Therefore, this figure thus placed near the tomb and over the head of the newly-buried person signified his having been honored with the lamentations of his family, and with the cries which friends never failed to come and utter over the grave of him whom they had valued and cherished for his good qualities. The meaning of this symbol is no longer a riddle after its name has been translated. They called it Cerberus, that is in plain terms, "the cries of the grave."

It is not easy or reasonable to pretend to explain all the symbols and ceremonies of antiquity, before we are convinced that most of the singular figures used on the most solemn occasions were in their first origin no more than significant symbols and instructive ceremonies. It is sufficient for us that this is true of many of them (which we flatter ourselves we have clearly shown in this and former explanations of the ancient writings), since the explication we give of it is simple, plain, and strictly connected both with the common notions and wants of the first men.

The Egyptians, who had contracted the habit of adoring the sun as God, the Author of all good, and looked upon Osiris as their founder, ran headlong into an abyss. They, from confused remembrance and universal custom, knew that this figure of Osiris related to the sun, and indeed, it was nothing else in its first institution. They besides, saw the circle, the character of God, placed frequently enough on Osiris's forehead. They then perpetually united the idea of Hammon with that of the sun, and both of these with that of God. They no longer

honored God, nor the sun without singing at the same time the favors of Osiris or Hammon. The one was still inseparably connected with the other, which made them give out that Hammon (or Osiris) had been transported into the sun, there to reside, and that he thence continually protected Egypt, taking delight in pouring a greater plenty upon the country inhabited by his offspring than on any other land in the universe. Thus, having gradually come to ascribe divinity, and offering their worship to the ruler representing the functions of the sun, they, to complete the absurdity, took him for the first of their kings. Hence this odd mixture of three inconsistent notions—we mean, of God, of the sun, and of a dead man, which the Egyptians perpetually confounded together. That religion which grossly indulged the self-love and vanity of the Egyptians, easily found favor, and took root in the minds of the people. The rest of the symbols took the same turn. They inquired who was the Neptune, that is, the marine Osiris, the symbol of the annual return of the fleets, and they made him a god who delighted in the sea, as Osiris did in the heavens. The funeral Osiris, who declared the anniversary of funerals had also *his* own history; and as all the ceremonies belonged to burials, instead of being taken in their true sense—that is, as public instructions upon the state of the just after death—had by degrees been looked on as pictures of the real treatment given to the dead underground, and in delightful gardens; they of Pluto, or of the symbol of the deliverance of the just, made a god who presided over the abodes of the dead. The pretended god Neptune, who became the favorite deity of the maritime nations, was almost unknown to and hardly worshipped by the Egyptians, who as a rule hated the sea, and who having plenty of everything hardly ever went out of their

own country. On the contrary, as they were very exact in the outward practice of their religious ceremonies, funeral anniversaries, which were frequently repeated, rendered Pluto much more renowned among them.

We often see around the head of the Egyptian Pluto a radiant crown, and round his body a serpent, sometimes accompanied with the signs of the Zodiac, which evidently signifies the duration of one sun—that is, of one year. It is plain that Jupiter-Ammon, Neptune, and Pluto, are in reality no more than the symbols of one solar year diversified according to particular circumstances. They did not quite lose sight of the unity of their origin in making persons of them, for they made them three brothers, who, as they said had divided the empire of the world between them. Ham, or Hammon, being commonly called God, Jehov, Jehov-Ammon, the city of Thebes, where he had dwelt longest, and which they anciently called “Ammon’s abode,” was afterwards called the “City of God.” This word Jehov, in its primitive use signified the Father of Life, the Supreme being, &c. They sometimes joined to it the name of father, which was but an interpretation of it, and called him “Jovpiter.” The Ammon, which by a stupid kind of love was confounded with God, and Osiris, or the star moderator of seasons, became the famous Jov-Ammon, or Jupiter-Ammon, and had always the first honors paid to him, after the other symbols had in like manner been converted into so many celestial personages and powerful deities. The reason of this pre-eminence is founded on their having annexed the idea of the founder of their colony to the most brilliant of all their symbols—we mean Osiris.

As mummying the dead will often be alluded to in

future Essays, a brief description of Egyptian embalming may now be introduced as a fitting close to this paper. The art of preserving the body after death was invented by the Egyptians, whose prepared bodies are known by the name of mummies. This art seems to have derived its origin from the idea that the preservation of the body was necessary for the conservation and return of the soul to the human form after it had completed its cycle of existence of three or ten thousand years. Physical and sanitary reasons may also have induced the ancient nations to adopt this custom; and the legend of Osiris, whose body, destroyed by Typhon, was found by Isis and embalmed by his son Anubis, gave a religious sanction to the rite—all deceased persons being supposed to be embalmed after the model of Osiris. The art appears very old. After death the corpse of a male was at once committed to the charge of the undertakers; if a female it was retained at home until decomposition had begun. The *flank-incisor* of the district, a person of low class, whose establishment was situated in the cemeteries or suburbs, conveyed the corpse home, a scribe marked a line on the left side beneath the ribs, down which a deep incision was made with a rude knife or stone—probably flint. Another kind of embalmer then proceeded to remove the entrails and lungs, with the exception of the heart and kidneys. The brain was extracted by another assistant with a crooked instrument through the nose. All this having been effected, the body was ready for the salt and spices necessary for its preservation, and the future operations depended upon the sum to be expended on the task. Three methods prevailed; the first, accessible only to the wealthy, consisted in passing peculiar drugs through the nostrils into the cavities of the skull, rinsing the stomach in palm wine, and filling it with resins, cassia, and other

substances, and stitching up the incision in the left flank. The mummy was then steeped in *natron* for seventy days, and wrapped in linen cemented by gums, and set upright in a coffin against the walls of the house or tomb. This process cost a silver *talent*, which considering the relative value of ancient money at one third of that at present would amount to about seven hundred and twenty-five pounds. The second process consisted in removing the brain as before, but only injecting cedar oil into the trunk, and soaking the corpse in a solution of *natron* for seventy days, which brought away or destroyed the soft portions, leaving only the skin and bones. The expense was a *mina*, relatively worth about two hundred and forty-three pounds. The third process, in use for the poorer classes, they washed the corpse in myrrh, and salted it for seventy days; the expense was a trifle, not mentioned. When thus prepared the bodies were ready for sepulture, but were often kept some time before being buried—often at home—and even produced at festive entertainments to recall to the guests the transient lot of humanity. All classes were embalmed, even malefactors, and those who were drowned in the Nile, or killed by crocodiles received embalmment from the city nearest to which the accident occurred. As the art however, existed for many centuries, it may be easily conceived that mummies were preserved by very different means, and quite distinct from those described by classical authors, some having been found merely dried in the sand; others salted by *natron*, or boiled in resin and bitumen with or without the flank incision, having the brains removed through the eyes or base of the skull, the skin partially gilded, the flank incision covered with a tin plate, the fingers cased in silver, the eyes removed and replaced.

The mummies found were generally wrapped in linen bandages, and placed in costly coffins. The sacred animals were also mummied, but by simpler processes than men. The Ethiopians used similar means to preserve the dead; and the successful nature of embalming may be judged from the numerous mummies in the various museums of Europe. Other less successful methods were used by nations of antiquity to embalm. The Persians employed *wax*; the Assyrians *honey*; the Jews embalmed with *spices*; Alexander the Great was preserved in wax and honey; and some Roman bodies have been found thus embalmed. The aboriginal inhabitants of the Canary Islands used an elaborate process like the Egyptians, and bodies preserved by atmospheric or other circumstances, for centuries, have been discovered in France, Sicily, England, and America,—especially in Central America and Peru, but there is no reason to believe that bodies so preserved will last as long as the Egyptian mummies.



ESSAY V.

EGYPT always was, and still is, the most fruitful country in the world. The harvest, which is almost certain there, and much exceeds the wants of the inhabitants, occasioned great quantities of corn to be amassed there, which in barren years were the resource of the Arabians, the Canaanites, the Syrians, and Greeks. Travellers, whom need or curiosity had drawn thither—and the Phœnicians especially, who inhabited a small maritime coast near Mount Libanus, had no granary so certain as Egypt—were all struck with the polity that reigned in every part of that beautiful country, with the gentle temper of its inhabitants, the mysterious externals of the *ceremonies* and *feasts*, which were with much pomp celebrated there, and finally with the plenty which they looked upon as miraculous in a country where it never rained.

The notion they had of that river whose source remained hidden, and whose overflowings appeared contrary to the common course of nature, made them assert that God himself poured these beneficial waters on Egypt. The Egyptians represented this marvel by the figure of a point within a circle—*i.e.*, the sun, out of whose mouth a river sprung, and the foreigners as well as the Egyptians everywhere gave out that so singular a prosperity was the reward of the piety of the inhabitants. Nay, the Phœnicians perhaps, and the Canaanites at first received from the Egyptians and used the symbolical characters among themselves. Thus Egypt was the cup wherein the

poison of idolatry lay, and the Phœnicians, the people who by travelling all over the world, have presented this fatal cup to the greater part of the western nations. For the same reason it is, that the names of the gods, and words used in the heathen feasts have so sensible an analogy with the Phœnician language.

Travellers and merchants during their sojourn in Egypt were undoubtedly struck with the outward show of the feasts, and the abundance that seemed to result from them. They did not carry home this multitude of symbols and practices which they understood nothing of, but they seldom failed to regard with veneration the three or four chief symbols which the Egyptians honored as beneficial powers, and as the authors of all the good they enjoyed.

The *Governor*, the *Woman*, the *Child*, and the *Messenger* (or giver of advices), always appearing in their feasts, though with some variety, foreigners used themselves chiefly to these three or four objects, the most distinguished of the whole worship, and the Phœnicians were the first who made use of the same ceremonial, and celebrated the same feasts in their own country. The circle of the sun, accompanied with serpents and foliage, or with large wings to represent the intelligence which is the mover of all things, the master of the air; the dispenser of seasons and harvests, though always placed at the top of the noblest symbols, however, less attracted the eyes than did the brilliant figure of the Governor of the Earth, or the several dresses given the Mother and the beloved child. Nothing contributed more to humanize, as we may say, the idea of God, or rather to make men refer their worship and adoration to beings like ourselves.

The god, or rather the figure of the sun, which the Egyptians called Osiris, or the governor of the earth, assumed other names in other places. The Eastern nations who had adopted him, and who regarded their temporal advantages as the effect of this devotion, called him "Moloch," that is, the *King*. Some called him Baal, Adonis, or Hero, which names signify "The Lord." Others styled him Achad, &c., &c., which signifies "The Lord of the Heavens." It was always the *sun* which these figures of a king and these names immediately signified. It was customary to say with a sigh, "Let us cry unto the Lord;" or, "God see our tears;" "Thou art the life, the Author of Being;" "Thou art God the Mighty." They chiefly said in the East, "God is the fire and principle of life." "Thou art the fire, life proceeds from thee, &c." All these words and many others, expressions of grief and adoration, became so many titles, which the people without understanding gave to this child or imaginary deity. They knew not what all this signified, but were sure that the god of the feast delighted in all these titles. They never failed to give them him, and thus, these expressions became cries of joy, or extravagant roarings. We are no way concerned to repeat here all the nonsense, which the want of understanding these names has caused to be built upon each of them. Let us pass on to the retinue of Bacchus; a brief sketch of the mythology of Bacchus will not be out of place here. He was the fabled son of Jupiter, and was brought up by the nymphs on Mount Nysa. On arrival at maturity he was driven by the jealousy of Juno from land to land all over the East; but he carried endless blessings with him for mortals, and was recognized as a divinity in almost every place. Prodiges terrified and punished those who were unwilling to own the God. *Ariadne*, was the best loved

of all of whom he was enamoured. His usual companions were satyrs, and he was drawn by tigers, lynxes, and panthers. The goat is sacred to him. He is crowned with vines and ivy, and bears in his hand a pole bound round with leaves and fruit. The worship of the god was introduced into Greece from the East by Melampus, and spread over nearly the whole of the then known earth, and at the same time the myth of Bacchus was variously modified among the different peoples, so that it has become one of the most perplexed and difficult. His worship being thus extensively spread, and his festivals being held with music and song, he naturally received many surnames. In works of art, his type is that of youth, and his figure is neither stout nor slim. He is usually represented quite naked. Frequently a deer-skin hangs across the breast, at times he wears shoes, more rarely buskins (from this the bearded Indian Bacchus is completely distinct). The worship of Bacchus consisted in noisy rites; the chief offerings to him were goats and oxen; the last because he himself was conceived and represented under the form of an ox. The festivities, besides theatrical representations, consisted in a great banquet, for which the state provided the meat, and in a procession through the city; in the most ancient times, even human sacrifices were not uncommon. One of the most essential points of this feast was to appear there covered with skins of goats, bucks, tigers, and other wild and tame animals. They smeared their faces with blood, to indicate the marks of danger they had run and the victory they had obtained.

Instead of a child of metal, mysteriously carried about in a chest, they by degrees contracted a custom of choosing a good fat jolly boy to play the part of the

imaginary god. In process of time they gave him a chariot, and to render the whole more realistic, the pretended "tigers" offered to draw him, whilst the "bucks" and "goats" were capering round him. The assistants, *disguised* and *masked* in this manner had names agreeable to what they were doing. They were called Satyrs, a word signifying men *disguised*.

Those who followed or attended the chariot of Bacchus were called "Bacchants," that is, mourners, because the "feast" began with woes, and complaints, and frequent invocations on the assistance of God. After the vagaries and the whole train, at last appeared an old man upon an ass, who advanced with a sedate countenance offering *Wine* to the tired youths, and inviting everybody to take some rest. Among other objects capable of pleasing were three large pitchers of wine. This was the finest part of the ceremonial, and the feasts where this liquor was plentifully drunk could hardly fail to be the briskest and most lively of all.

In order to introduce more important subjects we are obliged to considerably abridge this explanation of Bacchus; suffice it to state, that the festivals were religious thanksgivings in which grateful acknowledgments were rendered for favors received from the hands of Divine Providence; and the image of the god who was supposed to bestow these blessings was ceremoniously carried in procession. The feasts were similar to those noticed in a former Essay in "The memorials of past events," with trifling variations arising from a difference of taste and misconceptions in the conveyance of customs from one country to another. In after years, however, these rites degenerated and came

to be celebrated with a licentiousness that threatened the destruction of morality and of society itself. They were made the occasion of the most unnatural excesses. At first only women took part in these rites, but latterly men were also admitted. When the evil had reached its greatest height the Government (186 B.C.) instituted an enquiry into it, and rooted it out with fearful severity. Wild and excessive revels are still called Bacchanalia, and the remains of those ancient customs are still visible among the moderns in their annual rejoicings. It is the same concerns, and with no great difference the same idolatry.

The understanding which should be applied to those processions of Bacchus are as follows:—The sceptre and empire of heaven and earth fell to the share of Osiris. The chariot, whip, and reins were assigned to Apollo, whence it is that we so commonly find in one god the characters of another. The Horus Apollo, who was only related to the rural year, or the order of works, was the more easily mistaken for the sun which rules nature, that they put the whip and the attributes of the sun into the hands of the Horus, in order to shorten and abbreviate the marks of the solar year, and of the works suitable to each season. Thus Horus became the same with the Moloch of the Ammonites, the Adonis of Byblos, the Bell of the other Phœnician cities, and the radiant Belenus, honored in Gaul. This driver of the chariot which gives light to the world is the son of Jupiter; but the son of Jehov, the son *par excellence* Liber, is no other than Horus or Bacchus. Osiris, Horus, Apollo, Bacchus, and the Sun, are then confounded. Vigil himself makes no distinction between Bacchus and Apollo (or the Sun) when he gives Bacchus and Ceres (or Isis) the government of the year and the light.

We have now to speak of other Egyptian worthies, viz.:—"Atlas" (one of the Titans) and his two daughters Hyades and Pleiades. Atlas, according to Hesoid's Theogony, one of the Titans, married Pleione, daughter of Oceanus, and became the father of Pleiades. As leader of the Titans he attempted to storm the heavens, and for his supreme treason was condemned by Zeus (God) to bear the vault of heaven on his head and hands; the sting of this punishment obviously being that Atlas was compelled to support what he thirsted to destroy. Atlas is represented in other legends as holding up the heavens on his shoulders, or keeping the earth and heavens asunder. Others, that Perseus with the head of a Medusa changed him into a mountain for his inhospitality, and that mountain was supposed to be in North West Africa; that the Pleiades and Hyades were his daughters, a mountain range in Africa still bearing his name. Hyades, seven nymphs, said to be the daughters of Atlas, changed into stars by Jupiter. Pleiades, also seven daughters of Atlas, who (so says the legend) were changed into "Doves," and placed among the stars to rescue them from the pursuit of Orion.

In the Grecian mythology, the Pleiades were the seven daughters of Atlas, and Pleione; according to some authorities they committed suicide from grief, either at the death of their sisters the Hyades, or at the fate of their father Atlas. According to others they were companions of Diana, and being pursued by Orion, were rescued from him by the gods, by being translated to the sky. All authorities however, agree that after their death, or translation, they were transformed into stars. Only six of these stars are visible to the naked eye, and the ancients believed that the seventh hid herself for

shame, that she alone of all the Pleiades had married a mortal, while her six sisters were the spouses of different gods. Their names are Electra, Maia, Tygete, Alcyone, Celena, Sterope (the invisible one) and Merope.

Atlas, according to fable, was an ingenious master of astronomy, a doctor, who knew nature in general and gave information about it. Homer gives us Atlas, as a very learned god who knew all the obliquities of the coast and all the depths of the sea. Virgil ascribes to the information of the great Atlas, the knowledge men had acquired of the moon, the eclipses of the sun and the whole order of nature. The name signifies a "support" or "prop," which gave occasion for the invention of the metamorphosis of Atlas into a *column* or high mountain that props up the arch of the heavens. The Phœnicians, in carrying on the commerce of all the coasts of Europe and Africa, often saw the highest mountain of Mauritania whose top is generally covered with snow, and seems joined to the heavens. The name of Atlas (or column) given to that mountain caused the fable of Atlas to be applied to it. They said he was King of Mauritania, a great astrologer and geographer, who at last was by the gods changed into a high mountain, reaching from earth to the heavens.

The Hyades (who took their name from the figure V which they form in the forehead of the celestial Bull, and the Pleiades, which is that small platoon of stars so remarkable, near the foregoing) are the best known and easiest to be distinguished among the constellations of the Zodiac. They were of great use in regulating the information given to the disciples of the priests by means of an atlas,—that is, of a Horus bearing a celestial sphere.

Atlas humanized, became the father of the Hyades and Pleiades, and Orion, which rises immediately after them, easily passed in the imagination of the fabulists for a libertine who incessantly pursues them.

Among other fables, the two finest, doubtless, are those of the Garden of the Hesperides and of Atlas, freed by Hercules from the burden of the celestial globe. Hercules is a name of the sun, and his relieving Atlas of his burthen, simply refers to his dissolving the snow with which Atlas, or the mountain of Mauritania was loaded.

What can be the origin of the first? Three nymphs, placed round a *tree* bearing golden apples, of which they have the disposition and management; a dragon that watches to interdict the use of and access to this admirable fruit to any other; a wild goat that browses on the grass at the foot of the tree; or, instead of the goat, a horn of abundance placed either at the foot of the tree or in the hand of one of the three nymphs. This is the picture of the garden of the Hesperides. The picture is nothing more than the ancient symbol of the rich commerce of which the Phœnicians made the preparations in winter. It was the commerce of Hesperia, or of the western countries, particularly Spain, whence they drew exquisite wines, rich metals, and that superfine wool which the Syrians dyed in purple. They brought back the finest corn from the coast of Africa, and when they went round the continent through the Red Sea, exchanged all sorts of ironware, knives, and edge-tools, for ebony and other precious woods, for gold-dust and provisions of all kinds.

This branch of their commerce was the most esteemed of all. It was the chief object that then took up the

thoughts of the Phœnicians; nor did they fail to expose the public sign of it in the assemblies. One may easily guess at the meaning of the "tree" which afforded such precious things. The great dragon that surrounded the tree turned the minds of the beholders to the subsistence and benefits whereof it was a sign. The Capricorn, or barely one horn of this animal placed at the foot of the tree," was the character of the season; Hesperides, or Hesperia means "the good share, the best lot."

The public sign used upon this occasion was three golden balls, having reference to the three moons personified by the three nymphs, in which the companies were formed; the figuring and coloring corresponding with those of the full moon. Allusion may also be made to the gold-dust and other articles of a precious character, *the best lot*, which the Phœnicians received in exchange for their merchandise. The Lombards, the money-lenders of former times, are said to have adopted this sign for their offices, and pawnbrokers still use it to designate their profession.

Mercury, Hermes, and Camillus will now come under review. We have shown, and we think correctly, that there are a large number of very famous men and women whom we have a perfect right to strike out of history. There is no necessity to inquire further into their country, genealogy, or antiquity, since proof has been here afforded that all of them are nothing more than the Osiris, the Isis, and the Horus of Egypt; that is, the three principal keys of the ancient writings, or the symbols of the solar, the civil, and the rural year.

There is a fourth key, viz., the "*Thot*" or Taaut, that is the Dog-star. Thence again springs a multitude of kings

and gods, whose history we shall in a few words explain. This "*Thot*" has already afforded us two deities, one residing in the fine star near Cancer, under the name of Anubis, and very well employed in swelling and sinking the River Nile; the other wholly intent upon physic, and entirely taken up with the care of the peoples' health, under the name of Esculapius. Next to Anubis and Esculapius, let us see the Camillus of the Heturians, the Janus of the Latins, the Hermes of the Greeks, and the Mercury of the Phœnicians, all of them rising out of the same figure; one mythological description will do for those worthies. One authority states that "*Mercury*" was the God of Trade, and the messenger of Olympus, said to be the son of Jupiter and Maia; he is represented with a winged cap, wings on both feet, and a short staff winged and entwined with serpents. Literature was patronized by him and he was also the god of *Thievery*. Another goes further, and states that Mercury, (or Hermes) is familiarly known as the god of speech, eloquence, the sciences, theft, and herds; and that under his name are comprised several mythological personages, who personified the external expression of thought whether human or divine. The oldest of these personages was undoubtedly the "*Thot*" of the Egyptians, whose worship, as already shown appears very early among the ancient Egyptians, represented with the head of an "*Ibis*," which was his living emblem, and expressed his name in hieroglyphs. According to the legends, he was scribe, or clerk of the gods, and in the future state justified the good against their accusers, as he formerly had Osiris in the trial of that god and Typhon. His worship was universal. He was self-created, though some legends of later date make him the "*Son of the Nile*." In his celestial character he is identified with the moon,

and was supposed to preside over that luminary and the souls which made it their habitation. He it is, also, who inscribes the names of monarchs on the Persea, the Tree of Life of the Egyptian Paradise. Many heroic and other personages were descended from him. As god of the sciences, he invented the alphabet from the flight of cranes, astronomy, numbers, weights and measures, music, the lyre, gymnastics, tactics, and the cultivation of the olive. Among animals, the tortoise, pig, lamb, and goat, and the young of beasts were sacred to him; the ibis and the gull among birds; and the palm-tree, blackthorn, cinque-foil, and purslane among plants.

The Etruscans derived his worship from the Greeks, and represent him with the name Camillus of the gods. At the Porta Capena there was a well sacred to him, and the merchants sprinkled themselves and their goods with "Holy Water" obtained by dipping a laurel branch into the well. At a later period under the Roman Empire the influx of foreign religions made them confound him with the Egyptian Anubis, and even represent him with a dog, or jackal's head, and depict him of a golden or black color. His worship even penetrated to Gaul.

Of Janus (or the Sun) it may be said that he held a very high place in the regards of the Romans. In every undertaking his name was invoked. On *New Year's Day* people made each other presents of figs, dates, honey-cakes, sweetmeats, &c., wore a holiday dress, saluted each other kindly, as Janus presided over the beginning of the year, the beginning of the months, each day, &c. He is represented with a sceptre in his right hand, and a key in his left, sitting on a beaming throne (a relic of the very old worship of Janus), as the Sun. He has also two

faces (whence the expression "Janus-faced" is applied to a deceitful person), one youthful, the other aged; the one looking forward, the other backward, in which some have professed to see a symbol of the wisdom of the God who beholds both the past and the future. A further proof that Mercury, Hermes, Camillus, and Co. were no more than symbols of the Dog-star, or the warning of the retreat, and not men who ever taught or invented anything, is that they put into the hands of Mercury the mark of the swelling of the Nile, and at his feet the wings, as stated in a former Essay, intimating the necessity of escaping the inundation by a speedy flight. His gesture and the stick in his hand was supposed to indicate the mark of a leader and ambassador; hence the title of guide, of inspector of the roads, of messenger of good news, and the like that were given to Mercury, and of which a collection is to be found in Gerald's "History of the Gods."

In the East any person preferred to honors bore a sceptre, rod, or staff of honor, and sometimes a plate of gold on the forehead called *Cadosh*, signifying a sacred person, to inform the people that he who bore this mark was a public man who might go hither and thither freely, and whose person was inviolate. Such is the origin of the name given to Mercury's wand. Thus they made the guide of travellers the interpreter, the deputy of the gods, of a figure whose office they confusedly knew was to warn the people of some kind of danger. Being wholly ignorant of the relation between this long measure and the *Nile*, it was everywhere converted into an ambassador's staff. Instead of the measure of the *Nile*, they very often, as previously stated, put into his hands a key, and gave him two faces, one young, the other old, encompassing the whole with a serpent having his tail in his mouth. The

serpent, symbol of life, or of time, here signifies the year that makes a perpetual circle, and the revolution of the stars coming again to the point of the heavens from which they began their course. The solar year. We say solar, or natural, because it happened that the beginning of the sacred year went through every one of the seasons. This undoubtedly was the "Janus" of Rome, who had the same attributes with the name of door-keeper. His ordinary companion, good King Picus, with his hawk's head, has so much Egyptian about him that we cannot doubt but that Egypt, not Latium, was the country of both. Mercury, who opened and shut the door, became the leader of the dead. He conducted the souls with a high hand; opened the melancholy abodes to them, shut these again without remorse, and took away the key not permitting anyone to escape. As to the genealogy of Mercury it confirms all we have said. He was the son of the fair Maia, and grandson of Atlas. Maia is the Pleiades, or the cluster of stars previously referred to, known even by the vulgar, and placed on the back of the bull. The Eastern nations called these stars Meah, which signifies "the hundred; the multitude." These so very remarkable stars being most fit to regulate the study of the heavens; and being the first that had struck the eye before the rising of the Dog-star, of which they became forerunners, they, together with the Hyades, were the first in the knowledge of which the Egyptian priests took care to instruct their young pupils in the sphere of Atlas.

This symbol having become a god, all his instructions were embellished with histories, as well as he. The stars that served as a rule to know others by became beloved daughters of Doctor Atlas. Maia disengaged herself at that time from the rays of the sun in Gemini, that is—

in the month of May, to which she seems to have given her name.

We must reserve for a future Essay a description of the other gods and goddesses, &c., known to history. Suffice it to say that "Hermes" is generally referred to in old manuscripts as one of the founders of Masonry. Should it ever be *proved*, as some of the Craft suspect, that modern Masonry chiefly derives its origin from that of the ancient Egyptian mysteries, Hermes would occupy no inconsiderable position. At any rate, Hermes is at present regarded by many learned and eminent Masons as an individual, and a Grand Lodge manuscript (dated 1632) specially states that—"The great Hermarines (Hermes), that was Cuby's sonne, the which Cubye was Semme's sonne, that was Noe's sonne. This same Hermarines was afterwards called the 'Father of Wisdome;' he found one of the two pillars, and found the science written thereon, and he taught it to other men. His era is placed in the year of the world B.C. 2670, and he has since been considered as the patron of all secret physical science." The Hermetic Brothers of Egypt appeared to be men of vast erudition, and their knowledge of languages not to be doubted. They never remained long in one country, but passed away without creating notice or desiring undue respect to be paid to them.

We will close this sketch with a brief description of Dadalus, who appears, if tradition can be relied on, to have been the great-great-grandfather of all Freemasons. The tradition is as follows:—It was customary in Egypt to say, when Anubis was represented with large hawk's wings, that the water would be of sufficient height, and there would be a certainty of a plentiful harvest. On

this occasion Anubis was called Dadalus, which signifies a sufficient height, or a sufficient depth.

All the ancients agree that Dadalus was an ingenious architect, and ascribe to him the invention of the *compasses* and the *square*. They further add that to him mankind is indebted for statuary, and even characterise the nature of the progress which this noble art made under him, by circumstances which render the thing very *creditable*. Before Dadalus, and to his very time, statues had their eyes shut and their hands close to their sides; but Dadalus taught men how to give them eyes, to separate their legs, and clear their hands from their body, which procured him general admiration. But by misfortune both the history and the statues with their feet united became the proof of the origin we here assign to Dadalus. The *compasses* and *square*, of which tradition makes him the inventor, are no other than the *compasses* and *square* that are put into the hands of Anubis or Horus to warn the husbandmen to be in readiness to measure their land, to take angles in order to distinguish them from the lands of others. Thus he was made the inventor of the symbolical instruments they saw in his hands.

The statues, whose hands and feet are frequently swathed, are no other than those of Osiris, Isis, and Horus, such as they were presented to the people at the time of the inundation. There was nothing then to be done, and the inaction was universal. The entire cessation of the rural works could not be better intimated than by a Horus, swathed, or deprived of the use of his feet by the inundation, and using only his arms to point out the measure of the water, a vane to show the wind's course; another instrument to take angles, and a horn to proclaim the general surveying.

ESSAY VI.

THE Egyptian mysteries were a mysterious theology which they took great care not to divulge. Those initiated therein engaged themselves by oath never to communicate to the people any part of what had been revealed to them. Let us then see what these mysteries, so highly regarded, were, and if possible (with a Masonic key) penetrate into these secrets, in spite of the *veil and barriers* intended to make them inaccessible.

Among the ancient Egyptian figures were some which could not be well mistaken for celestial gods, and of which it was difficult to lose the meaning, having at first been of ~~infinite~~ use to the people. Such were—for instance—the serpent, the canopus, and the hawk. But the people having once forgotten the sense of the sacred writing and taken human figures for celestial powers, never gave over inventing histories, and the priests who preserved this writing, adapted it to their histories, which render it worthy of contempt, and altogether different from the ancient, as to its meaning. The priests, at first retained a part of the primitive explications,—whence comes the mixture of *great* and *little* in Egyptian theology. In them more than anywhere, remained the ancient footsteps of *truths* which constituted the principal groundwork of the religion of the ~~patriarchs~~. But it would have been dangerous for the Egyptian Priests to attempt to undeceive the people, and divert them from the pleasing thought that Osiris and Isis were real personages, and

① "infinite" is usually misused,
and eminently so here! So
with "patriarchs"!

great
①
↓

ancients
①
↓

were besides of their country, and the protectors of Egypt. This chimera and all the others in appearance, were authorised by the agreement of the monuments with the common phrase. The actions of Osiris and Isis were incessantly mentioned, and the people believed what they saw and heard; the perpetual recital of as many historical facts as there were figures and ceremonies exhibited, completed the errors, and rendered them invincible. It is natural to suppose that the priests themselves, like the rest, yielded to the persuasion of being under the patronage of their ancestors, transported into the stars, and now the moderators of the sun, moon, and of all nature. The people, in their fanatical enthusiasm, would have torn in pieces any who would dare to deny the history of Osiris and Isis. Truth was then altered and obscured by the very priests. They first accustomed themselves to these notions because it was dangerous not to comply with them, and afterwards became themselves the most zealous defenders of them. The whole came on by degrees. They first complied with the common language, because they could not stem the torrent, but they studied in private what they could collect of the interpretation of the ancient writing. Thus, they at once admitted both the popular stories, and the explications that demolished them; they only took care to require profound *secrecy* from those whom they would *instruct* in a more solid manner. This instruction assumed a mysterious and important air, without altering anything in which the people believed. Thus they avoided exciting the popular fury. *It was a crying injustice in those priests to detain truth captive and appropriate it exclusively to themselves.* So criminal a disposition could not but occasion a still greater impairing of truth, and really, everything degenerated more and more every day.

The probation of the disciples, and the oath of inviolable secrecy being very remarkable practices, were perpetuated with great exactness. The ceremonial easily supports itself in all religions, and is often embellished rather than diminished, because it is of no importance to the passions, which it never disturbs, and sometimes really indulges. It was not with *truth* and *instruction* as with the ceremonial. They were disfigured from age to age, sometimes through the ignorance of the priests, sometimes by their avarice, but principally by their fondness for systematic reveries, with which the most subtle among them tried to explain the symbolical writing, and of which they were not fonder than of a few plain and over simple truths which their predecessors were content to teach them.

Therefore danger and fear first gave birth to the secrecy of the Egyptian instructions, and converted the practices of the ancient ceremonial of public religion into so many mysteries, to the knowledge of which none could be admitted but those who had given proofs of profound respect for the objects of religion, of a perfection which common men could not attain. Those who were initiated thought themselves of a class superior to the rest of men, and their condition appeared worthy of envy. The priests, being sure of the discretion of their disciples, might very well acknowledge to them the grossness of the meaning which the people annexed to these symbols. But their shameful connivance suffered error to gain so much ground, that the piety of the initiated themselves sank into a mere ceremonial, and the small remains of truth which subsisted amongst so many fabulous stories, remained there, stifled as it were and without any useful effect. The priests themselves, outdid the popular superstitions, and from custom and interested views, preserved

the preparatory ceremonies and the religion of silence, and gave the people a high notion of the ministers and their learning.

We have given the literal translation of most of the terms used in these mysteries. Neither the Greeks nor Romans understood the meaning of them, because they were Phœnician. The Ceres of Sicily and Eleusis is no other than the Egyptian Isis brought into those places (as before stated) by the Phœnician merchants. The principal parts of the feasts instituted in honor of Ceres (Isis) may be reduced to three, viz.:—The *Preparations*, the *Processions*, and the *Autopsia*, or the sight of truth. The *Preparations* had for their object the frugality, chastity, and innocence necessary to the worshippers; the *Processions* consisted in the carriage of the *Sacred Baskets*, wherein they enclosed a child and a golden serpent, a van, grain, cakes, and all the other symbols of which we have made the enumeration in previous Essays, and with which our readers are acquainted. In a word, what was carried in the feasts of Ceres is the same as that carried in the feasts of Isis. Let us, therefore, pass on to the explication of the *Autopsia*, or manifestation of truth, which was, in a manner, the last act of this representation, and was the whole purport of the mysteries.

After a horrid darkness, lightnings, thunder-claps, and imitation of what is most shocking in nature, the serenity which at last succeeded discovered four personages magnificently dressed, and whose habits were all mysterious. The *first* and most brilliant of these, the Expounder of Sacred Things, was attired to represent “the Being that governs the Universe;” the *second* was

the “flambeau bearer,” and had relation to the sun; the *third* called “the Adorer,” who kept near an altar, represented the moon; the *fourth* was called the *Messenger of the Gods*, or Mercury, which corresponds to the Egyptian Anubis with his dog’s head and measure of the Nile, accompanied by two serpents, and is nothing but the wholesome advice which the Dog-star wisely gives to men to make off at the increase of the waters, and thereby secure their subsistence. Nothing could be better contrived than these magnificent ceremonies, whereby the Egyptians incessantly recalled to the minds of the assistants the belief of the first men concerning the judgment of God, and the hopes which are to quiet the minds of the just at the approach of death. The horrors exhibited at the commencement of the ceremony were intended to represent the condition of the wicked in another life, and the closing scene portrayed the abode of the blessed; the miseries of Tartarus and the happiness of the Elysium were contrasted, and being pronounced by holy priests, in whom the vulgar in barbarous ages placed implicit confidence, to be a true picture of what actually takes place in a future state of existence, must have produced a most powerful effect. The foregoing description has been very much curtailed, as it is intended to give a full account of the ancient mysteries in another series of Essays, when the subject will be treated of more at large, and in some respects with a better understanding.

The Auguries.—Most of our readers who are ever so little conversant with ancient history may remember to have seen that the Romans, Sabines, Greeks, and many other nations were very careful to never attempt any important undertaking without previously consulting the *Birds*, and drawing favorable or ill consequences, some-

times from the number and kind of birds that traversed the air, and at others from the quarter whence they began their flight and the different course they took. We may likewise recollect that in order not to be obliged to wait long for a bird—which chance may not immediately offer—the priests of the false “Deities” introduced the custom of the *Sacred Chickens*, brought into the middle of the assembly of the people in a cage for the magistrates gravely to observe their ways and motion. They had reduced into an art and referred to constant and settled rules all the consequences to be drawn with regard to futurity from the several methods in which these whimsical birds let fall or swallowed the food offered them. A splendid picture of this description may any day be seen in our own Art Gallery.

Have not the priests of Paganism, either from interested views or infatuation for these chimerical rules, a thousand times spoiled or stopped the most important and best concerted undertakings, out of regard to a fowl that had refused its meat? Augustus Cæsar, and many others of understanding have, without any fatal consequences despised the chickens and divination. But when the generals in the times of the Roman Republic had miscarried in any enterprise, the priests and people cast the whole blame of it on the heedlessness with which the *Sacred Chickens* had been consulted, and more commonly still, on the Generals’ having preferred their own forecast to that of these *fowls*. Anciently, or at the time of the institution of the Symbols, men, before sowing or planting used to say:—*Let us first consult the birds*: nor was there anything better understood. People were satisfied when they had observed this custom with care. These birds signified the winds, the observation and course of which

determined the propriety of rural works. But men, in course of time, very earnestly invoked the *birds* themselves.

The *Cock* commonly placed by the side of Horus and Anubis (or Mercury) plainly signified what was to be done in the morning, as the *Owl* marked out the assemblies that were to be held in the evening. *Cocks* were then considered so many new monitors, foretelling futurity, and the *Owl* acquired in this matter a talent which many persons earnestly contend she is still possessed of. When this bird (which is an enemy to light), in passing the window of a sick person—where she perceives it—happens to shriek, you can never convince them that this shrieking was not a foreboding of his end.

Now for the Sibyls. It was either from a sensible abuse in astronomy, or the custom of consulting certain stars, that the oracles of the Sibyls were introduced. Harvest has always been the great object of the desires and attentions of nations. In order, therefore, to regulate the manuring of the lands, ploughing, sowing, and other operations of concern to the bulk of society, men had their eyes fixed on the *Virgin* that bears the *ear of corn*, and which is the mark of the time of harvest. They observed how far the sun was remote from it, and on this account generally used to consult and have recourse to the *Virgin*, a language as reasonable as the practice expressed by it. They at first gave this constellation the name *Shibyl* (the reddening ear of corn) because it is exactly the circumstance for which men wait to begin their harvest, and because their crop ripens when the sun draws near this collection of stars. They afterwards called it *Sibyl* which signifies *red*. This gave birth to the *Egyptian Sibyl*.

