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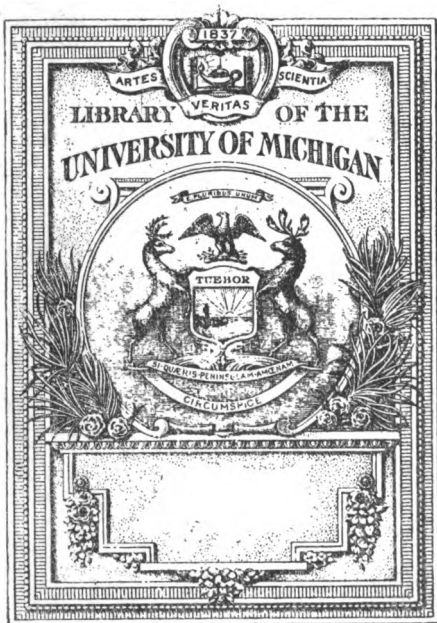
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**THE
STAR IN THE EAST.**

THE
STAR IN THE EAST,

SHEWING

THE ANALOGY WHICH EXISTS

BETWEEN THE



LECTURES OF FREEMASONRY,

THE

MECHANISM OF INITIATION INTO ITS MYSTERIES,

AND THE

Christian Religion.

BY

GEORGE OLIVER, VICAR OF CLEE,
Domestic Chaplain to the Right Honourable Lord Kensington ;
Author of " The Antiquities of Freemasonry."

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P R E F A C E.

REC'D 1885.6.3-30. F.R.
WHEN a publication on a novel subject has issued from the press, the motives of the Author, and the question of expediency, are usually investigated with some degree of eagerness. I know not how far it may be considered necessary to state the numerous and complicated motives which have unitedly contributed to originate the following essay; but I may perhaps be permitted to enumerate *three reasons*, each amply sufficient to decide the

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question of expediency, and to illustrate my design in laying this work before the Public.

And first we are informed, that the unsanctified bigotry of a superstitious creed has again proscribed Freemasonry, in some of the continental nations, as an institution decidedly hostile to the interests of Christianity; and under the sanction of an "ever-valid" bull of Pope Clement,* has unbarred the

* The following extract from this bull will exhibit the nature of the persecution to which our brethren in Spain and Portugal are now subjected.

"Clement Bishop, servant of the servants of God, to all the faithful of Christ, health and apostolical benediction.

"Placed (unworthy as we are) by the disposal

prison gates of the Inquisition, and loosened all its active engines to

posal of the divine clemency, in the eminent watch-tower of the apostleship, &c. &c., it has come to our knowledge, even from public report, that certain societies, companies, meetings, assemblies, clubs or conventicles, commonly called *de Liberi Muratori*, or Freemasons, or by whatsoever other name the same in different languages are distinguished, spread far and wide, and are every day increasing; in which, persons of whatsoever religion or sect, contented with *a kind of affected show* of natural honesty, confederate together in a close and inscrutable bond, according to laws and orders agreed upon between them; which likewise with private ceremonies, they enjoin and bind themselves, as well by strict oath taken on the Bible, as by the imprecation of heavy punishments, to preserve with inviolable secrecy.

apprehend, and punish by torture and death, the harmless professors of a

“ We therefore, revolving in our minds the great mischiefs, &c., by the plenitude of the apostolical power,... and by this our present *ever-valid* constitution, we do condemn and prohibit the same societies, &c. &c. We will moreover and command, That as well bishops and superior prelates, and other ordinaries of particular places, as *the Inquisitors of heretical pravity universally deputed*, of what state, degree, condition, order, dignity or pre-eminence soever, proceed and inquire, *and restrain and coerce the same, as vehemently suspected of heresy, with condign punishment*: for to him and each of them, we hereby give and impart free power of proceeding, inquiring against, *and of coercing and restraining with condign punishments, the same transgressors, and of calling in, if it shall be necessary, the help of the secular arm, &c. &c.*

“ Dated

science, which inculcates the chief doctrines and morality of Christianity; and assumes, as an universal axiom, the broad tenet of unrestrained union and brotherly love.

The second reason is derived from the general affectation, which seems to pervade the uninitiated, of believing that our institution was established for the purpose of sensual conviviality; and hence it is ranked merely on a level with the societies of "Odd Fellows," and "Good Fellows;" "Catch Clubs;" and "Smoking Clubs;" and

"Dated from Rome, at St. Mary's the Greater, in the year of the incarnation of our Lord 1738, the 4th of the calends of May, in the eighth of our Pontificate."

that therefore our professions of intellectual pursuits are altogether fallacious.

My third reason is of a personal nature. At the conclusion of ch. 6. of "The Antiquities of Freemasonry," I offered some observations on the intimate and necessary connexion which subsists between Masonry and Christianity. These remarks appear to have created a sensation in the minds of certain brethren, which I did not anticipate. I have received several admonitory letters, whose common object is to impugn this doctrine, which I consider the fairest gem that Masonry can boast. As all my disquisitions were intended to establish this

alliance, I have, in the following pages, attempted to place the matter beyond the reach of dispute or contradiction ; and I flatter myself I have satisfactorily proved that Freemasonry is not only a vehicle of religion in general, but of Christianity in particular.

To render this little work more generally acceptable, I have interwoven in its pages a considerable portion of our lectures ; distinguishing the several degrees in which each portion is delivered in our Lodges ; which will afford an unobjectionable answer to those cavillers, who will not be persuaded that any salutary benefits are derivable from the practice of Freemasonry.

It may be necessary to add, that I

have here described our science as it is practised in a Lodge which is indebted to my exertions for its origin, and over which I presided during many years. If my information on the subject be incorrect, it proceeds not from a want of assiduity in the research, for I have bestowed upon it much anxious attention: and I may be allowed to express my own conviction, that those who are persuaded of the non-existence of religion in the science of Freemasonry, have not given the subject that mature consideration which its importance demands. For surely it must be a question of some magnitude to the community at large, whether religion be the basis of an institution which

comprehends every description of mankind: which is patronized by crowned heads, and diffuses itself through every rank and station; and I think that a minute comparison between the spirit of religion, and the spirit of Masonry, would be sufficient to convince any ingenuous mind of their indissoluble connexion. The whole Jewish Ritual was but the perfection of Masonry, exhibited in types and emblems of spiritual things. The sublime *mark* or *token* of Ezekiel,* which was impressed on the foreheads of the Jewish masons to preserve them amidst the threatened destruction, was doubtless that significant

* Ezek. 9 c. 4, 6 v.

emblem which we now call the maso-
sonic LEVEL. The most sublime ordi-
nances of Christianity are shadowed
in our institution under types and illus-
trious symbols. In a word, the whole
system of ancient religion, whether
genuine or spurious, was little else
than primitive masonry under various
modifications; and, consequently, it
contained every thing that was condu-
cive to human happiness both tempo-
ral and eternal. For the sake of the
institution generally, and for the sake
of its members in particular, I should
grieve to be convicted of error; be-
cause if religion be discarded from
the illustrations of Freemasonry, it can
possess no charms for a rational being.

Objections may perhaps arise, but none, I trust, of sufficient weight to invalidate the theory. I conclude, however, in the words of Tully, "*refellere sine pertinacia, et refelli sine iracundia, parati sumus.*"

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THE STAR IN THE EAST.

CHAP. I.

Introductory Remarks ; shewing the absolute and immutable Connexion between Freemasonry and Religion.

BEFORE we enter on this discussion, it will be proper to determine precisely what religion is, in the common and most correct acceptation of the word. According to Cicero, the ancients believed religion to be “the study and practice of divine worship.” The Christian differs from the heathen world in the interpretation for religion. Bishop Wilkins defines reli-

gion to be "that general habit of reverence towards the divine nature, whereby we are enabled and inclined to worship and serve God, after such a manner as we conceive most agreeable to His divine will." And Dr. Watts says, that "religion or virtue, in a large sense, includes *duty to God and our neighbour.*" Religion, then, is a system of *practical* duties, and thus stands opposed to theology, which is a system of *speculative* truths. The moral duties, which man commits to practice in this probationary state, with a view of pleasing his Creator, are acts of pure religion, which produce a corresponding influence on the mind and manners, and display his nature, as superior to the rest of the creation. They shew that man has a rational soul, and from his unrestrained freedom

of will, by choosing evil or pursuing good, his personal responsibility is demonstrated ; whence, at some distant period, he will be brought to an account for his actions, whether they be good or whether they be evil, and receive an equitable recompence from the even hand of impartial justice.'

Freemasonry was revealed by God himself to the first man. But a wise and good being would reveal nothing but what had a tendency to encourage the practice of those precepts, which were given to preserve the newly created man in the strict line of moral duty ; therefore masonry must be closely interwoven with the practice of religion. Its operative portion proceeded from the effects of human ingenuity stimulated by human necessity after the fall.

It was merely an application of its principles to the benefit of man, as far as was conducive to his comfort and convenience in this life, without any reference to a future state. Hence originated the two great divisions of masonry : operative masonry was of human institution ; speculative masonry of divine.

Masonry, in the first ages of the world, was therefore a system of pure religion ; and when men degenerated into idolatry, and in their migrations carried with them the principles of the order, it was, in every nation, applied to the same purpose, more or less perverted, in proportion as the inhabitants adhered to, or swerved from, the rites of true worship. In India, Egypt, and other nations, which very early became addicted to Polytheism, it branched

out into pompous ceremonial observances, shrouded in mystery and withheld from the profane, but still applied to the national religion, and the worship of those gods which had been erected into objects of adoration, and placed on the foundation which Jehovah himself had laid. Nor is there a single instance on record, in which the mysterious institutions of any ancient nation, in any part of the world, having the least resemblance to freemasonry, excluded religion from a share in their solemn pursuits. On the contrary, religion was the main object of them all. Whether the Orphic or the Eleusian, the Gothic or the Dionysian; whether the rites of Mithras or Bramha, of Pythagoras or the Druids; the Essenian or the Kasidean; all were instituted in

honour of religion, and all enforced the practice of those duties which religion recommends. Shall we then be told that masonry, the very origin and foundation of all these systems, has no connection with religion, and least of all with Christianity, the perfection of religion? It is a fact, which I shall endeavour to prove, that every creditable writer on the subject of freemasonry has publicly avowed his conviction that the most intimate alliance subsists between the two sister institutions; and has left behind him ample testimonies to repel this novel and very extraordinary opinion.

Freemasonry, as practised at the present day, commemorates particularly five great events in the history of the world, *each typical of the Messiah*. These are,

the vision of Jacob, where he beheld the celebrated ladder, reaching from earth to heaven; *the offering of Isaac* upon Mount Moriah, when it pleased the Lord to substitute a more agreeable victim in his stead; *the miraculous deliverance from Egyptian bondage* under the conduct of Moses; *the offering of David* on the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite; and *the building of Solomon's Temple*. Now these extraordinary events, which unequivocally point to our Saviour Jesus Christ, are the principal historical events contained in our lectures. This coincidence could not have been accidental, and must, therefore, have been designed. It follows, then, that masonry was intended to perpetuate in the mind of man that most important fact, the salvation of his

soul through the sacrifice of Christ. To accomplish this design more perfectly, the most prominent types, as they arose, were incorporated by wise and pious brethren into the original system, until it contained a perfect chain of evidence, which could neither be effaced nor misunderstood, illustrative of this fact, so essential to the future welfare of mankind.