There was certainly an advantage in consulting her, and her answers were very just to regulate husbandry so long as she was taken for what she was—that is, for a cluster of stars under which the sun placed himself at the time which brought on harvest, and reddened the ears of corn. And because the Egyptian harvest did not fall under that sign, but under that of the Ram or the Bull, it is, that Egypt flocked to the oracles of Ammon or Apis, and had so particular an affection for Isis with the horns of a heifer,—the proclamation of their harvest—whereas all the East consulted the Sibyl in order to be assured of a plentiful crop. This language became the matter of fables. Our maid, changed from a sign to a prophetess, had no doubt the most perfect knowledge of futurity, since people came from all parts to ask her questions. The excessive wickedness of mankind, at last obliged her to quit their abodes, to go and in the heavens take possession of the place due to her. Many countries assumed to themselves the honor of having given birth to this Sibyl, nor would it be hard to find seven instead of one. All the current predictions, among which some strokes of the prophecies addressed to the Hebrews are found in time passed for the answers of these Sibyls. It may be mentioned here that the idolatrous nation of Syria, also consulted Teraphim. Teraph in Syriac, means consulting the oracle; it is said that the makers of Teraphim, slaughtered a man, who was a first-born, cut off his head, salted it, and cured it with spices and oil. After this they wrote the name of an impure spirit, and sentences of Divine purport on a golden plate, which they placed under the tongue of the head, it was then fastened to the wall, and lighted lamps were placed before it, and they knelt down in front of it in adoration, upon which the tongue began to utter divinations. There are other

descriptions of the Teraphim, but this appears to be the true one.

We shall now briefly treat of *Conjuration*, and in doing so enquire into an art of more importance than the foregoing.

This is *Necromancy*, the art of calling up the spirits of the dead, and making them speak. Our readers will here be pleased to find the key of the occult languages, and to be made acquainted with the manner in which magicians went about asking questions of hell, and conversing with disembodied spirits and even with devils. A respect for the human body, which was believed to be destined for a better state to come, and one day to rise from the dust, induced the first nations to inter the dead in a decent manner, as explained in a former Essay, and always to join to this melancholy ceremony, wishes and prayers, which were expressions or a profession of their expectations.

Funeral assemblies were the most frequent, because men died every day, and these meetings were repeated on every anniversary. They were not only the most common, but also most regular. Everything was simple in the ancient feasts. Men met on some high or remarkable place and made there a small pit wherein to consume the entrails of their victims by fire. They caused the blood to flow into this pit, and part of the flesh was presented to the *Ministers of the Sacrifice*. They boiled the rest of the offering immolated, and ate it sitting near the fire. All nations, when they sacrificed either to the gods they had framed to themselves or to the dead whose memory was dear to them, thought that they had entered into an alliance and conversed and familiarly ate with them.

This familiarity engrossed their minds most particularly in the funeral assemblies in which they were as yet full of the memory of the persons whom they had tenderly loved, and who they thought took always prominent part in the concerns of their family and country. Who then could doubt that it was in order familiarly to converse with their ancient friends that men sat down round a pit, into which was then thrown oil, flour, and the blood of the victim they had killed to their honor? How could it be doubted that this pit, so different from the altars set up and pointing heavenward, was a suitable oblation and peculiarly belonged to the dead? The dead evidently took pleasure in these repasts, and especially in what was poured into the pit for them. Doubtless they consumed the honey and liquors which disappeared from thence, and if their friends were content to offer them liquors only, doubtless, it was because their condition then would not admit of gross foods. At that period men were so credulous as to believe that the phantoms came to drink and voluptuously to relish these liquors, whilst their relatives feasted on the rest of the sacrifice around the pit. After the repast in common between the dead and the living came the interrogation or particular calling up of the soul for which the sacrifice was appointed and who was to explain her mind. (The reader will observe by this that modern spiritualists are not original or singular in their ideas). Everybody is sensible that inconvenience attended the ceremony, it being apprehended that the dead might crowd about the ditch to procure a share of this effusion which they were so greedy of, and leave nothing for the dear soul for whom the feast was designed. This was provided against; the relations made two ditches. Into one they threw wine, honey, water, and flour, to amuse the generality of the dead; in the other they poured the

blood of the victim then to be eaten in common by the family. They sat upon the brink of the latter, and with their swords near them they kept off by the sight of these instruments the crowd of dead who had no concern in their affairs. They, on the contrary, invited and called up by his name the deceased whom they had a mind to cheer and consult. They desired him to draw near. The dead seeing there was no security there for them flocked round the ditch, the access to which was free, and politely abandoned the other to the privileged soul who had a right to the offering, and who knew the bottom of the affairs about which she was to be consulted. The questions made by the living were distinct and easy to be understood. The answers, however, on the contrary, were neither so quick nor so easily unravelled. The priests who had been *taught* in their *labyrinth* how to *understand the voice of the gods*, the answers of the *planets*, the language of birds, serpents, and the mutest instruments, pretended to understand the dead, and became their interpreters. They reduced it to an art, whose most necessary point, and which best suited the condition of the dead was *silence* and *darkness*. They retired into the deepest caves; they fasted and lay upon the skins of sacrificed beasts. On awaking, or after a watch which was fitter to turn their brains than to reveal hidden things, they gave answers of the thought or dream which had most affected them, or opened certain books appointed for that purpose, and the first words visible at the opening of them were precisely those of the prophecy expected. In short, the priest, and often the person himself who came to consult, took care in going from the cave to listen with attention to the very *first words* he could possibly hear from what part soever, and they were to him in lieu of an answer. These words for certain had

no relation or connection with the business in hand, but were turned so many ways, and the sense of them so violently wrested that they must needs have given way some small matter. Commonly enough they had in appearance some relation to it. Sometimes instead of the foregoing methods they had recourse to what was called *sortes*, viz. :—A number of tickets on which words were written at random, or verses already current or newly coined. These tickets being thrown into an urn were stirred well together, and the first ticket drawn gravely given to the distressed family as a means to make them easy. Methods of divination were multiplied without end, and the whole religion was almost converted into so many methods of knowing futurity.

It is evident that the practices mentioned, were well fitted to everywhere spread this extravagant persuasion, which is still accredited by the people, that we may converse with the dead, and that they often come to give us advice. Because all nations flocked to *high places*, there to shed the blood of their victims into a *trench*, and to converse with the dead, it is, that scripture so often and in so express a manner forbids the Israelites to assemble upon *high places*, or (which was frequently the same thing) to hold their assembly near the blood, or to eat sitting round any pit sprinkled with the blood of victims. “Ye shall not go and eat upon the mountains.”

We will conclude this Essay with a few remarks on the Literature and Sciences of the ancient nations.

In Egypt the use of the hieroglyph was not entirely superseded by the invention of an alphabet. For many purposes connected with religion and even with the more

solemn occupations of civil life, the emblematical style of composition continued to enjoy a preference, on a principle similar to that which disposes the Jew to perform his worship in Hebrew, and the Romans in Latin. There appears also to have been a mixed language used by the priests partaking at once of hieroglyphics, and of alphabetical characters, which in allusion to the class of men by whom it was employed was denominated hieratic. Hence in process of time the Egyptians found themselves in possession of three modes of communication,—the Hieroglyphic, properly so called; the Hieratic; and the Demotic, or common. This distinction is clearly recognised. Those educated among the Egyptians, learn first of all the method of writing styled the Epistolographic; secondly the Hieratic, which the sacred scribes employ, and lastly the most mysterious description, the Hieroglyphic, of which there are two kinds, the one denoting objects in a direct manner by means of the initial sounds of words; the other is symbolical. Of the symbolical signs, one class represents objects by exhibiting a likeness or picture; another by a metaphorical or less complete resemblance, and a third, by means of certain allegorical enigmas. Thus, to give an example of the three methods in the symbolical division, when they wish to represent an object by the *first*, they fix on a distant resemblance, such as a circle when they want to indicate the sun, and a crescent when their purpose is to denote the moon. The *second* or metaphorical allows considerable freedom in selecting the emblem, and may be such as only suggests the object by analogous qualities. For instance, when they record the praises of kings in their theological fables they exhibit them in connection with figurative allusions which shadow forth their good actions and benign dispositions. In this case the representation is not direct,

but metaphorical. Of the *third* method of symbolical writing the following will serve as an example. They assimilate the oblique course of the planets to the body of a serpent, but that of the sun to the figure of a beetle or scarabeus.

In reference to the knowledge actually acquired of the literature of ancient Egypt, by means of the late discovery in hieroglyphics, we are not entitled to speak in boastful or very confident language. The wasting hand of Time, which has shown its effects even on the Pyramids, has entirely destroyed the more perishable materials to which the sages of Thebes and the magicians of Memphis may have committed the science of their several generations. We know too that the bigotry of ignorance and superstition accomplished in many cases what the flood of years had permitted to escape, for which reason we must not estimate the extent of acquirement among the wise men of Egypt by the scanty remains of their labors casually rescued from accident and violence. From Diodorus we receive the information that in the tomb of one king were deposited twenty thousand volumes—a number which is reduced by Manetho to three thousand five hundred and twenty-five, all of which from their antiquity or the importance of their subjects were ascribed to Toth or Hermes, who, it is well-known, united in his character the intelligence of a divinity with the patriotism of a faithful minister. In Egypt every individual cultivates a different branch of philosophy; an arrangement which applies chiefly to their holy ceremonies. In such processions the *Singer* occupies the first place, carrying in his hands an instrument of music. He is said to be obliged to learn two books of Hermes, one of which contains hymns addressed to the gods, and the other the rules by which

a prince ought to govern. Next comes a person holding a clock and branch of a palm tree—the symbols of astrology. He must be completely master of the four books of Hermes which treat of science. One of these explains the order of the fixed stars; the second the motions and phases of the sun and moon; the other two books determine the times of their periodical rising. Then follows another, the *Sacred Scribe*, with two feathers on his head and a book and ruler in his hand, to which are added the instruments of writing, ink, and a reed. He must understand hieroglyphics and those branches of science which belong to cosmography, geography, and astronomy, especially the laws of the sun, moon, and five planets (probably the origin of Pentalpa). He must be acquainted with the territorial distribution of Egypt, the course of the Nile, the furniture of the temples, and all consecrated places. After these comes an officer who bears a square rule as the emblem of justice and the cup of libations. His charge includes all belonging to the education of youth, as well as to sacrifices, first-fruits, hymns, prayers, religious pomps, festivals, and commemorations, the rules for which are contained in ten books. This functionary is succeeded by one called “The Prophet,” who displays in his bosom a jar or vessel meant for carrying water, a symbol thought to represent the Deity, but which more probably had reference to the sacred character of the Nile. He is attended by persons bearing *bread* cut into slices. The duties of the prophet made it necessary that he should be perfectly acquainted with the ten books called “Sacerdotal,” which treat of the *laws of the gods*, and of the whole discipline of the priesthood. He also presides over the distribution of the sacred revenues, that is—the income arising from the performance of pious rites and dedicated to the support

of religious institutions. Hence, there are forty-two books of Hermes, the knowledge of which is absolutely necessary; of these, thirty-six, containing the whole philosophy of the Egyptians, are carefully studied by the persons we have mentioned, and the remaining six are learned by the inferior priests, as they belong to anatomy, to nosology, instruments of surgery, pharmacy, the diseases of the eye, and the maladies of females. This distribution of the sciences does not enable us to determine either the principles on which they are founded or the extent to which they were pursued. We possess a better criterion, however, in the perfection to which the the people of Egypt at a very remote period had carried some of those arts which have a close dependence upon scientific deductions. The prodigies of Thebes could not have been accomplished by a nation ignorant of mathematics and chemistry; nor could the pyramids, the obelisks, and temples, which still meet the traveller's eye in almost every spot between Elephantine and the mouths of the Nile, have been raised without the aid of such mechanical powers as have their origin in the calculations of philosophy.

We see here—a matter of great interest to Freemasons—the original of the square rule and pentagon as Masonic symbols. This rule was an emblem of justice, because it was the means by which the boundaries of lands that had been obscured or carried away by the inundation were ascertained. We also clearly recognise the Scribe of the Royal Arch Chapter with a book and ruler in his hand. The said book containing the laws of Egypt relating to sacrifices and other matters pertaining to religion. Hermes, the god who presides over language, was very properly considered as common to all priests.

Hence our ancestors dedicated the inventions of their wisdom to this deity, inscribing all their own writings with the name of Hermes. In short, it appears that these books are the source of all that has been transmitted to us by the Greeks and Latins in every science, even in alchemy, necromancy, &c. What is most to be regretted in their loss is that part relating to the principles of medicine and diet, in which the Egyptians seem to have made considerable progress and useful observations.





ESSAY VII.

DISSERTATION.—PART FIRST.

IN commencing this important Dissertation, it will be necessary to remind our readers of this great truth, viz. :—That there never was in any age of the world from the most early accounts of time to the present day, any civil-policed nation or people who had a religion of which the chief foundation and support was not the doctrine of a future state of rewards and punishments; *the Jewish people only excepted.* All the religions of the world, whether true or false, turn upon this grand pivot, that there is an *invisible judge*, who punishes and rewards after this life the actions of men, both in thought and deed. It was the *utility* of that doctrine which set the magistrate upon inventing a religion for the State. The Egyptians were the first people in the world, so far as known, who established religion; they were the people too who deified their kings, law-givers, and public benefactors. This was the practice invented by them, who in process of time taught the world their mystery. The attributes and qualities assigned to their gods always corresponded with the nature and genius of the Government. If this was gentle, benign, compassionate, and forgiving, goodness and mercy were most essential to the deity; but if severe, inexorable, captious, or unequal, the very gods were tyrants, and expiations, atonements, lustrations, and bloody sacrifices, composed the system of religious worship.

The first step the legislator took was to pretend a mission and revelation from some god, by whose command and direction he had framed the policy he would establish. In a word, there is hardly an old law-giver on record, who did not pretend to revelation and the Divine assistance. The universal custom of the Ancient World was to make gods and prophets of their first kings and law-givers. Hence it is that Plato declares legislation to have come from God and not from man.

And here it is worth noting that anciently, tyrants, as well as law-givers gave all encouragement to religion, and endeavored to establish their irregular wills; not by convincing men that there was no justice or injustice in actions, but by persuading them that the privilege of *Divine Right* exempted the tyrant from all moral obligation.

An express law of Draco's concerning the mode of divine worship, says:—"Let the gods and our own country heroes be publicly worshipped according to the established rites; *when privately*, according to every man's abilities, with terms of greatest regard and reverence, with the first fruits of their labors, and with annual libations." Another—"Every inhabitant, whether of town or country, should first of all be firmly persuaded of the being and existence of the *Gods*, which belief he will readily be induced to entertain when he contemplates the heavens, regards the world, and observes the disposition, order, and harmony of the universe, which can neither be the work of blind chance or of man. These gods are to be worshipped as the source of all the real good we enjoy. Everyone therefore, should so purify and possess his mind, as to have it clear of all kinds of evil, being persuaded that God is not honored by a wicked person, nor acceptably served, like

miserable man with sumptuous ceremonies, or taken with costly sacrifices, but with virtue only, and a constant disposition to good and just actions." Again—"Let our citizens then be first of all firmly persuaded of the government and dominion of the gods, that they are the lords and masters of the world, that all things are disposed by their power, discretion, and providence, and that the whole race of mankind is in the highest manner indebted to them, that they are intimately acquainted with everyone's state and condition; that they know what he does, what he thinks, with what disposition of mind and with what degree of piety he performs the acts and offices of religion, and that accordingly they make a distinction between *good* and *evil*."

Then follow the laws themselves, viz.:—"Let those who approach the 'gods' be pure and undefiled; let their offerings be seasoned with piety, and all ostentation of pomp omitted: the god himself will be his own avenger on transgressors. Let the gods and those who were ever reckoned in the number of celestials be worshipped, and those likewise whom their merits have raised to heaven, such as—Hercules, Bacchus, Æsculapius, Castor, Pollux, and Romulus; and let temples be erected in honor of those qualities by whose aid mortals arrive thither, such as—Reason, Virtue, Piety, and Good Faith."

The next step the legislator took was to support and affirm the general doctrine of a Providence which he had delivered in his laws, by a very circumstantial and popular method of inculcating the belief of a future state of rewards and punishments.

This was the institution of the Mysteries, the most

sacred part of Pagan religion, and artfully framed to strike deeply and forcibly into the minds and imaginations of the people.

We propose, therefore, to give a full and distinct account of this whole matter, and rather, because it is a thing little known or attended to. To avoid ambiguity, it will be advisable to explain the term *Mysteries*. Each of the Pagan gods had, as previously shown, beside the public and open, a *secret* worship paid unto them, to which none were admitted but those who had been selected by preparatory ceremonies called *Initiation*. This secret worship was termed the *Mysteries*. The first and *original* *mysteries* of which there is any sure account were, as previously stated in these Essays, those of Isis and Osiris in Egypt, whence they were derived by the Greeks under the presidency of various gods as the institutor thought best for his purpose. Zoroaster brought them into Persia; Cadmus, into Greece at large; Orpheus, into Thrace; Melampus, into Argis; Trephonius, into Beotia; Minos, into Crete; Cinyras, into Cypress; and Erechtheus, into Athens. As in Egypt they were to Isis and Osiris, so in Asia they were to Mithras; in Samothrace, to the Mother of the Gods; in Beotia, to Bacchus; in Cypress, to Venus; in Crete, to Jupiter; in Athens, to Ceres and Proserpine; in Amphissa, to Castor and Pollux; in Lemnos, to Vulcan; and so to others in other places, the number of which was incredible. But their end, as well as nature, was the same in all—to teach the doctrine of a future state.

But of all the *Mysteries*, those which bore that name by way of eminence, those celebrated at Athens in honor of Ceres (or Isis) were by far the most renowned, and in

course of time eclipsed, and, as it were, swallowed up the rest. Their neighbors round about easily practised these *Mysteries* to the neglect of their own. In a little time all Greece and Asia Minor were initiated into them, and they finally spread over the whole Roman Empire, and even beyond its limits. We shall be forced to take our ideas of the *Mysteries generally* chiefly from what was practised in Athens; nor need we fear to be mistaken, the end of all being the same, all having their common original from Egypt. This will be understood by showing what they communicated promiscuously to all. To support the doctrine of a Providence, which they taught governed the world, they enforced the belief of a future state of rewards and punishments by all kinds of methods. But as this did not quite clear up the intricate ways of Providence they added the doctrine of a metempsychosis, or the belief of a *prior* state. This was an ingenious solution invented by the Egyptian law-givers to remove all doubts concerning the moral attributes of God, and so consequently to establish the belief of his Providence from a future state. For the law-giver knew how precarious that belief was, while the moral attributes of God remained doubtful and uncertain.

In cultivating the doctrine of a future state it was taught that the initiated would be happier there than all other mortals; that while the souls of the profane on leaving the body stuck fast in mire and filth and remained in darkness, the souls of the initiated winged their flight directly to the happy islands and the habitations of the gods. This promise was as necessary for the support of the *Mysteries* as the *Mysteries* were for the support of the doctrine. But now, lest it should be mistaken that initiation alone, or any other means than a virtuous life,

entitled men to this future happiness, the Mysteries openly proclaimed it as their chief business to restore the soul to its original purity. Thus the Mysteries became useful; thus we seize the true spirit of them when we begin to apprehend that everything therein was instituted by the Ancients for instruction and amendment of life.

Some of the moral precepts enforced in the Mysteries were to honor their parents, to offer up fruits to the gods, and to forbear cruelty to animals. In pursuance of this scheme it was required of the aspirant to the Mysteries that he should be of a clear and unblemished character, and free from even the suspicion of any notorious crime. To come to the truth, he was severely interrogated by the priest impressing him with a sense of his obligation to conceal nothing. He was required to confess every wicked act he had committed during his whole life. (Why initiation into these Mysteries is called enquiring of the Oracles we shall hereafter show). Hence it was that when Nero, after the murder of his mother, took a journey into Greece and desired to be present at the celebration of the Mysteries of Ceres, the consciousness of his parricide deterred him from attempting it. On the same account the good Emperor Mark Antoninus, when he would purge himself to the world of the death of Cassius, chose to be initiated into the Mysteries of Ceres, it being notorious that none were admitted into them who labored under the just suspicion of any heinous immorality. This was originally a fundamental condition of initiation observed in common by all the Mysteries among all nations. It was supposed that initiation drew the souls of men from a material, sensual, and merely human life and joined them in communion with the gods. Nor was a less degree of purity required of the initiated for their

future conduct. They were obliged by solemn engagements to commence a new line of strictest purity and virtue, into which they were entered by a severe course of penance proper to purge the mind from its natural defilements.

The initiated, under this discipline and with these promises, were esteemed the only happy men. They used to triumph after this manner, and say—"On us, only, does the sun dispense his blessings. We, only, receive pleasure from his beams; we who are initiated and perform towards strangers and citizens all acts of piety and justice. Life only is to be had there; all other places are full of misery and evil; happy is the man who hath been initiated into the *greater* Mysteries and leads a life of piety and religion." It was even scandalous not to be initiated, and however virtuous the person otherwise appeared he became suspicious to the people. No wonder they were universally aspired to; and, indeed, they soon grew as comprehensive in the numbers they embraced as in the regions and countries to which they extended. Men, women, and children ran to be initiated and became resplendent with the *pure whiteness of linen garments*. The Pagans, we now see, seemed to think initiation as necessary as some Christians do baptism, and the custom of initiating children appears to have been general. They believed the initiated would obtain divine honors after death, and, therefore, all came to be initiated. Their fondness for it became so great that at such times as the public treasury was low the magistrate would have recourse to the Mysteries as a fund to supply the exigencies of the State. In Athens a law was passed that everyone should pay a certain sum for his initiation.

Everything in these rites was mysteriously conducted, and under the most solemn obligation to secrecy. This obligation to secrecy was represented in the Egyptian hieroglyphic by a grasshopper, which was supposed to have no mouth. How this secrecy could agree with an institution for the use of all the people we shall now endeavor to explain.

They were hidden and kept secret for two reasons:—
Firstly. Nothing excites curiosity like that which retires from our observation, and appears to forbid our search. On this opinion you will find all the learned agree; people will despise what is easy and intelligible, and therefore will always be provided with something wonderful and mysterious in religion, to hit their taste and stimulate their curiosity. Again, the ignorance of the mysteries preserved their veneration, for which reason they were intrusted to the cover of night. On these principles the ancient mysteries were framed. They were kept secret to excite curiosity; they were celebrated in the night to impress veneration and religious horror; they were performed with a variety of shows and representations (of which more hereafter), to fix and perpetuate those impressions, they were invented not to deter, but to invite the curiosity of the people. But *secondly.* They were kept secret from a necessity of teaching the initiated some things improper to be communicated to all; there were many truths which it was inconvenient for the *State* to be generally known, and many things though false, which *it was expedient the people should believe*; and that, therefore they shut up their mysteries in the silence of their sacred enclosures. To reconcile this apparent paradox, we are to observe that in the rites of Ceres (or Isis) there were two mysteries, the *Greater* and the *Lesser*. The end of the *lesser*

must be referred to what we said of the institutor's intention to invite the people into them, and of the *greater* to his intention of keeping some truths from their knowledge. Nor is this asserted without sufficient warrant; antiquity is very express for this distinction. We are told that the *lesser* mysteries were only a sort of preparatory purification for the *greater*, and might be easily communicated to all. Four years was the usual time of probation for those greater mysteries. The "secret" in the lesser mysteries was some hidden *rites and shows* to be kept from the open view of the public, only to invite their curiosity; and the "secret" in the *greater*, some *hidden doctrines* to be kept from the peoples' knowledge for the very contrary purpose, for the shows, common both to the greater and lesser mysteries, were only designed to engage their attention and raise their devotion.

It is well worth while to enquire more particularly into the *hidden doctrines* of the greater mysteries, for so religiously was the secret kept, that the thing seems yet still to lie involved in a certain amount of darkness. We shall therefore, proceed cautiously, and endeavor from the obscure hints dropped up and down in antiquity and our own Masonic experience, to lay open things hidden in deep obscurity.

After "lustrations," came the lesser mysteries, in which lay the foundations of the hidden doctrines, and preparations for that which was to come afterwards. But there was one insuperable obstacle to a life of purity and holiness, viz., the vicious examples of the gods. The licentious rites in the open worship of their gods, gave still greater encouragement to these conclusions. Now

the mysteries professed to exact nothing difficult of the initiate which they would not assist him to perform. It was necessary then, to remedy this evil, which they did by striking at the root of it, so that such of the initiated as were judged capable, were made acquainted with the whole delusion. The Mystagogue taught them that Jupiter, Mercury, Bacchus, Venus, Mars, and the whole rabble of licentious deities, were only dead mortals, subject in life to the same passions and infirmities with themselves; but, having been on other accounts benefactors to mankind, grateful posterity had deified them, and with their virtues, indiscreetly canonized their vices. The fabulous gods being thus routed, the Supreme Cause of all things naturally took their place. Him (God) they were truly taught to consider as the great Creator of the Universe, who pervaded all things by His virtue, and governed all by His providence. But here, it must be observed that the discovery of this Supreme Cause was made consistent with the notion of the previously mentioned local tutelar deities; beings superior to men, and inferior to God (*i.e.* demi-gods), and by Him set over the several parts of the creation. This opinion was universally held by antiquity, and never brought into question by any Theist. What the Aporetæ overthrew was the vulgar polytheism, the worship of dead men. From this time the initiated had the title of Eoptes, or *one who sees things as they are, and without disguise*; whereas before he was called Mystes, which has a contrary signification.

Besides the prevention of vice, the national gods had another important use, which was to excite men to heroic virtue, by showing them what honors the benefactors of nations had acquired by the free exercise of it. This, as

will be shown hereafter, was the principal reason why princes, statesmen, and leaders of colonies and armies, all aspired to be partakers of the *Greater Mysteries*. Thus, we see how what was taught and required in the *Lesser Mysteries* became the foundation of instruction in the greater; the obligation to a good life *there* made it necessary to remove the errors of vulgar polytheism *here*, and the doctrine of a providence taught previously in those, facilitated the reception of the sole cause of all things, when finally revealed in these. Such were the truths it was expedient for the people to know. That the secret in the greater mysteries is no precarious hypothesis raised merely on conjecture, we shall now endeavor to show. *First*, from the clear evidence of antiquity which expressly informs us of these two important particulars. That the errors of polytheism were detected, and the doctrine of the unity taught and explained in the mysteries. And it must here be observed that when the ancients speak of mysteries indefinitely, they generally mean the greater.

It has been shown that the Grecian and Asiatic mysteries originally came from Egypt. Now, of the Egyptian, Alexander of Macedon wrote to his mother Olympias, things as revealed unto him by one Leo, a chief priest of the Egyptian mysteries, whereby it appeared that not only such as Picus, Faunas, Æneas, Romulus, nay Hercules, Æsculapius, and Bacchus, the son of Semele, and Castor and Pullox, and all others of the same rank had been advanced from the condition of mortality into gods (*i.e.*, demi-gods), but that even those deities of a higher order, such as Jupiter, Juno, Saturn, Neptune, Vulcan, Vesta, and many others, were in truth only mortal men. But the priest being under great fear and

apprehension, whilst he was relating this, and conscious that he was betraying the secret of the mysteries, begged of Alexander (when he found that he intended to communicate it to his mother) that he would enjoin her to burn the letter as soon as she had read it. It was the dread of Alexander's power which extorted the secret from the priest. This illustrates a passage in Lucian's "Council of the Gods," when after Momas had ridiculed the monstrous deities of Egypt, Jupiter replies—"It is true that these are abominable things which you mention of the Egyptian worship, but then consider, Momus, that much of it is enigmatical, and so consequently a very unfit subject for the buffoonery of the profane and uninitiated." To which the other answers with much spirit,—“Yes, indeed we have great occasion for the mysteries to know that gods are gods, and monsters monsters!”

With regard to the doctrine of the Unity, the Egyptian priests taught it among their greater secrets. The Egyptians did not reveal their Mysteries indiscriminately to all, nor expose truths concerning their gods to the profane, but to those only who were to succeed to the administration of the State, and to such of the priests as were most approved for their education, learning, and quality.

But to come to the Grecian Mysteries. The secret doctrines were the last things the initiated were informed of. The soul having gained an able support, and being possessed of her desires (*i.e.*, mistress of herself), can keep silent before the uninitiated and profane. The doctrines delivered in Greece in the greater Mysteries were concerning the Universe. Here all instruction ends.

Things are seen as they are, and nature and the things of nature are given to be comprehended. *The first cause of all things is communicated to those who approach the Temple of Isis with prudence and sanctity.* By which is meant the necessary qualifications for initiation. Singularly enough, for the Hebrew people alone was reserved the honor of being initiated into the knowledge of God the Creator of all things, and of being instructed in the practice of true piety towards Him. This naturally leads us to the explanation of the oracles of Apollo.

The first is in these words:—“*The way to the knowledge of the Divine Nature is extremely rugged and of difficult ascent.* The entrance is secured by brazen gates, opening to the adventurer; and the roads to be passed through, impossible to be described. These to the vast benefit of mankind were first marked out by the Egyptians.” The second is as follows:—“True wisdom was the lot only of the Chaldeans and Hebrews, who worship the true Governor of the World—the *Self-existent Deity*—with pure and holy rites.” Certainly there can be no controversy, that as the religious belief of the Hebrews in one Supreme Being was esteemed very correct; the same belief by the Egyptians was equally estimable. We will simply observe that the *frights* and *terrors* to which the initiated were exposed gave birth to all those metaphorical terms of *difficulty* and *danger* so constantly employed by Greek writers whenever they speak of the communication of the true God. In a work entitled “The Hebrew Mysteries; or, The Oldest Religious Freemasonry,” it is affirmed that the whole Mosaic religion was an initiation into Mysteries, the principal forms and regulations of which were borrowed by Moses (during his sojourn in that country) from the secrets of the old Egyptians.

That high and *sublime knowledge*, which the Gentiles with difficulty attained, was habitually taught to the Hebrews at all times, so that their body politic seems, as it were, one great assembly constantly kept together for the celebration of sacred Mysteries.

The two great mysterious secrets of the Egyptians, it has been shown, were the existence of one Supreme Being, implying the error of Polytheism, and a future state of rewards and punishments for acts committed in this life. (This is likewise communicated to the modern Masons). The former of which only, it appears, was taught to the Hebrews. It is true it was formerly enjoined upon the Hebrews to observe certain rites and ceremonies which were then adapted to their peculiar circumstances. For instance, they were taught that a person became defiled by touching a human corpse, and their priests were absolutely prohibited from doing it. So at interments of the dead those who enter the cemetery wash their hands on retiring, bowls of water and napkins being provided for the purpose.

The idea of defilement by touching human dead bodies was also a Pagan doctrine, for the following reasons:—"It is not lawful to touch human dead bodies when the soul has left them, since a *vestige, image, or representation of Divine life* is extinguished in the body by death. But it is no longer *unholy* to touch other dead bodies, because they did not *participate* in the *Divine life*. To gods therefore, who are *pure from matter*, our not touching dead bodies is adapted; but to those gods who preside over animals, and are proximately connected with them, invocation through animals is properly made.

We have yet no profane records that can reach, by

many hundreds of years so high as the ancient state and constitution of the religion and priesthood of Egypt, in and before the days of Moses. But as the Mosaic constitution itself was accommodated to the natural temper and bias of a people *perfectly Egyptianized*, and we know nothing but the language, religion, laws, and customs of Egypt, and as this people could never be attracted from the religion and customs to which they had been naturalized, the history of Moses and the Prophets gives one almost as just and adequate a notion of the religion, priesthood, and worship of Egypt, as if their own history had been handed down to us. Though Moses attempted in his law to reform the religion of Egypt, with regard to their symbolical polytheism, or siderial worship by images, yet this could never be effected, for the mass of the people still continued in the symbolical worship of Egypt except when restrained from it by force and compulsion under some of their kings, and they immediately fell back again to the same sort of worship as soon as that restriction and legal persecution was relaxed or taken off.

Thus have we shown that the secret of the Greater Mysteries was the detection by the candidates of the vulgar polytheism and the discovery of the doctrine of the Unity.





ESSAY VIII.

DISSERTATION.—PART SECOND.

IT appears that a celebrated fragment of papyrus (probably Phœnician) that has been preserved, contains the genealogical account of the first ages, and of the history that was wont to be read to the initiated in the celebration of the Egyptian and Phœnician mysteries, the purpose of it being to inform us that their popular gods whose chronicle is *there* given according to their generations, were only dead men deified. And as this curious and authentic record—for such we shall find it was—not only serves to illustrate the subject in hand, viz.—The ancient mysteries—but will be useful to support what is said hereafter of the rise, progress, and order of the three several species of ancient idolatry, it may not be out of place to give a brief extract of it here.

The ancients, in this fragment state that—“ Of the first two mortals Protogonis and Aon (the latter of whom was the author of seeking and procuring food from the forest trees), were begotten Genos and Genea. These in time of great droughts stretched their hands upwards to the sun, whom they regarded as a god, the sole ruler of the heavens. From these, after two or three generations, came Upsouranies and his brother Ousous. One of them invented the art of building cottages of reeds and rushes; the other, the art of making garments of the skins of wild beasts. In their time violent tempests of wind and rain having rubbed the large branches of the forest trees

against one another, they took fire and burnt up the woods. Of the bare trunks of trees they first made vessels to pass the waters, they consecrated two pillars to *Fire and Wind*, and then offered bloody sacrifices to them as gods." And here let it be observed that this worship of the elements and heavenly bodies, is truly represented as the first species of idolatry.

"After many generations came Chryser, and he likewise invented many things useful to civil life, for which, after his decease, he was worshipped as a god. Then flourished Ouranus, and his sister Ge, who deified and offered sacrifices to their father Upsistos, when he had been torn in pieces by wild beasts. Afterwards Cronos consecrated Muth, his son, and was himself consecrated by his subjects." This is, as truly represented to be, the second species of idolatry—the worship of dead men.

"Ouranus was the inventor of a kind of animated stones, framed with great art (sculpture). And Taautus formed allegorical figures, characters, and images of the celestial gods and elements." In which is delivered the third species of idolatry—statue and brute worship. By the animated stones, is meant stones cut into human shape; brute, unformed stones, being before this invention consecrated and adored. So by Taautus, invention of allegorical figures is insinuated (which was truly the fact) the origin of brute worship from the use of hieroglyphics.

This is a very short and imperfect extract of the "fragment;" many particulars, to avoid tediousness are omitted, which would much support what we are upon, particularly a minute detail of the principal arts invented

for the use of civil life. We learn that this genealogical history came into the hand of a certain son of Thabion, the first priest on record among the Phœnicians, who after having corrupted it with allegories and intermixed physical and cosmical affections with historical,—that is, made one significative of the other, delivered it to the prophets and priests of the mysteries, who left it to their successors. So that now we have an express testimony for the fact here advanced, that this was the very history read to the Epoptai in the celebration of the greater mysteries.

We desire now to draw the attention of Craftsmen to a most singular coincidence. In the year 1723, the Rev. Jas. Anderson, D.D., published the first book on Freemasonry, with the sanction of the Grand Lodge of England. The commencement of his work bears a strong resemblance to the foregoing fragment. Instead, however, of permitting the first inhabitants of the world to gain knowledge gradually by experience, he makes them finished artizans from the beginning. This was necessary for his purpose, which was to show, if possible, the original establishment of the Freemasons' society. As his account throws much light upon the early history of man and the amazing progress of the arts and sciences in the primary stages of human existence, and is, moreover, greatly relied upon by many members of the Craft, it may be well here to give, as a curiosity, a short abstract of it.

"The Almighty Architect," says the Doctor, "having created all things according to *geometry*, last of all formed Adam, and *engraved on his heart* the same noble science, which Adam soon discovered by *surveying* his earthly

paradise, and fabricating an arbour as a shelter from heat, &c. When expelled from his lovely arbour he resided in the most convenient abodes in the land of Eden till his sons grew up, whom he taught *geometry* and the great use of it in *architecture*, without which the children of men must have lived like brutes in woods, dens, caves, &c., or at best in poor huts of mud, or arbours made from the branches of trees, &c. . . . Tubal Cain wrought in metals; Jubal elevated music; and Jabal extended his tents. Adam was succeeded in the *grand direction* of the *Craft* by Seth, Enoch, Kainan, Mahalaleel, and Jared, whose son Enoch was *expert* and *bright* both in the *science* and in the *art*, and *being a prophet* he foretold the destruction of the earth for sin, first by *water*, and afterwards by *fire*. Therefore, Enoch erected *two large pillars*, the one of *stone*, and the other of *brick*, whereon he engraved the abridgment of the arts and sciences, principally *geometry* and *Masonry*. At last, when the world's destruction drew nigh, God commanded Noah to build the great Ark, or *floating castle*, and his three sons assisted, like a *deputy* and two wardens. That edifice, though of wood only, was fabricated by *geometry* as *nicely* as any stone building—like true ship-building at this day—a curious and large piece of architecture, and finished when Noah entered into his six hundredth year, aboard which he and his three sons and their four wives passed; and having received the cargo of animals, by God's direction, they were saved in the Ark, while the rest perished in the Flood for their immorality and unbelief. And so from these *Masons*, or *four grand officers*, the whole present race of mankind are descended."

The Doctor then goes on to say:—"After the flood Noah and his three sons having preserved the knowledge

of the *arts and sciences* communicated them to their growing offspring. And it came to pass as they journeyed from the *East* towards the *West* they found a plain in the land of Shinar and dwelt there as Noachides, which was the first name of Masons according to some old traditions. When *Peleg* was born there to Heber, after the flood one hundred and one years, Father Noah partitioned the earth, ordering them to disperse and take possession; but from fear of the consequences of a separation they resolved to keep together. Nimrod, the son of Cush, the eldest son of Ham, was at the head of those that would not disperse; or if they must separate they resolved to transmit a memorial to all future ages, and so employed themselves under *Grand Master* Nimrod in the large and fertile vale of Shinar, along the banks of the Tygris, in building a stately Tower and City—the *largest work that ever the world saw*—and soon filled the vale with splendored edifices. But they *over-built* it, and knew not when to desist, till their vanity provoked their Maker to confound their grand design by confounding their speech. Hence the city was called Babel, confusion. Thus they were forced to disperse about fifty-three years after they began to build, or after the Flood one hundred and fifty-four years, when the general migration from Shinar took place. They went off at various times and travelled North, South, East, and West with their *mighty skill*, and found the good use of it in settling their colonies. But Nimrod went forth no farther than into the land of Assyria, and founded the first great empire at his capital, Nineveh, where he long reigned. Under him flourished many learned mathematicians, whose successors were long afterwards called Chaldees and Magians; and though many of them turned *image worshippers*, yet even that idolatry occasioned an improvement in the arts of

designing, for Ninus, King of Nineveh or Assyria, ordered his best artists to frame the statue of Baal that was worshipped in a gorgeous temple."