I presume not to say that masonry is exclusively Christian, because many are daily initiated into its mysteries whose religious opinions are inimical to Christianity ; I only contend, and shall endeavour to prove, that being a system of ethics, and inculcating the morality of every religion under the sun, it is more particularly adapted to the Christian re-

ligion, because Christian ethics approach nearest to the standard of absolute perfection; and because the genius of masonry can assimilate with no other religion so completely as with Christianity. The *historical* part of its lectures bears an undoubted reference to our pure religion; and this coincidence is so remarkably striking, that it would almost convince an unprejudiced mind, that masonry was formed as an exclusive companion for Christianity. The strength of this testimony is increased by the nature and tendency of its *symbolical instruction*, by the peculiar cast of its *morality*, and by the very extraordinary nature of its *allegorical mechanism*; extraordinary on any other principle than with a reference to Christianity.

Masonry is confessedly an universal system, and teaches the relative and social duties of man on the broad and extensive basis of general philanthropy. A Jew, a Mahometan, or a Pagan may attend our lodges without fear of hearing his peculiar doctrines or mode of faith called in question, by a comparison with others which are repugnant to his creed, because a permanent and unalterable landmark of masonry is, the total absence and exclusion of religious or political controversy. Each of these professors practices a system of morality suited to the sanctions of his own religion ; which, as it emanated from the primitive system of divine worship, bears some resemblance to it ; and consequently he can hear moral precepts inculcated, without imputing a

designed reference to any peculiar mode of faith. But can it be concluded from these premises that masonry contains no religion? The whole compass of the world's experience refutes this bold and unqualified assertion. All our charges, all our regulations, assume, as a foundation which cannot be moved, a belief in the being of a God, and a future state of rewards and punishments, and inculcate the necessity of moral purity, as a qualification for future happiness; and this, according to our definitions, forms the sum and substance of religion in its most universal acceptance.

How can any brother considerately urge that masonry contains no reference to religion, when the very first step which a candidate makes in *advancing* to the

floor of the lodge, is attended with an acknowledgment that he believes in an omnipresent Deity, and that he puts his trust in that great and omnipotent Being to shield him from danger and to remove his apprehensions of evil? What is the ground of his solemn obligations? What is the sacred subject of the first charge delivered to him immediately subsequent to his initiation? Religion, if Watts' definition be correct. What can be the intended effect of our obligations, if they be not grounded on these fundamental truths? The progress of masonic knowledge moves step by step on these universally acknowledged principles. The first lesson which masonry teaches, is to persevere in the constant study of the Holy Bible as the sacred source of

our *faith*, and containing the only certain information on a subject the most interesting to a responsible agent in this probationary state ; and the next is an admonition to *practise* the three great duties of morality, one of which is the duty to God. As its instructions proceed, we learn that our *ground-work* is sanctified by the efficacy of *Three Religious Offerings*, which are typical of the great sacrifice of atonement by Jesus Christ ; and that our splendid *canopy* contains a **LETTER** of the most extensive reference, and the most comprehensive meaning. The *elevation* in the Third Degree refers to the resurrection from the dead ; and this is a clear admission of the reality of a future state, because, if there be no future state, there can be no resurrection.

Our solemn dedications and consecrations speak the same language, and they are irrefragable evidences of the intimate connection which subsists between masonry and religion. If we proceed another step, the evidence becomes stronger. The order of the Royal Arch is founded exclusively on religion. The degree is purely religious, and includes little but what is connected with the love and worship of God, and the wise and genial regulations of Divine Providence for the benefit of man. The very tests are founded on the fall of Adam, and the consequent degradation of the human race, enforced by the salutary promise of their future restoration through the intercession of a Mediator. If this be not religion, if this be not Christianity, what is it?

The Military Degrees, though indeed they possess only a remote connexion with masonry, will however testify that it is very closely allied to religion. They date their origin from the Crusades, and have Christianity for their basis and support. The whole system is exclusively Christian. Their banner was a RED CROSS, inscribed "IN HOC SIGNO VINCES," which was considered a safeguard and protection against all assailing dangers ; for the cross was regarded as a sacred symbol, which alone could convey safety in their holy career. The tests and paraphernalia of these degrees bear the same exclusive reference to Christianity. It is true they were grafted upon masonry at the above period, and consequently form no part of primitive Lux : but still they bear on the

point in question ; for every knight was necessarily a mason, and no one was eligible for the dignity of the golden spur, but he who had been prepared by a previous initiation into the three degrees of masonry. This is a strong collateral proof of the ancient alliance between masonry and religion ; for these high-minded men, who had nothing in view but the extension of Christianity, evinced their reverence for masonry as a religious system, by making it a *sine qua non* with all who aspired to admission into their honourable body. Amidst the enthusiastic spirit and sacred feelings which animated these champions of Christianity, they would scarcely have shewn such a distinguished predilection for any system founded on a basis which excluded religion.

The admission, on the part of certain mistaken brethren, who are surely unacquainted with the true nature of our constitution, that the science we profess does not inculcate the practice of religious duties, has given rise to an opinion amongst the uninitiated, very naturally resulting from the concession of a point of such vast importance, that we are infidels, if not atheists, and consequently friends to revolution and disorder. I grant that infidelity and atheism are inseparably connected with anarchy and demoralization ; but it can by no means be inferred that we are atheists, except the proof be founded on stronger data than the fact of our being masons, joined with the assumption that masonry contains no religion ; except it be shewn by undeniable reasoning that we

have literally renounced our allegiance to God, that we inculcate doctrines which tend to the subversion of religion, and that we are guilty of insubordination and contempt of the laws which are ordained for the preservation of peace and order in society.

But so far from encouraging insubordination, masonry is a perfect system of obedience to superior governors lawfully constituted. And I am happy to be able to set the plea entirely at rest by a quotation from our statutes: "The rulers and governors, supreme and subordinate, of the lodge, are to be obeyed in their respective stations by all the brethren, according to the old charges and regulations, with all humility, reverence, love, and alacrity*." Besides, though political dis-

* Ancient Charges, Sec. 4.

cussions are prohibited in the lodge, our laws unequivocally inculcate loyalty as a primary masonic qualification. "A mason is a peaceable subject to the civil powers wherever he resides, and is never to be concerned in plots and conspiracies against the peace and welfare of the nation; nor to behave himself undutifully to the inferior magistrates; for as masonry hath been always injured by war, bloodshed, and confusion, so antient kings and princes have been much disposed to encourage the craftsmen, *because of their peaceableness and loyalty*; whereby they practically answered the cavils of their adversaries, and promoted the honour of the fraternity, which ever flourished in times of peace."*

* Ancient Charges, Sec. 2.

What were the feelings of our best and wisest brethren when this unfounded accusation was first publicly urged? Each worthy brother took up his pen in defence of an order he revered, eager to repel a charge involving our reputation as individuals, and our dearest interests as a public body. One says that "the society of freemasons model their ceremonies upon this foundation, that there is but one God, who must be worshipped in spirit and in truth."* Another says that "free-masonry is an order whose institutions arise on the most solemn and sacred principles of religion." "The knowledge of the God of nature forms the *first* estate of our profession; the worship of the Deity under the Jewish

* Laurie's Hist. of Masonry.

law is described in the *second* step of masonry ; and the Christian dispensation is distinguished in the last and highest order.”*

Another respectable writer on masonry is still more explicit. He says, “ The royal order of masonry, however secret from its most early foundation to the present moment, has nothing belonging to it, but what is so far from giving birth or growth to the commission of any thing inconsistent with the strictest parts of our holy religion, whether it respects our duty to God or man, that every part of it, if duly followed, has a direct tendency to enforce and to encourage the performance of every one of its most holy precepts :” and, “ *The precepts of the gospel*

* Hutchinson’s Spirit of Masonry.

are universally the principles of masonry."*

But in the ensuing chapter I shall bring forward abundant proofs, from the most celebrated writers on masonry, that this science has in all ages been considered to have religion for its basis and support. Those brethren who contend that religion is excluded from masonry, are admitting for truth a disgraceful imputation, which was founded on the mere gratuitous assertions of strangers to our institution, and who consequently could not be competent judges of the allegations boldly and inconsiderately urged, and which they were altogether unable to prove.

We need only enquire what a system of secrecy, founded on the plan of masonry, but excluding religion, may effect, to be

* Inwood's Sermons on Masonry.

convinced that our science, as practised under the auspices of the grand lodge of England, cannot be that system. Religion being the only restraint on those who set at defiance all human laws, if that be also rejected, and an atheistical creed be substituted in its room—if men can so far succeed in promoting their own infatuation, as to absolve themselves from all apprehensions of retributive justice in a future state, they are prepared for the commission of any crime to which they may be stimulated by the operation of their own passions, or by the artful duplicity of designing men, who have purposes to fulfil which require the expulsion of religion from the heart before they are capable of engaging in conspiracies preliminary to murder and spoliation. The deep-laid

plots of Professor Weishaupt are a striking illustration of the ends to which a secret society may be made subservient, if divested of its connection with religion. The system of which he was the inventor held out to the world a promise of superior light and knowledge ; enlisted unsuspecting Christians under its banners, by the plausible and delusive theories of emancipating mankind from the shackles of slavish prejudice, of diffusing human science, and fixing the mind firmly in the pursuit of virtue ; and, like the serpent at the ear of Eve, led them on by imperceptible degrees, first to doubt, then to cavil, and afterwards to reject ; the succeeding degrees of error making them still riper for guilt ; and when the demon found his victims prepared for the reception of any

doctrine by a renunciation of religion, the latent scheme was fully developed ; that horrid scheme, which by its mystic agency and pernicious ramifications struck the whole continent of Europe with terror ; which promised unconditional deliverance from the united tyranny of religion and civil government ; and which threatened the subversion of all existing moral and religious institutions ; to overturn empires, hurl princes from their thrones, level all distinctions, and reduce mankind to an equality on the broad and latitudinarian principle of universal ignorance and impiety ; and CRUSH THE WRETCH ! (meaning Jesus Christ) was the infernal watch-word to every species of atrocity and crime ! I confess I shudder while engaged in this discussion. I tremble at the simple

idea of the application which our adversaries in this country may make of the admitted dogma, that masonry contains no religion.

We will, however, take a closer view of the doctrines and practices of the illuminati, or *masonry without religion*; for the system of Weishaupt being a system of secresy, though not actually of masonry, (for the Professor had not even received initiation into a single degree of our science when he established it,) was capable of being applied successfully to the very worst as well as the best of purposes. Zimmerman says, “Whether this sect be the same with that of the freemasons, or the Jesuits, both of which suppositions is improbable, is uncertain; but in 1774 or 1775, a society was undoubtedly esta-

blished in Bavaria, of which a celebrated Professor at Ingolstadt has been regarded as the founder. This society, under pretext of consulting the happiness of the people, and supposing that happiness to be incompatible with every species of religious and civil establishment at present existing, said with one voice, *Let us destroy them all, and raze their very foundations!* The secret order of the illuminati included among its mysterious principles, at present exposed to the whole world, the whole of the doctrine which the Jacobins of Paris have since put in practice; and it has been proved by the most irrefragable documents, that they maintained an intimate correspondence together before the French Revolution. The destruction of the Christian religion, and the subversion

of every throne and of all governments, have been their aim ever since the year 1776. It was not understood, by the new associates of this order, that the magic words, *the happiness of the people*, were the surest means to recruit their numbers with ease, and by which, in fact, the recruits became so numerous and well disciplined. Young men were chiefly pitched upon, who, not having yet formed a strong attachment to any particular opinion, were the more easily led away to embrace whatever was offered to them, and men of literary talents, whom it is important to secure when the propagation of any new opinion is in agitation. When once a person was enlisted, and fully penetrated with the enticing words, *the happiness of the people ; let us labour to pro-*

cure the happiness of the people ; he became impatient to know the obstacles which were in the way of this purpose, and the means to be made use of to remove them ; these were therefore offered to his view in succession."