We have now given sufficient of the respected Doctor's history of antiquity for our readers to form an opinion as to its resemblance to the former fragment, many thousands of years old. Nimrod, Bel, Baal, and Belus are supposed by mythologists to be one and the same person.

Having finished the history, we now come to the hymn celebrating the unity of the Godhead, which was sung in the mysteries by the officiating priest, habited like the Creator (*i.e.*, his representative, but how he could be *habited like the Creator, who was never seen by mortal eyes*, it is difficult to imagine). The hymn begins thus:—"I will declare a *secret* to the initiated, but *let the doors be shut against the profane*. But thou, O Musus, the offspring of bright Selene, attend carefully to my song, for I shall deliver the truth without disguise. Suffer not therefore, thy former prejudices to debar thee of that happy life, which the knowledge of these sublime truths will procure unto thee, but carefully contemplate this divine oracle, and preserve it in purity of mind and heart. Go on, in the right way and see the sole Governor of the Universe. He is one, and of himself alone, and to that *One* all things owe their being. He operates through all, was never seen by mortal eyes, but does himself see everyone."

To understand the force of this, we are to know that the mystagogue explained the representations in the mysteries, where the supernal and infernal gods passed

in review. To each of these they sang a hymn; when all this was over the above hymn was sung, and after that the assembly was dismissed with these few words, "*watch and abstain from evil.*"

Thus the reader will see the end and use both of the *Greater* and the *Lesser* mysteries, and that, as well as what they hid, as what they divulged, all aimed at the benefit of the state. To this end they were to draw in as many as they could to their general participation, which they effected by spreading abroad the doctrine of a providence and future state, and how much happier the initiated would be, and what superior felicities they were entitled to in another life. It is on this account that antiquity is so full and express in this part. But then, and here comes the rub; they were to make those they got in as virtuous as they could, which they provided for by discovering to such as were capable of the secret, the whole Delusion of Polytheism. This being supposed to be the shaking of the foundations of the gods, it was done with all possible circumspection, and under the *most tremendous seal of secrecy*. For they taught, as before stated, that the gods themselves punished the revealers of the *secret*, and not them only, but the clandestine hearers of it also. Nor did they altogether trust to that either, for, more effectually to curb an ungovernable curiosity, the *State* decreed capital punishment against the betrayers of the mysteries, and inflicted them with merciless severity. In our opinion those who established the mysteries, whoever they were, were well skilled in human nature; for in these rites it was of old signified to the aspirant, that those who died without being initiated, stuck fast in mire and filth, whilst he who was purified and initiated, at his death would have his habitation

“with the gods;” indeed it was a proverbial speech in those days when any thought himself in the highest degree happy to say—“I seem as if I had been initiated in the higher mysteries.” But now, such is the fate of all mundane things, these mysteries, venerable as they were in their first institution, did, it must be owned, in course of time degenerate, and those very provisions made by the *State* to enable the mysteries to obtain the end of their establishment became the very means of defeating it. We can assign no surer cause for the horrid abuses and corruptions in the mysteries, besides time, which naturally and fatally depraves and vitiates all things, than the season in which they were represented and the profound silence in which they were buried. For night gave opportunity to wicked men to attempt evil actions, and secrecy, encouragement to repeat them, and the inviolable nature of that secrecy which encouraged abuses, kept them from the magistrates’ knowledge so long, till it was too late to reform them. In a word we *must* own that these mysteries, so powerful in their first institutions for the promotion of virtue and knowledge became in time horribly subservient to the gratification of *lust* and *revenge*. Another most powerful cause of their depravation doubtless, was their being sometimes under the patronage of those deities who were supposed to inspire and preside over *sensual passions*—such as Bacchus, Venus, and Cupid—for these had all their own mysteries, and it could hardly be wondered at that the initiated should be sometimes inclined to give reins to their vices, in which the patron god was supposed to delight. In this case the hidden doctrine came too late to put a stop to the disorder. However, it is remarkable that the doctrine of a future state continued to be taught even in the most debauched celebrations of the mysteries of Cupid and

Bacchus. Nay, even that very indecent part of the mysterious *rites*, when at its worst, the carrying the Kiteis and Phallos (the male and female generative organs) in procession was introduced, but under pretence of their being *emblems* of the *mystical regeneration and new life*, into which the initiated had engaged themselves to enter. It is true that in Greece the mysteries became abominably abused, a proof of which we have, even in the conduct of their comic writers, who frequently laid the scenes of their subject—such as the rape of young girls, and the like—at the celebration of a religious mystery, and from that mystery denominated a comedy; even in the time of Cicero, the terms mysteries and abominations were almost synonymous. It is also true that in spite of all these drawbacks, some of the mysteries, particularly those of *Ceres* continued for many ages pure and undefiled. The wisest and best of the Pagan world held that the mysteries were instituted pure, and proposed the noblest end by the worthiest means.

We must now observe that atheism, by which was meant a contempt of the gods, was reckoned in the mysteries, among the greatest crimes. So in the Sixth Book of *Æneid* (of which more hereafter) the hottest seats in Tartarus are allotted to atheists.

The similitude between the rites practised and the doctrines taught in the Grecian and Egyptian mysteries, would alone be sufficient to point up to their original, such as secrecy, the metempsychosis, and a future state of rewards and punishments, which the Greek writers all agree to have been first set abroad by the Egyptians. The abstinence enjoined from domestic fowl, fish, and beans, a superstition peculiar to the Egyptians, retaining

the very Egyptian gods in whose honor the mysteries were celebrated; *Ceres and Triptolemus being only two other names for Osiris and Isis*. Hence it is, that the *Universal Nature*, speaking of herself, concludes the enumeration of her various mystic rites in these words:—
 “The Egyptians, skilled in ancient learning, worshipping me by ceremonies perfectly appropriate, call me by my true name, *Queen Isis*.” But it would be an endless task to compute all the particulars in which the Egyptian and Grecian mysteries agree; suffice it to say that they were in everything alike. Nothing but this common original can clear up the disputes, which in time arose among the Grecian states and cities concerning the first rise of the mysteries; everyone claiming to be more original than the rest.

Thus *Thrace* pretended that they first came from thence; *Crete* contested the honor with those barbarians; and *Athens* claimed it from both. At that time, when they had forgotten the true original (Egypt) it was impossible to settle and adjust these differences, since each could prove that he did not borrow from others, and at the same time, seeing a similitude in their rites, would conclude they had borrowed from him. But owing Egypt for their common parent clears up all difficulties, by accounting for the general likeness. The sages who brought the mysteries from Egypt, and propagated them in Asia, Greece, and Britain, were all kings or lawgivers, such as Zoroaster, Melampus, and the Druids.

We have thus shown that learning took its rise in the East (Egypt) and that it spread its benign influence, though very slowly and obscurely, to the West, and that the mysteries were originally invented by legislators for

State purposes. According to their original institution, neither slaves nor foreigners were to be admitted into them. Now, if the mysteries were instituted primarily for the sake of teaching religious truths only, there can be no reason given why every man with proper moral qualities should not be admitted; but supposing them to be instituted by the State for political purposes, a very good one may be assigned, for slaves and foreigners have there neither property or country.

It seems of little importance to determine whether the Mysteries are the invention of civil legislators or of the Sacerdotal order; in fact, in Egypt where they were first established the priesthood and legislators formed one body. This was also the case in Britain, where the Druids performed the offices of priests, and were at the same time makers of the laws.

It is worthy of remark (and perhaps this is the most proper place to make it), that Masonry conforms to the practice of the Egyptians in prohibiting to Slaves a participation of its mystic rites. Strictly speaking, it excludes also all those who possess certain bodily defects. That our truly benevolent and social Society, as the Masonic institution undoubtedly is, should debar anyone in misfortunes of this kind scarcely admits of justification, and we have never heard of plausible reason for this, though we do believe there is not a single Freemason who would not wish this so called *old landmark* entirely swept out of the Craft altogether, as it perverts the plainest principles of justice and common sense.

If there were no other proof of the origin of our Order, we consider this circumstance alone one of the strongest

proofs. The practice, doubtless, arises from a stupid adherence to the religious customs and observances of the ancient Egyptians, afterwards adopted by the Hebrews. The Mysteries, it has been shown, were deemed a sacred institution, and the most rigid investigation of character, and the severest trials were imposed upon aspirants to its benefits. No person born with any remarkable *bodily imperfection* could be consecrated in Egypt; and the very animals, when deformed, were never used either for sacrifice or symbolical worship.

The Levites among the Jews were subjected to the same rigid discipline; no one who had the least bodily blemish could be admitted into the Sacerdotal Order. Among the defects of the body which rendered them unworthy, the Jews reckon fifty which are common to men and other animals. The priest whose birth was polluted with any profaneness was clothed in *black* and sent without the verge of the priests' court; but he who was chosen by the judges appointed for that purpose was clothed in *white* and joined himself to the other priests. They whose birth was pure, but who had some defect of body, lived in those apartments of the Temple wherein the stores of wood were kept, and were obliged to split and prepare it for keeping up the fire of the altar.

There is a remarkable similarity in the institutions of the Egyptians, Jews, and Freemasons, when properly analyzed. The probation of four years was required after initiation into the *lesser* mysteries, before the candidate could be admitted to participation in the *greater*.

An Entered Apprentice Freemason had formerly to serve seven years in that grade before he could be further

advanced. This extra time however (of three years) arose from the necessity of adapting the rules of the Order which had existed from time immemorial, to the craft of operative Masonry, seven years being the usual period required for apprentices, both in operative Masonry and other mechanical trades.

The members of the Masonic fraternity also formerly wore *white* clothing during Lodge hours, but at present, except in a few isolated cases, a return has been made, with slight modification, to the ancient Egyptian apron.





ESSAY IX.

PART FIRST.

VIRGIL'S SIXTH BOOK OF THE ÆNEAD.

VIRGIL, the great Roman Epic poet was born seventy years before the Christian era. The "Ænead" was written at the desire of Augustus, but he (Virgil) did not live to revise his works, which abound with descriptive skill and beauty, and have always been ranked among the Latin classics, especially his "Sixth Book," which we intend to examine and show that the allegorical descent of Æneas into Hell, is no other than an enigmatical representation of his initiation into the Ancient Mysteries.

We have seen in general throughout these Essays, how fond and tenacious ancient Paganism was of this extraordinary *rite*, as of an institution supremely useful both to society and religion. But this will be observed more fully in what we now proceed to lay before our readers. An examination of this famous Sixth Book of Virgil's Ænead will show of what use the mysteries were esteemed to society.

An inquiry into Æneas' adventure to the *Shades* will have this further advantage, the instructing us in the *shows and representations of the mysteries*, so that nothing will now be wanting for a perfect knowledge of this most extraordinary and important institution. The descent of Virgil's hero into the infernal regions, we presume, was

no other than a figurative description of an initiation, and a very exact picture of the *spectacles* in the mysteries, where everything was done in show and machinery, and where a representation of the history of *Ceres* afforded opportunity for bringing in the scenes of Heaven, Hell, Elysium, Purgatory, and whatever related to the future state of men and heroes.

Virgil was, by Augustus' order, to represent a perfect lawgiver in the person of *Æneas*. Now, initiation into the mysteries was what sanctified his character and ennobled his function. Hence we find all the "Ancient Heroes" and Lawgivers, were in fact initiated. Augustus, who was shadowed in the person of *Æneas*, had been himself initiated into the mysteries of *Ceres*. While the mysteries were confined to Egypt, their native country, and while Grecian lawgivers went thither to be initiated, as a kind of designation to their office, the ceremony would be naturally described in terms highly allegorical. This was in part, owing to the genius of the Egyptian manners, in part to the humor of travellers, but most of all to the policy of lawgivers, who, returning home to civilize a barbarous people by laws and arts, found it useful and necessary (in order to support their own characters, and to establish the fundamental principle of a future state) to represent that initiation, in which they saw the state of departed mortals, in machinery, as an actual descent into Hell.

This way of speaking was used by Bacchus, and others, and continued even after the mysteries were introduced into Greece, as appears by the fables of Hercules, Castor, Pollux, and Theseus' descent into Hell. For we are told that they were, in fact, initiated into the mysteries of *Ceres*; and that it was just before their descent into Hell,

as an aid and security in that desperate undertaking, which in plain speech was no more than that they could not safely see the shows till they had been initiated. Here then, as was the case in many other of the ancient fables, the pomp of expression *betrayed* willing posterity into the marvellous. But why need we wonder at this, in the genius of more ancient times, which delighted to tell the commonest thing in a highly figurative manner. An ancient "sage," either in imitation of antiquity, or perhaps in compliance to the received phraseology of the mysteries, describes his initiation in the same manner:—"I approached to the confines of Death, &c." (See Essay No. III.)

Æneas could not have described his night's journey to his companions after he had been let out of the *ivory gate* in more proper terms, had it been, indeed, to be understood as a journey into Hell. If an old poem entitled "*A Descent into Hell*" were now extant it would have shown us that the idea of the Sixth Book was taken from it. The initiate had a guide or conductor called *Mystagogue*, or *Sybil*, indifferently of either sex, who was to instruct him in the preparatory ceremonies and lead him through and explain all the shows and representations. And as the female *Mystagogue* as well as the male was devoted to a single life, so was the *Sybil*. Another reason why a priestess is appointed to conduct him is because *Proserpine* presides in this whole affair, and the name of the priestess shows that she properly belonged to *Proserpine*, though she was called the "Priestess of *Ceres*." The first instruction the *Priestess* gives *Æneas* is to search for the *golden bough* sacred to *Proserpine*. Under this branch is concealed the *wreath* of myrtle with which the initiated were crowned at the

celebration. The *golden bough* is said to be sacred to Proserpine, and so was the *myrtle*. Proserpine only is mentioned all the way, partly because the initiation is described as an actual descent into Hell, but principally because, when the *rites* were performed, Ceres and Proserpine were equally invoked, but when the *shows* were represented, then Proserpine alone presided. Now this sixth book is a representation of the shows, but why is this myrtle branch represented to be of gold? Not merely for the sake of the marvellous we may rest assured. A golden bough was literally part of the sacred equipage in the shows of the mysteries. For the branch, which was sometimes wreathed into a crown, and worn on the head, was at other times carried in the hand, and afforded a free passage into the regions of the dead. So that this bough, we see, was an important implement of a very complicated intention in the "shows" of the mysteries.

Æneas, having possessed himself of the golden bough is led to the opening of the descent. "Here stood a *cave* profound and hideous, with a wide yawning mouth, stony, fenced by a black lake and gloomy woods. The ground beneath their feet began to tremble, the mountain-tops to quake, and dogs to howl through the shade of the woods at the approach of the goddess. Now he sees the shrines shake upon their tottering bases, and lightnings announcing the deity's approach, shed a vivid glare around. Now a loud warring noise is heard from the depths of the earth, and the *Ceropian temple re-echoes*, the holy torches are raised, the snakes of Triptolemus hiss and lift their scaly necks, rubbed by their curved yokes; the initiate sees many mystic sights and hears in the same manner a multitude of voices; darkness and light

alternately affect the senses and a thousand other uncommon things present themselves before him. The ritual of initiation was read aloud, and hymns sung in honor of Ceres. Soon after a hollow sound was heard, the earth seemed to groan beneath their feet, they heard thunder, and perceived by the glare of the lightning, phantoms and spectres wandering in darkness, and filling the holy places with howling which chilled them with terror, and groans that rent their hearts. Autopsia was introduced by frightful scenes, by alternate fear and joy, by light and darkness, by the glimmerings of light, by the terrible noise of thunder which was *imitated*, and by the apparitions of spectres, of magical illusions, which struck the eyes and ears all at once. The mystagogue in a fanatical manner shouts;—"Away ye profane! Now fury has expelled human feelings from my breast." The affectation of fury or madness was an inseparable circumstance from the mysteries. The hero and his guide now enter on their journey (twenty-seven perambulations), they advance under the solitary night through the shade, and through the desolate halls and empty realms of Pluto; their progress resembling a journey in woods by the precarious glimmering moon under a faint malignant light, when Jupiter had wrapped the heavens in shade, and sable night had stripped objects of color. The Sybil, on their approach to the mouth of the *cave* had advised Æneas to call up all his courage, as being about to undergo the severest trials. "Do you Æneas, boldly march forward, and snatch your sword from its sheath; now is the time for fortitude; now, for firmness of resolution." These trials were of two sorts—the encountering real labors and difficulties, and the being exposed to imaginary and false terrors. The latter was submitted to by all the initiated in general; the other was reserved for chiefs

and leaders, on which account Virgil describes them both in their order, as they were both to be undergone by his hero. The first in these words:—"Before the very courts and in the opening jaws of Hell, grief and tormenting cares have fixed their couches, and pale diseases, repining age, fear, and famine, 'forms' terrible to view, and death and toil; then sleep that is akin to death, and criminal joys of the mind, and in the opposite threshold murderous war, the iron bed-chambers of the furies (mad), and frantic discord."

To understand the force of this description it will be necessary to transcribe the account the ancients have left us of the probationary trials in the mysteries of Mithras, corresponding to the modern Knights of the Eagle, whose participation was more particularly aspired to by chiefs and leaders of armies, whence those initiated were commonly called the "Soldiers of Mithras."

No one could be initiated into these mysteries till he had passed gradually through the probationary labors, by which he was to acquire a certain sanctity. There were eighty degrees of these labors, from less to greater, and when the aspirant had gone through them all, he was initiated. These labors are:—To pass through fire, to endure cold, hunger, and thirst, to undergo much journeyings, and, in a word, every toil of this nature. They exercised the candidate many days to cross by swimming, a large extent of water; they threw them into it, and it was oftentimes with great difficulty that they extricated themselves. They applied a sword and fire to their bodies, they made them pass over flames. The aspirants were often in considerable danger, and our old friend Pythagoras, we learn, nearly lost his life in the trials.

To understand the origin of these ceremonies it will be necessary to explain that "the Egyptians" employ every year a talisman in remembrance of the world. At the summer solstice they mark their houses, flocks, and trees with *red*, supposing that on that day the whole world had been set on fire. It was also at the same period that they celebrated the *fire-dance*. This illustrates the origin of purification by fire and water, for having denominated the Tropic of Cancer, *gate* of heaven and of heat, or celestial fire; and that of "Capricorn," *gate* of deluge, or of water, it was imagined that the *spirits* or *souls* who passed through these gates on their way to and from heaven, were scorched or bathed; hence the *baptism of Mithra*, and the passage through the flames observed throughout the East, long, long before Moses. Ancient Masonry has slightly imitated these trials. The Druids, who had preserved the principle contained in the Third Degree, and also the Royal Arch, were, perhaps, fearful that by carrying the matter too far, their practices might come to the knowledge of the Government, which would probably have led to the destruction of the Order. For men, whose professed object was to merely teach the mechanical art of Masonry, to be engaged in such extravagances as were practised in the ancient mysteries, would certainly have alarmed the initiated themselves, a great portion of whom were in those days, carried no further than the third degree; they knew not what was meant by the ceremonies; they were pleased, however, with the shows.

Virgil has made the sufferings in the other world, preparatory to admission into Elysium, to correspond with the trials to which candidates were subjected in the mysteries. He says—"Even when, with the last beams of light their life is gone, yet not every ill, nor are all

corporeal stains quite removed from the unhappy beings, and it is absolutely unavoidable that many *vicious habits* which have grown up with the soul should be strangely combined and riveted therein. Therefore are they afflicted with pains, and pay the penalties of their former ills. Some, hung on high, are spread out to whiten in the empty winds; in others, the guilt not done away is washed out in a vast watery abyss, or burned away in fire." We have each of us a demon from whom we suffer, till length of time after the fixed period is elapsed hath done away the inherent stains, and hath left celestial reason pure from all irregular passions, and the *soul*, that spark of *heavenly fire*, in its *original* purity and brightness, simple and unmixed; then are we conveyed to Elysium, and we who are the happy few possess the fields of bliss."

The second sort of trial were the imaginary terrors of the mysteries, and these he next describes, thus.—“In the midst a gloomy *elm* displays its boughs and aged arms, which seat vain dreams are said to haunt, and under every leaf they dwell. Besides many monstrous spectres of various forms; in the gate Centaurs, and double-formed Scylas; Briareus with his hundred hands, the enormous snake of Lerna hissing dreadfully; and Camira armed with flames; Gorgons, Harpies, and the form of Geryon's three-bodied ghost.”

The ancient Chaos, according to the physiology of the Chaldeans was in this way.—“There was a time, they say, when all was water and darkness, and these gave birth and habitation to monstrous animals of mixed forms and species. For there were men with two wings, others with four, and some again with double faces. Some had the horns of goats, some their legs, and some the legs of

horses; others had the hind parts of horses and the fore parts of men like the Hippocentaurs. There were bulls with human heads, dogs with four bodies ending in fishes, horses with dog's heads, and men with other creatures, with the heads and bodies of horses, and with the tails of fishes; and a number of animals whose bodies were a monstrous compound of the dissimilar parts of beasts of various kinds. Together with these were fishes, reptiles, serpents, and other creatures, which by a reciprocal translocation of the parts to one another became all portentously deformed, the pictures and representations of which were hung up in the Temple of Belus. A woman ruled over the whole whose name was Omoroca, which signifies the “Sea,” and in course of connection the “Moon.” This account seems to have been exactly copied in the mysteries, as appears from the description of Virgil. The canine figures have a considerable station in this region of monsters. It was customary in celebrating the mysteries to present before many of the initiates, phantasms of a canine figure, and other monstrous shapes and appearances. The woman, whose name coincides with that of the moon, was the Hacate of the Greeks, who is invoked by Æneas on this occasion, who entering now into the mystic dome is disconcerted with sudden fear, and grasps his sword and presents the naked point to each approaching *shade*; he is filled with horror and amazement; he is seized with solicitude and a total perplexity; he is unable to move a step forward, and at a loss to find the entrance to that road which is to lead him to the place he aspires to, till the conductor lays open the vestibule of the Temple.

The adventurers come now to the banks of the Styx. Æneas is surprised at the crowd of ghosts which hover

around it, and appear impatient for a passage across. His guide tells him they are those who have not had the rites of sepulture performed to their manes, and so are doomed to wander up and down for a hundred years before they be permitted to cross the river. We must not think this old notion took its rise from vulgar superstition. It was one of the wisest contrivances of ancient politics, and came originally from Egypt, the fountain-head of legislation. Those profound masters of wisdom, in projecting for the common good, found nothing would more contribute to the safety of their fellow-citizens than the public and solemn interment of the dead, as without this provision private murders might be easily and securely committed. They therefore introduced the custom of pompous funeral rites, and were of all people, the most circumstantially ceremonious in the observance of them. To secure these by the force of religion, as well as civil custom, they taught that the deceased could not retire to a place of rest till they were performed. The notion spread so wide, and fixed its roots so deep that the substance of the superstition remains among us to this day in most civilized countries. By this effectual method did the legislature gain its end—the *security of the citizens, and safety of human life.*

The next thing observable is the ferryman Charon, and he, as shown in a former Essay, and whom the learned know well, was a substantial Egyptian boatman, and fairly existing in this world. The case was plainly thus:—The Egyptians, like the rest of mankind, *in their description of the world, used to copy from something they were well acquainted with in this.* In their funeral “rites” (as previously observed) a matter of greater moment to them than with any other people, they used to carry their dead

over the *Nile* and through the marsh of Acherusia, and there put them into the subterraneous caverns; the ferryman employed in this business being, in their language, called Charon. Now, in their mysteries, the description of the passage into the other world was borrowed, as was natural, from the circumstances of their funeral rites. It might be easily proved, if there were occasion, that they themselves transferred these realities into the *Mythos*, and not the Greeks, as later writers generally and wrongfully imagine.

Æneas having crossed the river and come to the proper regions of the dead, the first opposition that occurs is the dog Cerberus. Huge Cerberus makes those realms resound with barking from his triple jaws, stretched at enormous length in a den that fronts the gate. The prophetess, to appease his rage gives him a *medicated* cake, composed of honey and poppy seeds, which casts him into a slumber. Without doubt, the images which the juice of the poppy (*i.e.*, opium) presents to the fancy, was one reason why this drug had a place in the ceremonial of the shows; not improbably, it was given to some of the initiates, to aid the impression of those mystic visions which passes before them. Something like this was also used in the celebration of the mysteries of Hecate, which drives men into a kind of frenzy, and makes them confess all the wickedness they had done or intended. And *confession* was one necessary preparation for initiation.

The regions, according to Virgil's geography, are divided into three parts, *Purgatory, Tartarus, and Elysium.* Of all the three states of departed souls *Tartarus* only was *eternal.* There was indeed, another in the ancient Pagan theology, which had the same relation to *Elysium*

that Tartarus had to Purgatory, the extreme of reward, as Tartarus was of punishment; but then this state was not in the infernal regions but in heaven. Neither was it the lot of common humanity, but reserved for beings of an order superior to men, such as Hercules, Bacchus, and Co., who became gods on their admission into that state, where the *eternity* was in consequence of their deification.

And here it is to our purpose to observe, that the virtues and vices which stock these three divisions with inhabitants, are such as more immediately affect society—a plain proof of the views of the legislator.

Purgatory, the first division, is inhabited by suicides, extravagant lovers, and ambitious warriors, and, in a word by all those who had indulged the violence of the passions which made them rather miserable than wicked. Of all these disorders the misery of suicide is the most distinctly marked out. The mysteries not only forbade suicide, but taught on what account it was criminal, by pointing out that it was unlawful to fly from, or forsake (after being placed in a certain watch or station) our duties. Hitherto all goes well; but what must we say to putting *new-born infants* and men falsely condemned on earth, into this purgatory? It is indeed, difficult to tell what these inmates have to do here! Let us consider the case of the "infants" first. "Forthwith are heard voices, loud wailings, and weeping ghosts of infants, in the first opening of the gate, whom, bereaved of sweet life out of the course of nature, and snatched from the breast, in a black unjoyous day cut off, and buried in an untimely grave." The original of so extraordinary a circumstance we consider to have been just such another provision of the lawgiver for the security of *infancy*, as that of funeral

rites was for the adult; for nothing could more engage parents in the care and preservation of their young, than so terrible a doctrine. Nor are we to imagine that their natural fondness needed no enforcement or support; for that most degenerate and horrid practice among the ancients of *exposing* infants was universal, and had almost erased morality and instinct; it needed therefore, the strongest and severest check, and we are well persuaded it needed this counter-plot of the magistrate in order to give instinct fair play and call back banished nature. Nothing indeed, could be more worthy his care, for the destruction of children is like cutting off the spring from the year. Accordingly we are told, that the Egyptians had a *law* against this unnatural practice, which *law* was numbered amongst the singularities of that people. They were obliged to bring up *all* their children, in order to render the country populous, this being esteemed the best means of making "states" flourishing and happy.

As to the falsely condemned, we must seek another solution. "Next to those (new-born infants) are such as had been condemned to death by false accusation. Nor yet were these seats assigned them without destination and appointment, or without the sentence of a judge. Minos, as inquisitor, shakes their urn; he convokes the council of the *silent shades*, and examines their lives and crimes." This designment appears both iniquitous and absurd. The falsely accused are not only in a place of punishment; but, being first delivered under this singular predicament, they are afterwards distinguished into two sorts—some as blameable, others as innocent.

To clear up this confusion worse confounded it will be necessary to transcribe an old story told by Plato:—

“This law concerning mortals was enacted in the time of Saturn, and is yet, and ever will be, in force amongst the gods, that he who had lived a just and pious life should at his death be carried into the *Islands of the Blessed*; and these possess all kinds of happiness untainted with the evils of mortality; but that he who had lived unjustly and impiously should be thrust into a place of punishment—the prison of Divine Justice called Tartarus.” Now the judges to whom the execution of this law was entrusted were in the time of Saturn, and under the infancy of Jove’s government living men sitting in judgment on the living, and passing sentence on them upon the day of their decease. This gave occasion to unjust judgments, on which account Pluto, and those to whom the care of the *Happy Islands* was committed, went to Jupiter and told him that men came to them wrongfully judged, both when acquitted or condemned. To which the Father of the Gods thus replied:—“I will put a stop to this evil. These wrong judgments are partly occasioned by the corporeal coverings of the persons judged, for they are tried while living. Now, many mortals have their corrupt minds hid under a fair outside, adorned with birth and riches, and when they come to their trial have witnesses at hand to testify for their good life and conversation. This perverts the process and blinds the eyes of justice. Besides, the judges themselves are encumbered with the same corporeal covering, and eyes and ears, and an impenetrable tegument of flesh hinder the mind from a free exertion of its faculties. All these, as well as their own covering, as the covering of those they judge, are bars and obstacles to right judgment. In the first place then, says he, we are to provide that the foreknowledge which they now have of the day of death be taken away, and this shall be given

in charge to Prometheus; and then provide that they who come to judgment be quite naked, for from henceforth they shall not be tried till they come into the other world. And as they are to be thus stripped, it is but fit their judges should await them there in the same condition; that at the arrival of every inhabitant, *soul* may look on *soul*, and all family relation, and every worldly ornament being dropped and left behind, righteous judgment may at length take place. I, therefore, who foresaw all these things before you felt them have taken care to constitute my own sons the judges. Two of them, Minos and Rhadamanthus, are Asiatics, the third, Eacus, an European. These, *when they die*, shall have their tribunal erected in the *Shades*, just in that part of the highway where two roads divide, the one leading to the *Happy Islands*, the other to Tartarus. Rhadamanthus shall judge the Asiatics, and Eacus the Europeans; but to Minos I give the superior authority of hearing appeals, when anything obscure or difficult shall perplex the other’s judgments, that everyone may have his abode assigned him with the utmost equity.”

The matter now begins to clear up, and we see plainly that the circumstance of the falsely condemned alludes to this *ancient fable*. One difficulty remains; we find these people yet unjudged, already fixed with other criminals in the assigned district of Purgatory. But they are misplaced through an oversight, for the fable tells us they should be stationed on the borders of the three divisions in that part of the highroad that divides itself in two, which leads to Tartarus and Elysium.

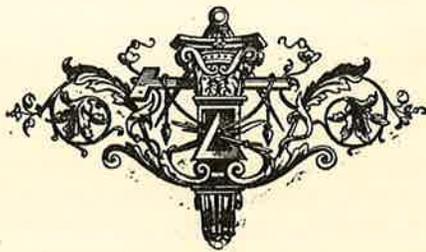
It only remains to consider the origin or moral of the fable, which we think, was this:—It was an Egyptian

custom as stated in a former Essay, for judges to sit on every man's life at his interment, to examine his past actions, and to condemn and acquit according to the evidence before them. These judges were of the priesthood, and so, it is probably taught that their decrees were ratified in the other world. Partiality and corruption would in time, pervert their sentence, and spite and favor prevail over justice. As this might scandalise the people, it would be found necessary to teach that the sentence which influenced everyone's final doom was reserved for a future judicature. Æneas, having passed this first division comes now on the confines of *Tartarus*, and is instructed in what relates to the crimes and punishments of the inhabitants. It is remarkable that Æneas is *led through* the regions of Purgatory and Elysium, but he only *sees* the sights of Tartarus at a distance, and this could not be otherwise in the shows, for very obvious reasons. Among the criminals destined to *eternal* punishment in this division, are those who had sinned so secretly as to escape the magistrate (and it was principally on account of such crimes that the legislator enforced the doctrine of a future state of punishment); the infringers of the duties of *imperfect obligation, which civil laws cannot reach*, such as those without natural affection to brothers, duty to parents, protection to clients, or charity to the poor; the *invaders and violators of the holy mysteries* making up the last class of offenders who continually cry with a loud voice throughout the shades—" *Warned by my example learn righteousness and not to contemn the gods.*" It is reported that Ixion, by the decrees of the gods, while he is incessantly turning round his rapid wheel, calls out upon mortals to this effect—That they should be always at hand to repay a benefactor for the kindness he had done them. From the circumstance of Noah reaching out

his hand to seize the dove, the Greeks invented many fictions. The "Fable" of Ixion bore this reference: He is said to have attempted to deflower Juno, but embraced in her stead a cloud, for which offence he was cast into Hell. Now, Juno is the dove, which was seized by Noah, and the punishment of Ixion on a *revolving wheel* in Hell, merely referred to his descent into the Hades of the *Mysteries*, and his circumambulating progress through the caverns of initiation.

Æneas has now passed through *Tartarus*; and here end the *Lesser Mysteries*.





ESSAY X.



PART TWO.

[VIRGIL'S SIXTH BOOK OF THE ÆNEID CONTINUED.]

ÆNEAS and his guide now enter on the *Greater Mysteries*, and after lustration, by *sprinkling his body with fresh water*, he comes to the abodes of the blessed; to the regions of eternal joy, delightful green retreats and blessed abodes, in groves where happiness abounds. Here the air they breath is more free and enlarged, and clothes the fields with radiant light; here the happy inhabitants know their own sun and their own stars. The initiates who till now only bore the name of *Mystai*, are called *Epoptai*, and this new vision *Autopsia*, or the *seeing with their own eyes the divine lights* without figure, or *agalma* (an image) which was all over illuminated. To this image the following lines in the oracles of Zoroaster allude:—"Invoke not the self-conspicuous image of nature," he says, "for thou must not behold these things before thy body be purified by initiation." The cloud and thick darkness are now dispersed, and the mind emerges, as it were into day, full of light and cheerfulness, as before it was of disconsolate obscurity. The clouds were accompanied by *thunder and lightning*, and other appearances; they were symbols, but not of the nature of the deity; and this was true, for the symbol of that was the *Autopton Agalma*, which followed. Hence, as before stated it was *without figure*.

Virgil having described the climate of the happy regions, speaks next of the amusements of its inhabitants: "Some exercise their limbs on the grassy plains, in sports contend, and wrestle on the yellow sands." The first place in these happy regions is assigned to the lawgivers and those who brought mankind from a state of nature into society; at the head of these is Orpheus, the most renowned of the European lawgivers, but better known under the character of Poet; for the first laws being written in measure to allure men to learn them, and when learnt to retain them, he has the first place because he was not only a legislator but the bringer of the mysteries into that part of Europe.

The next is allotted to patriots and those who died for the service of their country. The third, to virtuous and pious priests; for it was of principal use to society that religious men should lead holy lives, and that they should teach nothing of the gods but what was agreeable to the Divine nature.

The last place is given to the inventors of arts, mechanical and liberal. The order is exact and beautiful. The *first* class is of those who found society, heroes and lawgivers; the *second* of those who supported it, patriots and holy priests; and the *third* of those who adorned it, the inventors of the *arts* of life, and the recorders of worthy mysteries.

Notwithstanding the entire conformity between Virgil's scenes, and those represented in the ancient mysteries, something is still wanting to complete the identification, and that is, the famous *secret* of the mysteries, *the unity of the Godhead*, of which so much has already been said.

Had Virgil neglected to give us this characteristic mark, though even then we could not but say his intention was to represent an initiation, yet we must have been forced to own he had not done it with the utmost art. But he was too good a painter to leave anything ambiguous, and has therefore, concluded his hero's initiation as was the custom, with instructing him in the secret, or doctrine of the *Unity*. Till this was done, the initiated was not arrived at the highest stage of perfection, nor in the fullest sense entitled to the appellation of Eoptes. The mystagogue therefore, takes the place of the Sybil, as was *the custom to have different guides in different parts of the celebration*, and is made to conduct him to the recess, where his father's shade opens to him the hidden doctrine of perfection in those sublime words:—"First then, the *Divine Spirit* "*within*" sustains the heavens, the earth, the watery plains, the moon's enlightened orb, and shining stars; and the *Eternal Mind* diffused through all the parts of nature, actuates the whole stupendous frame, and mingles with the vast body of the universe. Thence proceed the race of men and beasts, the vital principle of the flying-kind, and the monsters which the ocean breeds under its crystal plain." This was no other than the doctrine of the old Egyptians, who taught that Jupiter was the *Spirit which prevadeth all things*.

The doctrine of the *Unity* of the *Godhead* here taught as being the doctrine of the *old Egyptians*, must not be understood as opposed to the belief in the *triplicity* of the *Supreme Being*, an opinion universally held by the ancient world. Different nations expressed this *triplicity* by various names, to which they also assigned different attributes. The philosophers of all nations seem to have had some idea, more or less confused, of the *triplicity* of

the *Supreme Unity*. Plato goes so far as to give the attributes or powers of the persons comprising this Trinity, viz:—*Agathos*, the sovereign good, is the *Intelligence* which drew the plan of the world; *Logos*, or *word*, is the energy which executed it, and *Psyche*, which is but another name for Isis, indicating the productions of the earth, which gives a finish and beauty to the whole creation. This is agreeable to the Masonic Trinity, which is denominated *Wisdom*, *Strength*, and *Beauty*.

Whilst on this subject of the *Trinity*, we will recount the following curious anecdote. “Thulis, a king of Egypt, being puffed up with pride, went to the oracle of Serapis, and thus spake to it:—‘Thou that art the God of Fire, and who governest the *course* of the *heavens*, tell me the *truth*, was there ever, or will there ever be, one so puissant as myself?’ The oracle answered him thus:—‘First *God*, then the *Word* and *Spirit*, all united in *one* whose power can never end. Go hence, immediately! O mortal! whose life is always uncertain.’ And Thulis at his going thence, had his throat cut.”

A Greek inscription of great antiquity on the great obelisk at Rome is to *this* effect:—“The Mighty God, begotten of God, and the all-resplendent Apollo, the Spirit.”

The idea of the Pagan Trinity was founded on the three actions of the sun, in the three seasons of the year. The sun, thus characterised, “is no other than the *three-eyed* Jupiter, *eye* and *sun* being expressed by the same word in most of the ancient languages of Asia.” This is the origin of all the Trinitary system subtilized by Pythagorus and Plato, and totally disfigured by their interpreters.

Although innovations appear to have been introduced in the administration of the *rites* of the *lesser mysteries*, in Greece and Rome, still it does not appear that women were admitted to participate in the celebrations of the *greater*; much less to act as priests to expound what were called the *sacred secrets* therein contained. This would have been too great a departure from the original, and moreover exposed the *secrets* to too great hazard. In Egypt the office of the priesthood is in every instance confined to men; there are no priestesses in the service of male or female *deities*. And here it may be worthy of remark that the Freemasons have adhered closely to this custom, by the total exclusion of females from the Order.

Women and children, as has been previously shown, were freely admitted to the trifling *shows* and representations of the lesser mysteries; and here, it seems, women sometimes took the lead, and presided at the celebrations, but when Sibyl arrives within sight of Elysium, where the greater mysteries commence, her command ceases, and she resigns her office to the mystagogue. Æneas himself, while under her guidance could only view at a distance, the happy regions of the blessed.

The mysteries did not teach the doctrine of the *Unity* for mere speculation; but as we have said before, to obviate certain mischiefs of Polytheism, and to support the belief of a providence. Now, as a future state of rewards and punishments did not quite remove the objections to its inequalities here in this state, they added to it the belief in a *prior state*. For after having revealed the great *secret* of the *Unity*, transmigration is explained in this manner:—“All these souls whom you see after they

have rolled away a thousand years, are summoned forth by the God, in a great body, to the river Lethe, to bathe themselves, to the intent that, losing memory of the past, they may *revisit* the upper regions, and again become willing to return into bodies."

In attending the hero's progress through the three estates of the dead, we have shown at almost every step, the exact conformity of his adventures to those of the initiated in the ancient mysteries. We shall now collect these scattered lights to a point, which will, we are persuaded, throw such a lustre on this interpretation as to make the truth of it irresistible. To this purpose, we need but transcribe a passage from an ancient writer, which professes to explain the exact conformity between death (or real descent to the infernal regions) and initiation, where the representation of those regions was exhibited. His words are these:—"The mind is affected and agitated in death, just as it is in initiation into the grand mysteries. The first stage is nothing but errors and uncertainties; *laborious wanderings, a rude and fearful march through night and darkness.* And now arrived on the verge of death and initiation, everything wears a dreadful *aspect*; it is all *horror, trembling, and affrightment.* *But, this scene once over, a miraculous and divine light displays itself, and shining plains and flowery meadows open on all hands before them.* Here they are entertained with hymns and dances, with the sublime doctrines of sacred knowledge and with reverend and holy visions. And now become perfect and initiated, they are free and no longer under restraints, but *crowned and triumphant, they walk up and down the regions of the blessed, converse with pure and holy men, and celebrate the sacred mysteries at pleasure.*"

The progress finished and everything over, Æneas and his guide are let out again to the upper regions, through the *ivory gate* of dreams. Besides this gate of *ivory*, there was another gate of *horn*. Through the *ivory gate* issued *false* visions; and through the gate of *horn, true*. "When Virgil sends Æneas forth through the *ivory gate*, he clearly indicates that whatever he has said in regard to the infernal regions is to be reckoned among the fables." When he treats of a future state, his purpose must be to make the doctrine interesting to his readers, and useful to civil life; he has done the *first* by bringing his hero through the most perilous achievements, and the *second* by appropriating the rewards and punishments of that state to virtue and to vice only. He has, however, with a beauty of invention peculiar to himself, made the *gate of horn* for true visions, and that of *ivory* for false, insinuating by the *first* the reality of another state, and by the *second* the shadowy representations of it, in the shows of the mysteries, so that the scenes of them only were false, as they lay not in hell, but in the Temple of Ceres. But though the visions which issued from the *ivory gate* were unsubstantial as being only representative, yet we make no question but the *ivory gate* itself was real. It appears indeed to be no other than that sumptuous door of the "Temple," through which the initiated came out when the celebration was over. This temple was of an immense size.

And now, having occasionally and by parts only, said so much of these things, it will not be amiss in conclusion to give one general and concise idea of the whole. We suppose the substance of the celebration to be a kind of "drama" of the history of *Ceres*, which afforded opportunity to represent the three particulars, about which the

mysteries were principally concerned; the *rise* and *establishment* of civil society, the doctrine of a future state of rewards and punishments; the error of polytheism, and the principle of the *Unity*. From what we have shown was taught and represented in the ancient mysteries, we infer that *Æneas's descent into hell* signifies an initiation; because of the exact conformity, in all circumstances, between what Virgil relates of his hero's adventure and what antiquity delivers concerning the shows and doctrines of those mysteries into which heroes were wont to be, in those days, initiated.

These mysterious ceremonies of Ceres were an imitation of those of the Egyptian Isis. Those who had committed crimes confessed and expiated them. They fasted, they purified themselves, and gave alms. All the ceremonies were held *secret*, under the religious sanction of an oath, to render them more venerable. The mysteries were celebrated at night to inspire a holy horror. They represented a kind of *tragedy*, in which the spectacle exposed to view the happiness of the just and the torments of the wicked. The greatest men of antiquity, the Platos, the Ciceros, have eulogised these mysteries, which had not then degenerated from their primitive purity.

Very many learned men have also supposed that the "Sixth Book of the *Æneid*," was a description of what passed in these secret and celebrated shows, and is merely a description of the mysteries of Isis and Ceres. It is confidently believed that this application of the "Sixth Book of the *Æneid*" will stand the test of the most severe criticism.

Why, Augustus was the hero of the poem: it was for

his honor and glory that the poet labored. Virgil lived under a *prince* who united with his other bad qualities that of wishing to pass for a religious character; had been initiated himself, the better thereby to impose upon the people; and as he was *shadowed in the person of Æneas*, he would not probably have been very scrupulous about a vague exposition of the mysteries, while it tended to his own glorification.





ESSAY XI.

THUS far we have shown the necessary use of the ancient mysteries to society in the earliest ages of the world. How essential they were esteemed to religion, we may understand by the *Metamorphosis of Apuleius*, a book which from its very first appearance, has passed for trivial fable. The work indeed is of a different character from what some have represented it, and even from what modern critics have pretended to discover of it. Those ancients, who viewed the outside only, considered it without refinement and an idle fable; the moderns who could not reconcile a work of that nature to the gravity of the author's character, supposed it a thing of more importance, and no less than a general satire on the vices of the times. But this even, is far short of the matter. The author's main purpose was not to satirize the specific vices of his age, but his aim was to recommend Pagan religion as the only cure for *all vices whatsoever*.

Now, antiquity considered initiation into the *mysteries as a delivery from a living death of vice, brutality, and misery, and the beginning of a new life of virtue, reason, and happiness*. This, therefore was the very circumstance which our author chose for the subject of his recommendation. And as in the mysteries, their moral and divine truths were represented in *shows and allegories*, so in order to comply with this method of instruction, and in

imitation of the ancient masters of wisdom who borrowed their manner of teaching from thence, he has artfully insinuated his doctrine in an agreeable "fable," and the fittest one could conceive for his purpose, as will be seen when we come to examine it.

The foundation of this allegory was a Milesian fable, a species of polite trifling then much in vogue, and not very unlike the modern *Arabian tales*. To allure his readers therefore, with the promise of a fashionable work, he introduces his metamorphosis in this manner. "And I too, will deliver to you various fables in this Milesian style, and delight your ears in a gentle whisper, &c." The fable opens with the representation of a young man, personified by himself, sensible of the advantages of *virtue* and *piety*, but immoderately fond of *pleasure*, and as curious of *magic*. He gives loose to his vicious appetite, and the crimes and follies into which they lead him soon ends in his transformation into a brute. This contrivance of the introductory part is artful, and finely insinuates the great moral of the piece, that brutality attends vice as its punishment, and punishment by actual transformation was keeping up to the popular opinion of transmigration.

Having now shown himself thoroughly brutalized by his crimes, he goes on to represent at large the miseries of that condition in a long detail of his misadventures, in the course of which he fell, by turns, under the dominion of every vicious passion, though the incidents are chiefly confined to the mischiefs of unlawful love, and this with much judgment, as one of the principal ends of the mysteries, was to curb and subdue the inordinance, which in those days, brought more general and lasting misery upon mankind than all others, and it was the great

moral of his piece to show that *pure religion* (such as a platonic philosopher esteemed pure) was the only remedy for human corruption; so to prevent the abuse or mistake of this capital principle, he takes care to inform us that an attachment to superstitious and corrupt religion does but plunge the wretched victim into still greater miseries. This, he finely illustrates in the history of his adventures with the *begging priests of Cybele*, whose enormities are related in the eighth and ninth books, and whose corrupt mysteries are intended as a contrast to the pure rites of Isis, with which, in a very studied description he concludes the fable.

In the meantime matters growing from bad to worse and Lucius (the name of his hero) plunging deeper and deeper into the sink of vice, his affairs come to a crisis. For this is one great beauty in the conduct of the fable, that every change of station, while he remains a brute, makes his condition still more wretched and deplorable.

And being now about to perpetrate one of the most shocking enormities, Nature, though so deeply brutalized, revolts; he abhors the idea of his projected crime; he evades his keepers; he flies to the sea shore, and in his solitude, begins to reflect more seriously on his lost condition. This is finely imagined, for we often see men, even after a whole life of horrors, come suddenly to themselves on the hideous aspect of some monster vice too frightful even for a hardened conscience to endure. Nor is it with less judgment that the author makes these beginnings of reformation, confirmed by solitude, when the unhappy victim of pleasure has broken loose from his companions and partakers of his follies. And now, a more intimate acquaintance with his hopeless state obliges him

to fly to heaven for relief. The moon is in full splendor, and the awful silence of the night inspires him with sentiments of religion. He then purifies himself in the manner prescribed by Pythagoras, and so makes his prayer to the Moon, or *Isis*, invoking her by her several names—the *Celestial Venus*, *Diana*, and *Proserpine*—when betaking himself to repose, she appears to him in a dream, under that shining image so much spoken of by the *Mystics* as representing the Divine Nature in general.

Isis, addressing him, says:—"Behold, *Lucius*, I, moved by thy prayers am present with thee; I, who am *nature*, the parent of things, the Queen of all the elements, the primordial progeny of ages, the Supreme of Divinities, the sovereign of the spirits of the dead, the first of the celestials, and the uniform resemblance of gods and goddesses. I, who rule by my nod the luminous summits of the heavens, the salubrious breezes of the sea, and the deplorable silence of the realms beneath, and whose one divinity the whole orb of the earth venerates under a manifold form, by different rites and a variety of appellations. Some call me Mother of the Gods, *Minerva*, *Venus*, *Diana*, *Proserpine*, and the ancient goddess *Ceres*. Some also call me *Juno*, others *Bellona*, and others *Hacate*. And those who are illuminated by the incipient rays of that divinity, the sun, when he rises, viz.:—the *Ethiopian*, the *Arü* (Arabs or Argans), and *Egyptians*, skilled in ancient learning, worshipping me by ceremonies perfectly appropriate, call me by my true name, *Queen Isis*." This was exactly adapted to the *design* of the mysteries, and preparatory to the communication of the *Apporrata* (secret). It had likewise, this further use, to patch up, and recommend the Pagan religions, by showing that their polytheism consisted in nothing else than in

giving the supreme God various names, merely expressive of his various attributes. This was the fashionable coloring which the advocates of Paganism employed to blanch their idolatry.

"Parent Nature" then reveals to *Lucius* the means of his recovery. Her festival was on the following day, where there was to be a procession of her votaries. The priest who led it up, would have a chaplet of roses in his hand, which had the virtue to restore him to his former shape. But as breaking through a habit of vice is, of all things the most difficult, she adds encouragement to her promises—"Nor should you fear anything pertaining to my concerns, as difficult. For in this very same moment of time in which I come to you, being there also present, I order my priest in a dream, to do those things which are to be done hereafter"—alluding to what was taught in the mysteries, that the assistance of heaven was always present to second the hopes and efforts of virtue. But in return for the favor of releasing him from his brutal shape, that is, of reforming his manners by initiation, she tells him she expected the service of his whole life; and this, the mysteries required of all. Nor should his service go unrewarded, for he should have a place in *Elysium* hereafter; and this too, the mysteries promised. *Lucius* is at length confirmed in his resolution of aspiring to a life of virtue. And on this change of his disposition, the entire conquest of his passions, the author finely represents all nature as putting on a new face of cheerfulness and gaiety. "All things likewise, independent of my peculiar joy, seemed to me to exult with such great hilarity, that I might have thought that cattle of every kind, every house, and even the day itself, rejoiced with a serene countenance." And to enjoy nature in these,

her best conditions, was the boasted privilege of the initiated.

And now the procession in honor of Isis begins. "There was an influx of a crowd of those who had been initiated in the sacred rites of the goddess, resplendent with the pure whiteness of linen garments. In the next place, the images of the gods carried by the priests of Isis proceeded, not disdaining to walk with the feet of men; these terrifically raising a canine head (that being the messenger of the infernal gods and of those in the realms beneath), with an erect face, partly black and partly of a golden color, bearing in his left hand a staff and shaking in his right hand branches of the flourishing palm-tree, whose footsteps, a Crow, in an erect position, immediately followed. This crow was the prolific resemblance of the all parent goddess, and was carried on the shoulders of one of the blessed servants of this divinity, and who acted the part of a mimic as he walked; another carried a chest containing arcana, and perfectly concealing the mystic symbols of a magnificent religion; another bore in his happy bosom the venerable effigies of the Supreme Divinity which was not similar to any cattle, bird, wild beast, nor even to man, but being venerable for the subtilty by which it was invented, and also for its novelty, was an ineffable indication of a more sublime religion, which was to be concealed with the greatest silence.

The priest of the 'rites' leads up the train of the initiated with a garland of roses in his hand. Lucius approaches and devours the roses, and is, according to the promise of the goddess, restored to his natural form," by which, as we have said, no more was meant than a change of manners from vice to virtue. And this the

author plainly intimates by making the goddess thus address him under his brutal (ass's) form:—"Immediately divest yourself of the hide of that worst of beasts, and which for some time since has been to me detestable." The garland plainly represents that which the aspirants were crowned with at their initiation, just as the virtue of the roses designs the mysteries. At this transformation he had been told that roses were to restore him to humanity, so that amidst all his adventures he had still this remedy in view. The people wondered and admired at this speedy metamorphosis; and the religious venerated so evident an indication of the power of the Supreme Divinity, and the magnificence and facility of his restoration. For the mysteries boasted the power of giving a sudden and entire change to the mind and affections.

As soon as Lucius had recovered the integrity of his nature by initiation, the priest covers him, naked as he was, with a white linen garment. A "habit" always bestowed upon the aspirant on his admission to the mysteries. When all was over, the priest accosts his penitent in the following manner:—"O, Lucius! you have at length arrived at the port of quiet, and the altar of pity, having endured many and various labors, and great tempests of fortune, and been tossed about by mighty waves of calamity. Assume now a more joyful countenance, and more adapted to that white garment which you wear. Attend the pomp of your saviour goddess with triumphant steps. Let the irreligious see, let them see and acknowledge their error; behold Lucius rejoicing in the providence of the great Isis, and freed from his pristine miseries, triumphs in his own good fortune."

Whilst the apron with which Masons are clothed;

indicates a disposition of innocence, and belies not the wearers heart, let the ignorant deride and scoff on; superior to the ridicule and malice of the wicked, they will enfold themselves in the garb, and safe in their self-approving conscience, stand unmoved against their enemies. The raiment, which truly implies the innocence of the heart, is a badge more truly honorable than ever was devised by kings; the Roman eagle, star, garter, with all the orders of knighthood, are thereunto inferior.

We will now return to the moral of the fable. Therein it is expressly declared that vice and inordinate curiosity were the causes of Lucius's disasters, from which the only relief was initiation into the mysteries; whereby the author would insinuate that nothing was more abhorrent from those holy rites than debauchery and magic, the two enormities they were then commonly suspected to encourage.

It has been previously stated that by Lucius's return to his proper form, was meant his initiation, and accordingly that return is called, as initiation used to be called, the being born again, but this was only in the lesser, not the greater mysteries. The first was to purify the mind, hence it was called by the ancients a separation from evil. The second was to enlighten the mind, when purified, and bring it to the knowledge of divine secrets. Hence they named the one purification, and the other perfection. The first is here represented in the incident of Lucius being restored from the shape of an Ass to humanity by the use of roses. The second as a matter of chief importance the author treats more circumstantially. He begins with making the priest take occasion from the benefit already received, to press

Lucius to enter into the greater mysteries of Isis, but at the same time makes him inform the candidate that nothing was to be precipitated; for that not only many previous rites and ceremonies concerning religious diet and abstinence from profane food were to be observed, but that the aspirants to these higher mysteries were to wait for a call, and that the highest degree of sanctity was required of those who entered into the greater mysteries.

These difficulties being surmounted, he is initiated with the accustomed ceremonies. He then makes his prayers, in which the grand "secret" of the mysteries is still more plainly referred to. "Thou, O holy and perpetual Saviour of the human race, being always munificent in cherishing mortals, dost employ the sweet affection of a loving mother in the misfortunes of the miserable. Nor is there any day or night, or even a slender moment of time, which passes unattended by thy benevolent interpositions. Thou protectest men both by sea and land, and dispersing the storms of life, dost extend thy salutary *right* hand, by which thou drawest back the inextricably twisted thread of the Fates, and dost mitigate the tempests of inclement fortune, and restrain the noxious courses of the stars. The supernal gods reverence thee, and those in the realms beneath attentively observe thy nod. Thou rollest the sphere of the Universe round the stately poles, dost illuminate the Sun, govern the world, and tread on the dark realms of Tartarus. The stars move responsive to thy command, the gods rejoice in thy divinity, the hours and seasons return by thy appointment, and the elements reverence thy decree. By thy nod blasts of wind blow, the clouds are nourished, seeds germinate, and blossoms increase. Birds swiftly pass through the trackless air,

wild beasts wandering on the mountains, serpents concealed in the ground, and the enormous monsters that swim in the sea, are terrified at the majesty which invests thy divinity, &c."

The affair thus over, he tells us how Isis counselled him to enter into the mysteries of Osirus; how after that she invited him to a third initiation, and then rewarded him for his accumulated piety with an abundance of temporal blessings. Now, all this considered, we can no longer doubt but that the true design of his work was to recommend initiation into the mysteries. And, surely nothing could be better conceived to recommend the mysteries, than the idea of such a plan, or better conceived than his execution of it, in which he omits no circumstance that might be recommended with advantage to the magistrate's favor; as where he tells us that in these rites they prayed for the prosperity of all orders in the State:—"For the great Emperor, the Senate, the Equestrian order, and for all the Roman people. This interpretation will throw new light on every part of the Golden Ass, But we have been so long on the subject, as now to have only time to give one instance, and this chiefly because it reflects it back again on the general interpretation of the fable. That one instance is, *The Amour of Cupid and Psyche*.

There was no man, though he regarded the Golden Ass as a thing of mere amusement, but saw that the story of Cupid and Psyche was a philosophic allegory of the progress of the soul to perfection, in the possession of Divine love, and the reward of immortality. The remaining monuments of ancient sculpture convince us that this agreeable fiction became very famous, in which

nothing is so common as the figures of Cupid and Psyche, in the various circumstances of their adventures. Now we have previously shown at large, that the professed end of the mysteries was to restore the soul to its original rectitude, and to encourage good men with the promises of happiness in another life. The fable therefore of Cupid and Psyche, in the Fifth and Sixth Books of the *Æneid*, was the finest and most artful preparative for the subject of the Eleventh, which treats of the mysteries.

But if we look more nearly into this beautiful fable it will be found that, besides its general purpose, it has one more particular. We have observed that the corrupt state of the mysteries, in the time of Apuleius was one principal reason of his undertaking their apology. These corruptions were of two kinds, debaucheries and magic. Their debaucheries have been taken notice of previously. Their magic was of three sorts—the magic of invocation (or necromancy); the magic of transformation (or metamorphosis); and the magic of divine communication under a visible appearance (or Theurgy.)

The shows of the mysteries seem to have given birth to the first; the doctrine of the metempsychosis taught therein the second; and the Grand Secret (or Aporreta) concerning the Divine Nature, to the third.

The abomination of the two first sorts was seen by all, and frankly given up as criminal; but the fanatic Platonists and Pythagoreans of the latter ages espousing the third, occasioned it to be held in credit and reverence; so that the Egyptian priests affected to distinguish the magic of Necromancy, and the magic of Theurgy, accounting the first infamous and wicked, but the last fair and

commendable. For now both these fanatics had their philosophic mysteries, the rites of which consisted in the practice of this theurgic magic. These were the mysteries which the Emperor Julian was so fond of, that he placed his principal felicity in their celebration. This fable, as previously said, is a philosophic allegory, delivered in the adventures of Psyche (or the soul), whose various labors and traverses in this progress, are all represented as the effects of her indiscreet passion for that species of magic called Theurgy.

To understand this we must observe that the Platonists in their pursuit of the Supreme Good, the union with the Deity, made the completion and perfection of it to consist in the Theurgic vision of the Autopton Agalma, or the selfseen image—that is, seen by the splendour of its own light. Now the story tells us there were three sisters, the youngest of whom was called Psyche, by which we are to understand, the three precipitate souls—the sensitive, the animal, and the rational; or in other words, sense, appetite, and reason; that the beauty of Psyche was so divine that men forsook the altar of the gods to follow and worship her according to the following ancient aphorism, that:—“No deity is wanting if Prudence is consulted.”

She is contracted to, and possesses the celestial god Cupid, or divine love invisibly. In the meantime her sisters, envious of her superior enjoyments, take advantage of the god's invisibility to perplex her with a thousand doubts and scruples, which end in exciting her curiosity to get a sight of her lover. Psyche is deluded by them, and, against the express injunction of the god, who calls it sacrilege, attempts this forbidden sight. She succeeds,

and is undone. Divine love forsakes her; the scenes of pleasure vanish, and she finds herself forlorn and abandoned, surrounded by miseries, and pursued with the vengeance of heaven. In this distress she comes to the Temple of Ceres and Juno, and seeks protection of those deities, by which is meant, the having recourse to their mysteries, against the evils and disasters of life, as is plainly marked by the reason given for her application—“Not willing to omit any even doubtful means of bettering my condition.” They both deny admittance to her, intimating that the purer mysteries discouraged that kind of magic, even the most specious. In a word, after long and severe repentance and penance, she is pardoned and restored to the favor of heaven. She is put again in possession of divine love and rewarded with the prerogative of immortality.

It is enough that we have pointed to the chief and peculiar purpose of this beautiful fable, which it is impossible to see while its nature and design lay undiscovered. Before wholly dismissing this matter, it may not be improper to observe that both Virgil and Apuleius have represented the genuine mysteries as rites of perfect sanctity and purity, and recommended only such to their countrymen, while they expose impure impious rites to the public aversion; for it was their purpose to stigmatize the reigning corruptions, and to recommend the ancient sanctity.

Hitherto we have considered the legislator's care in perpetuating the doctrine of a future state; and if we have dwelled longer than ordinary on this head, our excuse is that the topic was new, as also the doctrine itself, which is the main subject of the present enquiry. But

our Essays will be incomplete without an exposition of "Theurgy," which means God-work, and signifies magic operating by Divine and Celestial means, or the power of doing extraordinary and supernatural things by lawful means, as prayer, invocation of God, &c., called by some White Magic.

The wisest of the Pagan world and their greatest philosophers held this magic in the highest esteem. Theurgy was, according to them, a divine art which served only to advance the mind of man to the highest perfection and render the soul more pure. They who by means of this magic had the happiness to arrive at what they called Autopsia (or Intuition), a state wherein they enjoyed intercourse with the gods (? Insanity), believed themselves invested with all their power, and were persuaded that nothing to them was impossible. Towards this state of perfection all those aspired who made profession of that sort of magic; but then it laid them under severe regulations.

None could be priest of this Order but a man of unblemished morals, and all who joined with him in his operations were bound to strict purity. They were not allowed to have any commerce with women, to eat any kind of animal food, nor defile themselves by the touch of a dead body. The philosophers and persons of the greatest virtue thought it their honor to be initiated into the mysteries of this sort of magic.

That this magic was employed by the Ancients in their mysteries we have, in former Essays, fully proved, and is, doubtless, the same as the magic of Zoroaster, which Plato says—"consisted in the worship of the gods."

The Emperor Julian alludes to this Theurgical art in the following words:—"The inspiration which arrives to men from the gods is rare and exists but in a few. Nor is it easy for every man to partake of this, nor at every time. It has ceased among the Hebrews, nor is it preserved to the present time among the Egyptians. Spontaneous oracles, also, are seen to yield to temporal periods. This, however, our philanthropic Lord and Father, Jupiter, understanding that we might not be entirely deprived of communion with the gods, has given observation through sacred arts by which we have at hand sufficient assistance."

This "art" was also professed by the early Masons, as appears by a work well-known to enlightened Masons—"An examination of one of the brotherhood of King Henry VI.," which will be transcribed in full in a future Essay.

The priests of Egypt, Persia, India, &c., pretended to bind the gods to their idols, and to make them descend from heaven at their pleasure. They threatened the sun and moon to reveal the secret mysteries, to shake the heavens, &c. Absurdity could go no further.





ESSAY XII.

WE shall now examine the principles and practices of that ancient sage and philosopher "Pythagoras" (a name familiar to all Freemasons), one who, by the superiority of his mind, infused a new spirit into science and learning, and taught his disciples Geometry that they might be able to deduce a reason for all their thoughts and actions, and ascertain correctly the truth or falsehood of any proposition by the unerring process of mathematical demonstration.

The ethical teaching of the Pythagoreans was of the purest and most spiritual kind. Virtue was regarded as a harmony of the soul, a conformity with or approximation to the Deity. Self-restraint, sincerity, and purity of heart were especially commended, and conscientiousness and uprightness in the affairs of life would seem to have been their distinguishing characteristics.

The appellation of a grandfather would perhaps apply much more to Pythagoras than that of "brother," for he, doubtless, was the parent of Druidism, and this was the father of the Masonic Society, whilst the ancient Egyptian mysteries was the great-grandfather of all. The Druids made use of Masonry as a mere cloak to cover their religious observances with no special regard to the improvement of the Craft. The idea, however, of a connection between Pythagoras and Freemasonry must have been handed down in tradition by the old Druidical

Masons, which is a strong evidence that the secrets and ceremonies of Masonry are derived originally from the ancient Egyptian mysteries through the Pythagorean school. Upon this supposition, of the truth of which there is very little doubt, it is important at this stage of our work to give some account of this celebrated philosopher, whose memory is so deservedly venerated by the Masonic Order.

From "Rees' Cyclopaedia" we find that Pythagoras himself was of Samos, the son of a lapidary who flourished in the time of Tarquin, the last king of Rome, about five hundred and eighty years before the Christian Era, and not in Numa's time, as many authors suppose. Posterity has been very liberal to this philosopher in attributing to him all such inventions as others had neglected to claim, particularly in music, for there is scarcely any part of it as a science with which he has not by his generous followers in biography been invested. His right, indeed, to some discoveries has been disputed, with as little reason perhaps as they have been bestowed upon him. After musical ratios were discovered and reduced to numbers, they were made the type of order and just proportion in all things by Pythagoras and his adherents. Hence virtue, friendship, good government, celestial motion, the human soul, and God himself were harmony. This discovery gave birth to various species of music far more strange, such as Divine music, mundane music, elementary music, and many other divisions and sub-divisions. It is, perhaps, equally to the credit and advantage of music and philosophy that they have in modern times descended from these heights and taken their proper and separate stations on

?! { earth, so that we no longer admit of music that cannot be heard, or of philosophy that cannot be understood.

The first journey of Pythagoras from the Grecian Island of Samos was into Egypt, then celebrated for that kind of wisdom which best suited his genius and temper. On the way thither he visited Phœnicia and conversed with the prophets and philosophers who were the successors of Nischus, the physiologist. Whilst in Egypt he was introduced to its king, a distinguished patron of literary men, and thus obtained access to the colleges of the priests. Having found it difficult to gain this privilege he performed many severe and troublesome preliminary ceremonies, and even submitted to circumcision, a prescribed condition of his admission. He passed twenty-two years in Egypt, and availing himself of all possible means of information with regard to the recondite doctrines of the Egyptian priests, as well as their astronomy, geometry, and Egyptian learning in its most unlimited extent. After his return from Egypt to his native island he wished to communicate the benefit of his researches and studies to his fellow citizens, and with this view he attempted to institute a school for their instruction in the elements of science, proposing to adopt the Egyptian mode of teaching, and to communicate his doctrines under symbolical form. But the Samians were either too foolish or indolent to profit by his instructions.

Although obliged to relinquish his design he did not altogether abandon it; and in order to engage the attention of his countrymen by other means, repaired to Delos, where, after presenting an offering of cakes to Apollo, he received, or pretended to receive, moral dogmas from the priestess, which he afterwards delivered to his disciples under the character of Divine precepts. With the same views he also visited the Island of Crete, so celebrated in mythological history, where he was conducted

by the priests of Cybele into the cave of Mount Ida, in which Jupiter is said to have been buried. Here he conversed with an eminent pretender to prophetic powers, and was initiated by him into the sacred mysteries of Greece. About the same time he visited Sparta and Elis, and was present at the celebration of the Olympian games. During his stay in Greece he first assumed the appellation of Philosopher.

Having thus added to the stores of learning he had previously accumulated, and acquired authority calculated to command respect, he returned to Samos, and made a second attempt—more successful than his first—to establish a school of philosophy. In a semi-circular kind of building used by the Samians as a place of resort for public business, he delivered with assumed authority of a sacred nature, popular precepts of morality, and he also had a secret cave into which he retired, with his intimate friends and disciples, and here gave his followers daily instructions, accompanied with a considerable parade of mystery, in the more abstruse parts of philosophy. His fame and the number of his followers increased; what he failed to accomplish by mere force of learning and ability, he affected by concealing his doctrines under the veil of mysterious symbols and issuing his precepts as responses from a divine oracle. About the beginning of the 59th Olympiad, Pythagoras left Samos, and as already hinted, passed over to Italy, and attempted to establish his school among the colonies of Magna-Grecia. It is probable that in order to obtain credit with the populace, he about this time pretended to possess the power of performing miracles, and practised many arts of imposture.

The first place at which he arrived in Italy was Crotona,

a city of the bay of Tarentum, the inhabitants of which were very corrupt in their manners. But such was his reputation and influence, that he was treated with great respect, and people of all classes assembled to hear his discourses, insomuch that the manners of the citizens were soon totally changed from great luxury and licentiousness, to strict sobriety and frugality.

It is said that six hundred (some say two thousand) persons were prevailed upon to submit to the strict discipline which he required, and to throw their effects into a common stock for the benefit of the whole fraternity. The influence of his philosophy extended from Crotona to many other cities, and obtained for Pythagoras from his followers, a degree of respect little short of admiration. Had he been content with philosophy and precepts of practical wisdom, he might have continued his labors without molestation to the end of his life. But he manifested a strong propensity towards political innovations, and employed his influence in urging the people to the strenuous assertion of their rights, against the encroachment of their tyrannical governors. This course of conduct raised against him a very powerful opposition, which he was unable to resist, or contend against, and which obliged him to retire to Metapontum. Here he found himself still surrounded with enemies, and was under the necessity of seeking an asylum in the Temple of the Muses, where, not being supplied by his friends with sufficient food, he perished of hunger. He died in the third year of the sixty-eighth Olympiad, about five hundred years before the Christian era, aged about eighty years. The Pythagorean system was carried on by a succession of disciples down to about three hundred years B.C., when it seems to have gradually died out, being

to associate, how he passed his leisure moments, and what incidents appeared to excite in him the strongest emotions of joy or sorrow. Nor after this examination was anyone admitted into his society till he was fully persuaded of the docility of his disposition, the gentleness of his manners, his power of retaining in silence what he was taught, and in fine, his capacity of becoming a true philosopher. After the first probationary admission the fortitude and self-command of the candidate were put to the trial by a long course of severe abstinence, and rigorous exercise. This course comprehended food, drink, and clothing, all of which were of the most plain and simple kind, and the exercises prescribed were painful and fatiguing. To teach them humility and industry, he exposed them for three years to a continued course of contradiction, ridicule, and contempt among their fellows. This custom, it would appear, has descended through the Druids, the ancient schoolmasters of England, to the universities and colleges, where the newly entered "freshmen" are made the butt and ridicule of the higher classes for twelve months. This practice was doubtless introduced upon the principles of Pythagoras to inculcate humility, a vile custom which has, we believe, recently fallen much into disuse.

In order to restrain the powerful passion of avarice, he required his disciples to submit to voluntary poverty, and deprived them of all command over their own property, by casting the possessions of each individual into a common stock, to be distributed by proper officers, as occasion required. After this sequestration of their goods they lived together on a footing of perfect equality, and sat together at a common table. If anyone afterwards repented of the connection, he was at liberty to

depart and might reclaim from the general fund his whole contribution.

That his disciples might acquire a habit of entire docility, Pythagoras enjoined upon them from their first admission a long term of silence. This initiatory silence consisted in refraining from speech for from two to five years (this is probably a modern exaggeration), according to the propensity toward conceit, &c. With regard to himself this was a judicious expedient, as it checked impertinent curiosity and prevented the inconvenience of contradiction. His disciples silenced all doubts and refuted all objections by appealing to his authority. Moreover, during the years of initiation, the disciples were prohibited from seeing their master, or hearing his lectures, except from behind a curtain, or receiving instructions from some inferior preceptor. To the genuine disciples belonged the privilege of receiving a full explanation of the whole doctrine of Pythagoras, which was delivered to others in brief precepts and dogmas under the concealment of symbols. Disciples of this class were permitted to take minutes of their master's lectures in writing as well as to propose questions and offer remarks upon each subject of discourse. These were particularly distinguished by the appellation of "The Pythagoreans" and were also called "mathematicians," from the studies upon which they entered immediately after initiation. After making sufficient progress in geometrical science, they proceeded to the study of nature, the investigation of primary principles, and the knowledge of God. Those who pursued these sublime speculations were called "Theorists," and those who devoted themselves more particularly to theology were styled "religious." Others, according to their

abilities and inclinations, were engaged in the study of morals, economics, and policy, and were afterwards employed in managing the affairs of the fraternity, or sent into the cities of Greece to instruct them in the principles of government or assist them in the institution of laws.

The brethren of the Pythagorean College at Crotona lived together as in one family with their wives and children, and the whole business of the Society was conducted with the most perfect regularity. Every day commenced with a deliberation upon the manner in which it should be spent, and concluded with a retrospect of the events which had occurred and of the business transacted. They rose before the sun that they might do him homage, after which they repeated select verses from Homer and other poets, and made use of music, both vocal and instrumental, to enliven their spirits and fit them for the business of the day. They then employed several hours in the study of the sciences. These were succeeded by an interval of leisure which was commonly spent in a solitary walk for the purpose of contemplation. The next part of the day was allotted to conversation. The hour immediately before dinner was filled up with various kinds of athletic exercises. Their dinner consisted chiefly of bread, honey, and water; for after they were perfectly initiated they wholly denied themselves the use of wine. The remainder of the day was devoted to civil and domestic affairs, conversation, bathing, and religious ceremonies.

The Exoteric disciples of Pythagoras were taught after the Egyptian manner by images and symbols, obscure and almost unintelligible to those uninitiated into the

mysteries of the school. Those admitted to this privilege were under the strictest obligation of silence with regard to the recondite doctrines of their master. The wisdom of Pythagoras, that it might not pass into the ears of the vulgar, was committed chiefly to memory; and when they found it necessary to make use of writing they took good care not to suffer their minutes to pass beyond the limits of the school.

The two "Orders" we have described correspond very exactly to those among the Hebrews, for in the schools of the prophets there were two classes, viz.:—The sons of the prophets, who were the scholars, and the doctors or masters, also called Perfecti; and among the Levites, the novices, who had their five years' exercises by way of preparation. Lastly, even among the proselytes there were two "Orders"—proselytes of the gate and proselytes of the covenant. It is highly probable that Pythagoras himself had been a proselyte of the gate, if not of the covenant. After the dissolution of the assembly it was thought necessary, in order to preserve the Pythagorean doctrine from oblivion, to reduce it to a systematic summary, at the same time, however, strongly enjoining their children to preserve these memoirs secret, and to transmit them in confidence to their posterity.

From this time books began to multiply among the followers of Pythagoras, till at length (in the time of Plato) they exposed the Pythagorean records for sale. Of these imperfect records of their philosophy few have escaped the wreck of time, except, perhaps, sundry fragments (concerning the authenticity of which there are grounds for suspicion); these, if admitted to be genuine, only exhibit an imperfect view of the moral and

political doctrine of Pythagoras under the disguise of symbolical and enigmatical language.

The strict injunction of secrecy given on oath to initiated Pythagoreans has effectually prevented any original records of their doctrines concerning Nature and God from passing to posterity. On this head we rely entirely for information (and, indeed, concerning the whole doctrine of Pythagoras), upon Plato and his followers. Plato himself, whilst enriching his system with stores from the magazine of Pythagoras, accommodated the Pythagorean doctrines to his own system, and thus gave an imperfect, and we may suppose, in many particulars, a false representation of the principles of Pythagoras. This was further corrupted by Plato's followers even in the old academy and afterwards in the Alexandrian school, to which we may add, that the doctrine of Pythagoras itself, probably in its original state, and certainly in every form under which it has been transmitted to us was observed, not only by symbolical, but by mathematical language, which is rather calculated to perplex than to illustrate metaphysical conceptions. In this fault Pythagoras was afterwards imitated by Plato, Aristotle, and others.

An ancient writer says that the Pythagorean philosophy came at last to be extinguished. First, because it was enigmatical; next, because the writings were in the Doric dialect, which is obscure. By this means the doctrines delivered in it were not understood; and, moreover, because they who published them were not Pythagoreans.

The following is a faint delineation from the best authors of the Pythagorean philosophy. "The end of

philosophy is to free the mind from those incumbrances which hinder its progress towards perfection, and raise it to the contemplation of immutable truth, and the knowledge of divine and spiritual objects. This effect must be produced by easy steps, lest the mind, hitherto conversant only with sensible things, should revolt at the change. The first step towards wisdom is the study of geometry or mathematics (or Masonry), [?] a science which contemplates objects that, [?] in the middle way between corporeal and incorporeal beings, and, as it were, on the confines of both, which most advantageously inures the mind to contemplation. [?] *accustoms*

? The Monad, or Unity is that quantity which, being deprived of all number, remains fixed; it is the fountain of all number. The Duad is imperfect and passive, and the cause of increase and division. The Triad, composed of the Monad and Duad, partakes of the nature of both. Tetrad or Quarternion number is the most perfect. The Decad, which is the sum of the four former, comprehends all arithmetical and musical proportions. According to some writers the Monad denotes the active principle in Nature, or God; the Duad, the passive principle, or matter; the Triad, the word formed by the union of the two former; and the Quarternion the perfection of nature. Some have understood by this mysterious number, the four elements; others the four faculties of the human mind; others, the four cardinal virtues; whilst others have been so absurd as to imagine that Pythagoras made use of this number to express the name of God in reference to the word (Gehovah) by which that name is expressed in the Hebrew language. But every attempt to unfold this mystery has hitherto been unsuccessful.

Next to numbers, music had the chief place in the exercises of the Pythagorean school, by which the mind was to be raised above the dominion of the passions, and inured to contemplation. Pythagoras considered music not only as an art to be judged of by the ear, but as a science to be reduced to mathematical principles and proportions.