"The order has five degrees ; in the lower, the mysteries are not unveiled ; they are only preparatory, on which the minds of the noviciates are founded and prepared ; then by degrees, those who are found worthy are initiated into the higher ranks."* The mechanical part of the order bore some faint resemblance to that of masonry, but the principles and doctrines of our science were never introduced, even subsequently to the admission of Weishaupt into a masonic lodge ;

* Vide Preston's Illustrations. Edit. 13. p. 304.

nor could they, for bearing a character so decidedly hostile to his views, they would have destroyed the very foundation on which the illuminating scheme was erected. The artful Professor adopted our secrecy to sanction his purposes, by screening him from public observation and legislative scrutiny. He used his utmost endeavours, by every means within his reach, not excepting probably his masonic privileges, to extend his doctrines throughout the continental nations; and, as is usual with all innovators, he succeeded in making many proselytes. His lodges were ultimately established all over Europe; they regularly communicated with each other; and their transactions were kept inviolably secret from the rest of the world. Men of all ranks and stations

became members of these dark and mysterious assemblies; but their most active emissaries were in the armies of every continental monarch; they guided the councils, they filled up the ranks, and were equally unknown and unsuspected. The facility with which they succeeded in subverting the religious principles of their votaries is a problem which it may be difficult to solve; suffice it to say, that whether the real intentions of Weishaupt were indeed what are generally imputed to him, it is certain that the seeds of impiety and insubordination which he scattered throughout Europe, impelled by other powerful incentives, lent their aid to the production of those rank weeds of savage cruelty and revolutionary bigotry, which swept a monarch from his throne,

and produced a twenty years' war, which deluged the continent with the best blood of its inhabitants.

Such are the ends to which a system of secrecy, unguarded by religion, may be made subservient. But under the sober garb and genial protection of a religious and Christian faith, it is capable of producing much unqualified good. If it makes men more strict in the performance of their moral duties; if it conveys firmness under affliction, and directs them to look beyond the bounds of humanity for relief under the pressure of actual or impending calamity; if it ameliorates the mind, and unites men together in a chain of universal benevolence; if it instructs mankind to rule and govern their passions, to avoid slander and dissimulation,

to look upon the Bible as a rule of faith, and to regulate their actions by the precepts it contains; if it does this, and much, much more than this, it may surely be entitled to the praise of conferring benefits on its professors, by enforcing the duties of religion. And this is the business of masonry. Can it then be a system of Atheism? can it lend a sanction to the perfidious schemes of revolutionary demagogues? or the designs of those infatuated men, who would lead us back into the darkest ages of ignorance and infidelity? I answer, without hesitation, No. Masonry is a system of loyalty, which attaches us to the king, our patron, and to the soil which gave us birth. And though political disquisitions are prohibited in our assemblies, yet an inherent

attachment to our native land can never be thus suppressed. If masonry were a system that possessed the most indirect affinity to rebellion, would it be patronized by the monarch? would it be encouraged by his royal brothers, and the principal nobility of this realm? would it merit or receive the sanction of a deliberate act of the legislation? The reign of Solomon was a perfect era in masonry : and why was it so glorious ? Because of the indissoluble union which our order conveyed to his subjects, and their invincible attachment to his person and government, as king and grand-master ; which causes his reign to be referred to as the most stupendous specimen of peace and happiness under a monarch, feared for his love of justice,

beloved for his munificence, and respected for his piety and virtue.

Such is masonry united with religion; and in truth, masonry could not be practised without the aid of this magnificent supporter. No company of men, not altogether confirmed in the principles of atheism, could so far forget themselves, their duty, and the supreme Governor of the world, clad in majesty and splendour, as to exclude religion wholly from their minds, particularly the members of an institution professing superior light and knowledge. The Creator cannot be overlooked amidst every incentive to virtue; nor can man so far disregard the voice of nature within him as to forget by whom he was created, and to whom he is indebted for every blessing he enjoys on this

side the grave. Masonry has set forms of prayer adapted to every one of its transactions. The lodges are opened and closed with prayer ; the solemn initiations, passings, raisings and exaltations, are accompanied by the same devotional exercise ; and if masonry be not allied to religion, to whom can these prayers be addressed, or what can be their efficacy ? For prayer can only be beneficial so far as it includes a belief in the omnipresence of God, and his ability as well as inclination to confer blessings on his creatures, and to grant his omnipotent aid on all their undertakings. Indeed, the very act of prayer is a full acknowledgment of God's attributes of wisdom, power and goodness, and thus becomes an unequivocal act of religion. But masons habitually use

prayer in their lodges ; and therefore it clearly follows, that masons never assemble for any purpose but they perform acts of religion.

CHAP. II.

Testimonies extracted from Masonic Writers in support
of this Truth.

THE observations in the preceding chapter may lend their assistance towards opening an inquiry of the greatest importance in a Christian country ; no less than to refute an hypothesis which would place a popular and useful institution on a level with Anti-Christian clubs, and revolutionary associations. In this stage of the investigation it may be necessary to exonerate the authors who have professedly treated on freemasonry before me, from

lending any sanction to the destructive charge, that religion is excluded from our assemblies. In doing this, I shall collect a few reputable testimonies, and place them in chronological order, with their dates prefixed, so as to produce an uniform proof of the belief which has prevailed in all ages, that *the great pedestal of masonry* is religion.

Before the invention of printing these testimonies are not very numerous, as few manuscripts are in existence which were produced antecedent to that period; partly owing to “the losses sustained in the year 1720, when the ignorant zeal of some rash brethren, induced them to burn their manuscripts, from a dislike, probably, of having their constitutions printed.”* Such

* Noorth Const, Part 1. ch. 1.

as remain, however, will serve to convince us that the early masons little anticipated the appearance of a day, when their art would have to combat the charges of some of its own members, avowedly urged to strip the science of its most brilliant and imperishable ornament.

About the year of our Lord 590, "the Picts and Scots," says the annalist,* "continued their depredations with unrestrained vigour, till the arrival of some pious teachers from Wales and Scotland; when many of these savages *being reconciled to Christianity, masonry got into repute.*"

The antient constitutions, charges, &c. were framed about the year 926, from manuscripts in Greek, Latin, French, and other languages, which were produced by

* Prest. Illus. Bk. 4. Sec. 2.

the brethren who met at York for the purpose of forming a grand lodge in that city, pursuant to the summons of Prince Edwin. From these charges I select the following, as bearing an unequivocal relation to the point in question.

“ A mason is to study the moral law as contained in *the sacred code* ; to consider it as the unerring standard of truth and justice ; and to regulate his life and actions by its divine precepts. He is strictly to observe his duty to God, by never mentioning his name but with that awe and reverence which is due from a creature to his Creator ; to esteem him as the chief good, and to implore his aid in all laudable undertakings.”—“ A mason is obliged, by his tenure, to obey the moral law ; and if he rightly understands the art, he will

neither be a stupid atheist nor an irreligious libertine. But though *in antient times masons were charged in every country to be of the religion of that country or nation*, whatever it was, yet it is now thought more expedient only *to oblige them to that religion in which all men agree*, leaving their particular opinions to themselves."

We now come to a manuscript in the Bodleian library, written about A.D. 1536, which is a copy of one still older, wrote by King Henry VI., about 1440. This MS. asserts that "Maçonnes techedde mankynde relygyonne."* The excellent Preston, in his comment on this passage, says : "It appears to have surprised the learned annotator (Mr. Locke) that religion should

* Answer 6.

be ranked among the arts taught by the fraternity; but it may be observed that religion is the only tie which can bind men; and that **WHERE THERE IS NO RELIGION, THERE CAN BE NO MASONRY.**"

In the short reign of King James II., A.D. 1686, a MS. was written, which is now preserved in the Lodge of Antiquity. It contains the following passages :

" Every man that is a mason take good heed to these charges, we pray ; that if a man find himself guilty of any of these charges, that he may amend himself ; or principally for dread of God," &c. &c.
" *The FIRST charge is, that ye shall be true men to God and to the holy church, and to use no error or heresy by your understanding and by wise men's teaching.*" And after enumerating more than twenty

charges, it concludes thus: "These be all the charges and covenants that ought to be read at the instalment of a master, or making of a freemason or freemasons. The Almighty God of Jacob, who ever have you and me in his keeping, bless us now and ever. Amen."

An ancient masonic manuscript, written about the end of the 15th century, and published in the Gentleman's Magazine for June 1815, commences in the following manner: "The might of the Father of Kings, with the wisdom of his glorious grace, through the grace of the goodness of the Holy Ghost, there bene three persons in one Godheade, be with us at our beginning, and give us grace so to governe us here in this mortall life liveing, that we may come to his kingdome that never shall have endinge."

We now come to modern times, when testimonies are much more numerous, though perhaps not of greater weight and consequence than the preceding, which shew so clearly the opinion of our antient brethren many centuries ago, on this important subject.

The Rev. JAMES HART, in a sermon preached at Durham, in the year 1772, says, "Masonry is founded on that sure rock, against which let the waves and billows of temporal persecution never so strongly dash, it will stand erect and secure, because *that rock is Christ.*"

The Rev. JOHN HODGETTS, who preached a sermon at the consecration of the Harmonic Lodge in Dudley, Worcestershire, 1784, after expatiating on the general truths of masonry, adds, "but this is not

all; the sacred writings confirm what I assert; the sublime part of our mystery being there to be found; nor can any Christian brother (let me speak it distinctly) be a good mason, that does not make the word of God his first and principal study."

Brother, the Rev. JAMES WRIGHT,
Maybole, Scotland. 1786.

"Piety towards God, the glorious master builder of the universe; and love to mankind; are the two grand immoveable pillars which support the fabric of masonry."

Brother THOMAS JIEANS, M.D.,
Southampton. 1792.

"The doctrine of freemasonry embraces

all the natural, moral, and political obligations of society. It directs us to fulfil our duty to God, our king, our neighbours, and ourselves; it inculcates reverence, resignation, and gratitude to Him who made and preserves us, &c. &c."

Brother JAMES MACCONOCHIE, Liverpool.

"We venerate and adore the Great First Cause of All, and we endeavour to exalt our views and conceptions of the invisible Architect, from the contemplation of his glorious works;

"To look thro' nature up to nature's God."

Brother the Rev. JAMES WATSON, Lancaster. 1794.