It was said of Pythagoras that he was the only mortal so far favored by the gods as to be permitted to hear the celestial music of the spheres. Pythagoras applied music to the cure of diseases both bodily and mental. It was the custom of his school to compose their minds for rest in the evening, and to prepare themselves for action in the morning, by suitable airs which they performed upon the lute, or other stringed instruments. The music was, however, always accompanied with verse, so that it may be doubted whether the effect was to be ascribed more to the musician or to the poet. It is recorded of Pythagoras that whenever he perceived himself inclined to anger, spleen, or other restless passions, he took up his lute, and that it never failed to restore the tranquility of his mind; it is related that he checked a young man who was meditating some act of Bacchanalian madness, by ordering the musician who had inflamed his passions, to change the music on a sudden into a slow and solemn Doric mood.

Pythagoras learned geometry in Egypt, but greatly improved it by investigating many new theorems, and by digesting its principles in an order more perfectly systematical than had before been done. Pythagoras seems to have done more than any other philosopher of this period towards reducing the "Royal Art" to a regular science. His definition of a point is a Monad, or

unity with position. He taught that a geometrical point corresponds to unity in arithmetic, a line to two, a superficies to three, a solid to four.

Of the geometrical theorems ascribed to Pythagoras, the following are the principal:—Thus, the interior angles of every triangle are together, equal to two right angles, that the only polygons which fill up the whole space about a given point, are the equilateral triangle, the square, and the hexagon; the first to be taken six times; the second four times; the third three times, and that in rectangular triangles, the square of the side which subtends the right angle is equal to the two squares of the sides which contain the right angle. Upon the invention of this later proposition (Euclid I., prop. 47) Plutarch says that Pythagoras offered an ox; others, an hecatomb, to the gods. But this story is thought inconsistent with the institutions of Pythagoras, which did not admit of animal sacrifices.

Theoretical philosophy which treats of Nature and its origin, was the highest object of study of the Pythagorean school, and included all those profound mysteries, which those ambitious to report what Pythagoras said behind the curtain, have endeavored to unfold. On this subject nothing can be advanced with certainty, especially respecting theology, the doctrine of which, Pythagoreans, after the manner of the Egyptian priests, were peculiarly careful to hide under the veil of symbols, probably through fear of disturbing the popular superstitions. The ancients have not, however, left us without some ground of conjecture.

With respect to God, Pythagoras appears to have

taught that He is the universal mind, diffused through all things, the source of all animal life, the proper and intrinsic cause of all motion, in substance similar to light, in nature like truth, the first principle of the universe, incapable of pain, invisible, incorruptible, and only to be comprehended by the mind.

The region of the air was supposed by the Pythagoreans to be full of spirits, demons, and heroes, who caused sickness or health to a man or beast, and communicated at their pleasure by means of dreams, and other instruments of divination, the knowledge of future events. That Pythagoras himself, held this opinion cannot be doubted, if true, as related, that he professed to cure diseases by incantations. He probably derived it from the Egyptians, among whom it was believed that many diseases were caused by Demonical possessions.

The doctrine of the Pythagoreans respecting the nature of brute animals, the transmigration of souls into the bodies of men and animals, appear to have been regarded by him as a process of purification, and he is asserted to have said that he had a distinct recollection of having personally passed through other stages of existence. Seeing a dog beaten, and hearing it howl, he bade the striker desist, saying—"It is the soul of a friend of mine whom I recognize by his voice." Doubtless this belief was the foundation of their abstinence from animal food and of the exclusion of animal sacrifices from their religious ceremonies. This doctrine Pythagoras probably learned in Egypt where it was commonly taught. Nor is there sufficient reason for understanding it, as some have done, symbolically. The precept, however, prohibiting the use of "beans" is one of the mysteries, which the ancient

Pythagoreans never disclosed, and which all modern ingenuity has in vain attempted to discover. Pythagorean precepts of more value are such as these. "Discourse not of Pythagorean doctrines without light. Above all things govern your tongue." Referring to suicide, he says—"Quit not your station without the command of your general. Remember that the paths of virtue and vice resemble the letter Y." The symbolical use of the letter Y has reference to the old fable (before noticed in these Essays) of the triple path, that is, where the road to the infernal regions divides into two, the one leading to Elysium, and the other to Tartarus. This letter was a very appropriate symbol to mark out these roads; the disproportion of the two strokes which form it being indicative of the comparative numbers to be accommodated in the two courses, that is, of the righteous and the wicked. (See Matthew vii. 13).

It is surprising that a philosopher so skilful as Pythagoras in astronomy, geometry, and other parts of mathematics, should be pleased to deliver his most beautiful precepts under the veil of enigmas; this veil, so thick that the interpreters have found in it ample matter for conjecture. This symbolic method was very much used in Egypt and the East. It is from thence, without doubt, Pythagoras derived it. He returned from his travels laden with the spoils of the erudition of all the countries he had visited. It is pretended that his Quarternion is the same thing as the name "Tetragrammaton," a name ineffable and full of mystery according to the Rabbins. Others will have it that this Quarternion this great object of veneration and of oaths is nothing more than a mysterious manner of dogmatizing by numbers. But let us not forget that Pythagoras and

his successors had two ways of teaching, one for the initiated, the other for strangers and the profane. The first was clear and unveiled, the second symbolic and enigmatical.

It is somewhat remarkable that a difference of opinion should exist among the learned in regard to the meaning which Pythagoras intended to convey to his pupils of the higher class by the word Tetrachys (or Quarterion), for it appears pretty evident that he used it enigmatically as synonymous with geometry. And so Bailey, who seems to have known more of antiquity than any other of his day, defines it. He says—"Quarternion, in ancient geometry, signified a point, a line, a surface, and a solid."

The ancient Druidical Freemasons were taught that there were four principles in Masonry, specified agreeably to the above definition of Quarternion. These four principles contained in geometry comprehended the entire of physical nature, and on this account the enigma of the perfection of the number four has been erected. The Pythagoreans affirmed the number four to be the sum and completion of all things, as comprising the four great principles both of arithmetic and geometry. In the centre of our Masonic Lodges, within an irradiation or "blazing star," is inscribed the letter G, denoting the great and glorious science of geometry as cultivated by our ancient and venerable masters. Whilst each of our symbols reciprocally serves to illustrate the rest, there is one sense in which they yield to the decided pre-eminence of the great centre emblem, whose sacred initial character, surrounded by a blaze of glory, recalls our minds from the work of the architect to the Grand Geometrician himself. The Egyptians invented geometry and found

it of such infinite importance that they, in a manner, deified the science; hence the great respect paid to its initial in Freemasonry. It is, in fact, made to indicate the Supreme Being, who, according to the Pythagorean doctrine, was mysteriously involved in the physical principles of nature. Geometry is painted as a lady with a sallow face, clad in a green mantle, fringed with silver, and holding a silver wand (the Nilometer) in her right hand.

! very genteel!

The mysteries of Ceres were regularly celebrated every fifth year, that is, after a revolution of four years. The Olympic games took place at the same time, the name of which originated from their being first celebrated near the city of Olympia. Hence the Olympiad, an epoch of four years, all arising evidently from the perfection attributed to the number four.

NOTE.—As in the present system of "blue" Masonry there are three degrees, so also in the Pythagorean system there were three degrees. First—"Mathematici," engaged in the study of the exact sciences; second—"Theoretici," engaged in the study of philosophy and probably magic; third—"Electi," consisting of only a few favored disciples, regarded by the master as worthy of special enlightenment.

SUMMARY.—Pythagoras appears to have gained the confidence of the priests wherever he went, and learned from them the symbolic languages by which their proceedings were guarded, which at the same time concealed the artful policy by which they governed princes as well as people. The various discoveries in mathematics, music, and astronomy, are proofs of the

mighty impression which he made on his contemporaries, as well as on after ages. From the great respect paid by Pythagoras to geometry all Masons have ever hailed him as an ancient brother, and certainly his system approximates to the science of Freemasonry. He is said to have been instructed in the sacred things of the Hebrews either by Daniel or Ezekiel during the Babylonish captivity. The "institutions" of this great philosopher resembled the Masonic system in many respects. His assemblies were arranged due East and West, because he said—"motion began in the East and proceeded to the West." He adopted a system of signs then in vogue, whereby his disciples, although dispersed throughout various countries, made themselves known to each other at first sight, and became as familiar at their first introduction as if they had been acquainted from their birth; and so closely were their interests united that many of them passed over seas, and risked their fortune to re-establish one of their brethren who had fallen into distress.

Various aphorisms and pointed replies (which ought not to be omitted here) are ascribed to Pythagoras, such as the following:—"What is the most ancient of beings?" "God, for He is uncreated." "What the most beautiful?" "The Universe, for it is the work of God." "What the most extensive?" "Space, for it contains all things." "What the most rapid?" "Wind, for it traverses all things." "What the most powerful?" "Necessity, for it prevails over all things." "How shall we live most virtuously and justly?" "If we refuse to do ourselves what we reprehend in others." "Who is happy?" "He who possesses a sound body, competence of fortune, and a mind disposed to receive instruction."

When there had been any difference or misunderstanding among the scholars of Pythagoras, they were bound to embrace each other, and shake hands before the sun went down—an apt and prompt means of adjusting differences, which might advantageously be adopted in the present day. There is little doubt that his mysteries were the most perfect approximation to the original science of Freemasonry which could be accomplished by a philosopher bereft of the aid of revelation.





ESSAY XIII.

THE Druidical institution was, probably, common to all Celtic nations, for when the Romans invaded Britain under Julius Cæsar, about fifty-five years before the Christian era, the inhabitants were famous, even at that early period among foreign nations, for their superior knowledge of the principles, and their great zeal for the "rites" of Druidism. Nothing can be affirmed with certainty concerning the number of the British Druids, though we have reason to believe they were very numerous. Both the Gauls and Britons of these times were much addicted to superstition, and among a superstitious people there will always be many priests. Cæsar informs us that large numbers of people, allured by the honors and privileges which they enjoyed, embraced the discipline of the Druids of their own accord, and that many more were dedicated to it by their parents. Upon the whole, therefore, we shall probably not be much mistaken in supposing that the British Druids bore as great proportion in number to the rest of the people as the clergy bear to the laity in the present age.

In Albion (now England) there were provinces under an Arch-Druid, invested with supreme authority; under him was a Trinity of Ministers, and twenty-five subordinate Deans or Deacons; these met annually for the judgment of causes and enactment of rules, and four other meetings took place, as near as possible to the equinoctial and solstitial periods of the year.

In the Drudicial mysteries there were three degrees:—First, “bards,” or chanters, who wore a robe of sky-blue to signify peace; second, “prophets,” who wore white, denoting holiness; and the third, “Druids,” who wore green, an emblem of progress. This class was invested with a gold chain. A gold fringe was sometimes added to the bard’s robe.

They appear also to have had a great “secret”—the name of God represented by three marks, or short lines, like the royal arrowhead found on stones and the like. They had also secret symbols and passwords, and adored Hu, the mighty Hu.

Their teaching was conveyed in Triads, such as there are three primary unities; one God, one Truth, and one point of Liberty; three things spring from the three primary unities, Life, Goodness, and Power; three things which God cannot but see, viz. :—What perfect goodness ought to be; what perfect goodness would desire to be; and what perfect goodness can be. Cæsar says—“The people are much addicted to religious observances; that those who are attacked by serious diseases, or involved in danger, either offer human sacrifices, or make a vow that they will do so, and they employ the Druids to officiate at these sacrifices, to conciliate the gods with life for life; there were also sacrifices of the same kind on behalf of the State. Some have images of enormous size, the limbs of which they make of wicker-work, and fill with living men, and setting them on fire, the men are destroyed by the flames. They consider that the torture of those who have been taken in the commission of theft, or open robbery, or in any crime, is more agreeable to the immortal gods, but when there is not a sufficient number

of criminals, they scruple not to inflict torture on the innocent. The chief deity whom they worship is Mercury; of him they have many images, and they consider him to be the inventor of all “arts,” their guide in all their journeyings, and they seek his influence in the pursuit of wealth and affairs of commerce. Next to him, they worship Apollo, and Mars, and Jupiter, and Minerva, and nearly resemble other nations respecting these, as that Apollo wards off disease; that Minerva communicates the rudiments of manufactures and manual arts; that Jupiter is the ruler of the celestials; that Mars is the god of war (Cæsar does not give their native names.) To Mars, when they have determined to engage in a pitched battle, they commonly devote whatever spoil they may take in war. After the contest, they slay all living creatures found amongst the spoil, the other things they gather into one spot. In many States, heaps raised of these things in consecrated places may be seen; nor does it often happen that anyone is so unscrupulous as to conceal at home any part of the spoil, or take it away when deposited; a very heavy punishment with torture is denounced against that crime.”

In the Druidical mysteries, the candidate was initiated under the canopy of heaven; the place of meeting was to be unpolluted with a metal tool, and, as previously stated, those belonging to the “Order” were invested with a chain. A coffin (or pastos) was required, and the progress of the initiate was gradual; after severe trials he was admitted to the privileges of Druidism. The following principles were instilled into the candidate at progressive stages:—1st. That all worthy things descend from the Heaven of Heavens. 2nd. The soul after death goeth into divers other bodies, the sublimer minds ascend to

higher orbs than our earth, there to enjoy unbounded felicity. 3rd. Whatever is left with the dying, or cast upon their funeral piles, is surely theirs in the other world. 4th. Those who destroy themselves will go thither with their friends, and there abide with them. 5th. None shall receive instruction without the limits of our sacred grove; there the oak and mistletoe favor devotion. 6th. The education of children demands the greatest care; twenty years of assiduous teaching will scarce suffice. 7th. The secrets of our sciences and arts must not be committed to writing; they must repose in memory alone. 8th. Every soul is immortal, however long and variously it may transmigrate. 9th. The mistletoe must never be cut but with a golden "bill," and if possible, only in the sixth moon; it is to be gathered with a holy reverence, and when deposited in the *white segum*, must be then conveyed upon two white bulls to the place where needed. 10th. The powder of the mistletoe is salutary for women, making them fruitful. 11th. The sacrifices are holy; none but the obedient shall attend them. 12th. Man or woman may be sacrificed on extraordinary occasions. 13th. Prisoners of war are to be slain at times, and upon the cromlechs, or they may be burnt alive within "wickers" in honor of the immortal gods. 14th. Future events may be foretold from the direction in which the body falls when seized by death, or as the same shall move when fallen, or as the blood may flow therefrom. 15th. Strangers must have no commerce with our people, save from necessity, or for some good unto ourselves. 16th. Children are to be brought up separate from their parents until their fourteenth year; the foundation must be laid by their ghostly fathers. 17th. When the world is destroyed it must be by fire or by water. 18. Money lent and not repaid, will be restored

in the next world. 19th. Everyone who cometh sluggishly to the "Assembly of our States," and he who is the last of all in attendance shall surely die. 20th. The earth we inhabit is not a plain, but a globe, and so are the sun and moon and stars likewise. 21st. All light cometh from the sun, that which by the moon is shed is but borrowed by her from him. 22nd. Our people were mighty in knowledge once. Upon the heights they were used to meditate upon the heavenly bodies, and there did they contemplate all nature. The mysteries were there taught unto our youth; and in the plains below our wise men saw that the wisdom so gained was practised. 23rd. Temples are never to be raised with closed walls, and they are likewise to be open to the skies; they are to be upon the plains, or upon some lofty height, that the heavenly spheres may be the better seen; and if upon the plains then in the open air, and yet with trees encompassing. 24th. No images of the gods have we, but emblems only; hence does the truncated oak symbolize both the firmness and the majesty of the God of Gods. 25th. Our *Fiads*, also called *Vaccerri*, are the ordinary priests; the *Enbages* are our augurs: The *Bardi*, also called *Vates*, are our poets and chroniclers; the *Vergobretus* doth judge the law, and the *Saronida* instruct our youths, and also administer justice, under the guidance of the Arch-Druid and the *Vergobretus*. Such is the bloody creed of the ancient Druids.

The Druids, as well as the Gymnosophists of India, the Magi of Persia, the Chaldeans of Assyria, and all the other priests of antiquity had two sets of religious doctrines and opinions which were very different from one another. The one of these systems (as before shown) they communicated only to the initiated who were admitted into their own order, and at their admission

were solemnly sworn to keep that system of doctrines a profound secret from all the rest of mankind. Besides this they took several other precautions to prevent the secret doctrines from transpiring. They taught their disciples in the most private places, such as caves of the earth, or the deepest recesses of the thickest forests, that they might not be overheard by any who were not initiated. They never committed any of these doctrines to writing, for fear they should thereby become public. Nay, so scrupulous were some orders of these ancient priests on this head, that they made it an inviolable rule never to communicate any of these secret doctrines to women, lest they should reveal them. The other system of religious doctrines and opinions were made public, being adapted to the capacities and superstitious humors of the people, and calculated to promote the honor and opulence of the priesthood.

It cannot be expected that we should be able to give a minute detail of all the secret doctrines of the Druids. The Greek and Roman writers, from whom alone we receive information, were not perfectly acquainted with them, and, therefore, have left us only some general hints and probable conjectures about them with which we must be contented. The secret doctrines of the Druids, as previously shown, were much the same as the Gymnosophists and Brahmins of India, the Magi of Persia, the Chaldeans of Assyria, the priests of Egypt, and of all the other priests of antiquity. All these are frequently joined together by ancient authors, as entertaining the same opinion in religion and philosophy, which might be easily confirmed by an induction of particulars. The truth is, there is hardly anything more surprising in the history of mankind than the similitude, or rather

identity, of the opinions, institutions, and manners of these "Orders" of ancient priests, though they lived under such different climates, and at so great a distance from one another without intercourse or communication. This really amounts to a demonstration that all these opinions and institutions flowed originally from one fountain. The secret doctrine of the Druids, and of all these different "orders" of priests were more agreeable to primitive tradition and right reason than their public doctrines, as they were not under any temptation in their private schools to conceal or disguise the truth. It is not improbable that they still retained in secret the great doctrine of one God, the Creator and Governor of the Universe. This, which was originally the belief of all the "orders" of priests which we have mentioned, was retained by some of them long after the period we are now considering, that is—fifty-five years B.C. to A.D. 449. This is one of the doctrines which the Brahmins of India are sworn to keep secret:—"That there is one God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth." Cæsar acquaints us that the Druids taught their disciples many things of the nature and perfections of God. Some writers are of opinion, and have taken much pains to prove that the Druids as well as the other orders of ancient priests taught their disciples many things concerning the creation of the world; the formation of man; his primitive innocence and felicity, and his fall into guilt and misery; the creation of angels; their rebellion and expulsion out of Heaven; the universal Deluge; and the final destruction of the world by fire; and that their doctrines on all these subjects were not very different from those which are contained in the writings of Moses and other parts of Scripture. There is abundant evidence that the Druids taught the doctrine of the immortality of the souls of

men, and "Mela" tells us that this was a doctrine which they were permitted to publish for political rather than religious reasons. There is one thing which they teach their disciples which has been made known to the common people in order to render them more brave and fearless, viz. :—"That souls are immortal, and there is another life after the present." Cæsar says that the Druids taught the Pythagorean doctrine of the transmigration of souls into other bodies. This was, perhaps, their public doctrine on this subject, as being most level to the gross conceptions of the vulgar. But others represent them as teaching that the soul after death ascended into some higher orb, and enjoyed a more sublime felicity. This was probably their private doctrine and real sentiments. According to their doctrine, man is placed in the circle of courses, good and evil are placed before him for his selection; if he prefers the good, death transmits him from the earth into the circle of felicity, but if he prefers evil, death returns him to the circle of courses; he is made to do penance for a time in the body of a beast or reptile and then permitted to re-assume the form of man. According to the predominance of vice or virtue in his disposition, a repetition of this probation may be necessary, but after a certain number of transmigrations his offences will be expiated, his passions subdued, and the circle of felicity will receive him among its inhabitants. But, however agreeable to truth and reason these doctrines of the Druids might be, they were of no benefit to the bulk of mankind, from whom they were carefully concealed. For these artful priests for their own mercenary ends had embraced a maxim which has unhappily survived them—"that ignorance was the mother of devotion," and that the common people were incapable of comprehending rational principles, or of being influenced by rational motives, and

that they were therefore to be fed with the coarser food of superstitious fables. The following is the reason assigned for the fabulous theology of the ancients :—"It is not possible to bring women and the common herd of mankind to religion, piety, and virtue, by the pure and simple dictates of reason; it is necessary to call in the aids of superstition, which must be nourished by fables and portents of various kinds. With this view, therefore, were all the fables of ancient theology invented, to awaken superstitious terrors in the minds of the ignorant multitude." As the Druids had the same ends in view with the other priests of antiquity, it is highly probable that their public theology was of the same complexion with theirs, consisting of a thousand mythological fables concerning the genealogies, attributes, offices, and actions of their gods; and various superstitious methods of appeasing their anger, gaining their favor, and discovering their will. The secret and public theology of the Druids, together with their system of morals and philosophy, had swelled to such an enormous size, in the beginning of this period, that their disciples employed no less than twenty years in making themselves masters of all their different branches, and in getting by heart that infinite multitude of verses in which they were contained.

The sun seems to have been both the most ancient and universal object of idolatrous worship; inasmuch, that perhaps there never was any nation of idolators who did not pay some homage to this glorious luminary. He was worshipped by the ancient Britons with great devotion, in many places, under the various names of Bel, Belinus, Apollo, Graunis, &c.; all which names in their language were expressive of the nature and properties of that visible fountain of light and heat. To this illustrious

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object, those famous circles of stones, of which there are not a few still remaining, seem to have been chiefly dedicated, where the Druids kept the sacred fire, the symbol of this divinity, whence as being situated on eminences, they had a full view of the heavenly bodies.

The Gauls and Britons appear to have paid the same kind of worship to the moon, as to the sun, and it has been observed that the circular temples dedicated to these two luminaries were of similar construction and commonly contiguous. But a great many of the gods of Gaul and Britain, as well as of Greece and Rome, had been men, victorious princes, wise legislators, inventors of useful arts, &c. They worshipped also several female divinities or goddesses; as Andraste, who is supposed to have been identical with Venus, or Diana, Minerva, Ceres, Proserpine, &c. Nay, into such an abyss of superstition and idolatry were they sunk, that they had a greater number of gods than the Egyptians, and there was hardly a river, lake, mountain, or wood, which was not supposed to have some divinities, or genii residing in them.

Offerings of various kinds constituted an important part of the religion of the ancient Druids. Mankind in all ages of the world and in every country, have betrayed a consciousness of guilt, and dread of punishment from superior beings on that account. In consequence of this they have employed various means to expiate the guilt of which they were conscious, and to escape punishment of which they were afraid. The means most universally employed for these ends were sacrifices of living creatures to their offended gods, which constituted a very essential part of the religion of the ancient Britons, and other nations. The animals which were sacrificed by them, as well as by other nations, were such as they used for their

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own food, which being very palatable and nourishing to themselves, they imagined would be no less agreeable to their gods. These victims were examined by the Druids with great care, to see that they were the most perfect and beautiful in their several kinds; after which they were killed with various ceremonies by priests appointed for that purpose. On some occasions the victims were consumed entirely by fire upon the "altar," but more commonly they were divided into three parts, one of which was consumed upon the altar, another fell to the share of the priests who officiated, and on the third, the person who brought the sacrifice, feasted with his friends.

It had been well if our British ancestors had confined themselves to the sacrificing of oxen, sheep, goats, and other animals, but we have undoubted evidence that they proceeded to the most horrid lengths of cruelty in their superstition, and offered "human" victims to their gods.

It had unhappily become an article of the Druidical creed—"That nothing but the life of a man could atone for the life of a man." In consequence of this maxim their altars streamed with human blood, and great numbers of wretched men fell a sacrifice to this barbarous superstition. They are said indeed, to have preferred such as had been guilty of theft, robbery, and other crimes, as most acceptable to their gods; but when there was a scarcity of criminals, they made no scruple to supply their place with innocent persons. These dreadful bloody sacrifices were offered by the Druids for the public on the eve of a disastrous war, or in time of any national calamity, and for particular persons of high rank when they were afflicted with any dangerous disease. By such acts of cruelty did the ancient Britons endeavor to avert the

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displeasure and gain the favor of their gods. It was one article of their creed, and of all other nations of antiquity, that the gods whom they worshipped had the government of the world and the direction of future events in their hands, and that they were not unwilling upon proper application, to discover these events to their pious worshippers.

“The gods,” it was said, “either from the benignity of their own natures, and their love to mankind, or because men have merited this favor from them, take pleasure in discovering events by various indications. This belief gave rise to astrology, augury, magic, lots, and an infinite multitude of religious “rites and ceremonies,” by which deluded mortals hoped to discover the counsels of heaven with regard to themselves and their undertakings. The ancient Britons were greatly addicted to divination, and excelled so much in the practice of all its arts that they might have given a lesson either to the Persians or Egyptians themselves. The Druids, who were the ministers of religion, appear to have professed the sole authority of making, explaining, and executing the laws; and one great reason of the superior success of the Druids in their ambitious schemes was this. The laws among the ancient Britons, and some other ancient nations, were not considered as the decrees of their princes, but as the commands of their gods, and the Druids were supposed to be the only persons to whom the gods communicated the knowledge of their commands, and consequently the only persons who could declare and explain them to the people. The violation of the laws were not considered as crimes against the princes or State, but as “sins” against heaven, for which the Druids, as ministers of heaven, had alone the right of taking vengeance. All these important

prerogatives of declaring, explaining, and executing the laws, the Druids enjoyed and exercised in their full extent. “All controversies,” says Cæsar, “both public and private, are determined by the Druids. If a crime is committed, or murder perpetrated; if any disputes arise about the division of inheritances, or the boundaries of estates, they alone have the right to pronounce sentence, and they only are the dispensers of rewards and punishments. “These ghostly judges had one engine which contributed much to procure submission to their decisions. This was the sentence of excommunication, or interdict which they pronounced against particular persons, or whole tribes, when they refused to submit to their decrees. The unhappy persons against whom they were fulminated, were not only excluded from all sacrifices and religious rites, but were with all held in universal detestation, as impious and abominable; their company was avoided as dangerous and contaminating; they were declared incapable of any trust, or honor, put out of the protection of the laws, and exposed to injuries of every kind; a condition which must have brought the most refractory spirits to submission.

The 1st of May was a great annual festival in honor of Belinus, or the sun. On this day prodigious fires were kindled in all their sacred places, and on the tops of all their “Cairns,” and many sacrifices were offered to that glorious luminary which now began to shine upon them with great warmth and lustre. Midsummer-day, and the 1st November, were likewise annual festivals, the one to implore the friendly influences of heaven upon their fields, and the other to return thanks for the favorable seasons, and the fruits of the earth, as well as to pay their yearly contributions to the ministers of their

religion. Nay, it is even probable that all their gods and goddesses, their sacred groves, hallowed hills, lakes, and fountains, had their several anniversary festivals, so that the Druidical calendar was crowded with holidays. On these festivals, after the appointed sacrifices and other acts of devotion were finished, the rest of the time was spent in feasting, singing, dancing, and all kinds of diversion.

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ab ⊗ { It was an article in the Druidical creed, as previously stated—"That it was unlawful to build temples to the gods, or to worship them within walls and under roofs." All their places of worship therefore, were in the open air, and generally on eminences, from which they had a full view of the heavenly bodies to whom much of their adoration was directed. But, that they might not be too much incommoded by winds and rains, distracted by the view of external objects, or disturbed by intrusion, when they were instructing their disciples or performing their religious rites, they made choice of the deepest recesses of groves and woods for their sacred places. These groves were planted for that purpose in the most proper situations and with those trees in which they most delighted. The chief of these was a strong and spreading oak, which tree the Druids held in high and superstitious veneration.

These sacred groves were watered by consecrated fountains, or rivers, and surrounded by a ditch or mound to prevent the intrusion of improper persons. In the centre of the grove was a circular area enclosed with one or two rows of large stones set up perpendicularly in the earth, which constituted the temple, within which the "altar" stood, on which sacrifices were offered. In some of their most magnificent temples (as particularly that of

Stonehenge in England) they laid stones of prodigious weight on the tops of the standing pillars, which formed a kind of circle aloft in the air, and added much to the grandeur of the whole.

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At the time of the invasion of Julius Cæsar, the British Druids were in the height of their power and glory, enjoying an almost absolute authority over the minds and persons of their own countrymen, and being greatly admired and resorted to by strangers. But as the Romans gained ground on this island the power of the Druids gradually declined until it was quite destroyed; for that victorious people, contrary to their usual policy, discovered everywhere a great animosity against the persons and religion of the Druids. They deprived the Druids of all authority in civil matters, and showed them no mercy when they transgressed the laws, or were concerned in any revolt.

Such of the Druids as did not think fit to submit to the Roman Government and comply with the Roman rite fled into Caledonia, Ireland, and the lesser British Isles, where they supported their authority for some time longer. Many of them retired into the Isle of Anglesea—a kind of little world of their own—where the Arch-Druid of Britain was thought to have had his stated residence. They did not long remain undisturbed in this retirement, for the Governor of Britain under Nero, A.D. 61, observing that the Isle of Anglesea was the great seat of disaffection to the Roman Government, and the asylum of all who were forming plots against it, determined to subdue it. Having conducted his army to the Island and defeated the Britons who attempted to defend it, though they were animated by the presence, and prayers, and the

exhortations of a great multitude of Druids and Druidesses, he made a very cruel use of his victory. Not content with cutting down their sacred groves, demolishing their temples, and over-turning their "altars," he burned many of them in fires which they had kindled for sacrificing the Roman prisoners if the Britons had gained the victory. So many of the Druids perished on this occasion and the unfortunate revolt under Boadicea, Queen of the Iceni, which happened soon after, that they were never able to make any considerable figure from this period.

But, though the dominion of the Druids in "South Britain" was destroyed at this time, many of their superstitious practices continued much longer; and so deeply rooted were these principles in the minds of the people, both in Gaul and Britain, that they baffled all the power of the Romans. Even in the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries, we meet with a number of edicts of emperors and canons of council against the worship of the sun, moon, mountains, rivers, lakes, and trees. This superstition continued even longer in Britain than in other countries, having been first revived by the Saxons and afterwards by the Danes. As proof of this, so late as the eleventh century, in the reign of Canute, it was found necessary to make the following law against the heathenish superstition:—"We strictly discharge, and enjoin, and forbid all our subjects to worship the gods of the Gentiles, that is to say—the sun, moon, fires, rivers, fountains, hills, trees, or wood of any kind."

The Druids professed to be able to understand the nature, power, and providence of Divinity, with the size, formation, and final destruction of the earth, with the

stars, their position and motions and supposed influence over human affairs. They practised the art of divination and magic. Three of their ancient astrologers were able, it is said, to foretell whatever should happen before the day of doom. To medicine, also, they had pretensions, but their knowledge was principally confined to the use of the mistletoe, vervain, savin, and trefoil; even the efficacy of these simples was attributed, not to the nature of the plants, but to the influence of prayers and incantations.

From the *Edinburgh Encyclopædia* we gather that the garments of the Druids were remarkably long, and when employed in religious ceremonies they always wore a white surplice. They generally carried a wand in their hands, and wore a kind of ornament encased in gold about their necks, called the Druid's Egg. Their necks were (as previously stated) decorated with gold chains, and their hands and arms with bracelets. They wore their hair very short and their beards of extreme length. The Druids had one chief, or Arch-Druid, in every nation, who acted as high priest. They had absolute authority over the rest, and commanded, decreed, punished, &c., at pleasure. He was elected from amongst the most eminent Druids by a plurality of votes. They worshipped the Supreme Being under the name of Esus, or Hesus, symbolised by the Oak. No person was admitted to enter the sacred recesses unless he carried with him a chain in token of his absolute dependence on the Deity.

To prevent any persons entering the consecrated groves, except through the passages left open for that purpose, the entrances were guarded by some inferior Druids to prevent any strangers from intruding into their mysteries.

These groves were usually oblong, and more or less capacious as the votaries in the district to which they belonged were more or less numerous.

In the chain carried by the ancient Britons in the performance of their religious rites is to be seen the archetype of the cable-tow, or tow-rope, which is a subject of much ridicule among the profane; and, indeed, the fraternity themselves do not seem to be aware of its true import. They are not conscious that this humble badge is a testimony of their belief in God, their dependence on Him, and their solemn obligations to devote themselves to His will and service.

The candidate for Masonic instruction should be regarded as an untutored wild man of the woods—a mere child of nature, unregenerated and destitute of any knowledge of the true God, as well as the comforts and conveniences of civilised life. For this reason he is exhibited blindfolded; “neither naked nor clothed,” but about half way between both. Here, also, may be discovered the type of the Masonic Tyler, an inferior officer with a drawn sword to guard the Lodge from the impertinent intrusion of Cowans and eaves-droppers. It will not be pretended that a drawn sword is needed in this case, it is a mere ensign of office in conformity to the Druidical custom.

As slaves are not admitted into the Masonic Society, it may be interesting to some Brethren unacquainted with the fact to know the vast extent of the evils of slavery in England about the period of which we have been treating, and the great proportion of the inhabitants, particularly of the mechanical and laboring classes, who

were consequently excluded from participation in its charitable and benevolent purposes. In the time of the Anglo-Saxon rule, certainly, not less than two-thirds of the population of Britain existed in a state of slavery, and continued so until the landing of “William” Duke of Normandy, A.D. 1066, and the sale and purchase of slaves publicly prevailed during the whole of this period. These unhappy men were sold like cattle in the market. The Northumbrians (like the savages of Africa) are said to have carried off, not only their own countrymen, but even their friends and relatives, and sold them as slaves in the ports of the Continent. The men of Bristol were the last to abandon this traffic. Their agents travelled into every part of the country. They were instructed to give the highest price for females in a state of pregnancy, and slave ships regularly sailed from that port to Ireland, where they were sure of a ready and profitable market.

Before closing this Essay, we may state that the Druids had two alphabets, one of ten, the other of sixteen letters, and the like. That of ten was known only to the bards or initiates; the other of sixteen was for the “profane.” Some assert that these letters were old Greek characters, introduced into Greece from Egypt by the Phœnicians, others, that they were purely Druidical; there is a great family likeness between them and masonic marks, too great to be accidental. A study of several recent works has convinced us in how very many points Druidism impinges, so to say, on Freemasonry, or perhaps more properly Freemasonry on Druidism; at any rate there is a close relationship between them, even in details.

It may here be mentioned that there is a modern Order of Druids, a useful benefit society of some importance,

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and we understand, also a sort of Quasi-Masonic grade—but of this knowing nothing, we can say nothing.

Degrading as the superstitions of the Druids undoubtedly were, and blind their notions as to the future, their belief was not a mere formal or conventional pretence; it was a principle operating upon their actions.

We cannot close this Essay better than by quoting a noble passage from “Lucan’s First Book of the Pharsalia.”

“And you, O Druids! free from noise and arms,
Renew’d your barbarous rites and horrid charms;
What gods, what powers in happy mansions dwell,
Or only you, or all but you can tell.
To secret shades, and unfrequented groves
From world and cares your peaceful tribe removes;
You teach that souls eas’d of their mortal load,
Nor with grim Pluto make their dark abode,
Nor wander in pale troops along the silent flood,
But on new regions cast, resume their reign,
Content to govern earthly frames again.
Thus death is nothing, but the middle line
Betwixt, what lives will come, and what have been;
Happy the people by your charms possess’d!
Nor fate, nor fears disturb their peaceful breast.
On certain dangers unconcerned they run,
And meet with pleasure what they would not shun;
Defy death’s slightest power, and bravely scorn
To spare a life that will so soon return.”

These lines are based upon a principle (whatever its errors may be), and that principle rested upon the disposition of man to believe and to reverence.

ESSAY XIV.

MOST of those writers on Freemasonry, who belong to the Craft, either through ignorance or design, have mystified the subject in such a manner as to render it not only unintelligible but absolutely forbidding. The opinions, therefore, of those of the Order who have written with candour and with a view of eliciting the truth (so far as they deemed consistent with their obligations), are entitled to great consideration. Such are the writings from which many of the following extracts are made, or at least passages selected generally bear that character.

The titles of Masons, or Masonry, were most probably derived from the Greek language, as that idiom is adopted by the Druids. When committing anything to writing they used the Greek alphabet, and we boldly assert that the most perfect remains of their rites and ceremonies are preserved in the ceremonials of Masons that are to be found extant at the present day among mankind. Our brethren may be able to trace them with greater exactness than we are at liberty to explain publicly. The original names may perhaps be derived, or corrupted from mysterious (mysteries), or mystes (those initiated to sacred mysteries.) We are now treating of the derivation of the simple English word “mason.” There is no doubt that the ceremonies and mysteries of Freemasons were derived from the rites, ceremonies, and institutions of the ancients, and some of them from the remotest antiquity. In the British Museum is a “Druidical”

Beryl stone in the form of an egg. The head is in "cameo," or relief, reverse in "taglio." The head is supposed to represent the image of the Creator, under the denomination of Jupiter Ammon. The sun and moon, and a star, on the reverse the Osiris and Isis of the Egyptians, and were used hieroglyphically to represent the omnipotence, omnipresence, and eternity of God. The star seems to have been used as a point only, but is an emblem of prudence, the third emanation of the Divine person. Jupiter Ammon was worshipped under the symbol of the sun. He was painted with horns, because with the astronomers the sign Aries in the Zodiac is the beginning of the year; when the sun enters into the House of Aries he commences his annual course. The error of depicting him with horns grew from the doubtful significance of the Hebrew word, which at once expresses heat, splendour, brightness, or horns. The sun was also worshipped by the House of Judah under the name of Tamuz. Now Tamuz was "Adonis," and Adonis is generally interpreted the sun, from the Hebrew word "Adon," signifying the same as Baal, or Moloch, or lord, or prince of the planets.

The month we call June, was by the Hebrews called Saumuz, and the entrance of the sun into the sign Cancer was in Hebrew astromomy termed the revolution of Tamuz; the Jews held it unlawful to pronounce that essential name of God, Jehovah, and instead thereof read ~~Adonia~~ ^{ADONAI}, to prevent the heathen blasphemy of that holy name by the adoption of the name of Jove, &c., to the idols. Concerning Adonis, whom some ancient tribes call Osiris, there are two things remarkable. The death, or loss of Adonis, and the finding of him again; as there was great lamentation at his loss, so was there great joy at his

finding. By the death, or loss of Adonis, we are to understand the departure of the sun; by his finding again, the return of that luminary. Some authors say that this lamentation was performed over an image in the night season, and when they had sufficiently lamented, a candle was brought into the room, which ceremony mystically denoted the return of the sun, when the priest with a soft voice muttered this form of words.—"Trust ye in God, for out of pains salvation is come to us." Our ancient record brings us positive evidence of the Pythagorean doctrine, and Basilidian principles, making the foundation of our religious and moral rules.