"Masonry has the Omnipotent Architect of the Universe for the object of its

adoration and imitation ; his great and wonderful works for its pattern and prototype ; and the wisest and best of men of all ages, nations, and languages, for its patrons and professors. But though masonry primarily inculcates morals and the religion of nature, it has caught an additional spark from the light of revelation and the **SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS**. And though masonry continues to burn with subordinate lustre, it lights the human traveller on the same road ; it breathes a concordant spirit of universal benevolence and brotherly love ; adds one thread more to the silken cord of evangelical charity which binds man to man, and crowns the cardinal virtues with **CHRISTIAN** graces." " The three degrees of masonry seem to have an obvious and apt coinci-

dence with the three progressive stages of mankind, from the creation to the end of time. The first is emblematical of man's state of nature, from his first disobedience to the time of God's covenant with Abraham, and the establishment of the Jewish economy. The second, from that period, to the æra of the last, full, and perfect revelation from Heaven to mankind, made by our GREAT REDEEMER. The third, comprehending the glorious interval of the Christian dispensation down to the consummation of all things."

Brother WILLIAM PRESTON. 1796.

"Speculative masonry is so far interwoven with religion, as to lay us under the strongest obligations to pay that rational homage to the Deity, which at once consti-

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tutes our duty and happiness. It leads the contemplative to view with reverence and admiration the glorious works of creation, and inspires them with the most exalted ideas of the perfections of the divine Creator. At opening the lodge, a reverential awe for the Deity is inculcated, and the eye fixed *on that object* from whose radiant beams LIGHT only can be derived. Hence, in this ceremony we are taught to adore the God of Heaven, and to supplicate his protection on our well meant endeavours. In the diligent pursuit of knowledge great discoveries are made, and the intellectual faculties are employed in promoting the glory of God, and the good of man. SUCH IS THE TENDENCY OF EVERY ILLUSTRATION IN MASONRY. Reverence for the Deity, and gratitude for the blessings of heaven, are inculcated in every degree."

Brother STEPHEN JONES, 1796.

“The solemnity of our rites, which, embracing the whole system of morality, cannot fail to include the first principles of religion, from which morality is best derived, necessarily calls our attention to the great architect of the universe, the Creator of us all. The masonic system exhibits a stupendous and beautiful fabric founded on universal piety. To rule and direct our passions; to have faith and hope in God, and charity towards man, I consider as the objects of what is termed speculative masonry.”

Brother the Rev. JETHRO INWOOD, Deptford. 1799.

“Masonry is truly the sister of religion; for she boasts her efficacy in all its native

influence ; and is continually the assistant promoter of like principles and of like actions. The central point of all her innumerable lines, squares and circles, is *the love of God*. And upon this central point she builds her *faith* ; from it she derives her *hope* of glory here and hereafter ; and by it she squares her conduct in strict justice and universal *charity*. The central point of all true Christianity and of all true Masonry is, the love of God.” “ *Masonry is dedicated only to the Gospel*. It has nothing in its institution but what both the law of Moses and of Christ will fully allow and universally sanction. To be masonic is to be truly religious in both its parts ; first seeking and cherishing in our hearts the true fear of God, and then from this principle bringing forth all the

amiable fruits of righteousness, which are the praise and glory of God."

Brother ALEXANDER LAURIE. 1804.

"In all ages it has been the object of freemasonry, not only to inform the minds of its members, by instructing them in the sciences and useful arts, but to better their hearts by enforcing the precepts of religion and morality. In the course of the ceremonies of initiation, brotherly love, loyalty and other virtues are inculcated in hieroglyphic symbols, and the candidate is often reminded that there is an eye above which observeth the workings of his heart, and is ever fixed upon the thoughts and actions of men."

The author of an anonymous pamphlet printed in the year 1804, entitled MASONIC

UNION, says, "Masonry annihilates all parties, conciliates all private opinions, and renders those, who, by their Almighty Father, were made of one blood, to be also of one heart and one mind ; brethren bound, firmly bound together by that indissoluble tie, the love of their God, and the love of their kind."

Encyclopedia Britannica. 1814.

"The structure of the Lodge is a pattern of the universe ; and the first entry of a mason represents the first worship of the true God." "The sun and moon are emblems of God's power, eternity, omnipresence, and benevolence. The ethereal mansions of the blessed, for possession of which all men hope, are typified by seven stars."

Brother WILLIAM HUTCHINSON.**Edition 1814.**

“In forming this society, which is at once religious and civil, great regard has been given to the first knowledge of the God of nature, and that acceptable service wherewith he is well pleased. This was the first and corner stone on which our originals thought it expedient to place the foundation of masonry. They had experienced that by religion all civil ties and obligations were compacted, and that thence proceeded all the bonds which could unite mankind in social intercourse ; thence it was that they laid the foundation of the edifice on the bosom of religion. It is not to be presumed that we are a set of men professing religious principles contrary to the revelations and doctrines

of the Son of God, reverencing a deity by the denomination of the God of nature, and denying that mediation which is graciously offered to all true believers.

The members of our society at this day, in the third stage of masonry, confess themselves to be CHRISTIANS; the veil of the temple is rent, the builder is smitten, and we are raised from the tomb of transgression. The master mason represents a man under the Christian doctrine, saved from the grave of iniquity, and raised to the faith of salvation."

The mass of evidence here collected, which needs no comment, will be abundantly sufficient to establish the fact, that our best and wisest brethren have been uniformly of opinion, that the true design

and end of masonry is religion. It is indeed in vain to look for excellence in any system which is not founded on this basis; because all our hopes and all our fears are enfolded in the belief of a God, and a future state of rewards, to be attained by faith and obedience to his commands, and of punishments to be inflicted for a wilful and habitual violation of his laws.

But the design of this little work embraces a still wider and more comprehensive field of inquiry. I must show that the system of freemasonry is more congenial with the spirit of Christianity than with any other religion ever practised amongst mankind. And this will be satisfactorily proved by an attentive consideration of the lectures of masonry, and the mechanism of initiation.

CHAP. III.

Christianity was the True Religion from the Fall of Man to the establishment of the Jewish Dispensation ; even the temporary system revealed to Moses, was, in every material point, typical of the perfected Church of Jesus Christ ; and therefore speculative Masonry being early united with Faith in Christ, has, in all ages, retained the benefits which it derived from this dignified alliance.

ALL religions profess essentially the same system of morality ; but every false scheme of divine worship was but a perverted imitation of the true one which preceded it ; therefore all the commendable parts of every religion under the sun, are but emanations from the original wor-

ship of God. Now the first form of divine worship established on the earth after the unhappy fall of man, was the system of Christianity; and consequently the morality of every religion, how imperfect soever, is a remnant of Christian morality.

If, in this discussion, the holy scriptures may be appealed to as of undoubted authority, Jesus Christ was the creator of the world. They tell us that Christ "in the beginning laid the foundations of the world, and the heavens were the works of his hands."* And again, "By Him (Christ) were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth."† "All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made."‡ These

* Heb. c. i. v. 10. from Ps. 102. 25.

† Col. c. i. v. 10. ‡ John c. i. v. 3.

passages, enforced by innumerable others, are sufficient to prove that Jesus Christ was the creator of the world. It will now be shewn that he gave His religion to the newly-formed man.

The conditions being violated by which the tenure of life and happiness was held, the parents of mankind were expelled from Paradise; and the threatened pains and penalties were inflicted by a hand, which, while it brandished the sword of inexorable justice, held out, at the same time, the golden sceptre of mercy to its fallen creatures. From the recollection of man's original felicity, and to guard the unhappy race against the consequences of Adam's delinquency, the first masons adopted two significant tokens, which bear a striking reference to the *penitence* of our progeni-

tors, and to the *reverence* and awe with which they beheld the radiant glory of God when summoned into his presence to hear pronounced the fatal sentence of expulsion, misery, and death. Thus banished from the presence of God, into a world accursed for their sin, and depending alone on their own exertions for support, they were reduced to the hard necessity of using manual labour to procure the necessities of life, and to avert the evil of perishing for want of food; for the earth was now deprived of all its spontaneous productions which contained the aliment essential to the support of human life. This was a calamity almost insupportable to the miserable exiles, whom habit had rendered unfit for such laborious employment, increased, as it was, by

piercing reflections on the heinous nature of sin, which had desolated a perfect creation ; and the appalling prospect of death, the agonies of which struck them with horror, even in the beasts which were slain for sacrifice. These considerations bowed them down as penitents before the Throne of God, and introduced an habitual system of piety, which cheered their labours, and removed the apprehension which the sentence of death had created in their minds. From the fatigue consequent on their daily toil, and the remembrance of the supplicating posture in which they implored forgiveness, have arisen two other tokens, commemorative of these particulars. Commiserating their unhappy situation, God gave the repentant transgressors that soothing promise of redemption which



removed the fears of death eternal ; and they hailed with joy the means that should exalt them to everlasting life. And hence originated the fifth and last token, expressive of *faith* in the promised Redeemer, and *hope* of sharing the blessings he would convey to mankind.

Here then we have the most intimate union between masonry and Christianity from the very fall of man ; and I am not conscious of the occurrence of any event which had a tendency to separate them down to the present time. Enoch, a very assiduous mason, could not be willing to make this innovation, because he was also, in principle, a Christian, and did not confine his Christianity to the mere indulgence of private speculative opinions on its mysteries ; but in his charges and

disquisitions of every kind, he actively enforced its doctrines by that most awful of all incentives, the denunciations of heaven against impenitent sinners.* His faith in the promise of a mediator was so pleasing to God, that he admitted him to the possession of glory without undergoing the agonies of temporal death.

Noah was the next practical mason we read of in scripture, or who is noticed in our lectures. He did not change the principles of masonry, but rather improved them by adding another degree which bears a direct relation to the Christian faith; for the covenant was renewed with him *for ever*; and the *precepts* which he inculcated were the very same which the Apostles of Jesus Christ enjoined on the

* Jude v. xiv, xv.

converts to Christianity when applied to for a decision respecting ceremonial observances.* From this circumstance, the professors of our science were distinguished by the significant appellation of Noachidæ.

I do not follow the posterity of Ham and Japhet in their migrations into distant parts of the world, though they carried with them the knowledge of masonry which they had acquired from their father Noah, for this obvious reason, because they renounced the practice of the true religion, and applied our science to purposes unconnected with its original designs, and productive of idolatry and atheism. Their conduct therefore can have nothing to do with this discussion, but as it affords a strong negative proof that masonry was

* Acts c. xv. v. 29.

not disengaged from the sanctions of religion by the race who practised it in primitive purity ; and to show the ruinous effects which must necessarily ensue, when temporal schemes are made to supersede the awful concerns of eternity.

We may now safely pass on to the time of Abraham, under whom the union between masonry and Christianity was rather cemented than broken. He held more than one personal communication with Jesus Christ ; and was accepted by faith in the future appearance of that divine personage, rendered perfect by obedience to His commands. To Abraham it was therefore covenanted, that the promised seed should arise from his posterity, who should convey eternal blessings to the world ; and this seed, says St. Paul, was

Jesus Christ.* Through faith in these repeated promises it was, that all mankind were saved during the patriarchal ages, because there never existed any other medium of salvation, but only the name of Jesus Christ ; “ for the passion and resurrection of Christ, through which alone salvation could be had, with the glory that should follow, were articles of the prophets as well as the apostles’ creed.”†

The sovereignty given to the tribe of Judah by Jacob, was pronounced by that patriarch to be only a temporary dominion, which was to expire when the universal expectation of all nations should appear to resume his regal authority over man-

* Gal. c. iii, v. 16.