As the servants of one God, our predecessors professed the temple, wherein the Deity approved to be served, was not the work of men's hands. In this the Druids copied after them; the universe, they confessed was filled with His presence; and He was not hidden from the most distant quarters of Creation; they looked up towards the heaven as His throne, and wheresoever under the sun they worshipped regarded themselves as being in the dwelling-place of the Divinity, from whose eyes nothing was concealed. The ancient Druids, as shown, not only refrained from building temples, but even held it utterly unlawful; because they thought no temple spacious enough for the sun, the great symbol of the Deity. They considered it profane to set limits to the infinity of the Deity; and when in later ages they built temples, left them open to the heavens and unroofed.

As Freemasons derived many of their mysteries and moral principles from the doctrines of Pythagoras, who acquired his learning in Egypt, and others from the Phœnicians, who had received the Egyptian theology in

an early age, it is not to be wondered at that they should adopt Egyptian symbols to represent or express the attributes of the Divinity. The Blazing Star (emblem of prudence), which is the first and most exalted object that demands our attention in the Lodge, is placed in the centre, ever to be present to the eye of the "Mason," that his heart may be attentive to her dictates and steadfast in her laws; for prudence is the rule of all virtues; prudence is the path which leads to every degree of propriety; prudence is the channel whence self-approbation flows for ever; she leads us forth to worthy actions, and as a Blazing Star enlighteneth us through the dreary and darksome paths of this life. It has always been a difficult task for young Masons to make out anything of this Blazing Star that has the semblance of reason. They find it among the symbols, but are unaware how it came there, and endeavor to make the best of it they possibly can. But our readers will recollect that it is our old friend "Anubis," the dog-star, who prudently warned the Egyptians to retire from the plains with their produce to avoid the destructive effects of the overflow of the Nile.

That "innocence" should be the professed principle of a Mason occasions no astonishment when we consider that the discovery of the Deity leads us to the knowledge of those maxims wherewith He may be well pleased. The very idea of a God is succeeded by the belief that He can approve of nothing that is evil; and when first our predecessors professed themselves servants of the Great Architect of the Universe, as an indispensable duty, they professed innocence, and put on a white raiment as a type and characteristic of their conviction and being devoted to His will.

The Druids were appalled in white at the time of their sacrifices and solemn offices. The Egyptian priests of Osiris wore snow-white cotton in the service of Ceres (Isis), under whom was symbolised the gift of Providence in the fruits of the earth, and the Grecian priests also put on white.

Every degree of sin strikes the rational mind of man with feelings of self-condemnation. Under such conviction who could call upon or claim the presence of a Divinity whose demonstration is good works? Hence are men naturally led to conceive that such Divinity will accept only of works of righteousness.

Standing forth for the approbation of Heaven, the servants of the first revealed God bound themselves to maxims of purity and virtue, and as Masons they regard the principles of those who were the first worshippers of the true God, they imitate their apparel and assume the "badge of innocence." Under the Druids the first principles of their profession most assuredly were taught and exercised, and their Society as it now stands is an association on religious and charitable principles which was instituted and arose upon the knowledge of God. They ground a judgment of the nature of their profession on their ceremonials; and we flatter ourselves that every Mason will be convinced that they have at present no relation to building and architecture, but are emblematical and imply moral, spiritual, and religious tenets. It appears self-evident that the situation of the Lodge and its several parts are copied after the Tabernacle and Temple, and are representative of the Universe, implying that the Universe is the Temple in which the Deity is everywhere present. (It may be noted here that the

Tabernacle, as well as the Temple of Solomon, appeared to have been constructed upon the same plan as the Temples of the Ancients).

Their mode of teaching the principles of their profession were derived from the Druids; their maxims of morality, from Pythagoras; their chief emblems, originally from Egypt. To the ancient Egyptians they owe those emanations of the Deity which they have adopted, and which are so necessary for the maintenance of a moral Society.

Their Lodges are not now appropriated to worship and religious ceremonies only; they meet more as a Social Society inclined to acts of benevolence, and, unfortunately, often suffer the more sacred offices to rest unperformed. Whether this neglect is to their honor we presume not to determine. In their present state, professing themselves Free and Accepted Masons, they are totally severed from architects and are become a set of men working in the duties of charity, good offices, and brotherly love.

From the ancient "rites" and "ceremonies" (which we have taken so much trouble to lay before you) it will now be easy to trace the origin of our own rites, and to discover the foundations on which our noble Society is formed.

We have explained to you fully and clearly that the structure of the Lodge is a pattern of the Universe, and that the first entry of a Mason represents the first worship of the true God. They have retained the Egyptian symbols of the sun and moon as emblems of God's power, eternity, omnipresence, and benevolence;

and thereby they signify that they are the children of Light, and that the first foundation of their profession is the knowledge and adoration of Almighty Mesouraneo, who seateth Himself in the centre of the heavens. They derive from the Druids many of the Ammonian rites; and the Masonic Society has saved from oblivion many of their religious rites (especially in their initiation to the first degree of Masonry), which otherwise would have slept in eternity. These they seem to have mixed and tempered with the principles of the Essenes, who are a "sect" as ancient as the departure of the Children of Israel out of Egypt. The philosophy of the Egyptians, and the manners, principles, and customs of the Hebrews were introduced into Europe by the Phœnicians, and made a part of their profession, so far as they are adapted to the worship of Nature's Great Author unpolluted by idolatry. Freemasons are not to search for their antiquity in the mythology of Greece or Rome, they advance into remoter ages.

Religion was the original and constituent principle. A recognition of the Deity first distinguished them from the rest of mankind. Their predecessors sought for the Divine Essence in wonders displayed on the face of Nature; they discovered supreme wisdom in the order of the Universe; in the stellary system they traced the power in the seasons, and their changes the bounty; and in animal life, the benevolence of God. Every argument brought with it conviction, and every object confirmation that all the wonders displayed to the eye of man could only be produced by some superlative Being and maintained by His superintendency. It was from such conviction that men began to class themselves in religious societies. We may venture to assert it was the only

consequence which could ensue whilst men were looking up to the Divinity through His works that they would conclude the "Sun" was the region where, in celestial glory, the Deity reposed.

We discover in the Ammonian and Egyptian rites the most perfect remains of those originals to which the Society refers. We are told they esteemed the soul of man to be an emanation of the Supreme, and a spirit detached from the seraphic bands which filled the solar mansions and surrounded the throne of majesty. They looked up to this grand luminary as the native realm from whence they were sent on this earthly pilgrimage, and to which they should in the end return. The figure of the sun was at once a memorial of their Divine origin, a badge of the religious faith they professed, and a monitor of those principles which should conduct and ensure their restoration. How soon or to what extreme superstition and bigotry debased this emblem is a research painful and unprofitable.

The Masons have adopted three peculiar characteristics; secrecy, charity, and brotherly love. The sense of these great duties has been explained, and of what special import they are to Masons, or to men who have separated themselves from the rest of mankind, and professed they are servants of Him who ruleth in the midst of heaven. If our ceremonies mean not the matter which has been expressed; if they imply not the moral and religious principles which we have endeavored to unveil; it may be asked of all Freemasons, what they do imply, import, or indicate?

The principles of the "Order" are coeval with the

creation. Founded upon the laws of nature and the commands of God, nothing had precedence of them in time. The origin of the Society, however, as an institution distinct from other associations, is involved in impenetrable obscurity, and notwithstanding the learning and zeal of many industrious masons, it will we fear, for ever remain unknown. Various indeed, have been the speculations on this subject, and great the labour expended by many "good men and true," to prove that every man of note from Adam down to the present day, was a Freemason. But such round assertions are beneath the dignity of the Order, and would not be urged by men of letters. Neither Adam, nor Noah, nor Nimrod, nor Moses, &c., so far as we know, belonged to the Masonic Order as now constituted, however congenial their principles may have been.

It is unwise to assert more than we can prove, and to argue against probability. Hypothesis in history is absurd. There is no record, sacred or profane, to induce the belief that these holy and distinguished men were Freemasons, and "Lodge" traditions do not go back to their days. To assert that they were Freemasons may "make the vulgar stare," but will rather excite the contempt than admiration of the wise.

The excellence of the institution (in these practical times) depends upon its usefulness, and not its antiquity. It is sufficient for them to know that their principles are coeval with the creation, and their origin so remote that the date is lost in the lapse of ages, and can now only be indistinctly traced by occasional records and the sparse traditions of the Order.

It may be well to notice here that some writers unwittingly class the Freemasons and Gipsies together. These philosophers have certainly placed us in bad company by classing us with vagrants; but the inference is in some measure nevertheless true. The purposes for which the institution was originally organized, are now as unknown as the date of its origin. Whether designed for agricultural purposes; for improvement of the arts and sciences; or for the preservation of revealed religion by significant symbols and impressive rites, in an idolatrous and barbarous age, cannot now be clearly ascertained. Perhaps all these objects gave rise, or perfection, to the honorable institution.

When the Hindoos claim for their Shastras an antiquity of more than two millions of years; when the Chaldeans boast of observations of the stars for more than four hundred and seventy thousand years; and Manetho, the high priest of Heliopolis, claims for the Egyptians a national existence of nearly fifty-four thousand years—who would hesitate to pronounce them all fabulous? Let Freemasons then, give up the vain boasting which ignorance has foisted into the Order, and relinquish a fabulous antiquity rather than sacrifice common sense. Let them trace their principles “to Adam, or even to God himself (with reverence be it spoken), but let them not excite the pity of the wise, by calling Adam a Freemason. This will not lessen the dignity or importance of the Craft but rather add to its celebrity by giving it a reasonable origin.

As previously stated, some authors suppose that Freemasonry was introduced into Europe by means of the Gipsies. Although this seems a very ridiculous supposition

it is highly probable that the leaders of the first emigrants of this tribe from Egypt had been initiated into the lesser mysteries and perhaps copied in part from them the forms of the oath which they administered to their initiates.

“Every person who was not guilty of some public crime, could obtain admission to the lesser mysteries. Those vagabonds called Egyptian priests, in Greece and Italy, required considerable sums for initiations, and the Gipsies practice similar mummeries to this day to obtain money.”

The customs of the latter, and the oath which they impose upon each other has been preserved, from which as a curious antique we make the following extract:—“The Gipsies derive their origin from the Egyptians, a people heretofore very famous for astronomy, natural magic, the art of divination, &c., and are therefore, great pretenders to fortune-telling. It is the custom of these vagrants to swear all that are admitted into their fraternity by a form and articles annexed, administered by the principal Maunder, or *roguish strowler*, and which they generally observe inviolably.” The manner of admitting a new member, together with the said oath and articles, is as follows:—“The name of the person is first demanded, and a nick-name is then given him in its stead, by which he is ever after called, and in time his other name is quite forgotten. Then standing up in the middle of the fraternity, and directing his face to the Dimber-Damber, or prince of the gang, he swears in this manner, as is dictated to him by one of the most experienced:—‘I, Crank-Cuffin, do swear to be a true brother and will in all things obey the commands of the great Tawney Prince, and keep his counsel, and not divulge the secrets of my brethren. I will never leave nor forsake this

company, but observe and keep all the times of appointments, either by day or by night, in any place whatsoever. I will not teach anyone to cant; nor will I disclose aught of our mysteries to them, although they flog me to death. I will take my prince's part against all that shall oppose him, or any of us, according to the utmost of my ability, nor will I suffer him, or anyone belonging to us, to be abused by any strange Abrams, Rufflers, Hookers, &c., but will defend him or them as much as I can against all other Outlyers whatever. I will not conceal aught I win out of Libkins, or from the Ruffmans, but will preserve it for the use of the company.' "

The Canters have it seems, a tradition, that from the three first articles of the oath, the first founders of a certain boastful worshipful fraternity (*i.e.*, the Freemasons), who pretend to derive their origin from the earliest times, borrowed of them both the hint and form of their establishment, and that their pretended derivation from the first Adam is a forgery, it being only from the first Adam-Tiler that they originated.

The meaning of the cant terms here used are as follows:—Abrams, shabby beggars; Rufflers, notorious rogues; Hookers, petty thieves; Libkin, a house to lie in; Ruffmans, the woods and bushes; Adam-Tiler, the comrade of a pickpocket, who receives stolen goods or money, and scours off with them.

Dr. Geo. Oliver, in one of his lectures on Freemasonry says:—"Under what denomination soever our science has been known in the world; under what form soever it may have been practised, it has always been understood to have a distinct reference to the worship of God, and the

moral culture of man. The characteristic propensity 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. In a 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 we so call it?) of different nations. Wheresoever the mysteries were introduced they retained their primitive form, adapted to the customs and usages of the natural religion; and if it varied in some important 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 honor 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 Ceridwin; 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 deities, and most probably referred to Noah and the ark. They certainly were originally the same system.

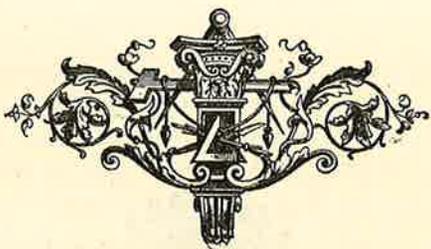
These nations used as most significant emblems the Theological Ladder—the Triple support of the universal Lodge—called by Freemasons, Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty; the point within a circle; and many other legitimate emblems of Masonry. They used the same form of government, the same system of secrecy, 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 practice the most rigid morality; justice towards men; and piety to the Gods.

If the system of Masonry, primarily, was a system of "light," the initiated heathen equally paid divine honors to the sun, as the source of light, by circumambulating in the course of that luminary during the ceremony of initiation. Did the initiated refer to the four elements? They were portrayed by certain prismatic colors. White represented the air; Blue, the water; Purple, the earth; and Crimson, the fire. The Zodiac was considered the great assembly of the Twelve Gods, the Sun being supreme, and the planets his attendants.

Some of 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. The "Triangle" (now called a Trowel) was an emblem of very extensive application, and much revered by ancient nations as containing the greatest and most abstruse mysteries. It signified equally the Deity, Creation, and Fire.

In the account given of the Ancient Mysteries, the Epopetes, or perfectly initiated aspirants, were reputed to have obtained 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 favor, and doomed to a perpetual residence in the infernal regions, amidst a cheerless and overwhelming contamination.





ESSAY XV.

DURING the Persian initiations the before-mentioned doctrine was enforced from the desk or pulpit. The priest 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 an evil power, who were perpetually engaged in contest with each other, and as each in turn prevailed, the world was characterised 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 that at the end of the world each with his followers will go to 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 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.

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 the supposition 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. A very important question here presents itself:—"Have not Masonic writers generally neglected this matter, as to whether Freemasonry be a servile imitation of certain ceremonies in the ancient idolatrous mysteries, as is asserted by some, or whether it be the great original from which the mysteries themselves were derived?"

On this enquiry we have bestowed much consideration,

for we found it impossible to be satisfied with practising a "Science" derived from the polluted dregs of idolatry, and have reached the conclusion that Freemasonry (its principles, that is) is coeval with the Creation, and is, in reality, the original institution from which all the mysteries were derived. We have 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. That an essential difference exists between the ancient mysteries and Freemasonry "wants evidence," the whole of our dissertation in Essays Nos. 7 and 8 on the subject of the former goes to prove the assertion.

However erroneous Freemasonry or the mysteries may be in a theological point of view they agree in moral principles, and are unexceptionable. In all the ancient mysteries, before an aspirant could claim participation in the higher secrets of the institution, he was placed within a bed or coffin, or in other words, was subjected to solitary confinement for a prescribed period of time, that he 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 would also be an excellent example for modern aspirants to follow). 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. An old writer tell 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 we are inclined to think

that when the aspirant entered into the mystic cell he was directed to lay himself down upon a 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 emerging from the gloomy cavern, or liberation from the womb of the ship goddess.

The candidate was made to undergo these changes in scenic representations, and was placed under the Pastos, or coffin, 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, with the Druids, nine days and nights was the specified period; in Greece, three times nine days, while among the Magi of 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, we must carry you (in imagination) to distant shores, even to England. Doubtless, the British Cromlech was one of the very identical vehicles 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 Ceridwin, 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 Ceridwin was either the Consort of Noah, or the Ark itself—symbolically, the great mother of mankind.

⊗ usually COTT, not Cotti. It was still standing, under the care of the national monuments board, in August 1973; and is the terminal chamber of a mound tomb of the Medway Group neolithic settlement of about 2000 B.C. Not Druidic.

! The IONA (usually YONI) was the female correlative!

Noah, or great father of the mysteries, was worshipped under the gross symbol of the Phallus, and it was usually represented by a pyramidal stone. The emblem of the male generative power, anciently adored in India as the Lingham (and Iona), without any of the low associations produced by the confluence of classes in the ages of modern civilization. That it was extensively cultured in ancient times cannot be questioned, and it was the principal object of public and private processions. According to Hebrew legends the accomplishment and construction of the material temple was accompanied with a devotion on the part of King Solomon to the Phallic rites. There was, however, a noble Cultus attached to this symbol, viz.:—That men should live a healthy life, of a character not exactly Canohite, but as Bishops or overseers of their own conduct, husbands of one wife, and not desirous of others.

Curious as it may seem, this recommendation made in the Holy Scriptures, is common to the Egyptians, Chinese and Hindus. Among the better class of Chinese a man with two wives is a depraved being.

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 none 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, or coffin.

Among Freemasons this state of darkness is symbolical of ignorance in Masonic, and other occult matters. In

the inter-relations of things of this description it has a necessary existence, on which it is needless to expatiate. But as a part of our ceremonies it has ever played no mean part. In many of the Oriental rites of the present day, however, much longer periods of seclusion than, as previously stated, are necessary to prepare the initiate, the commonest period being three hundred and sixty-five days; after which annual period, certain rites are performed and signs communicated, giving access to a portion of the secrets. This was done in order to impress the disciple with the utter nullity of man before God and nature. So reverent should we be before the Mysterious Author of everything about us, that we should not dare to lift our eyes until they are properly unveiled. The Third Degree in Freemasonry points to the darkness of death, and the obscurity of the "Grave," as the forerunner of a more brilliant light which shall follow at the resurrection of the just, when these mortal bodies, which have been long slumbering in the dust shall be awakened, reunited to their kindred spirits, and clothed with immortality. Hence Masons, remembering that they are brought out of darkness into light, are admonished to let the light, which is in them, so shine before all men, that their good works may be seen, and the Great Fountain of that light be glorified.

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

Pillars were continually used among the ancient nations for the purpose of commemorating events of public and private importance, and it is unnecessary here to mention all the instances of this universal practice; a few cases

will suffice. We may name the pillars of Seth—on which secrets are mythologically said to have been engraved. There can be no doubt, that, at first the rude unhewn pillar, and afterwards a sculptured column, like the modern church spire, was the method of calling heaven to witness concerning some fact, or confirming a solemn contract. Enoch is said to have constructed pillars; and pillars of fire and cloud are related to have preceded the Israelites in their march, &c., &c. We are also familiar with the Masonic trio of pillars—"Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty," represented respectively by the columns of the Master and Wardens, the three chief orders of architecture, the King of Israel, the King of Tyre, Hiram, and many others.

We shall here diverge a little from our subject, to describe these three Masonic pillars which are all of Grecian origin—the Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian. They exhibit three essentially distinct styles of composition, and they alone show invention and particular character. The Doric order, which is plain and natural, is the most ancient. Its column, agreeably to modern proportions, is eight diameters high, and has no ornament except mouldings on either base or capital; though the frieze is distinguished by tryglyphs and metopes, and the cornice by mutules. The solid composition of this order gives it a preference in structures where strength and a noble but rough simplicity are chiefly required. The Ionic bears a kind of mean proportion between the more solid and delicate orders; the column is nine diameters high, its capital is adorned with volutes, a kind of spiral scroll, the characteristic ornament of the order; its cornice has denticles. Delicacy and ingenuity are displayed in this column, and when

pure it is indeed most elegant. Its invention is attributed to the Ionians, as the famous temple of Diana, at Ephesus was of this order. It is poetically suggested to have been formed after the model of a young female of elegant shape, with her hair dressed, as a contrast to the Doric order, which was formed after that of a strong robust man.

The Corinthian, the richest, is generally considered to be a master-piece of art, and its invention ascribed to the Corinthians. The following anecdote ~~which~~, if not true, is too pretty to be thrown aside. "Callimachus observed on the grave of a young lady recently interred, a basket of toys—left as a tribute by her nurse—covered with a "tile" placed over an acanthus, an herb with broad prickly leaves; as the plant grew, the leaves encompassed the basket, till arriving at the "tile" they met with an obstruction, and bent downwards." He was so struck with the object that he set about imitating it, and it was adopted as a new order in architecture. The vase of the capital represented the basket; the abacus, the "tile," and the volutes the bending leaves. It is Virtruvius who tells this pretty traditional story; but the plant was always a favorite among poets and sculptors. The column of this pillar is ten diameters high, and its capital is adorned with two rows of leaves, and eight volutes, which sustain the abacus. The frieze is covered with curious ornamental devices and the cornice with dentils and modillions. There is something stately in this column for superb structures.

Masons are reminded by these three pillars that—"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of *wisdom*, and happy is the man that findeth it;" that they should in

strength be clothed with the armour of righteousness, and in whatever station of life the providence of God may place them to adorn it with the *beauty* of holiness. If thus they set T.G.A.O.T.U. always before them they shall not be moved; the apprehension of His Omnipresence will be the guard of their conduct; His Omnipotence, the support of their steps here; and His Love, a further reward and enjoyment hereafter. Such are some of the teachings of true Freemasonry. We have been thus particular in explaining the three pillars, as it is a matter of deep interest to all Masons, and the matter is so inadequately explained in the lectures.

The application of this number three in the system of Freemasonry is the most important and universal of all the mystic numbers, and we find it pervading every part of their system. In one of the oldest known formulas there exist three degrees, three grand offerings, three supports or pillars, three principal officers, three movable and three immovable jewels, three knocks, three working tools to each degree, three greater and three lesser lights, with many other instances of the consecration of this number, besides there being three ancient Grand Masters, of whom the last, but not least in importance, was Hiram, the widow's son of Tyre; indeed, the use of the number three is so firmly incorporated into many of our civil and religious ceremonies that its observance has become an immovable item in the habits and customs of the people. This public approbation of a toast or sentiment is displayed at a banquet by the honors three, or three times three acclamation. When a hostile man-of-war meets the enemy the seamen salute him with three hearty cheers, and sometimes with three rounds of shot. We shall now proceed to show that the number three was also

? No more!

incorporated into the religious ceremonies of all ancient nations.

In the Druidical, and other ancient mysteries, these three pillars represented the great emblematical Triad of the Deity, as with us they refer to the three principal officers of the Lodge. We 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, and Beauty, and placed in the East, West, and South, crowned with three human heads. They jointly refer to the Creator, who was said to have planned the great work of Creation 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. The chief Brahmin sat in the "East," high exalted on a brilliant throne, clad in flowing robes of azure, thickly sparkled with golden stars, and bearing in his hand a magical rod, thus symbolising 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 personates Siva, the Meridian Sun, occupied a splendid throne in the "South." Brahma, Vishnu,

and Siva were considered as a Triune God, distinguished by the significant appellation of the Trimurti. Brahma was said to be the Creator; Vishnu, the Preserver; and Siva, the Judge, or Destroyer. As just stated, 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 (the pillar of Beauty), "Siva."

In like manner the Persians, who termed their emblematical Mithratic cave a Lodge, feigned it to be supported by three intelligences, viz.:—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. Among them the right-angled triangle was regarded as an important figure; the base represented Osiris, or the male principle; the perpendicular, Isis, or the female principle; and the hypotenuse, Horus, their son, the product. The Sovereign Good, Intellect, and Energy of the Platonists were also regarded as the respective properties of the Divine Triad.

It is a remarkable fact that every ancient or mysterious system practised on the habitable globe contained this Triad of Deity. The "Oracle" in Damascus 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 Masonic Lodge, bounded only by the extreme points of the compass, the highest heavens, and the lowest

depths of the central abyss is, as previously stated, said to be supported by three pillars, called Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty, in precisely the same form—that of an equilateral triangle. We will not attempt to explain this, though it appears to us more than an ordinary coincidence—we may say, a remarkable one.

It is
usually
an
isosceles?

The point within a circle.—J. How says that “the point within a circle”—although now explained as representing the point, the individual Brother, and the circle, the boundary of his duty—had astronomical and several other meanings, as it is found in the rites of very ancient times. With the Egyptians, it among other things, represented the Phallus, as the symbol of fecundity, and it is conjectured that the temples of the Druids, which were circular, had a single stone erected in the centre. Among the Scandinavians, the hall of Odin contained twelve seats, disposed in the form of a circle for the principal gods, with an elevated seat in the centre for Odin. In course of time the symbol became with astronomers, a representation of the sun, and it is this day the chemical symbol of gold. But the esoteric meaning of the symbol is far different, and would require a volume in itself to explain. We can but briefly touch on the subject. The universal symbol by which the Supreme Being was designated, viz., the point within a circle, it is necessary to explain with some degree of minuteness, because it constitutes one of the most important emblems in Masonry. One of the earliest heathen philosophers of whom history gives any account was Hermes Trismegistus, and he describes the Maker of the Universe as “an intelligent sphere whose centre is everywhere, and whose circumference cannot be defined,” because the universe is boundless and He existed from

all eternity. We learn that when the Persians wished to pay a high respect to the deity, they ascended to the top of a high mountain, and, expanding both hands, prayed to Him in the name of “the circle” of heaven. In like manner, the Hebrews entertained the belief that “the heaven of heavens could not contain Him.” The sun, under the symbol of a point within a circle, was the great object of worship amongst the Dionysian artists who built the Temple of Solomon, and these artists thenceforth transmitted the meaning of the point within a circle, not as bearing any reference to sun-worship, but as regarding the sun merely as a great work of the one uncreated God. Thus the emblems of the sun and moon were introduced into Masonry, and however we may explain them in our Lodges, they appear unquestionably remains of the solar worship, or at least of astronomy.

We must not omit here that remarkable expression which Lucian puts into the mouth of Cato—“God makes himself known to all the world. He fills up the whole circle of the universe, but makes His particular abode in the centre, which is the soul of the just.” We see here that the sages of Greece through a series of wire-drawn reasoning, came to the same conclusion as the uninformed savages of Britain, Scandinavia, Mexico, and Peru.

? Savages!

This subject has become so intensely interesting that we propose continuing it somewhat further. In very old times the tribes contiguous to Judea placed a jod in the centre of a circle, as a symbol of the deity surrounded by eternity, of which he was said to be the inscrutable author, the ornament, and support. The Samothracians had great veneration for the circle, which they considered consecrated by the universal presence of the deity; hence

rings were distributed to the initiated—(we understand that rings are also presented to the initiate in some of the higher side degrees of Freemasonry)—as amulets possessed of the power of averting danger. The Chinese used a symbol bearing a great resemblance to that which is the subject of this Essay. 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.

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 them the central fire, the supernal mansion of Jove, and he called it *Mesouraneo*, because the most excellent body ought to have the most excellent place, *i.e.* the centre. Servius tells us it was believed that the centre of the temple was the peculiar residence of the Deity—(“Brother J. W., what have you discovered?”)—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. It has been shown that the most

perfect metal, gold, is also designated in Chemistry by the same character. With this reference the point within a circle was an emblem of great importance among the Druids, and without a circle it was thought impossible to obtain the favor of the gods. The rites of divination could not be successfully performed unless the operator was protected within the consecrated circle. The plant *Vervain* was said 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.” Many temples founded on the principles of a point within a circle are still extant to demonstrate the truth of the theory.

It is remarkable that in all ancient systems of mythology, the Great Father, or the male generative principle, was uniformly symbolised by a point within a circle. This emblem was placed by the Scandinavian priests and poets, on the central summit of a rainbow, fabled to be a bridge leading from earth to heaven; the emblem therefore represented Valhall, or the supernal palace of the chief 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 anyone 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 with a crowned head, placed in the centre of twelve bright stars, expressive of the sun’s annual course through the Zodiacal signs. That expositors of Masonry should differ in the interpretation of the figure of a point within a circle is not surprising. It is an astronomical enigma, the true

sense of which was probably lost sight of during the centuries in which the affairs of the Lodges, with very few exceptions, were in the hands of ignorant craftsmen.

The true solution of the symbol we take to be as follows:—The Point in the centre represents the Supreme Being, the Circle indicates the annual circuit of the sun, and the parallel lines mark out the solstices within which that circuit is limited.

The Mason, by subjecting himself to due bounds, in imitation of that glorious luminary, will not wander from the path of duty. The device is ingenious, and its true meaning ought to be restored in the Lodge to its original intention. This would give the symbol a reasonable origin. Question.—“Whence came you?” “From the East.” “Where are you going?” “To the West, &c.” The allusion in this part of the ritual, to Osiris, the sun, is very plain; and when found, it is evident he must be on the imaginary circle made by his annual course, unless he should deviate from the order of nature. And the point in the centre of the circle, according to the meaning evidently intended, it is equally certain would be found in its proper place.

Here will be the most fitting place to treat of the subject of *Circumambulation*. It was an ancient custom to use circumambulation during the performance of certain 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; while the first part was chanted, they circumambulated in the direction from east to west, emblematical of the apparent motion of

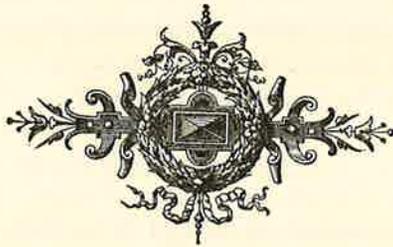
the heavenly bodies; at the commencement of the second part, they changed their course and proceeded from west to east, pointing out the real motion; and during the performance of the third part, they remained stationed around the altar, a symbol of the stability of the earth, waiting for some propitious 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 greater 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 symbolise the motion of the earth, and gave an idea of God’s immensity, which fills the universe.

It was it known in those days.

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, 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 to be solid, angular, of about a foot square, and laid in the north-east. The habit of circumambulation is a relic of heathen worship, though there is no meaning of course in its special use any longer. The brethren well know that in connection with ceremonies of the Craft, a modified form of circumambulation, or processional is used, though simply on Masonic principles. The novice is marched round the Lodge a certain number of times, in conformity to the apparent

movement of the sun, but an explanation of this is seldom given—the origin never—consequently the purport of the ceremony is not generally understood; this motion, however, is really in honor of the divinities of the upper hemisphere.

Before closing this subject we may observe that circumambulation in its processional phases is common to most modern churches, as much as it was to the heathen temple-worship. There is an innocent use, and lawful adaptation of all such ancient forms.



ESSAY XVI.

PROOFS of the existence of the Society of Freemasons in England, at certain remote periods, added to the occurrence of events that would naturally tend to create it, will point out its origin there with sufficient accuracy for the present enquiry. No regular ancient history of the Order is attainable at this time, A.D. 1885, nor is it essential to our purpose. It is highly probable, as asserted by Dr. Anderson, a well-known Masonic authority, that many valuable documents relating to the Society were destroyed at the revolution of the Order in 1717 by some scrupulous brethren, lest an improper use might be made of them.

We shall now endeavor to show that the British Druids instituted the present Society in England; and the first consideration will be to point out the period when they were in a condition that required a resort to such artifices and secret means for the preservation and continuance of their own religious rites. We have already seen in a former Essay, that their open worship was entirely prohibited by the edict of Canute, who reigned from 1015 to 1035. Within those periods this edict was issued, by which the very existence of the Druids was put at hazard. Cut off from their favorite devotional retreats, no means were left them but to devise a mode to evade the scrutinizing eye of the ministers of the law. It is probable that these mysteries were secretly celebrated, in spite of the severe laws enacted against them, and that they were partly

continued during the dark ages, though stripped of their original purity and splendour. We are certain, however, that many rites of Paganism were performed under the dissembled names of convivial meetings, long after the publication of the said edict.

One writer informs us that—"The mysteries of Ceres subsisted in Athens till the 8th century of the Christian Era, and were never totally suppressed." A similar course would naturally suggest itself to the Druids. That such a course was adopted, and that they fixed upon the craft of ancient Masonry, as a cloak under which to screen their mystic ceremonies and dogmas, will, it is believed, appear so evident in the sequel as to leave no room for doubt on the subject.

During the reign of Canute, therefore, it may be fairly presumed the famous Freemason Society (though deriving its origin from ancient Egypt) was first established in England. The conquest of England by William, Duke of Normandy, occurred in 1066, and it is highly probable that many of the artizans who were induced by him to emigrate from France to England were initiated into the Order of Freemasons, and greatly contributed to raise its fame as an operative Masonic institution. It is also probable that many of these Masons were attached to the Druidical religion, as the rites of Druidism are said to have been openly practised in France upwards of one hundred years after the famous edict of Canute prohibiting them in England.

Great advancement, however, in the art of building soon followed this event; in fact, architecture in all its branches received as great improvements in this period as

agriculture. The truth is, the twelfth century may very properly be called the age of architecture, in which the rage for building was more violent in England than at any other time. The extensive and general improvements made in the fabrication of houses and churches in the first years of this century, are thus described by a contemporary writer:—"The new cathedrals and innumerable churches that were built in all parts, together with the magnificent cloisters, monasteries, and other apartments for monks, that were then erected, afforded sufficient proof of the great felicity of England in the reign of Henry I.

Henry I. was the third son of William, and ascended the throne in 1100—only thirty-four years after the Conquest. To enable him to carry on such extensive works in architecture, required that his subjects should have been previously instructed by his predecessors. Under the patronage, therefore, of King William, there is the strongest reason to believe the Masonic Society was fostered and protected. And although the principal purpose of the leading members of the institution was the preservation of their religious rites, yet attention was required to be given by them to the ostensible object of the establishment. Through this means there is no reason to doubt that architecture was improved to a greater extent in England, at this time, than it would have been but for this adventitious circumstance.

The mere craftsmen, however, knew nothing of the secret views of his superiors. The symbols used in the Lodge were unintelligible to him, but he was pleased with the tinsel show of the representations, and when he was found sufficiently intelligent, and thought worthy to be trusted, he was raised to the sublime degree of Holy

Royal Arch, and gained the honorary appellation of Companion. Here, if duly attentive to the symbols and ceremonies, he might make some progress towards discovering the hidden scheme upon which Freemasonry was founded.

The principles of the Order were even imported into Caledonia (Scotland) A.D. 1140, where they continued for many ages in their primitive simplicity, long after they had been extinguished in the continental kingdoms. What those causes were which continued the societies of Freemasons longer in Britain than in other countries, it may not perhaps be easy to determine; but as the fact itself is unquestionably true, it must have arisen either from favorable circumstances in the political state of Britain, which did not exist in the other governments of Europe, or from the superior policy by which the British Masons eluded the suspicions of their enemies, and the superior prudence with which they maintained the primitive simplicity and respectability of the Order. In this manner did Freemasonry flourish in Britain, when it was completely abolished in every other part of the world.

The fraternity maintain that St. Alban was the first who brought Masonry to Britain, about the end of the third century; that the "Brethren" received a "charter" from King Athelstane, and that his brother Edwin summoned all the Lodges to meet at York, which was the first Grand Lodge of England in 926, but this is incapable of proof from authentic history. In support of these opinions, indeed, it is alleged that no other Lodge has laid claim to greater antiquity than that of York, and that its jurisdiction over the other Lodges in England has been

invariably acknowledged by the whole fraternity. But this argument only really proves that York was the birth-place of Freemasonry in England, and there is every reason to believe that Freemasonry was first established in England at a very early date. With this we must needs be content, and that it remained till the famous meeting of the Brotherhood at the Appletree Tavern in 1717, when under its new form, it took wing, and visited all parts of the civilized world. In fact, there was no cause for its institution in any other country than England, where the Edict of Canute had compelled the Druids to relinquish their religion altogether, or practice their "rites" and ceremonies covertly.

All the brethren on the continent of Europe agree in saying that Freemasonry was imported from Great Britain about the beginning of the eighteenth century, and in the form of a mystical society.

It is almost impossible to determine the precise era of the establishment of Freemasonry in Europe, ^{nor is it} ~~or~~ easy to show in what manner and by what means it spread and propagated itself. Many reasons concur to make us believe that the English brought it into Europe, and that they gave it, the Masonic principles, the external form, and the different names by which we know it at this day. We might push this investigation further, did we not fear to enter on details which we are not permitted to publish.

An eminent French Masonic writer, in support of the above proposition says:—"What is the origin of that wearisome quantity of healths, with which the Masonic entertainments were formerly (and many at present) burthened, which have been the occasion of so much

sarcasm against Freemasonry (and not without cause), which a better taste has now wisely, partially reformed? Is not this immoderate use of a custom, innocent in itself, an image of the too-often repeated "toast," which so much distinguishes English clubs in general? The love of good cheer, the profusion, the lengthening out of the feast, which are contrary to European sobriety, and which reason and decency have long since banished to the tavern, to which they legitimately belong." Our French brother further remarks that "the grossness of these practices, introduced into France and Europe generally, is too nearly allied to the taste of the English nation, not to be attributed to them."

We will now produce some of the proofs of the long-standing of the Society of Freemasons in England, that have survived the wreck of time.

One of the doctrines referred to by Freemasons in proof of their antiquity, which is considered more decisive than any other, is an ancient paper that was found in the Bodleian Library, in the year 1696, and which document was evidently written some time in the year 1436. It reports an examination of one of the Brotherhood by King Henry VI., about 1430. This manuscript seems to possess an internal evidence of genuineness, and its record accords in every respect with Druidical Masonry.

It must be remembered in perusing this document, that everything at the time of its discovery in 1696, relating to the origin and purport of Masonry was kept a profound secret; however, all Masonic writers appear to claim it as genuine. As friends of progress we ought to value this manuscript the more because it is an historical monument

of the dawn of the fifteenth century, a time when we march through a vast wilderness, so the thirsty traveller, finding an unexpected fountain in the desert, rests and refreshes himself, and quits it only with painful regret.

We shall give the whole of this precious document; and, to Freemasons, a priceless treasure. In copying it, however, we have altered the ancient orthography to the modern, and corrected the errors it contains in respect to persons and places. Its title is—"Certain Questions, with Answers to the Same, concerning the Mystery of Masonry, written by King Henry VI, and faithfully copied by me, John Leylande, Antiquarius, by command of His Highness. They are as follows:—

"What mote it be?" "It is the knowledge of nature, and the power of its various operations, particularly the skill of reckoning; of weights and measures, of constructing dwellings and buildings of all kinds, and the true manner of forming all things for the use of man."

"Where did it begin?" "It began with the first men of the East, who were before the first men of the West, and coming Westerly, it hath brought with it all comforts to the wild and comfortless."

"Who brought it to the West?" "The Phœnicians, who being great merchants, came first from the East into Phœnicia for the convenience of commerce, both East and West, by the Red and Mediterranean Seas."