† Dr. Ellis’s inquiry, Whence cometh knowledge and understanding to man ?

kind. And even the Mosaic dispensation, ushered in with all the solemnity which an omnipotent Being thought proper to bestow upon it, was but intended to separate the Jews from the rest of the world who were immersed in idolatry, by such a series of distinctive observances as made it impossible, even for their own tribes to be confounded with each other ; that the expected Saviour might proceed from a stock uncontaminated with the pollutions of false worship.

This dispensation was, in every particular, typical of the perfected church of Christ ; and was given to introduce and restore a permanent religion, which was completed by the sacrifice of its founder ; who opened the door of mercy on all mankind, by a full revelation of a future

state, and an unequivocal disclosure of the means of salvation.

To prevent the Israelites from returning to the idolatries they had left behind them in Egypt, whose splendid and imposing ceremonies were calculated to captivate the human heart, and lead it astray from the true worship of God, to follow the innovations of men; Moses erected a superb tabernacle in the wilderness; for the Israelites are upbraided with carrying in their wanderings, the portable tabernacle of Moloch, and the image and star of Remphan. To obviate these evils, the tabernacle of the true God was set up; constructed so ingeniously as to serve the purposes of a temple for divine worship; and to be expeditiously removable with every change of situation which they were

directed to make. This tabernacle was furnished with an ark, an oracle, an altar, &c., and numerous services were appointed to be performed by the priests on the authority of God himself; which, while they answered every purpose of present devotion, had a reference to a future dispensation, which was to continue to the end of the world. With this people then, the original connexion between masonry and religion could sustain no deterioration; but an union so genial and beneficial would be more strongly cemented, and even assiduously cultivated by all its professors who steadfastly adhered to the true worship, and with it to primitive masonry.

But the Jewish religion was only a temporary dispensation, instituted to prevent

the true system of divine worship from being lost ; and the essential points of that system were preserved continually alive in men's minds by a series of types and references which could not be misunderstood.

And first, *the oblations* which were made by the people towards the erection of this celebrated edifice, were so many types of the several graces of Christianity. The gold of *Faith*, the silver of *Hope* ; the precious stones of *Charity* ; the *blue* colour of the silks, &c. denoted the lifting up our hearts to heaven ; a privilege conveyed to mankind by the meritorious atonement of Jesus Christ ; the *purple*, our warfare and tribulation for the sake of religion ; and the *crimson*, or as the original words (*tolaghath shani*) signify,

the double scarlet, the joint love of God and man.

The tabernacle itself was a distinct type of the church of Christ, the Son of God ; for as the former was his ceremonial, so the latter was his spiritual residence. It was built *due East and West*, and so are all Christian churches, to denote the rise and propagation of the gospel, which was first preached in the east, and afterwards spread over the whole population of the western world, where it now flourishes more abundantly than in any other part of the globe. It was also intended to shew further, the vast extent of the perfected church, which should reach in length from east to west ; in breadth from north to south ; and in compass, should ultimately include the whole ha-

bitable globe, and extend from earth to heaven. The tabernacle was built rather for the preservation of unity of worship, than as a place of itself intrinsically holy, because God is equally present in all places; and this is also the peculiar design of Christian churches, for every individual member of Christ is a temple in which the holy spirit of God resides.

The wisest and best of men amongst the Israelites, united in the most perfect bond of harmony and peace to construct the tabernacle in the wilderness, as Solomon's temple was afterwards built, without the use of axe, hammer or metal tool; so the spiritual building of Christ's church should be made perfect, without discord or contentious disputations, for God is not the author of confusion but of peace.

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The three divisions of the tabernacle, viz. the *outer court*, which was open to the people; the *sanctuary*, into which the priests were admitted; and the *holy of holies*, to which none had access but the high priest alone, were typical of the constitution of the Christian church. The whole congregation of the people are denoted by the first; the bishops, priests and deacons, who perform the sacred offices of Christianity by the second; and Jesus Christ himself, our eternal high priest, by the third.

At the dedication of the tabernacle, the *glory of the Lord*, in the form of a palpable cloud, filled it within and without, and at length remained stationary over the *sanctum sanctorum*. This was figurative of Christ's universal presence in his church;

and the continual protection which he has promised to all his faithful worshippers. A cloud was frequently used as peculiarly indicative of the Divine presence. The token of Noah's covenant was a bow set in a cloud. God brought his people out of Egypt by a pillar of a cloud. Moses communed with the Lord on Mount Sinai in a cloud. The dedication of the tabernacle and of the temple, were sanctified by God in a cloud. Jesus Christ was transfigured in a cloud ; ascended up to heaven in a cloud ; and shall come in a cloud to judgment.

The *sanctum sanctorum* was a type of heaven, whither Christ is gone as our high priest to intercede before the throne of God in behalf of his people. It was the immediate residence of the Deity, who

dwelt between the cherubims of the mercy-seat in the form of a bright cloud.

The typical meaning of the *ark* and its appendages is this : the ark itself, made of imperishable materials, was a figure of Christ's body. It was composed of two substances, wood and gold, typical of his two distinct natures, the human and divine. The three consecrated symbols it contained referred to the three sacred offices of Christ ; the *tables of the law* pointed to his regal power ; the *rod of Aaron* to his priesthood ; and the *pot of manna*, with which the children of Israel were fed in the wilderness, to his prophetic office, by which the souls of the faithful are fed and nourished. The four *rings*, which supported the ark, denoted the four gospels ; and the buds on Aaron's rod were

symbolical of the revival of the body at the final resurrection.

The *mercy seat* had a direct reference to Jesus Christ, who is the true *ἰλασμηρίον* or propitiatory, that reconciled mankind to the Father by his meritorious death. The *cherubs*, with their wings extended over the mercy seat, were emblematical of the angels who minister in the church of Christ. This covering of the ark concealed the holy law of God from public view: so Christ protects his people from the effects of the same law, whose letter is eternal death.

The *veil* which separated the holy from the most holy place, was the sacred partition which prevented mankind from prying into the mysteries which were concealed in this temporary dispensation;

but at the crucifixion of Christ it was supernaturally rent in sunder from the top to the bottom ; thus testifying that the typical worship was no longer necessary, now the end of all the types was come to re-establish the true religion ; for the knowledge which was prohibited under the law, was fully revealed in the gospel ; and as there was no access to God but through the veil, so there can be none in the Christian dispensation but through the intercession of Christ.

In the middle division of the tabernacle was the *altar of incense*, which was symbolical of Christ, through whom mankind offer up their prayers as incense, and the lifting up of their hands as an evening sacrifice. The *crown of gold* was figurative of Christ's regal dignity, and the *horns* were

expressive of his power. No incense was offered but upon this altar; and no prayers are efficacious but such as are offered through Christ. The *shew bread* was typical of the disciples of Christ in all ages of the world, who are nourished by his doctrine to their final salvation; for Christ was the true bread of life. The *golden candlestick* denoted the superior illuminations derivable from the operation of God's holy spirit under the gospel dispensation; the *light* was typical of the word of God, and the *oil* of the graces and perfections of Christian holiness.

In the outer court was the *altar* for sacrifices, which was also symbolical of our Saviour, whose sacrifice upon the altar of the cross, was daily prefigured by the innumerable sacrifices which were here

offered for sin. The *laver* symbolized the regeneration of baptism, which is the sacred rite of admission into the Christian church.

The *boards or pillars* which supported the tabernacle were emblematical of all faithful Christians, who are represented in scripture as pillars in the temple of God; the *bars* referred to the ministers of Christ's church; and Christ himself is the foundation, depicted by the *bars* and *sockets*; and as there were two sockets under every pillar, so they were intended to denote the two natures of Christ.

It will be seen, that, in following the arrangement of the master mason's (or more properly the past master's) lecture, I have been as concise as possible in enumerating the typical applications of the

tabernacle and its appendages to Christianity, which was the true religion on which Judaism was engrafted for wise and inscrutable purposes; and if we examine the services and other component parts of the institution itself, we shall find that they all point equally to the same event, the coming of Shilo predicted by Jacob while the Israelites were in Egypt; and the full establishment of Christianity, by the total subversion of this temporary and figurative institution.

The *Annual Sacrifices* were typical of the sacrifice of Christ. They cleansed the sinner from all moral as well as ceremonial defilement; but a repetition of them every year was essential, because of the imperfection of a system which necessarily ordained that one man should atone for

another ; but the one sacrifice of Christ, God as well as man, purifies the conscience for ever from sin. The *burnt offerings* were also typical of the same Divine personage. They were burnt without the camp, and Christ was sacrificed without the city. Their blood was sprinkled on the ark of the covenant to propitiate the Deity who dwelt between the cherubims ; and Christ's blood was poured out in the face of heaven as a sacrifice of a sweet smelling savour, to wash away the sins of men.

The scape goat, the paschal lamb, the cities of refuge, the daily sacrifices, the temple, were equally types of Christ ; as the jubilee was of the Gospel, and Mount Zion of the Church. It is in fact unnecessary, in a disquisition of this nature, to

multiply evidences for the purpose of proving that the entire system of Judaism was typical of Christianity; and consequently that salvation was then, as now, suspended on the indispensable condition of faith in the Mediator. And this was not an obscure doctrine, partially understood by the Jews; for their prophets were continually sounding it in their ears, and there was scarcely a generation from Moses to Malachi which did not hear it enforced by the awful sanction of rewards and punishments.

Hence, as "the glad tidings of salvation to be attained through Christ, were as ancient as the time of man's sin;"* and as they were constantly and unequivocally acknowledged by patriarchs and

* Joseph Mede.

prophets until the actual appearance of Christ upon earth ; we may safely pronounce that the one true and unchangeable religion, which extends from the beginning to the end of time, and has hitherto been distinguished by the express approbation of God in every gradation, is that which is now known by the significant appellation of Christianity. But genuine speculative masonry has been alone preserved by the race of men who were the conservators of this religion ; it follows, therefore, that speculative masons, in every age of the world, have been the exclusive professors of the true religion, or Christianity ; and hence masonry and religion have been cemented from the creation to the present time.

CHAP. IV.

Every event alluded to in the *historical* part of the Masonic Lectures, has a direct reference to Jesus Christ, or the Christian religion.

THE system which is now practised under the denomination of freemasonry was originally an intellectual pursuit, which had God and his worship for its sole object of meditation, and consequently was not by any means connected with a mechanical craft. Its name corresponded with its nature, for it was designated by a term signifying **LIGHT**, purity, or perfection. To trace the origin of its present appellation

through all its various ramifications, amidst the gloomy days when ignorance and barbarism had overrun the world, were a forbidding and almost an useless task. We know that those ages abounded in operative architects, who, taking advantage of the inanity of the few speculative masons who continued to practise our science in its native purity, boldly pronounced *themselves* the sole conservators of masonry ; while the unassuming Essenes were incompetent to unmask the pretenders, or to refute their confident assumption of our peculiar privileges.

The historical part of our lectures has an undoubted reference to something of a higher and more exalted nature than the mere construction of sumptuous edifices ; something which embraces the vital part

of religion, and points to an exaltation from the grave of sin, and redemption from eternal death. Privileges which were wrought out by the great author and finisher of our faith, and which consequently refer to him as the object of their illustration and fulfilment.