"How came it into England?" "Pythagoras, a Grecian, travelled to acquire knowledge in Egypt and Syria, and in every other land where the Phœnicians had planted

Masonry, and gaining admittance into all Lodges of Masons, he learned much, and returned and dwelt in Grecia-Magna, growing and becoming mighty wise, and greatly renowned. Here he formed a great Lodge at Crotona, and made many Masons, some of whom travelled into France, and there made many more, from whence in process of time, the art passed into England."

"Do Masons discover their arts to others?" "Pythagoras, when he travelled to gain knowledge, was first made (initiated) and then taught; this course should rightly be applied to all others. Nevertheless, Masons have always, from time to time, communicated to mankind such of their secrets as might be generally useful; they have kept back such only as might be hurtful if taught to improper persons, or such as would not be beneficial without the necessary teaching joined thereto in the Lodge, or such as to bind the brethren more strongly, by the profits and convenience accruing to the fraternity therefrom."

"What arts have the Masons taught Mankind?" "The arts of agriculture, astronomy, arithmetic, music, poetry, chemistry (alchemy), government, and religion."

"How does it happen that Masons are better teachers than other men?" "They only have the art of finding new arts, which the first Mason received from God, by which they discover what arts they please, and the true way of teaching the same; what other men find out is only by chance, and therefore of little value, I trow."

"What do the Masons conceal and hide?" "They conceal the art of finding new arts, and that for their own profit and praise. They conceal the art of keeping secrets,

so that the world may hide nothing from them. They conceal the art of wonder-working, and foretelling things to come, that so the same art may not be used by the wicked to a bad end; they also conceal the art of changing; the way of obtaining the faculty of Abrac; the skill of becoming good and perfect without the aid of Hope or Fear; and the universal language of Masons."

"Will you teach me the same arts?" "You shall be taught if you be worthy and able to learn."

"Do all Masons know more than other men?" "Not so; they only have a right and opportunity to know more than other men, but may fail from want of capacity, and many more from want of industry, which is very necessary for gaining all knowledge."

"Are Masons better men than others?" "Some Masons are not so virtuous as some other men; but for the most part they are better than they would be if they were not Masons."

"Do Masons love one another mightily, as is said?" "Yea, verily; and that cannot be otherwise, for the better men are the more they love one another."

We now leave the Brethren, to moralise on this Ancient Manuscript, and will produce another proof of the antiquity of the "Order."

In an old work, entitled "The Display of Heraldry," by John Guillim, it is stated that the company of Masons, being otherwise termed Freemasons, of "ancient standing"

(even in those days) and good reckoning, by means of affable and kind meetings, divers times did frequent this mutual assembly in the time of King Henry VI., in the twelfth year of his reign, 1434.

Another proof. Ashmole, in his diary, says:—"I was made a Freemason at Warrington, in Lancashire, 16th October, 1646. On March the 10th, 1682, I received a summons to appear at a Lodge, to be held the next day at Mason's Hall, in London. March 11th, I accordingly attended, where I was the senior fellow among them, it being nearly thirty-five years since I had been admitted into the fraternity. We all dined at the Half-Moon Tavern, where we partook of a sumptuous dinner at the expense of the new accepted Mason." NOTE.—This gentleman was the celebrated antiquary who founded the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford. His attachment to the fraternity is evident from his diligent enquiries into its origin and history, and his long and frequent attendance upon its meetings.

Again Robert Plott, LL.D., keeper of the Ashmolean Museum, &c., says, in 1686, that—"They have a custom in Staffordshire of admitting men into the Society of Freemasons, that in the Moorlands of this country seems to be of greater request than anywhere else, though I find the custom spread more or less over the nation; for here I found persons of the most eminent quality who did not disdain to be of this honorable fellowship, nor indeed, need they, were it of that antiquity and honor that is claimed in a large parchment volume they have among them, containing the History and Rules of the Craft of Masonry, which is there deduced, not only from Sacred Writ, but profane story (*i.e.* tradition).

We will now reproduce proofs from our old friend, before quoted in these Essays, viz., Dr. Anderson. The worthy Doctor says:—"According to a copy of the old constitutions, a general assembly and feast was held on St. John's Day, December, 1663, when Henry Jermyn, Earl of St. Albans, was elected Grand Master, who appointed Sir John Denham his Deputy, and Mr. (afterwards Sir) Christopher Wren, and John Webb, his Wardens."

At this Assembly the following regulations, among others, were made:—

"That no person of what degree soever be made, or accepted a Freemason, unless in a regular Lodge, whereof one to be a Master or Warden, in that limit or division where such Lodge is kept, and another to be a Craftsman in the trade of Freemasonry."

This regulation shows clearly that the Society was not, even at that time, confined to operative Masons. It shows also, that it was at this period in a very disorderly condition.

"That for the future the fraternity of Freemasons shall be regulated and governed by one Grand Master, and as many Wardens as the Society shall think fit to appoint at the Annual General Assembly."

It appears by this, that at the period here spoken of, whatever may have been the case formerly, the Freemasons had no Grand Master, as we understand it, and that each Lodge regulated its own affairs.

"That no person shall be accepted unless he be twenty-one years old, or more."

It is evident that this regulation was an innovation, and that previously apprentices were entered at the usual age (about fourteen) at which they are taken in other trades.

“Sir Christopher Wren—says Anderson—was chosen Grand Master in 1698.” He then enumerates the public buildings that were erected by Freemasons, under Wren’s superintendence, and adds—“Some few years after this Sir Christopher neglected the office of Grand Master, yet the old Lodge near St. Paul’s, and a few others, continued their stated meetings.” Previously to this period the Government enacted the building of fifty new churches in the suburbs of London, to supply the places of those consumed at the great Fire of London in 1666, and Sir Christopher being an eminent architect, was appointed one of the commissioners to superintend the construction of these edifices.

It appears that Wren was at this time Master or President of the Company of Operative Masons of London, and may perhaps have been a member of the Freemasons’ Society also; but that the Freemasons as a body, were employed to construct public works is not probable.

The Freemasons were not acknowledged by the Government as a company of builders or architects, and whatever may have been its standing in the time of the Druids, it was at this period in little repute.

Respecting the revolution which took place in the Order in 1717, Anderson gives the following account. He says:—“In 1716, the few Lodges in London, finding

themselves neglected by Sir C. Wren, thought fit to cement under a Grand Master as the centre of union and harmony.”

It here appears that the order made in 1663, in regard to a Grand Master, had become neglected. These Lodges were those “that met first at the Goose and Gridiron Alehouse, in St. Paul’s Churchyard; second, at the Crown Alehouse in Parker’s Lane; third, at the Apple-tree Tavern in Charles-street, Covent Garden; fourth, at the Runner and Grapes Tavern, in Channel-row, Westminster. The members of these Lodges, and some older brothers met at the said Apple-tree Tavern, and having put into the chair the oldest Master Mason, they constituted themselves a Grand Lodge, *pro tempore* in due form, and forthwith revived the quarterly communication of the officers of Lodges, called the Grand Lodge, and resolved to hold the annual assembly and feast, and then to choose a Grand Master from among themselves, till they should have the honor of a Noble Brother at their head. Accordingly, on St. John Baptist’s day (the 24th June,) the summer solstice, 1717, the assembly and feast of the Free and Accepted Masons was held at the aforesaid Goose and Gridiron Alehouse.”

The Freemasons at this eventful period seem to have rummaged their old records and found out what the Society “formerly” was, and come to the determination to “revive” old Druidical, or Hiram Masonry. At this assembly, “Mr. Anthony Sayre, gentleman, was elected Grand Master of Masons, who, being forthwith invested with the badges of office and power, and installed, was duly congratulated by the assembly, who paid him the usual homage. Captain Joseph Elliot and Mr. Jacob

Lamball, carpenter, were appointed Grand Wardens. It appears that the Brethren did not wait long before a Noble Brother condescended to be placed at their head; for, on the 24th of June, 1721, the Duke of Montague was elected, and accepted the office of Grand Master of Masons. From that time, 1721, to the present, 1885, a nobleman or a prince has constantly presided over English Masons. The Society soon became fashionable. The brilliant processions and luxurious feasts now got up, which had for a long time been neglected, added to the sublime mysteries and secrets held out to the initiated, allured the young, the gay, and the inquisitive to the "standard" of the Order, which now assumed such an imposing appearance as caused it to spread with astonishing rapidity over Europe, Asia, Africa, and America. The year 1717 forms an important epoch in the history of Freemasonry. It had till then been for some centuries almost exclusively in the hands of mere craftsmen, who knew not what to make of it. Druidism being extinct, the religious cement which had bound them together was dissolved, and the Incorporated Company of Masons, no doubt, rendered its combination, in respect to that profession, inefficient. As Operative Masons the incorporated Company would naturally take the lead of a Society not sanctioned by the laws, the utility of whose mystic rites could not be estimated after the religion which gave them birth was no longer known.

Dermott mentions eight persons as authors of this remarkable revolution. At this revival, the ostensible ground upon which the Society was originally founded (the Craft of Masonry), as though in derision of the pretension, was utterly abandoned and no longer considered as a recommendation for admission into the Order.

The Society, however, keeps up a show of respect to the Craft of Operative Masonry by marching in processions to lay the corner-stones of Masonic Halls, and other public edifices and works. This was an ancient religious custom, it may be observed, having no reference in its origin to the art of building, &c.

Incorporation of Masons in London—"Masons," No. 30.—By the arms granted this Society by William Hankeston/Clarencieux, King-at-arms, in the year 1477, it appears to be of very remote antiquity. However, it was only incorporated by Letters Patent of the twenty-ninth of Charles II., September 17, Anno 1677, by the name of the Master, Wardens, Assistants, and commonality of the Company of Masons (not Freemasons) of the City of London.

They consist of a Master, two Wardens, twenty-two Assistants, and seventy Livery-men, whose fine of admission is five pounds. They have a small but convenient Hall in Mason Alley, Basinghall Street.

Their Armorial Ensigns are azure, on a chevron between three castles argent, a pair of compasses somewhat extended of the first; Crest, a castle of the second." Though this incorporation was not Freemason, it, of course, included the Operatives of the Freemasons, who, in their Society, make use of the same armorial bearings which it is very probable originally belonged to them. Up to what period the Pagan rites, under the name of Druidism, were sustained in different parts of Europe is uncertain; but that they were not concealed under the title of Freemasonry in any other quarter than Britain is very evident from the Charters of all Lodges on the

Continent emanating from either the Grand Lodge of England or that of Scotland. The latter, however, was not instituted till 1736. The Grand Lodge of Ireland was formed in 1730, and in 1783 a Charter for a Lodge was obtained for Boston, U.S. So it is seen that America was not far behind in availing itself of the earliest opportunity to become a partaker in the advantages of Freemasonry.

In concluding the examination of this subject we cannot suppose, as some writers have, that the Freemasons' Society first sprang up in 1717. We think we have proved this to any unprejudiced mind, by such a mass of curious ceremonies, bearing on their very front the most palpable marks of the remotest antiquity; and to suppose that this ancient society was for the first time concocted in the year of grace 1717, by Doctors of Divinity, or any other learned men is—well, simply preposterous. This we think, we have proved to a certainty.

Freemasonry, we believe, is based on Sabeism—call it astronomy, or geometry, if you will. That is the knowledge and worship of the stars; but as before observed, its original intention has long since been lost sight of and abandoned. Modern Masons, as we know, not only continue the ceremonies of ancient Masonry in three degrees which relate exclusively to Pagan rites, but have added thereto many others. The partisans, however, of opposing sects (or degrees) seem reconciled to it, and do not stop to enquire into the true meaning of the symbols, and still congregate together in great harmony and evident friendship. It may be mentioned here that there are about one hundred and forty thousand Lodges of Freemasons distributed throughout the world with a

membership of fourteen million one hundred and seventy thousand.

It is not our intention in these Essays to discuss fully the various rites of Freemasonry, dating from the tenth century, in proof of the antiquity of the Order, but we recommend the brethren to study a work called—"A Lecture on the Various Rituals of Freemasonry," by the Rev. G. Oliver, D.D., privately printed for A. Lewis, London, and dated 1876. Our worthy Brother has therein ably condensed, and almost exhausted the subject. The lecture alluded to was delivered in the Witham Lodge, Lincoln, 1863.





ESSAY XVII.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS.

WE shall now proceed to prove the premises laid down in our last Essay, viz. :—That Freemasonry originated in “Sabeism,” or worship of the sun, moon, and stars, and is derived from the ancient Pagan mysteries, or religions.

The unanimous testimony of all ancient and recently discovered monuments, mummies, &c., presents to us a methodical and complicated system, viz., that of the worship of the stars (or heavenly bodies), adored sometimes in their proper forms, sometimes under figurative emblems and symbols; and this worship was the natural effect of the knowledge men had acquired in physics, and was derived immediately from the first causes of the social state of man, *i.e.*, from the necessities, and arts, of the first importance, which are among the elements of society.

Indeed, as soon as men began to unite in society, it became necessary for them to multiply the means of subsistence, and consequently to attend principally to agriculture. Agriculture to be carried on with success requires the observation and knowledge of the heavens. It was necessary to know the periodical return of the same operations of nature, and the same phenomena in the skies; indeed, to go so far as to ascertain the duration and succession of the seasons, and months of the year.

It was indispensable in the first place, to know the course of the Sun, who, in his zodiacal revolutions, shows himself the first and supreme agent of the whole creation; then of the Moon, who, by her phases and periods, regulates and distributes time; then of the Stars, and even planets, which by their appearance and disappearance on the horizon and nocturnal hemisphere, mark the minutest divisions; finally, it was necessary to form a whole system of astronomy (by the aid of geometry), or a calendar, and from these works there naturally followed a new manner of considering these predominant and governing powers. Having observed that the productions of the earth had a regular and constant relation with the heavenly bodies; that the rise, growth and decline of each plant kept pace with the appearance, elevation, and declination of the same star, or group of stars; in short, that the languor or activity of vegetation seemed to depend on celestial influences—men drew from thence an idea of action, of power in those beings, superior to earthly bodies; and the stars dispensing plenty or scarcity became powers, genii, gods—in fact, authors of good and evil. As the state of society had already introduced a regular hierarchy of ranks, employments, and conditions, men, continuing to reason by comparison, carried their new notions into their theology, and formed a complicated system of gradual divinities, in which the sun, as first god, was a military chief, a political king; the moon was his wife and queen; the planets were servants, bearers of commands, messengers; and the multitude of lesser stars were a nation, an army of heroes, genii, whose office was to govern the world under the orders of their chiefs; and all the individuals had names, functions, attributes, drawn from their relations and influences. A pretty fair description of a Masonic Lodge, with the Worshipful Master

in the East, personifying the Sun; surrounded by the Senior Warden, who acts the part of the Moon; the Junior Warden in the South, who takes the place of Orion, and other subordinate officers, and private members, all under the command of their chief, the Worshipful Master.

If it be asked to what people this system is to be attributed, we shall answer that the same monuments, &c., supported by numerous traditions, attributed it to the first tribes of Egypt; and when reason finds in that country all the circumstances which could lead to such a system; when it finds there a zone of sky bordering on the Tropic, equally free from the rains of the Equator and the fogs of the North; when it finds there a central point of the sphere of the Ancients, a salubrious climate, a great, but manageable river, a soil fertile without labor or art, and placed between the two seas which communicate with the richest countries in the world, it conceives that the inhabitants of the Nile country—addicted to Agriculture from the nature of the soil; to Geometry, from the annual necessity of measuring the lands; to Commerce, from the facility of communications; to Astronomy, from the state of the sky always open to observation—must have been the first to pass from the savage to the social state, and consequently to attain the physical and moral sciences necessary to civilised life.

It was then, on the borders of the Upper Nile, among a black race of men, that Sabeism, or the complicated system of the worship of the stars, considered in relation to the productions of the earth and the labors of agriculture, was organized; and this “first” worship, characterised by their adoration under their own forms

and natural attributes was a simple proceeding of the human mind; but, in a short time, the multiplicity of the objects, of their relations, and the reciprocal influence having complicated the ideas and signs that represented them, there followed a confusion as singular in its cause as pernicious in its effects.

It has already sufficiently been made to appear, it is believed, that the Society of Freemasons (as Freemasons) has, at any rate, existed in "England" for upwards of six hundred years. How far its true principles and objects were generally understood by its members in the early stage of its establishment in England is now unknown. But, judging from the enigmatical manner in which the Ritual, as handed down to us, is explained, we may conclude that most of the Brethren, particularly the Craftsmen of the three first degrees, were kept as closely hoodwinked, in respect to its true import, after, as they were before their initiation. The personal safety of its founders in England, as already shown, required this course. Hence the awful oaths exacted of them to keep secret the rites and ceremonies in which they were permitted to participate.

These ceremonies were so obscurely formed as to be rendered incomprehensible to all those instructed with the secret object of the Institution. Answers to questions propounded being often given that have no relation to their true interpretation. In short, Freemasonry is allegorical throughout, and is an imitation of the astronomical worship of the Egyptians. There are occasional departures from the original to accommodate it to the Craft or trade of Masonry, which, as before observed, is done to cover the real design. On the revival of the

Institution in 1717, the surviving heirs of the mysteries, no doubt, gave to the Society, as far as recollected, the very words and ceremonies as delivered to them. It seems impossible to believe that men of learning, talents, and standing in society would seriously form *de novo* such a medley, void of the least claim to wit or rationality, except in reference to the scientific worship of the heavenly bodies and other physical powers of nature.

To prevent that satiety occurring from the perusal of long Rituals, we shall confine ourselves to as few items in that respect as is consistent with the necessary development of the subject. Particularly as this analysis is not in any sense intended as an *exposé* of the ceremonies of Freemasonry.

We will first, from a very old Ritual, take the question—What makes a Lodge? Five. We know the usual answer to this question, but we must seek amongst the Ancient Theology for a true solution of this question of five making a Lodge.

The Egyptians represent the world by the number five, being that of the elements—earth, air, water, fire, and ether (or spiritus). They are precisely the same amongst the Indians, and according to the mystics they are the "Supreme God," or *primum mobile*; the Intelligence, or *meus*, born of Him; the Soul of the World, which proceeds from Him; the celestial spheres and all things terrestrial. Hence the analogy between the Greek *pente*, five, and *pan*, all. Question—"What doth Geometry teach?" Answer—"The art of measuring, whereby the Egyptians found out their own land, or the same quantity which they had before the overflowing of the Nile."

Question—"Where did our ancient Brethren meet before regular Lodges were erected?" Answer—"Upon holy ground, or on the highest hill or lowest vale, or any other secret place, the better to guard against intrusion."

Memo.—These ancient Brethren were Druids; and the places mentioned are such as they used to assemble at before the Edict of Canute entirely prohibited their public meetings; in consequence of which Druidism was changed into Freemasonry and Lodges erected. It cannot be shown that a Lodge of Speculative Masons ever held a meeting for the performance of their mystic rites, except in a close room, probably tiled. The groves and other places where the Druids assembled for worship were consecrated to some Divinity and considered "holy ground."

In a former Essay we introduced to your notice, the great sun-god Osiris, as an ancient king of Egypt, and Isis, the moon-goddess, (also the fabled death of the former by Typhon, &c.). These, however, we are bold to assert (as the Hercules of the Greeks) are only physical beings, and the two great principal agents in nature. We are led to judge by these examples of the allegorical character of antiquity, and to consider how much we should be on our guard against traditions which place physical beings as characters in history. It is important not to lose sight of the fact that formerly the history of the heavens, and particularly of the sun, was written under a form of a history of men, and that the people almost universally received it as such, and looked upon the hero as a man. The tombs of the gods were shown as if they had really existed. Feasts were celebrated, the object of which seemed to be to renew every year the grief occasioned by their loss. Such was doubtless, the

tomb of Osiris, covered under those enormous masses, the Pyramids, raised by the Egyptians to the star which gives us light. One of these has four fronts facing the four cardinal points of the world. Each of these fronts is one hundred and ten fathoms, or six hundred and sixty feet wide at its base, and the four form as many equilateral triangles. The perpendicular height is seventy-seven fathoms, or four hundred and sixty-two feet. In the centre of the pyramid is a vault, said to be the tomb of the ancient king—the husband of Isis, the famous Osiris, the beneficent king whom the people believed to have reigned formerly over Egypt, while the priests and learned men saw in him the powerful planet which governs the world, and enriches it with his benefits; and, in fact, would they ever have gone to so great an expense if this tomb had not been reputed to contain the precious remains of Osiris, which his wife had collected, and which she confided they say, to the priests, to be interred at the same time that they decreed to him divine honors? Can we suppose there was any other object among the people who spared nothing to give all pomp and magnificence to their worship, and whose greatest luxury was a religious luxury? On the subject of the "Sphinx," we may say that this enormous statue was cut out of a solid rock with great ingenuity; its height from the stomach to the top of the head was sixty-three feet, and its length one hundred and forty feet. It is said that King Amisis was buried in it. The head is covered with a cap. Mythology describes the Sphinx as a fabulous female monster who ravaged Thebis, until an answer should be found to her riddle, viz.:—"What animal is that which walks on four legs in the morning, two at noon, and three in the evening;" which when Edipus discovered, she killed herself.

While the beauty and grandeur of the great Sphynx have often attracted the admiration of travellers, its age has always remained a matter of doubt. It is usually assigned to Tothmes, of the Fourth Dynasty of the Pharaohs. There has also been among Egyptologists, much speculation as to its origin and purport. We give the following solution of its origin for what it is worth. "The Sphynx was a representation of the signs 'Leo' (the Lion) and 'Virgo' (the Virgin) joined together in commemoration of the inundation of the Nile, which occurs when the sun is in those signs." It is also said to symbolise the union of intellect and power required in a king. The Egyptians had always an astronomical mystic reverence for the three Signs, Cancer, Leo, and Virgo. The great utility of the overflowing of the Nile to Egypt, which was always considered a providential occurrence, was sufficient, among a superstitious people to cause its commemoration in this manner.

The Babylonians, who worshipped the sun under the name of Belus, raised him a tomb which was hidden by an immense pyramid, for as soon as the powerful planet which animates nature became personified, and in sacred "fictions" was made to be born, to die, and to rise again, imitative worship which sought to retrace his adventures, placed tombs beside their temples. Thus is shown that of Jupiter, in Crete; of Mithra, in Persia; of Hercules, in Cadis; of the Coachman; the Celestial Bear; of Medusa; of the Pleiades, &c., &c., in Greece. These various tombs prove nothing for the historical existence of the feigned personages to whom the mystic spirit of the ancients had consecrated them. They show also the place where Hercules burned himself up, and we have already mentioned that Hercules was no other than the sun personified

in the sacred allegories; and at the same time, we have proved that the adventures of Queen Isis were those of the moon, sung by her worshippers.

We wish now to direct attention to the relation which the traditional history of Hiram bears to that of Osiris. There is a singular fancy set forth in ancient astronomy in regard to the reputed murderers of Chrisna, that must not be omitted here; it contains a strict analogy to the assassination of Hiram. Chrisna, among the Hindoos, is the same as Osiris with the Egyptians, and worshipped by them in like manner. It is mentioned in "Mackey's Mythological Astronomy," as follows:—

"The stories which have been the result of the particular method made use of by ancient historians to express the various changes of the constellations and seasons of the year, and the causes of those changes will be well worth our while to examine. The Elohim, the Decans, or the symbols which preside over the thirty-six sub-divisions of the Zodiac, or more properly speaking, of the year, each month having three, were those gods, whose care it was to regulate the weather in the different seasons, and who were supposed to vary it according to their will. These Decans, or Elohim, are the gods, of whom it is said the Almighty created the Universe. They arranged the order of the Zodiac. The Elohim of the Summer were gods of a benevolent disposition, they made the days long, and loaded the sun's head with topaz; while the three wretches that perished in the winter, as the extreme end of the year, hid in the realms below were, with the constellation to which they belong, cut off from the rest of the Zodiac, and as they were missing, would consequently be accused of bringing Chrisna into troubles

which at last ended in his death. This is a sketch of the life of the sun, who, finishing his career at the winter solstice, when Typhon and the rebel angels gain the dominion, seems to be put to death by them, but who soon after is born again, and rises into the vault of heaven where he reigns."

It may be remarked here that the lamentations sometimes uttered for the death of Hiram are in exact accord with the customs of the Egyptians in their celebrations of the fabled death of Osiris, the Sun; of the Phœnicians, for the loss of Adonis; and of the Greeks, in their mystic rites of Ceres. It is through the instrumentality of Leo that Osiris, the Sun, is relieved from his perilous condition. The strong paw of the Lion wrests him from the clutches of Typhon and places him in his wonted course. Anubis, the Dog-star; is the herald of this event. Here we see the Archetype of the raising of Hiram by the strong grip, or Lion's paw. We do not undertake to explain this coincidence, though the likeness appears very exact. In every movement of our Order we discover traits of its derivation from a religion founded on Astronomy. The Egyptians worshipped Astronomy, and were the first people known to have acquired a knowledge of it. Their priests, shut up in the "labyrinth," had nothing else to do but study the movement of the heavenly bodies, and they communicated their discoveries in such a manner as to be incomprehensible to the common people.

Volney, in treating of the notions that the Persians had of the future world, says that, "they believe Paradise is placed under the equator, with this singular attribute, that in it the blessed cast no shade." There is also on this subject, a passage in Plutarch, so interesting and

explanatory of the whole of this system, that we shall cite it entire. Having observed that the theory of good and evil had at all times occupied the attention of naturalists and theologians, he adds:—"Many suppose there are two gods of opposite inclinations—one delighting in good, the other in evil. The first of these is called particularly by the name of God, the second by that of Genius or Demon. Zoroaster has denominated them Oromaze and Ahrimanes, and has said that of whatever falls under the cognizance of our senses, light is the best representative of the one, and darkness and ignorance of the other." He adds "that Mithra is an intermediate being—and it is for this reason that the Persians call Mithra the Mediator, or Intercessor. The Persians also say that Oromaze was born, or formed out of the purest light; Ahrimanes, on the contrary, out of the thickest darkness; that Oromaze made six gods as good as himself, and Ahrimanes opposed to them six wicked ones. That afterwards Oromaze trebled himself (Hermes, tris-megistos) and removed to a distance remote from the earth; that he there formed stars, and among others Sirius, which he placed in the heavens as a guard and sentinel. He made also twenty-four other gods, whom he enclosed in an egg, but Ahrimanes created an equal number who cracked the egg, and from that moment good and evil were mixed in the universe. But Ahrimanes is one day to be conquered, and the earth to be made equal and smooth, that all men may live happy."

We will now, for the sake of novelty, introduce here the following remarks of Plato on the Immortality of the Soul, which will show the idea entertained by the ancients in regard to the difficulties to be encountered in the journey to the other world. Plato says:—"If the soul

is immortal, it stands in need of cultivation and improvement, not only in the time that we call the time of life, but for the future, or what we call the time of eternity. For if you think justly upon this point, you will find it very dangerous to neglect the soul. Were death the dissolution of the whole man, it would be a great advantage to the wicked after death, to be rid at once of their body, their soul, and their vices. But, forasmuch as the soul is immortal, the only way to avoid those evils and obtain salvation is to become good and wise. For it carries nothing along with it but its good or bad actions, and its virtues or its vices, which are the cause of its eternal happiness or misery, commencing from the first minute of its arrival in the other world. And it is said that after the death of every individual person, the Demon, or Genius that was partner with it, and conducted it through life, leads it to a certain place where all the dead are obliged to appear in order to be judged, and from thence are conducted by a guide to the world below. And after they have there received their good or bad deserts, and continued there their appointed time, another conductor brings them back to this life after several revolutions of ages. Now, this road is not a plain road, else there would be no occasion for guides, and nobody miss their way. But there are several by-ways and crossways, as I conjecture from the method of their sacrifices and religious ceremonies. So that a temperate wise soul follows its guide, and is not ignorant of what happens to it; but the soul that is nailed to its body (that is inflamed with a love of it), and has been long its slave, after much struggling and suffering in this visible world, is at last dragged along against its will by the demon allotted for its guide. And when it arrives at that fatal rendezvous of all souls, if it has been guilty

of any impurity, or polluted with murder, or has committed any of those atrocious crimes that desperate, lost souls are commonly guilty of, the other souls abhor it and avoid its company. It finds neither companion or guide, but wanders in a fearful solitude and horrible desert, till, after a certain time necessity drags it into the mansion it deserves. Whereas the temperate and pure soul has the gods themselves for its guides and conductors, and goes to cohabit with them in the mansions of pleasure prepared for it."

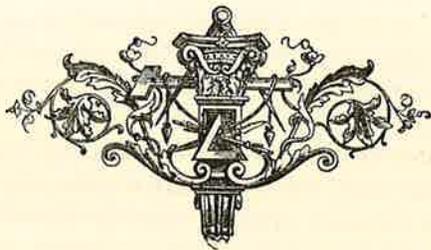
Platonism was full of notions about demons, for in another place Plato says:—"That demons were of a middle nature, between God and man; that they were of the ærial genii appointed to hold commerce between God and us; that although they were near us, yet we could not see them; that they penetrated into all our thoughts; that they had a peculiar love for the good and a hatred for the bad; and that it was for their honor that such variety of sacrifices and so many different ceremonies were appointed; but it does not at all appear that Plato himself acknowledged any evil demons, to which might be attributed the management of the illusion of oracles. Plutarch notwithstanding, assures us that Plato was not ignorant of them, and amongst the Platonic philosophers, the thing is out of doubt. One Pagan philosopher assures us that evil demons are the authors of enchantments, philtres, and witchcrafts; that they cheat our eyes with spectres, phantoms, and apparitions; that lying is essential to their nature; that they raise in us the greater part of our passions; and that they have an ambition to pass with us for gods; and their ærial and spiritual bodies are nourished with suffumigations and with the blood and fat of sacrifices; and that it is only these that employ

themselves in giving oracles, and to whom this task so full of fraud, is assigned; in short, at the head of this "troop" of evil demons he places Hecate and Seraphis.

As we have dealt pretty freely in this Essay with ancient traditions, fables, &c., we will conclude with a very remarkable legend taken from the Persian mysteries, called Rustam, who was the Persian Hercules, or the White Giant:—"Cai-Caus, the successor of Cai-Cobab, the first monarch of the Caidnian dynasty, is instigated by the song of a minstrel to attempt the conquest of Mazenderaun, which is celebrated as a perfect earthly paradise. 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 prisoners. In this emergency the king sends a messenger to Zaul, father of the hero Rustam, begging his immediate assistance. For the greatest dispatch, Rustam takes the shorter, though more dangerous road, and departs alone, mounted on his charger 'Rakesh;' this was a horrible winged animal whose common food is said to have been serpents and dragons. [MEMO.—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 Rustam 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 courage is severely tried. [MEMO.—At each of the seven stages the candidate, in the Persian mysteries really encountered many dangers; in fact, instances have occurred where the poor affrighted wretch has absolutely expired through excess of fear.] Our hero, however, having at length

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. [MEMO.—The symbolical three drops of blood had its counterpart 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 a portion of mythology transferred into 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. The scenes of mimic adventure alluded to, undoubtedly originated from the fabulous labors of Rustam, the Persian Hercules. It has been shown that Hercules was one of the names by which the sun was designated—Osiris, Bacchus, Cronus, Pluto, and Hercules, are all equally the Sun—and that the perilous adventures attributed to a fabulous character, to whom the name was given, was a mere allegory on the progress of that luminary through the signs of the Zodiac, of which the legend of Rustam is another version.



ESSAY XVIII.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS.—*Continued.*

WE repeat, that whatever our institution is now, the Society was founded in the first instance on Sabeism, and for the purpose of concealing the rites of the ancient Pagan religion under the cover of operative Masonry; and that, although the Pagan religion is extinct, many of its ceremonials remain, and clearly develop the origin of the institution.

Sabeism—or the worship of the stars—is conspicuous in every grade of the order. The frequent quotations from the Scriptures betray its religious cast, and moreover confirm what has before been advanced, that the forms of prayer, and consequently other acts of devotion among the Pagans and Hebrews were delivered in the same terms, though applied to different objects.

The ceremonies of our ancient craft, however, by no means impeach the morality it inculcates, which is unexceptionable; whatever may have been the conduct of some of its deluded members, impelled by a fanatical zeal for the preservation of its secrets, or whatever innovations may have been introduced by aspiring political or religious demagogues, adverse to the established principles of the Order.

Among the ancient, ignorant, operative Masons, some instruction in the rudiments of learning, including rough

architecture, were doubtless, given, as proved by the old lectures; but operative Freemasonry has been abandoned for upwards of a hundred years, and no more of it remains to the order as now constituted, than the record of its former practices.

Our present Freemasonry is purely speculative (an unproved theory) or theoretical, but universal, admitting people of all nations and creeds (who believe in the Great Architect of Heaven and Earth); its principles gradually free them from all religious prejudices, cultivate the social virtues, and animate them by a speedy prospect of universal happiness, in a state of liberty and moral equality, freed from the obstacles which subordination, rank, and riches, continually throw in the way of other societies. Our secret association works in a manner that nothing can withstand. These are the great objects held out by our venerable association.

Of all the knowledge which human reason can give, none is comparable to that of God, and of ourselves; to the discovery of what we are, our nature, our obligations, what happiness we are capable of, and what are the means of attaining it. In comparison with this knowledge the most brilliant sciences are but amusements for the idle and luxurious. To fit man by wisdom for active virtue to engage him to it by the strongest motives and obligations; to render the attainment of it easy and certain by adopting a certain course of action, by finding employment for every talent, and by placing every talent in its proper sphere of action, so that all, without feeling any extraordinary effort, and in conjunction with, and completion of ordinary business, shall urge forward, with united powers the general task; this is, indeed, an

employment suited to noble natures, grand in its views, and delightful in its exercise.

As the object of the fraternity is the glory of the Great Architect of the Universe and the happiness of the human race, is it not distressing to a generous mind, after contemplating what happiness human nature is capable of, to see how little we enjoy? When we look at this goodly world, and see that everyone may be so, but that the happiness of one depends on the conduct of another; when we often see the wicked so powerful, and the good so weak, and that it appears vain to strive singly and alone against the general current of vice and oppression, the wish naturally arises in the mind that it were possible to form a durable combination of the most worthy members of society, who should work together in removing obstacles to human happiness, become terrible to the wicked, give their aid to all that is good, and by the most powerful means, first fetter, and by fettering lessen vice; means, which at the same time should promote virtue, by rendering the inclination to rectitude, hitherto too feeble, more powerful and engaging. Is not such an association a blessing to the world? These principles are sure to advance Freemasonry with a speed, progressing every day.

Respecting secret union, the most casual observer must see that nothing so much contributes to increase the zeal of members of the craft as secret union. We see with what keenness and zeal much of the frivolous business of this life is conducted by persons knit together for worldly purposes, only, by the secrecy of their union. It is needless to enquire into the causes of this zeal which secrecy produces. It is an universal fact, confirmed by

the history of every age. Let this circumstance of our constitution, secrecy, therefore, be directed to this noble purpose, viz.:—the glory of God, and the happiness of the human race; then all the objections urged against our society by jealous tyranny and affrighted superstition, will vanish. Our order works silently and securely, and though many of the generous benefactors of humanity are deprived of the applause of the world, they will have the noble pleasure of seeing their work prosper in their hands. We now see with a perfect sight, and we think we have made clear to others the purport of the whole of the ancient mysteries; and a true revelation of them will, by and by, form a delightful history of the human race, and illuminate that darkness which has been formed in the human mind by resting on the letter of some of those mysteries as profane historical facts. That which the far-seeing mind of ancient genius could symbolize (by virtue of its inspiration) as the history of principles incident to human existence, under the form of united similitudes of physical and moral nature, well suited in ancient times to man's instruction, when understood, has in many cases, by erring ignorance, been adopted as a literal history of the race, and a record of its action. The mistake in understanding the symbolical, mythological, and allegorical language of the ancients, has been the same as if any other poetic or mythological picture had been taken for the reality; or instead of the spirit or principle of an existence, as if Venus had embodied all the love, and Mars all the spirit of war that has existed in this lower world; instead of understanding that Venus is an ancient name given to that principle of love which is diffused through human life; and Mars a name for the evil spirit of war which lamentably, has too much prevailed, and too much encouraged by human beings so erring and misled.

The field of ancient science, which a true knowledge of mythology opens to our view, is one of the only true antidotes we have for present superstition, bigotry, and ignorance. Strong minds, by their own scientific perceptions, may see through superstition, but the multitude of this age is not strong of mind, and requires careful direction to abate its fears, appease its alarms, and to unfold to its understanding the realities of present, past, and future.

Let us all start for the West, in pursuit of light and knowledge, and try to harmonize human dissent, and its evil consequences. Men agree in and teach whatever they know, and dissent only where both parties are ignorant, and neither can explain the mystery of ancient language and symbols.

Through ignorance of its mystery many defects and anachronisms have crept into the ceremonies of modern masonry; but of one thing we feel assured, that man is physically born ignorant, and needs intelligent cultivation. This is the root and foundation of all useful knowledge. Superstition has partly smothered for a time, this the first necessary item of knowledge, and it must be fully redeemed before society can recover its lost position.

The candidate for Freemasonry is received not only as a figure of humility, but as a picture of the human mind proceeding from ignorance to knowledge. To the purpose of any instruction it is not necessary that the details be literally true, as profane history. Mythology and allegory partake of the character of the novel, or other dramatic writing, of instruction as to character and principles, by

fiction, which to this day is received and most read, as an agreeable and satisfactory style of writing.

Little is cared in the present age for simple commonplace practical truths. Human nature seems to crave, and has in all ages of the world craved "Mystery;" to be fond of riddles and the marvellous. Doubtless it was ever so, and so provided for in mythological, allegorical, and dramatic books, and thus provided for in Freemasonry.

To follow the ritual and routine of all the degrees in Masonry, to have the language in memory, and to be able from memory to practice all the required steps, positions, grips, or motions, and to know all characters, figures, or emblems depicted in a Lodge, these ought to be known; but in the letter just amounts to nothing at all, in the making of a Freemason; the "spirit" or revelation of the allegories, &c., is what is required, both as to knowledge, and practice, to make out the character of a true Freemason.

A true Masonic character is formed by the acquisition of all possible knowledge, divine and human, fane and profane, with the benevolent desire of extending that knowledge among the whole human race, that recognises in every man a brother of the dust, who has need of every other man's goodwill and assistance. To complete the Mason's character, he should know something of mythology, tradition, ancient history, physical science, ancient languages, symbolical and alphabetical. This would raise the individual above the despicable slavery of superstition and bigotry.

NOTE.—It is well to observe here, that although modern Masonry copies the customs of ancient nations, it is not

to be supposed for a moment there is any "idolatry" connected with it. It is merely an imitation of their rites and ceremonies, without any reference to the original import of them.