The first great event to which our lectures refer (for I shall take them in chronological order, and not as they occur in the illustrations), is the creation of the world.* This work was performed by Jesus Christ, and therefore its reference to the Christian religion need scarcely be insisted on. Like the initiation into the first degree of masonry, there was nothing before the creation but *darkness*, a void space and undistinguishable confusion.

* F. C. Lect. Sec. 2.

But from this darkness, at the all powerful word of Christ, sprang a *light* of inconceivable brightness, which illuminated the newly created universe; like the light which bursts on the aspirant's soul, when the bandages of ignorance are removed, and he beholds the first cheering ray of truth emanate from the shining light of integrity and devotion.

“Abel offered a more acceptable sacrifice than his brother Cain.”*

The institution of sacrifices at the fall was intended to keep alive the great sacrifice of atonement by which Jesus Christ should expiate the consequences of Adam's sin. These sacrifices were therefore ordained to be bloody, as more expressly typical of that great event. And this was

* E. A. P. Lect. Sec. 3.

the sole intention of an ordinance which, abstractedly considered, could possess no efficacy whatever. For what is there in the simple act of killing a beast, and offering certain parts of its body and blood on an altar, that is capable of appeasing the just wrath of an offended God? The sacrifice of Abel derived its merit, principally, from the expression of *faith* in the antitype, and *obedience* to the commands of God. And these, accordingly, have been essential conditions of salvation from the origin of terrestrial things; and will remain so to the end of time. Hence, at the emigrations from Shinar, we find that every tribe which colonized any other part of the globe, preserved the rite of sacrificing pure and uncontaminated with the adulterations of religion; and thus with the

type, an indistinct knowledge of the anti-type was preserved in every nation of the world; and the idea of one dying as an expiation to the Gods, was not only believed, but practised in every system of religion which prevailed among mankind, whether Jew or Gentile; and the only reason why Abel's sacrifice was approved and that of Cain rejected, was because the former being bloody, retained the typical reference to the great atonement, and the latter, being unbloody, was offered in disobedience to God's commands. But Abel himself was an eminent type of Christ. Abel was a shepherd; Christ styles himself the good shepherd. Righteous Abel was the first martyr for religion, and was offered to God as a pure and holy sacrifice; Christ too was offered without spot as a

martyr for the sins of the world. Abel was slain through envy, so was Christ; and as the offering of Abel was acceptable to God, so also was the offering of Christ.

“Noah was a just and upright man, and obtained salvation in the ark, when all the human race perished in the flood, except himself and righteous family.”*

This event refers to the salvation which arises by virtue of Christ's sacrifice, and the admission to it by the rite of baptism. The punishment which God has threatened to inflict on a guilty world, may be averted by taking refuge under the meritorious atonement of Christ, as Noah avoided the deluge by entering into the ark, which floated on the waters of destruction ; while they overwhelmed all the faithless and

* E. A. P. Lect. Sec. 3.

unbelieving who rejected the ark of safety which God had provided, under the deceitful expectation that his threatenings would never be executed.

The terrible nature of this judgment has induced the unbelievers of the present day to pronounce it fabulous. But there is no fact better attested, equally from the testimony of sacred and profane writers, and from the deductions of reason. Many heathen authors have recorded the circumstances of that tremendous display of God's power and justice, and St. Peter refers to it as expressly typical of our admission into the Christian covenant.* There exists a tradition of it in every nation under heaven; and the memory was preserved amongst the ancient idolaters in their mys-

* 1 Pet. c. iii. v. 21.

teries; all of which bore an undoubted reference to this fact.

“At the grand festival which Abraham gave at the weaning of his son Isaac, Sarah detected Ishmael, the son of Hagar the Egyptian bondwoman, in the act of teasing and perplexing her son. She, therefore, remonstrated with Abraham, saying, cast out this bondwoman and her son, for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac. She spake under the impulse of divine inspiration; well knowing that from Isaac’s loins should issue a mighty people, who should serve the Lord with freedom, fervency, and zeal; and fearing that from too familiar an intercourse with a person of Ishmael’s slavish extraction, the pure stock set apart for the preservation of

God's true worship might become contaminated with the degenerate vices of slavery."*

This transaction is said by St. Paul to be allegorical of the two covenants of Judaism and Christianity. Ishmael was born after the flesh, Isaac after the spirit, by the immediate agency of God himself, which shews the superiority of the Christian over the Jewish, or any other religion: the latter generate to bondage and are merely ceremonial; the former is perfectly spiritual and leads to everlasting life.

"Abraham offered his son Isaac in sacrifice, when it pleased the Lord to substitute a more agreeable victim in his stead.†"

As Isaac was an express type of Christ, so this event pointed out the great atone-

* E. A. P. Lect. Sec. 6.

† E. A. P. Lect. Sec. 3.

ment ; Isaac was named by a celestial messenger before he was born, so was Christ ; Isaac carried the wood on which he was offered, and Christ bare the cross on which he was crucified ; Isaac was offered on mount Moriah ; Christ was offered on an adjoining mountain ; Isaac was to suffer by his father's hand, and whose sword was it that pierced Christ ? Isaac was redeemed from death three days after Abraham was commanded to offer him up ; and Christ was raised from the dead three days after his actual crucifixion. And lastly, Isaac became the father of the Jews, as Christ is the universal father of the Christians. How can these very extraordinary coincidences be accounted for, on any other principle than type and antitype ? And who can sit in a mason's lodge and

hear them expatiated on, without feeling a conviction that the lectures of masonry have a clear and indissoluble connection with the sacred truths of religion ?

“ Jacob was the beloved son of Rebecca, the wife of Isaac, &c. &c. To escape from the fury of his brother Esau, &c. &c. he was sent by his mother into Mesopotamia, &c. Fatigued with his journey he lay down to rest, &c., and dreamed a remarkable dream. A LADDER, whose foot was planted on the earth, and whose top reached to the heavens, was filled with angelic messengers ascending and descending, and surmounted by the majesty of God, &c. &c. In this place the Lord entered into a solemn league and covenant with Jacob, &c. &c. &c.”*

* E. A. P. Lect. Sec. 3.

This ladder, which thus connected heaven and earth, had a plain reference to that religion which conveys to man the privilege of unrestricted communication with God, by means of prayer and meditation ; and the ministration of angels, as messengers of heaven, is plainly pointed out. The angels attended our Saviour in every step of his divine mission. His incarnation was announced by an angel ; his birth was carolled by choirs of angels ; they watched with intense interest every gradation of his great mediatorial undertaking. They were continually *ascending* or *descending*, to convey tidings or to bring consolation, while his heavenly father from the summit of the ladder beheld his conflict with the powers of darkness ; saw him lead captivity captive ; rejoiced in his

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transcendent victory over death and hell ;
and at length received him amidst the
triumphant acclamations of the heavenly
host

“Jacob wrestled with an angel, and his
successful contention was crowned with a
blessing for himself and his posterity.”*

The perseverance of Jacob in his contest
with the *Son of God*, for the holy personage
who appeared to him at Peniel, was no
other than the second person in the Tri-
nity ; shews the necessity of continual ap-
plication for mercies by prayer if we ex-
pect to receive an answer to our petitions ;
for it was to this principle that Jacob was
indebted for the blessing of God.

“Moses took off his shoes by the com-
mand of God, at the burning bush in Mount

* E. A. P. Lect. Sec. 3.

Horeb, that he might be ready to offer up his prayers to the Almighty ; to thank him for mercies received, crave pardon for past offences, and implore his aid and protection in all future endeavours.”*

This extract carries with it its own interpretation. Prayer is an act of religion ; our lectures recommend prayer ; we practice it in every step of our proceedings ; and therefore it is preposterous to argue that religion is excluded from our institution.

“A great and mighty wind blew, first from the east to facilitate the passage of the Israelites over the Red Sea in their escape from Egyptian bondage ; and then from the opposite point of the compass, which overwhelmed Pharaoh and

* R. A. Lect. Sec. 2.

his host in their attempt to follow them."*

This deliverance, which was preceded by the sacrifice of the passover, prefigured the deliverance of mankind from sin by Jesus Christ, denoted by the sacrifice of the immaculate paschal lamb, of which a bone was forbid to be broken. The passage through the Red Sea refers to baptism ; for, as the Israelites were obliged to pass through the water before they could receive possession of the promised land, so it is necessary for Christians to be purified with the waters of baptism before they can obtain a title to the kingdom of heaven.

" The pillar of a cloud and of fire are thus represented in a mason's lodge.*****
'They were a light and a guide to the

* E. A. P. Lect. Sec. 1.

Israelites in their escape from the protracted oppression of Egypt ; and also preceded Pharaoh and his host to destruction in the Red Sea.”*

The Israelites who followed this pillar of a cloud by day, and of fire by night, represent the whole community of Christians following Jesus, the captain of their salvation ; and were they to forsake the path which he has marked out for them, they would soon be left to the uncertain guidance of their own inventions ; and like Pharaoh and his host, would perish in the sea of destruction.

“ The Israelites were a rebellious and disobedient people ; and were sentenced to wander in the wilderness forty years. Here they were miraculously sustained

* F. C. Lect. Sec. 2.

by the mighty power of God. Bread was given to them from heaven, and water issued from the dry rock at the word of Moses, &c. &c.”*

The chequered scenes of good and evil to which Christians are subject in this probationary state are aptly compared to the miseries and fluctuations of the Israelites during their sojournings in the wilderness; and should make us anxious for a better country, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. The *manna* pointed to Jesus the true bread of life; the *rock* from which water was extracted by the agency of the miraculous *rod* of Moses, had a reference to that fountain of living waters, of which he who drinks shall thirst no more;

* M. M. Lect. Sect. 5.

the stretching out of Moses' arms while the Amalekites were subdued, was an emblem of the conquest of sin and Satan, by the extension of Christ's arms upon the cross ; the *brazen serpent* elevated on a pole that the Israelites might look thereon and be healed, was symbolical of Christ's body exposed on the cross for the salvation of sinners ; and the blood of the sacrifices signified the blood of Christ, the seal of the covenant, by which our sins and iniquities are purged and done away.

“ Moses caused a tabernacle to be erected in the wilderness as a repository for the tables of the law, as well as a place for the solemnization of divine worship, &c. &c.”*

The erection of the tabernacle, as well

* E. A. P. Lect. Sec. 3.

as the services of Jewish worship, having already been explained as typical of Christianity, I pass on to the building of the temple by Solomon.

On the spot of ground where this famous edifice was afterwards erected "King David offered up his prayers to God, who was pleased to put a stop to the pestilence which then raged amongst his people, as a punishment for his own imprudence, in having ordered them to be numbered; and gave him a **TOKEN** of reconciliation," &c. &c.*

This is an undoubted act of genuine religion; and as it forms *one* fundamental basis of our Lodge's consecration, it holds out something more than an equivocal proof of the existence of religion within

* E. A. P. Lect. Sec. 2.

our walls; it shews that our illustrations have a tendency to elevate the heart to that sublime object who hath raised us from the grave of sin by the sacred points of Christian fellowship; hath instructed us in the terms of reconciliation; and given us the glorious Gospel, which points out the resurrection from the dead, and everlasting life in the paradise of God.

“There was neither axe, hammer nor metal tool used at the building of King Solomon’s temple, so that nothing was heard among the workmen of Zion, save harmony and peace.”*

This arrangement of the Most High, emblematically pointed out that *peace*, *harmony*, and *brotherly love*, were to be characteristic signs of the gospel dispen-

* E. A. P. Lect. Sec. 2.

sation. The temple was built on Mount Moriah, one of the hills of *Zion*, which is the name given to the Christian church, and Christ is the foundation stone on which it is erected.*

“ The stones were carved, marked, and numbered in the quarry from whence they were hewn ; the timber was prepared and marked in the forest ; and, when brought

* It is asserted by the Rabbins, that King Solomon received a secret from Asmodeus an evil spirit, mentioned in the book of Tobit, who had usurped his throne, and afterwards became his prisoner. By the use of this he was enabled to finish the temple without the use of axe, hammer, or metal tool ; for the stone *schamir*, which had been presented to him by the *dæmon*, possessed the property of cutting any other substance as a diamond cuts glass. This, however, is wholly fabulous. Metal tools were used in the forest and the quarry, and it was by a very natural process that the building was constructed without the pollution of these instruments.

to Jerusalem and put together, each part fitted with such perfect exactness, as made it appear rather the work of the great architect of the universe, than an exertion of human skill.”*

Every Christian is a stone in this spiritual edifice, which, when properly modelled and polished by the exercise of religion, and the practice of morality, and fitted for translation to a celestial building, he is cemented with his perfected brethren, by charity, into a beautiful temple prepared on earth, and put together in heaven.

I might notice many other particulars, in this division of the lectures, which point out the intimate connection between masonry and religion ; but enough has been said to prove the truth of the propo-

* E. A. P. Lect. Sec. 2.

sition, that the historical part of masonry consists purely of unmixed religion ; and contains a regular series of undoubted references to Christianity.

CHAP. V.

The *morality* of Masonry is precisely the same as that of Christianity.

THIS division will consist almost solely of the morality exhibited in the lectures of Masonry; for I conjecture that the doctrines will be found so closely allied to religion, that comment will be scarcely necessary. The lectures will be quoted from publications authorized by the Grand Lodge, and can therefore be subject to no exception on the ground of authenticity.*

* Every quotation brought forward in proof of this proposition, will be selected from detached parts of the lectures already

The great characteristic of free-masonry which has excited so many unjust suspicions of its innocence, is the *secrecy* which has been inviolably observed respecting its peculiar mysteries, from the creation of the world to the present time. Our lectures enforce the practice by such arguments as these. "Of all the arts which masons possess, the art of secrecy particularly distinguishes them. Taciturnity is a proof of wisdom ; and is allowed to be of the utmost importance in the different transactions of life. The best writers have declared it to be an art of inestimable value ; and that it is agree-

already published in Preston's "Illustrations," Huchinson's "Spirit of Masonry," and Inwood's "Sermons," under the sanction or approbation of the Grand Lodge of England, and Webb's "Monitor," published under the express sanction of the Grand Lodge of America.

able to the Deity himself may be easily conceived from the glorious example which he gives, in concealing from mankind the secrets of his providence. The wisest of men cannot pry into the arcana of heaven; nor can they divine to-day what to-morrow may bring forth.”*

The lectures define free-masonry to be a “ science which includes all others; which inculcates human and divine knowledge, and teaches man his duty to God, his neighbour, and himself.”† Here we have surely a decisive proof, in the very definition of our Order, that it is founded on religion; for nothing but a religious system can inculcate this constellation of grand and important duties.

* E A P. Lect. Sec. 1. quoted from Preston.

† R A. Lect. Sec, 2, from Webb.

“From east to west free-masonry extends ; and between the north and south in every clime and nation are masons to be found. Our institution is said to be supported by wisdom, strength, and beauty ; because it is necessary that there should be wisdom to contrive, strength to support, and beauty to adorn all great and important undertakings. Its dimensions are unlimited, and its covering no less than the canopy of heaven. *To this object the mason's mind is constantly directed, and thither he hopes at last to arrive* by the aid of the theological ladder, which Jacob in his vision saw extending from earth to heaven ; the three principal rounds of which are faith, hope, and charity ; which admonish us to have faith in God, hope in immortality, and charity to all mankind.”*

* E. A. P. Lect. Sec. 4. from Webb.

Faith, hope, and charity, are virtues connected with religion, if any affinity can be traced between religion and morality. But charity united with faith and hope is pure Christianity. Faith imprints a strong sense of duty on the mind, and displays the glorious prospect of an eternal reward. Hope vigorously discharges the duty under a strong assurance that the reward is attainable. But charity surmounts all difficulties, turns duty into delight, and contributes to a final consummation in glory. Hence arises the most exalted prerogative of charity over all other gifts and perfections. Charity is the distinguishing characteristic of the Deity. All other virtues are mortal; charity alone is immortal. It will beam resplendent rays through all eternity, and like the CENTRAL STAR of heaven shall

utterly extinguish all inferior lights by its unfading lustre. "Charity never faileth," says a great Christian teacher, "but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away."* These gifts being adapted solely to the imperfect state of human nature, their utility will cease in a state of absolute perfection. Even the glorious habits of faith and hope, though essential qualifications in this mortal state, will have no part in the heavenly life, because they are but earthly virtues, for charity is the only *step* which penetrates the clouds, even to the throne of God. The time will come when, seeing the things which are now unseen, we shall not need the evidence

* 1 Cor. c. xiii. v. 8.

of faith; possessing the rewards now hoped for, we shall not want the assurance of hope. But when faith and hope shall have had their perfect end and consummation, charity will exist covered with all its brilliant glories, and overshadowed with a radiance which can suffer no diminution. Hence the true mason will be transported beyond all bounds, when placed in the immediate presence of the majestic object of his former faith and hope, and in the actual enjoyment of celestial bliss. The inexpressible excellency of the divine *light* will continually supply him with fresh ardour of affection, with renewed sentiments of adoration. In this Grand Lodge all will be immutably perfect and happy under the influence of universal charity. As there will be no wants to relieve, no

distress to pity ; all in that blessed assembly will enjoy a plenitude of bliss, emanating from the sacred source of infinite goodness, truth, and mercy. The souls of the just will form but one glorious company with the angels and archangels ; possessed of one mind, and with one voice recounting the praises of the spotless LAMB. With thoughts, capacities and powers having but one tendency, one centre, they will all unite to adore the Great I AM, in peace, harmony, and brotherly love.

“ Every well-governed lodge is *furnished with the Holy Bible, the Square, and the Compass*. The Bible points out the path that leads to happiness, and is dedicated to God ; the square teaches to regulate our conduct by the principles of morality and virtue, and is dedicated to the

master ; the compass teaches to limit our desires in every station, and is dedicated to the brethren. The Bible is dedicated to the service of God, because it is the inestimable gift of God to man ; the square to the master, because, being the proper masonic emblem of his office, it is constantly to remind him of the duty he owes to the lodge over which he is appointed to preside ; and the compass to the craft, because, by a due attention to its use, they are taught to regulate their desires, and keep their passions within due bounds.”*

“ The *ornamental* parts of a lodge are, the Mosaic pavement, the indented Tressel, and the blazing Star. The Mosaic pavement is emblematic of human life, chequered with good and evil ; the beautiful

* E. A. P. Lect. Sect. 5. from Webb.

border which surrounds it, those blessings and comforts which surround us, and which we hope to obtain by a faithful reliance on Divine Providence, which is hieroglyphically represented by the blazing star in the centre. The moveable and immoveable jewels are the square, the level, and the plumb-rule, the rough and perfect ashler and the tressel board. These appear to be mere instruments of labour; but the moral, to which they respectively point, renders them jewels of inestimable value. The square teaches morality and justice; the level equality, and the plumb-rule integrity. By the rough ashler we are reminded of our rude and imperfect state by nature; by the perfect ashler that state of perfection at which we hope to arrive by a virtuous education, aided by

divine grace; and the tressel board reminds us that, as the operative workman erects his temporal building agreeably to the rules and designs laid down by the master on his tressel board, so should we endeavour to erect our spiritual building agreeably to the rules and designs laid down by the supreme architect of the universe in the Holy Bible, which is a mason's spiritual tressel board. *That book, which is never closed in any lodge,* reveals the duties which the great master of all exacts from us; and were we conversant therein and adherent thereto, it would bring us to a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”*

These are extracts from the abundant stores of morality and religion contained in

* E. A. P. Lect. Sec. 5 from Webb.

the masonic lectures. Can it then be contended, with any degree of reason, that they have no reference to religion ? nay to Christianity ? But, to silence every possible objection, to remove every cavil, I shall penetrate still deeper into this mine of precious stones ; assured at every step of meeting with some valuable gem. If there be any truth in a plain symbol, or any dependence on the illustration, the following extract will abundantly prove that no lodge can be esteemed perfect, which does not contain a visible and self-interpreting emblem of the Christian religion.

“ In all regularly constituted lodges there is represented a certain *point within a circle*, the point representing an individual brother ; the circle representing the boundary line of his duty to God and man ;

beyond which he is never to suffer his passions, prejudices, or interests, to betray him on any occasion. This circle is embordered by two perpendicular parallel lines, representing St. John the Baptist, and St. John the Evangelist, who were perfect parallels in Christianity as well as Masonry; and upon the vertex rests the book of the Holy Scriptures, which point out the whole duty of man. In going round this circle we necessarily touch upon these two lines, as well as on the Holy Scriptures; and whilst a mason keeps himself thus circumscribed, it is impossible that he should materially err.”*

To the Holy Scriptures the lectures frequently refer. The masonic ladder, say they, stands firmly with its foot on the

* E. A. P. Lect. Sec. 5. from Webb.

Holy Bible, whilst its summit is lost amidst the clouds of heaven. Can any thing be founded on the Bible, and have no connexion with religion? Impossible! This ladder, by which we all hope to ascend to the glorious *arch of heaven* at the final consummation of all things, is a direct type of religion; for religion is founded on the Holy Bible, and is studded with innumerable theological virtues, which point the way to everlasting bliss.

We now come to the sixth and last section of entered apprentice Masonry, which inculcates the most instructive lessons; it expatiates on Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth, and enforces a strict regard to the four cardinal virtues: temperance, fortitude, prudence, and justice.

“By the exercise of Brotherly Love we

are taught to regard the whole human race as one family; the high and low, the rich and poor; who, as children of one almighty parent, and inhabitants of the same planet, are to aid, support and protect each other. On this principle Masonry unites men of every country, sect, and opinion, and conciliates true friendship amongst those who might otherwise have remained at a perpetual distance. Relief is the next tenet of our profession. To relieve the distressed is a duty incumbent on all men, particularly on masons, who are linked together by an indissoluble chain of sincere affection. To soothe calamity, to alleviate misfortune, to compassionate misery, and to restore peace to the troubled mind, is the grand aim of the true mason. On this basis he establishes his friendships,

and forms his connexions. Truth is a divine attribute, and the foundation of every virtue. To be good and true is the first lesson we are taught. On this theme we contemplate and by its dictates endeavour to regulate our conduct : influenced by this principle, hypocrisy and deceit are unknown ; sincerity and plain dealing distinguish us, while the heart and the tongue join in promoting each other's welfare, and rejoicing in each other's prosperity."*

“Without the cardinal virtues, of which Prudence is the chief, the name of mason is an empty title, and but a painted bubble. Phronæsis, the emblem of prudence, is the first and most exalted object that demands our attention in the lodge. It is placed in the centre, ever to be present to the eye

* E. A. P. Lect. Sec. 6. from Preston.