The following article, which appeared in the *Victorian Argus*, of March 27th, 1884, on the installation of Bro. Sir. W. J. Clarke, as District Grand Master E.C., and reproduced by the *S. A. Rough Ashlar*, is so thoroughly in accord with the subjects treated of in our Essays, that we here give it in full for the benefit of our readers:—

"In the minds of the uninitiated, as in those probably of a good many free and accepted Masons, the ceremonial of March 26th is not likely to connect itself with events so remote as the construction of the Pyramids or with the esoteric philosophy which the priests of early Egypt taught, under obligations of secrecy, to a limited number of adepts. And yet those who have investigated the genealogy of Masonry, and traced its history, under various forms and names, in different countries and epochs, find plenty of evidence to show that its commencement has to be looked for in the beginnings of history, and that those stupendous monuments in the valley of the Nile, which, "doting with age, have forgotten the names of their founders," were built by men who laid the first stones of them upon the same principles and in the same angle of the structure, as did the inheritors of their lore, their science, and their traditions, who reared the spires of Strasburg, Cologne, and Salisbury, and as do the organisers of a contemporary Masonic lodge.

"With the exception of Judaism, Masonry is probably the only institution extant which reaches back so far into

the immeasurable past. Its monotheism is believed to have been derived from the doctrines taught by the priests of those Egyptian temples, in the adyta of which the "bright hair'd" Samian, Pythagoras, spent two and twenty years of his life in the acquisition of occult knowledge. The practice of delivering certain important words "face to face and mouth to ear," was evidently borrowed from that which was pursued by the Kabalists in the communication of their secret lore, and while the connection between Masonry and the mysteries of classic antiquity are too obvious to be overlooked; while we read in *Ovid* of Medea having "her arm, breast, and knee made bare, and her left foot slipshod;" and while we know that the passwords, rites, and symbolical ceremonies of the modern lodge are familiar to Asiatic brotherhoods, who have obtained them by independent inheritance from a long line of adepts, we can scarcely refuse to recognise the extreme antiquity of the institution, although the name it bears is a modern one—that is to say, if we do not accept Sir Egerton Brydges' etymology of it, that it was one name or title of the Druids—May's-ons or Men of May. That erudite writer affiliates Masonry to Druidism; but as *this* is conjectured to have had its origin among the Magi of Persia and the Gymnosophists of India; and as the latter, in their turn, are reputed to have received all their knowledge from the Risi, or seven primæval sages, who lived—or are fabled to have lived—before the Vedic times, we only lose ourselves in the night of time by following up this clue to the genesis of Masonry.

"Under whatever name it was known, and whatever may have been the transformations which its external aspect underwent, in this or that country, or under such and such

a form of government or condition of society, its main object seems to have been to keep alive and to transmit to such as were capable of comprehending a truth so different from the exoteric doctrines taught to the ignorant multitude, a knowledge of the existence of a supreme impersonal First Cause, an external and omnipotent Creative Principle, whose name was ineffable, and who was figuratively spoken of as the Great Architect of the Universe. In addition to this, a knowledge of the exact sciences was communicated orally to the initiated, and was thus handed down from generation to generation, a practice which still survives, we believe, in the lectures delivered in the "lodges of instruction." Liberty of conscience and freedom from ecclesiastical tyranny were also cherished by the adepts. As to the ceremonies of initiation, passing, and raising, we may, without violating any of the secrets of the order, point out the impressive way in which they symbolize the entrance of each human being on the stage of life, his education and development, his death, burial, and resurrection.

If Masonry has too often degenerated in modern times into a pretext for mere conviviality, and if the members of the craft too frequently lose sight of what it typifies, and of what it has accomplished in bygone times, it is not the institution which is deserving of blame, but those who have treated it with insufficient respect. Its fundamental principles are belief in God, loyalty to the Throne or to the established system of government, and the practice of charity—of "brotherly love, relief, and truth." The Christian, the Jew, the Mahommedan can meet in a Masonic Lodge upon common ground. The Old Testament, which each venerates, is never closed while the Lodge is open; and the passwords relate to persons and

events associated with a history that all of them hold in almost equal reverence. There are signs which no brother can refuse to acknowledge, and methods of supplication and tokens of distress which have ere now converted enemies on the battle field into fast friends, and averted from a prostrate foe the sword which was impending for his destruction. In times when foreign travel was attended with difficulties and dangers which have since disappeared, Masonry was a bond of union between men meeting as strangers in countries widely remote from each other, and the tourist found himself welcomed and *fêted* by hosts upon whom he had no other claim than that he and they recognised each other, by a very simple token, as members of the same brotherhood. In the middle ages, Masonic confraternities were engaged in the construction of the *noble ministers* which stud the face of Great Britain and of Western Europe, and their symbolic "marks" may be still discovered on the foundation stones, or the base courses at the north-east corners of these venerable edifices; although the common belief that these bodies of Freemasons were "ubiquitous," is regarded by the late Mr. C. E. Street as erroneous. Be this as it may, the craft possesses a history full of interest, and this seems a fitting occasion to call attention to it."

To return to our subject. In taking a retrospect of other human institutions, whether founded for the purposes of government, science, mutual security, or any other purpose, we find they have mostly been unstable in their duration, and generally failing in the accomplishment of the design for which they were framed. Kingdoms, with their mighty founders have had their rise, meridian, and decline. In vain, we ask, who were the

founders of Palmyra's boasted temples, of Baalbec's gorgeous domes, or the gigantic works of Egypt—the wrecks of their mouldering grandeur only seeming to frown contempt on their founder's schemes.

Our noble, ancient, and honorable institution, "Freemasonry" (*i.e.* its principles), has witnessed the rise, revolutions, and wane of empires, withstood the inroads of war, and the still more desolating ravages of barbarous ignorance, and the gloomy superstition of ancient mediæval and modern times. Through the dark ages from the sixth to the sixteenth century, Masonry was one of the chief lamps of knowledge that illumined the gloom of the then degraded human mind. Masonry was the nurse that fostered, the guardian that watched over, the ark that preserved the sacred scriptures, and (amidst the deluge of Gothic doom that overspread the earth) all the science that had survived the wreck of the Grecian and Roman empires, was preserved in our Lodges.

If, in the far-distant future "ignorance" should again wrap her sable mantle around the world, there will still be, as in the ages past and gone, a little, if but a glimmer, of true light left (like the star in the East) in the Freemasons' Lodge, whose office it will be to again conserve it, to treasure it, and to again forward the true principles upon which Freemasonry is founded, on to posterity.

A lady recently (in 1880) published a book—"Isis Unveiled"—in which she told the world that Freemasonry, as taught in our Lodges, had only a standing of three or four centuries, and had no existence at the time of the building of King Solomon's Temple.

Another wiseacre has recently been amusing the public of South Australia with a similar baseless tale. At these assertions we took umbrage, and one of our primary reasons for the production of these Essays was to refute and silence, both by traditional and historical facts, such random statements, made by ignorant and prejudiced persons, and to prevent such statements gaining credence among the uninitiated.

But we have still a more startling piece of intelligence to impart. It may not be generally known by Masons in Australia that an extraordinary revelation has lately been brought to light, as if in answer to such injudicious assertions.

Through the uncovering and cleansing of the second Cleopatra's Needle, which has been presented by the Government of Egypt to the Americans, evidences were brought to light which show that the signs and symbols used by Masons to-day in their Lodges were used by the Master Masons at a time coeval with the "Needle," and, of course, before that period. This fact proves that there were Freemasons at and before the building of the "Temple," a fact evidencing the antiquity claimed by the "Craft." Great credit is due to Capt. Gorringe, who has brought these evidences to light. Doubtless, further discoveries in Egypt and elsewhere will, in due time, substantiate the antiquity of the dear old Craft.

We cannot and will not subscribe to the opinion that a pure and wholesome stream can have its source in pollution; that truth and justice, freedom, charity, and brotherly love, can be the salient characteristics of a Society founded by impostors.

So far we think we have shown in these Essays that our past history is not to be sought for in impossible annals of the transactions of our ancient Brethren; we must go far beyond and behind the fabulous records of ancient times to search for the origin of our Craft. It is not by direct evidence, but only by induction that we can arrive at a probable solution of the question—Whence are we?

We do not for a moment suppose that Freemasonry in its present form, and adapted as it now is to embrace all nations, kindreds, creeds, and languages in one common Brotherhood, has been exactly what it now is from the commencement. Progress and change are inseparable from all human institutions, and development is a law of nature; but we do maintain that the main principles and leading features of the "Order" have been handed down to modern times unaltered and unimpaired, with increasing improvements and adaptability, from the ancient fathers of our race, who flourished before the birth of Grecian refinement and art, and long, long before Roman jurisprudence created Corporate Bodies or Craftsmen's Guilds.

Though probably descended from Egypt, our Craft, like language, arose and developed itself in various places. The ancient mysteries of Egypt, India, Greece, and Rome, which have been so largely treated of in these Essays, were, we believe, identical with Freemasonry. They were, it is true, at times polluted and prostituted, for no human institution is free from such a liability; but, nevertheless, in all times their essence, when divested of their temporary coating of sensuality or superstition, was the same; and this essential rallying point of them

*which was
very late
in the history
of Egypt.*

all was Monotheism, and a belief in a life beyond the grave.

The doctrine of the immortality of the soul was among them all, and in all countries taught and inculcated, not only directly, but by legends and allegories; the doctrine remaining the same, while the legends and illustrations used to impress it on the minds of the candidates have varied almost endlessly with time and place. It matters little what such legends were, if they were but appropriate and fit to make a lasting impression on the mind.

In the infancy of our race, when the childlike hearts of men were filled with wonder and admiration at the tremendous power of the Almighty Architect, the Cyclopean architecture of the time, emulating in some cases the mountains themselves in vastness (Pyramids), and in others the columnar structure of Staffa and the Giant's Causeway, were fitting illustrations of the ideas which then filled the human mind.

We think that by this time our readers will believe that no human organisation has had so great an effect upon the minds of the race of mankind as has the noble and ancient Craft of Freemasonry. It is to be regretted that now-a-days so many gain admission into the ranks of Masonry, who, without an inkling of the derivation or descent of the Order, and with a very vague notion of its deepest and most permanent principles, they go through life, and even attain to rank and office among the Fraternity, with no other idea than that certain ceremonies, which to them have no significance, constitute their only distinction from other men. We shall be glad if what we have said in these Essays should lead some of

them to become thoughtful and really study the matter, and see whether our conclusions be without foundation; and still more shall we rejoice should they be induced to believe, as we do, that Freemasonry constitutes the oldest and most permanent depository of those great moral truths that we have mentioned; that while creeds and politics may vary as they please, and sects and denominations multiply over the face of the earth; till bickerings, heart-burnings, and polemic disputes have become a disgrace to civilised men; that the Masons have a firm hold of and will not let go the fundamental points of the true religion, which teaches the Lord our God is one God, is our God, our Father, our Creator, our King, our Judge, and our Saviour; that He is all powerful, and all merciful, and all wise; that every son of Adam is to each one of us a brother worthy of our sympathy and entitled to our assistance; and that there is a life beyond the grave.

While Freemasons hold to these, their Ancient tenets, they need never fear that any true man, whatever creed he may profess, can with any truth accuse them of heresy, or, when he knows them, refuse them his adhesion; and at the same time, when, as now, we find theologians disputing about the fashion of a garment, or the color of a vestment, "tithing mint, anise, and cummin, and forgetting the weightier matters of the law," they may, as Masons, rejoice that, accepting all reverent worshippers of the Most High, they now stand as they have ever stood, the upholders of truth against the attacks of atheism and materialism on the one hand, and the encroachments of ultramontaniam and intolerance on the other.

In the preceding Essays we have clearly shown that the heathen nations had their mysteries, but we do not

envy them. "They are not our mysteries." Theirs were dedicated to idols, while ours are dedicated to Jehovah; and the Jehovah of the old covenant is the Christ, the Redeemer of mankind, under the new.

Our Essays have now shared the usual fate of all mundane things, and we have at last reached the close of our long, laborious, though pleasant, self-imposed task. We thank the Great Architect of the Universe for this, and take courage; should He in His wisdom think fit, we intend to compile another graphic, and intensely interesting series of Essays, treating of each system of the ancient mysteries in detail.

So now, with fraternal greetings to all who have honored the foregoing Essays with their attention, we close our labors, hoping at some future time to find opportunity for carrying out the promises we have made; thus evincing our true and sincere respect and love for the craft.



MARCH OF THE MASONS.

FROM out the distant past,
 The early Masons came,
 And labor'd to the last
 To win a noble name.
 With flag of peace unfurl'd,
 They journey'd far and wide,
 And reared throughout the world,
 The temples, now our pride.
 Honor those of old,
 The true and great—the great and good;
 In wisdom's ranks enrolled,
 A faithful brotherhood;
 For as they march'd along,
 The agéd and the youth;
 They strove to conquer wrong
 With love, relief, and truth.

The ages roll along
 'Mid everlasting strife,
 Between the right and wrong,
 The good and bad of life.
 We mortals feel the thrall
 Of trials old and new,
 Though many men may fall,
 Yet Masons still are true.
 Yes, we Masons still,
 We still are prompt to prove our might,
 Against all deeds of ill,
 And in the cause of right.
 And as we march along,
 The agéd and the youth,
 We strive to conquer wrong
 With love, relief, and truth.



THE COROLLARY.

DURING the infancy of the world, in the remotest period of antiquity, the ceremonies of primitive Masonry (*i.e.* religion) would naturally be few, and consist, perhaps, like that of admission into modern christianity, &c., of a simple lustration (or christening), conferred alike on all, in the hope that they would practice the social duties of benevolence and goodwill to man, and devotion to the one true God.

This in reality is the meaning of primitive Masonry, pure as it came from the mind of God; indeed, every conservator of the true name of God, was, and is a Freemason in heart, in the truest sense of the word. The ordinary employment in those remote days, was the study and contemplation of God's wisdom in making, ordering, and governing the world, together with observations on the motions of the heavenly bodies; and the sciences of astronomy and geology were doubtless employed in these studies and contemplations. Astronomy was peculiarly a favorite pursuit with the original Freemasons (so to call them) who flourished in ages before the Deluge. Whether this led to the practice of Sabeism among them is open to conjecture. We think it did.

The doctrines of the Patriarchs before the Flood consisted of traditions of the Creation, Paradise, the Seventh Day, the Fall of Man, Cain's fratricide, &c. This is the race which Freemasons of the present day regard as their

most early predecessors in the practice of rites to which accident gave the name of Masonry.

Such was the Masonry of these primeval ages, and thus it passed through the hands of antediluvian patriarchs, unalloyed by innovations tending to vitiate its benefits or circumscribe its blessings. After the Flood, the patriarchal ordinances were perverted; the rites of Buddah were engrafted on the pure ceremonies of the first worshippers, and by subsequent corruptions it assumed the complex form of Brahminism, and was solemnized with such pomp and imposing magnificence of decoration as to excite universal notice. This brings us to the period of the "Ancient Idolatrous Mysteries," or spurious Freemasonry.

Mythologically, Egypt was said to have been governed by a dynasty of "gods" for a period of about thirteen thousand years. Their names were, Vulcan, or Ptah; Helios, the Sun, or Ra; Sos, or Shu; Saturn, or Seb; Osiris, or Heshar; Typhon, or Seti; and Horus, or Hor.

These were succeeded by the "demi-gods" and Manes, whose reigns were said to occupy four thousand years more.

These were again succeeded by thirty dynasties of kings (or Pharaohs), whose reigns occupied five thousand three hundred and sixty-two years (long chronology). Tradition asserts that the first king of the first dynasty was Mena, whose reign is placed by the Egyptians 17,000 B.C., and the last king of the thirtieth dynasty or Sebennytic, was Nectanabes the II., who fled into Ethiopia before the Persians under Darius the II., about three hundred and forty years before the Christian era.

The chronological order of the Ancient Mysteries were probably, as follows, viz. :—

First, Egyptian; second, Babylonians and Assyrians; third, Phœnicians and Carthaginians; fourth, Etruscans; fifth, Hindoostan; sixth, Zoroastrian and Persian; seventh, Grecian; eighth, Celtic; ninth, Gothic; tenth, Peruvian and Mexican. The Indians, Hindostanees, Greeks, and Britons were Brahminists; the Chinese, Japanese, Persians, and Saxons, were Buddhists; the Buddhists were Magians; the Brahminists were Sabians. These were two separate systems; indeed, no two systems can be more opposite, or bear less evidence of being derived from each other, for Brahminism has incarnations, has a host of idols, enjoins bloody sacrifices, requires atrocious self-tortures, makes lying, theft, and other vices *sometimes* commendable, and describes the gods as excelling in all those enormities, and makes absorption into deity the supreme good. The Buddhist, on the contrary, admits of no incarnations, for it has no permanent God, has but one idol, forbids all killing, inculcates but few austerities, never confounds right and wrong, never excuses any sin, and believes in annihilation.

And how abhorrent soever it may appear, the Magians (or Buddhists) maintained their superiority by the sword, while the Sabians (or Brahminists) were peaceable, and addicted to the arts of civil and social life. In some nations, the above two systems became, in subsequent ages, intimately blended; of these the Indians and Britons may be marked out as chief.

It is evident that a regular idolatrous priesthood was established prior to the dispersion from Babel, for it is

stated that "the priests of Jupiter, the Conqueror, surviving the general destruction, preserved the holy vessels and ornaments, and repaired with them to Babylon."

The mysteries, after being fairly instituted—which probably took place on the plains of Shinar, before the dispersion of mankind—spread over the world with a rapidity truly astonishing. They were introduced into Egypt by Tosh, the son of Mizriam, who was the son of Ham; into India, by Brahma; into China and Japan, by Buddah; into Persia, by Zoroaster; into Greece, by Melampus; into Bœotia, by Prometheus; into Crete, by Minos; into Samothrac^e, by Dardanus; into Messina, by Caucon; into Thebes, by Methalpus; into Athens, by Erectheus; into Eturia, by Philostratus; into the city of Arene, by Lycus; into Thrace, by Orpheus; into Italy, by the Pelasgi; into Cyprus^a, by Cipyras; into Gaul and Britain, by Gomer, or his descendants; into Scandinavia, by Sigge or Odin; into Mexico, by Vitzlipultzli; and into Peru, by Manco Copac and his wife.

Hence it follows by a clear induction, that all the mysteries throughout the world were the same in substance, being derived from one source, and celebrated in honor of the same deities. Though acknowledged under different appellations, they sprang up in the East with such prodigious rapidity and strength, that soon their branches spread from East to West, and from North to South. The continent of Asia was pervaded in every part of its vast and spacious surface; the shores of Africa basked under their shade, and disseminated their abominations; they imparted activity to the designs of the Phœnician merchants, and gave distinction to the Greek

and Roman name; the distant isles of Britannia and Hibernia; the cold and inhospitable regions of Scandinavia and Iceland, alike yielded to their sway; and even the distant countries which peopled the woods and forests of the new world, felt and acknowledged their utility in enslaving and reducing to abject submission the savage nature of their fierce inhabitants.

It is said that Nimrod was the first apostate from the true Freemasonry, which as previously stated, was a religion supported only by the unpopular recommendations of silent devotions to the one and only true God, a superintending providence and unoffending simplicity to man, accompanied by a life which coveted no distinction in this world, but such as emanates from the principles of piety and virtue.

Nimrod's apostacy was attractive, and the spurious imitations aimed at extinguishing the unpretending blaze of truth, which was then denominated Masonry.

Nimrod instituted a number of Divine honors to Noah and his triple offspring, who are identified with the Sabian worship, and gave the original impulse to the Sun-and-Ark superstition; hence the Sun and Noah were worshipped in conjunction with the Moon and the Ark. The Ark subsequently represented the female principle, under the various appellations in different countries of Isis, Venus, Astarte, Ceres, Proserpine, Rhea, Sita, Ceridwen, Frea, &c., whilst Noah, or the male principle, assumed the names of Osiris, Saturn, Jupiter, Neptune, Bacchus, Hu, Brahma, Odin, &c. This system of distinguishing their deities into sexes, male and female, would, as a matter of course, by degrees introduce the abominations of the

Phallic worship; while Vesta represented the Ark itself; Minerva, the Divine wisdom and justice which produced the Deluge and preserved the Ark upon its waters; Isis was the rainbow; and Juno, the Arkite Dove.

On these rude beginnings the whole complicated machinery of the mysteries was formed, which almost completely banished from the political horizon of idolatry the knowledge and worship of the one and only true God, and of His superintending providence.

The triumph of this diabolical system was completed by the invention of the doctrine of the Transmigration of souls, in which they were taught to believe that the unhappy soul of the wicked despiser of the mysteries was doomed to a transmigration of three thousand years' duration. This doctrine was a fearful engine in the hands of a political priesthood to enslave the mind through the influence of imaginary fears. What could be more terrible than the contemplation of a punishment which degraded the human soul beneath its natural superiority of character, and consigned it to a long succession of transmigrations through the polluted bodies of ravenous beasts, or loathsome reptiles, &c., and who would be bold enough to reject or condemn a system which bore the ensigns of such a dreadful retribution?

Singularly enough, the greatest philosophers of all ages and nations considered this doctrine to be perfectly orthodox. A curious traditional account is given of Godama, the Buddhist king's transmigrations; we therefore transcribe them in full.

"Godama was the son of a king, who had previously lived in four hundred millions of worlds, and passed

through innumerable conditions in each. In this world he had been almost every sort of worm, fowl, fish, or animal, and in almost every grade and condition of human life. (One would think that this was a good subject *re* Darwinism). Having in the course of these transitions attained immense merit, he at length was born son of the above-mentioned king. The moment he was born, he jumped upon his feet and spreading out his arms exclaimed:—'Now am I the noblest of men! this is the last time I shall ever be born!' When in this state his mind was enlarged, so that he remembered his former conditions and existences, of which he rehearsed many to his followers. Five hundred and fifty of these narrations have been preserved, one relating his life and adventures as a deer, another as a monkey, elephant, fowl, &c. &c."

In the ordinances of Menu it is decreed, that a man who designedly takes away the property of another, or eats any holy cake, not first presented to the deity at a solemn rite (in defiance, we suppose, or contempt of the holy ordinance), shall inevitably sink to the condition of a brute.

The slayer of a Brahmin must enter, according to the circumstances of his crime, the body of a dog, a boar, an ass, a camel, a bull, a goat, a sheep, a stag, a bird, &c.

He who steals the gold of a priest shall pass a thousand times into the bodies of spiders, of snakes and chameleons, of crocodiles, and other aquatic monsters, or of mischievous blood-sucking demons.

This degrading species of punishment is still more pointedly denounced on the despisers of the sacred

mysteries. "Because of their folly," says the god Chrishna, "they adopt false doctrine, and continue to live the life of impurity; therefore I cast down upon the earth those furious abject wretches, those evil beings who thus despise me, into the wombs of evil spirits and unclean beasts. Being doomed to the wombs of Assoors (demons) from birth to birth, at length, not finding me, they go into the most infernal regions."

Public odium was studiously cast on those who refused the rites. They were considered as profane wretches, unworthy of public employment, or private confidence, proscribed as obdurate atheists, and finally condemned to everlasting punishment; they were exhibited in the dramatic machinery of initiation as enduring the pains of Tartarus, a doom pronounced to be everlasting.

These motives were strengthened by that undefined principle of curiosity, which is always excited by any system in which secrecy forms a prominent feature; for the human mind, ever reaching forward to extended information, seeks for it in those institutions where it is supposed to be preserved, and the knowledge which is enveloped in mystery, is frequently courted with greater eagerness than that which is open to public inspection.

Few, however, of the myriads who sought admission into the Lesser Mysteries, attained the higher and more perfect degrees; for here were embedded the real secrets. These were—the tradition of the Creation, Fall, and Promise of a Mediator, the Unity and Trinity of the Godhead, the Deluge, the Redemption by a bloody sacrifice, and the soul's existence in a future state.

The misapprehension of the redemption of mankind by a bloody sacrifice, doubtless, led to the horrid custom of immolating human victims. It is difficult to pronounce with any degree of confidence, what was the origin of this revolting practice, although it might probably have arisen from an imperfect knowledge of the prediction of the Messiah in the earlier ages of the world.

Nevertheless, under all the absurdities, and the potent spell of this spurious Masonry, the true light of Masonry declined in public estimation as the rapid progress of its adversary made all nations and people and languages bend before it, until the true light gave portentous intimation of approaching decay, and nought could have saved it from utter extinction, had it not been reinvigorated by the "Essenes,"—a sect of people among the Jews—who took charge of the forsaken "institution," and cherished it until its rays of light once more began to illuminate the surrounding darkness; and it thence continued to enlighten (it must be admitted) in a narrow and restricted path, terminating, however, in the broad and glorious blaze of splendour that dissipated the unholy shades of Idolatry.

We again reiterate the opinion, founded on study and research, that the science which we now denominate Speculative Masonry, was coeval, at least, with the creation of our globe, and that the far-famed mysteries of idolatry were a subsequent institution, founded on similar principles, with the design of conveying unity and permanence to the false worship, which it could not otherwise have ever acquired.

The climax of degeneracy and degradation arrived in

the year A.D. 364, when "Valentinian" published a law forbidding nocturnal sacrifices, for the purpose of preventing the indecencies which were now perpetrated in the Mysteries. Subsequently, Theodosius sent Cynegius into Egypt, with orders to close the temples and places of initiation, who executed his commission to the letter. He shut up the temples, and prohibited the celebration of the Mysteries all over the East, and even in Alexandria itself, and finally abolished these institutions, and every branch of the ancient and religious rites.

Psellus, however, informs us that in Athens they were practised till the eighth century; and we are assured on undoubted authority, viz., from the Bardic writings of that period, that they were celebrated in Wales and Scotland even so late as the twelfth century.

Enough of the famous Mysteries of Idolatry have now been exposed and explained in our Essays, to give the student or reader a good general idea of their use and import. We have designedly omitted to draw any formal comparison, for the purpose of showing what portion of true Freemasonry they retained amidst all their abominations, because there are many things not proper to be written, and because the intelligent brother will not fail to discover the points of resemblance wherever they occur. It appears evident that all the "mysteries" of antiquity originated in some common source, because the ceremonies, in all cases, bear a striking resemblance to each other. The Legend invariably celebrated the death and resurrection of some imaginary being.

The Rites were always solemnized by lamentation,

terminating in joy. Severe tests and probations accompanied the ceremonial, and the initiations were performed in secret. Ablutions and purifications formed a distinguishing feature in all these institutions.

The doctrines of the Mysteries formed another, and more decisive evidence of their common origin. They exhibit traces, which cannot be mistaken, of the unity and trinity of the Godhead; of the creation and fall of man. The promise of a Mediator, the doctrine of redemption by blood (which, as before stated, doubtless through ignorance), led to the deplorable practice of immolating human victims to appease the gods. We discover in these remarkable institutions, fables which bear an undoubted reference to the sin of our first parents, and their exclusion from bliss, a sin produced by the intervention of a serpent—tempter; of the first fratricide, and many of the transactions of the antediluvian world; the deluge; the ark; the Egyptian bondage and many other facts in the early history of the world, which are of the utmost importance to the present and future condition of man.

Above all, we must feel struck with the remarkable fact, that the abstruse doctrines of the resurrection, and a future state (which were not perfectly understood, even by God's favorite people) were embodied in the ceremonies of initiation, where the candidate not only is figured to die, and be restored to life, but the torments of a place of punishment are always broadly contrasted with the happiness of the final reward which good men are sure to enjoy after death. These coincidences are remarkable, they are more than coincidences, they are great facts.

It is impossible that the beforementioned truths could

have been invented; they must have been derived, and they could not have been derived from any system but that which had been revealed from Heaven, to the first race of men on the earth, before they were contaminated by error, or polluted by the abominations of an idolatrous worship. In this view the Mysterious Institutions of Antiquity (so briefly explained in this work, but of more anon) form a striking corroboration of the Mosaic records. The evidence is extremely valuable, because it is undesigned. Nor did the heathen nations suspect, that by their mysteries they were furnishing an unsuspected evidence to the cause of religious truth, which, at the appointed time, should uproot their system, and triumphantly found a truer plan of human salvation on its ruins.

APPLICATION OF THE WHOLE MATTER.

Every system of Masonry (or Mystery) practised throughout the world has been applied to religion and the worship of the Deity. How diversified soever in other respects, this is a broad and distinguishing feature which undisguisedly pervades the whole. If the deities were false, the system was false also; and if the worship was directed to its true fountain, the system remained pure and uncontaminated by error or delusion. Such was pure Freemasonry. Religion, so-called, was the ostensible design of each, for, however the world may have been infested and overrun by idolatry, it has suffered (or is likely to suffer) little from professed Atheism. There is a principle implanted in the human heart which prompts mankind to the belief in a superior and superintending power, under whatever name it may have been personified,

and this power is endowed with attributes of infinite knowledge and infinite wisdom. Sophism, or the art of making the truth appear false, cannot overwhelm it; Philosophy cannot succeed in erasing it from the heart. It speaks the same language to the ignorant savage and to the proud philosopher of antiquity as it does to the learned Jew or Christian; it displays a God of Nature, who loves virtue and abhors vice, and teaches man the doctrine of personal responsibility; and this is, in reality, the extreme boundary of Natural Religion. But Masonry opens our eyes to futurity, and directs us how to worship this Great Omnipotent Being, so as to attain the reward and escape the punishment consequent on our actions, and instructs us how to walk in that pure and perfect way which leads to life eternal. Any kind of idol set up as a substitute for these great truths is but a shadow without substance; we, as Masons, repudiate them altogether; we are of those who cannot be prevailed on to concede an iota of these principles (call them patriarchal, Christian, or by any other name you please) in favor of any isms. Place in one scale the whole world, and in the other these grand principles, and we should not hesitate to proclaim our choice.

We subjoin, with a few comments, the following observations on the machinery of the Apocalypse, for our readers to moralise on:—For ourselves, we think that the figures and imagery therein were borrowed from the ancient mysteries. In this remarkable Book we find the pure Church of God described as “a woman clothed with the sun, and standing upon the crescent of the moon,” while a corrupted Church is exhibited to us, both under the image of a female floating upon the surface of many waters, and under that of a harlot using a monstrous

beast as her vehicle. The former of these women (the pure), when about to bring forth her first-born, is attacked by a monstrous serpent, which spouts out against her offspring a deluge of water; but the earth opens its mouth and receives the mighty inundation into the central abyss. The latter of them, under the mystic name of the False Prophet, together with her bestial supporter, is said to be at length plunged alive into an infernal lake burning with fire and brimstone. We cannot but think it sufficiently clear that the whole of this machinery is palpably deluvian, and we believe it to have been derived from that received imagery of the Patriarchal Church, which by a corrupted channel was admitted into Paganism. It is simply impossible not to perceive that the woman standing upon the crescent is the very figure of the Samian Juno, or rather of the Egyptian Isis, who were represented in a precisely similar manner with reference to the lunar boat. That the attack upon the woman and her offspring by the deluging serpent, which is frustrated by the earth's absorption of the waters, is perfectly analogous to the attack of the deluvian serpent Python, or Typhon, upon Latona and Horus, which is similarly frustrated by the destruction of that monster; and the false Church, bearing the name of Mystery, floating on the mighty waters or riding on a terrific beast and ultimately plunged into the infernal lake, exhibits the very same aspect as the great mother of Paganism sailing over the ocean, riding on her usual vehicle, the lion, venerated with certain appropriate mysteries, and during the celebration of them, plunged into the waters of a sacred lake, deemed the Lake of Hades.

We take it that in the representation of the pure Church, an ancient patriarchal scheme of symbolical

machinery, derived most plainly from the events of the Deluge, and borrowed with the usual perverse misapplication by the contrivers of Paganism, has been reclaimed to its proper use; while, in the representation of the false Church, which, under a new name, revived the old Gentile demonolatry, the very imagery and language of the Gentile mystagogue has with singular propriety been studiously adopted. (See Rev. xii., xvii., verses 1 to 5; xix. to 20). We need scarcely remark that we are speaking solely of the Apocalyptic machinery; of this the origin will still be the same however we may interpret the prophecies which are built upon it. The whole machinery of the Apocalypse, from the beginning to end, seems to us very plainly to have been borrowed from the machinery of the ancient mysteries; and this, if we consider the nature of the subject, was done with the very strictest attention to poetical decorum. St. John himself is made to personate an aspirant about to be initiated, and accordingly the images presented to his mind's eye closely resemble the pageants of the mysteries, both in their nature and in the order of their succession. (See Rev. iv.) The Prophet first beholds a door opened in the magnificent Temple of Heaven, and into this he is invited to enter by the voice of one who plays the Hierophant, or Mystagogue. Here he witnesses the unsealing of a sacred Book, and forthwith he is appalled by a troop of ghastly apparitions which flit in horrid succession before his eyes. Among these are pre-eminently conspicuous a vast serpent, the well-known symbol of the Great Father, and two portentous wild beasts, which severally come up out of the sea and out of the earth. Such hideous figures correspond with the canine phantoms of the Orgies which seemed to rise out of the ground, and with the polymorphic images of the principal hero-god,

who was universally deemed the offspring of the sea, passing these terrific monsters in safety, the prophet, constantly attended by his Angel-Hierophant, who acts the part of an interpreter, is conducted into the presence of a female who is described as closely resembling the great mother of Pagan theology.

Like Isis emerging from the sea and exhibiting herself to the eyes of the aspirant (see Essay XI.) this female divinity, upborne upon the marine wild beast, appears to float upon the surface of many waters. She is said to be "an open and systematic Harlot," just as the Great Mother was the declared female principle of fecundity, and as she was always propitiated by literal fornication reduced to a religious system, and as the initiated were made to drink a prepared liquor out of a sacred goblet, so this Harlot is represented as intoxicating the kings of the earth with the golden cup of her prostitution. On her forehead the very name "Mystery" is inscribed, and the label teaches us, that in point of character she is the great universal mother of idolatry. The nature of this Mystery the officiating mystagogue undertakes to explain, and an important prophecy is most curiously and artfully veiled under the very language and imagery of the Orgies.

To the sea-born Great Father was ascribed a threefold state; he lived, he died, and he revived; and these changes of condition were duly exhibited in the Mysteries. To the sea-born Wild Beast, is similarly ascribed a threefold state; he lives, he dies, and he revives. While dead he lies floating on the mighty ocean, just like Horus, or Osiris, Siva, or Vishnu; when he revives, like those kindred deities, he emerges from the waves, and whether

dead or alive, bears seven heads and ten horns, corresponding in number with the seven ark-preserved Rishis, and the ten aboriginal Patriarchs. Nor is this all; as the worshippers of the Great Father bore his special mark or stigma, and were distinguished by his name, so the worshippers of the maritime beast equally bear his mark, and are equally designated by his appellation. At length, however, the first or doleful part of these sacred Mysteries draws to a close, and the last and joyful part is rapidly approaching. After the prophet has beheld the enemies of God plunged into a dreadful lake or inundation of liquid fire, which corresponds with the infernal lake or deluge of the Orgies, he is introduced into a splendidly illuminated region, expressly adorned with the characteristics of that paradise which was the ultimate scope of the ancient aspirants, while without the holy gate of admission, are the whole multitude of the profane, "dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolators, and whosoever loveth or maketh a lie."

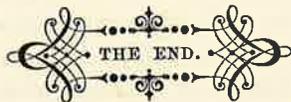
With the following few remarks we will close this Corollary, and our labors for the present.

Many persons are deluded by the vague supposition that the Mysteries of Freemasonry are purely nominal, and that the practices established among us are frivolous, and that our ceremonies may be adopted or waived at pleasure. We believe that after reading our Essays on this subject, they will think very differently. On this false basis, we find too many of the brethren hurrying through all the degrees of the order without adverting to the propriety of one step they pursue, or possessing a single qualification to entitle them to advancement. The consequence is obvious; men who are eminent for ability,

rank, and fortune, frequently view the "honors of Masonry" with indifference, and when their patronage is solicited they either accept offices with reluctance, or reject them with disdain. Until genuine merit shall distinguish our claim to the honors of Masonry, and regularity of deportment display the influence and utility of our rules, the world in general will not be led to reconcile many of our proceedings with our professions.

Whatever may be the conclusions formed by the reader of the foregoing pages, as to the evidences we have adduced from Egyptian, and other sources, relating to the Ancient Mysteries (or religions), we have the satisfaction in our own mind, that our aim is "Truth," and as we have found, so have we given forth, trusting that the information imparted may help to remove prejudice and misconception as to the true aims of Freemasonry, and prepare the way for further Archeological researches. The field is a wide one, the system abstruse, and requires close application to select the pure grain from the chaff, but, whoever will take the trouble to master the science, will be abundantly rewarded for their pains.

"All Glory to the Most High!"



ESSAYS

ON THE

ORIGIN AND ANTIQUITY

OF

FREEMASONRY

HUGO.

Australian Dictionary of Biography

Hugo, William Marks (1828–1904)

by **R. M. Gibbs**

William Marks Hugo (c.1828–1904), missionary and founder of the Bushmen's Club, was born at East Ham, Essex, England, son of Trevanion Pyle Hugo and his wife Mary Anne, née Marks. The writer Victor Hugo was a distant relation. William went to sea when young and was a purser's steward in 1842. After service in the Crimean War he worked for three years in a store at New Haven, Connecticut, United States of America. He read much. Outspoken, and with the civil war looming, he moved to Kingston, Ontario, Canada, where his elder brother lived. Relations there judged him a 'brilliant genius'; his nephew noted his 'breezy manner, rather engaging personality, and general look of brightness and smartness'.

In 1861 Hugo left for Liverpool, England, and then travelled to Queensland, where he experienced a religious conversion. Concealing his past and known only as 'William', for some years he tramped the outback as a missionary; on prodigious journeys in South Australia and beyond he carried only a swag and a little water, relying on others for sustenance and shelter. He occasionally rested at the Mount Remarkable station of **J. H. Angas** who, with his father **George Fife Angas**, had supported a bush missionary society and William's work.

By 1866 a ravaging northern drought accelerated the need to succour bush workers, who were often victims of their own excesses and were preyed upon between jobs. Hugo pressed for a 'bushmen's home', like a seamen's home, as a quiet, sober refuge. Opposition came from those who saw it as a squatters' movement, but his canvassing, bushmen's subscriptions and philanthropic support enabled the home to open in Whitmore Square, Adelaide, in May 1870. The Bushmen's Club included dormitories, reading room and labour office. Initially, Hugo was unpaid as superintendent. Charges were moderate, notices read: 'Swearing, drunkenness, and gambling strictly prohibited' and amusements inside and games outside were



William Marks Hugo (1828-1904), by unknown photographer, 1886

State Library of South Australia, SLSA: B 6229

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