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, enlightens us through the dreary and darksome paths of life. That Fortitude should be the characteristic of a mason we need not argue ; by which, in the midst of pressing evils, he is enabled always to do that which is agreeable to the dictates of right reason. Temperance, also, must be one of his steadfast principles, and must moderate or restrain his passions, especially in sobriety and chastity. We regard Temperance under the various

definitions of moralists, as constituting honesty and decency; and in all its potential parts instituting meekness, clemency, and modesty. We profess Justice, as dictating to us to do right to all, and to yield to every man what belongs to him. The cardinal virtues, Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence and Justice, hold in their train the inferior powers of peace, concord, quietness, liberty, safety, honour, felicity, piety and charity; with many others, which were adored by the ancients in those ages when they confounded mythology with the worship of the divinity. Within the starry girdle of prudence, all the virtues are enfolded. We may apply this emblem to a still more religious import: it represents the star which led the wise men to Bethlehem; proclaimed to mankind the nativity

of the Son of God; and here, conducting our spiritual progress to the author of our redemption."*

Such are a few detached extracts from the lectures of the first degree. They proclaim, with a conviction superior to all argument, the intimate union which subsists between Masonry and Religion, between Masonry and Christianity. They shew further, that our pursuits are neither trifling nor insignificant, for they embrace topics of general and unfading interest; topics on which the most celebrated philosophers and moralists of all ages have exercised their ingenuity, to promote equally the welfare of man and the glory of God.

The second degree is devoted to the

* E. A. P. Lect. Sec. 6. from Hutchinson,

study and illustration of human science : and to trace the greatness and majesty of the Creator, by minutely analyzing his works. The intellectual faculties expand as a desire of knowledge increases ; and by the studies attached to this degree, the mind is elevated to a communion with its Maker. What a field for moral investigation and critical research do the liberal sciences afford ! The subtilties of grammar, rhetoric, and logic ; the wonderful combinations of arithmetic ; the universal application of geometry, the delicacy of music, and the sublimity of astronomy, have each a separate charm to win the heart and point to a Creator. The organization of the human body is another sublime subject, to which the attention is particularly directed in this lecture. It embraces every

branch of one of the great divisions of masonry, its operative part; and hence the disquisitions are rather minute on the five orders of architecture, the use and application of the globes, and other important objects connected with useful science. In the second section, the creation of the world, and the divine appropriation of the seventh day for the purposes of rest and devotion, are expatiated on, as was the uniform practice of our antient brethren many thousand years ago : and the following extract will shew the object they had continually in view. “In six days God created the heavens and the earth, and rested on the seventh day; therefore our antient brethren dedicated the seventh day as a period of rest from their labours : thereby enjoying frequent opportunities to

contemplate the glorious works of the creation, and to adore the great Creator.”

I shall quote but little from this lecture, because the illustrations are chiefly scientific ; but they all have a moral and religious tendency ; and the lecture concludes with that precept, to which every point of discussion had a direct reference. It exhorts us to fear “ God, the great geometri-
cian of the universe ; and at all times, and on all occasions, cheerfully to submit to his injunctions, and to obey his precepts, which are holy, just, and good.”*

The third degree is the cement of the whole : it binds men together by *the mystic points of fellowship*, as in a chain of indissoluble affection, and teaches them to love their neighbour as themselves, as the

* F. C. Lect. Sec. 4.

best means of evidencing that the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts. But it does more than this, it asserts positively the resurrection of the body, and points to a future state, in which those who have endured sufferings in this world to preserve their virtue and religion from profanation, shall meet a suitable reward; while the wicked shall be cast out as unworthy of a place in the heavenly country, and receive the horrible punishment they have imprecated on themselves.

The first point incites us to brotherly love: that love which renders spontaneous assistance in time of pressing need, without the venal hope of receiving an equivalent, for the reward is from above. The second point inculcates universal benevolence; which must derive its satisfaction from a

source distinct from, and independent of human approbation : I mean the reflection that it will ensure the approbation of God, to which a reward is attached beyond the reach of calumny. This enables the benevolent mason to pursue his glorious career like the sun in the firmament, which, though temporarily intercepted by clouds which obscure his brightness, soon dispels the unsubstantial vapour, resumes his dignity, and bursts upon the world with a brightness more vivifying from the effects of his temporary obscurity. The third point teaches the duty and necessity of prayer to God, without which, as a solemn act of religion, nothing we can be engaged in can reasonably be expected to prosper. The fourth point inculcates secrecy, and points out the consequences of betraying the

confidence reposed in us by a friend and brother. For masonry asks, if you envy the prosperity of a brother, and wound him in the tenderest part by revealing his secrets: if you believe and propagate the tale of defamation whispered by the slanderer to his prejudice: if you cherish and encourage the evil passions of envy, hatred, and revenge: if you refuse to forgive injuries, and blot them out from your recollection: how shall you establish the reputation either of Masonry or Christianity? The fifth point teaches us to bury in oblivion a brother's failings, and to *raise* his virtues from the tomb: to speak as well of him in his absence as in his presence: and if unfortunately his life be irregular, and his morals tainted with crime, *to say nothing rather than defame*; for masonry prefers

silence to slander, as masons always pour the healing balm of consolation into the wounds which tyranny or inhumanity may have inflicted; to avert the pressure of calamity, and make the widow's heart to sing for joy.

The moral and religious precepts of the third degree, arise out of emblems peculiarly adapted to its nature and end.

“*The Pot of Incense* is an emblem of a pure heart, which is always an acceptable sacrifice to the Deity; and as this glows with fervent heat, so should our hearts continually glow with gratitude to the great and beneficent Author of our existence, for the manifold blessings and comforts we enjoy.”*

“*The Bee-hive* is an emblem of industry, and recommends the practice of that virtue

* M. M. Lect. Sec. 7. from Webb.

to all created beings, from the highest seraph in heaven to the lowest reptile in the dust, &c. &c.”*

“ *The Sword pointing to a naked Heart*, demonstrates that justice will sooner or later overtake us; and although our thoughts, words, and actions may be hidden from the eyes of men, yet that ALL-SEEING EYE which the *sun, moon, and stars* obey, and under whose watchful care even comets perform their stupendous revolutions, pervades the inmost recesses of the human heart, and will reward or punish us according to our works.”†

“ *The Anchor and Ark* are emblems of a well-grounded hope and a well spent life. They are emblematical of that divine Ark

* M. M. Lect. Sec. 7. from Webb.

† Ibid

which safely bears us over this tempestuous sea of troubles; and that Anchor which shall safely moor us in a peaceful harbour, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.”*

“The *Hour-glass* is an emblem of human life. Behold how swiftly the sand runs, and how rapidly our lives are drawing to a close. We cannot without astonishment behold the little particles which are contained in this machine, pass away almost imperceptibly, and yet, to our surprise, in the short space of an hour all are exhausted. Thus wastes human life. At the end of man’s short hour, death strikes the blow, and hurries him off the stage to his long and darksome resting place; for there is no escape from the piercing arrows of death.

* M. M. Lect. Sec. 7. from Webb.

The thick walls of the palace of a king, with the clay-built cottage of the lowly pauper, are equally pregnable to his darts. Strength or weakness, health or sickness, riches or poverty, all—all, in one undistinguishable level, fall beneath his mighty arm. Wherever he levels his bow, the mark is certain : the victim falls, the silken cord of life is cut in twain, and the mourners weep about the streets ; for the re-union of soul and body, when once thus separated, exceeds all human power : such hath been man in every age of the world, such is man in his present most exalted moments, and such are each of us. To-day, perhaps, the sun of prosperity and joy shines upon our persons and our families ; health and strength invigorate our own persons and those of our beloved friends, and we only

feel for the sorrows of another's woe ; but to-morrow some friendly heart may sigh over our own breathless corpse, alas ! my brother !”*

“ *The Scythe* is an emblem of time, which cuts the brittle thread of life, and launches us into eternity. What havoc does the scythe of Time make among the human race ! If by chance we escape the numerous evils incident to childhood and youth, and arrive in perfect health and strength at the years of vigorous manhood ; yet decrepit old age will soon follow, and we must be cut down by the all-devouring scythe of Time, and be gathered into the land where our fathers are gone before us.”†

* M. M. Lect. Sec. 7. from Webb and Inwood.

† Ibid, from Webb.

The Coffin with the Skull and Cross-Bones are emblems of mortality, and cry out with a voice almost more than mortal, *prepare to meet thy God*. Infancy or youth, manhood or old age—all must pass to the embrace of corruption. “How often do we see the tear of sorrow moistening the cheek of venerable age, while hanging over the corpse of a beloved son or daughter, snatched from life in the bloom of youth and beauty! How often do we see the strong features of manhood distorted or broken by unaffected grief, while hanging over the grave of a beloved wife, or even of an infant child! How often do we drop a tear when we behold the disconsolate widow, leading her trembling orphans from the grave of their departed father; and before she could leave the hallowed

ground, turn round to heave the farewell sigh, when her sorrows are too great to weep.”*

“ *The three Steps* usually delineated upon a master’s carpet, are emblematical of the three principal stages of human life, youth, manhood, and old age. In youth, as entered apprentices, we ought industriously to occupy our minds in the attainment of useful knowledge ; in manhood, as fellow crafts, we should apply our knowledge to the discharge of our respective duties to God, our neighbour and ourselves ; that so in old age, as master masons, we may enjoy the happy reflections consequent on a well-spent life, and die in the hope of a glorious immortality.”†

* M. M. Lect. Sec. 7. from Inwood.

† M. M. Lect. Sec. 7. from Webb.

“ *The Sprig of Acacia* points to that state of moral obscurity to which the world was reduced previously to the appearance of Christ upon earth : when the reverence and adoration due to the Divinity was *buried in the filth and rubbish* of the world, when religion sat mourning in Israel in sackcloth and ashes, and morality was *scattered to the four winds of heaven*. In order that mankind might be preserved from this deplorable estate of darkness and destruction ; and as the old law was *dead and become rottenness*, a new doctrine and new precepts were wanting to give the *key* to salvation, in the language of which we might touch the ear of an offended Deity and bring forth hope for eternity. True religion was fled ; those who sought her through the wisdom of the antients were

not able to raise her; she eluded the grasp, and their polluted hands were stretched forth in vain for her restoration. Those who sought her by the old law were frustrated, for death had stepped between, and corruption had defiled the embrace; sin had beset her steps, and the vices of the world had overwhelmed her. The Great Father of all, commiserating the miseries of the world, sent his only Son, who was innocence (*anania*) itself, to teach the doctrine of salvation: *by whom man was RAISED from the death of sin unto a life of righteousness*; from the tomb of corruption unto the chambers of hope; from the darkness of despair to the celestial beams of faith; and not only working for us this redemption, but making with us the covenant of regeneration, whence we become the

children of God and inheritors of the realms of heaven.”*

Here, then, shall close my extracts from the Lectures of Masonry. If they do not refer to religion, they have no meaning whatever: and I will submit to the inference which may then be deduced, that masonry is a trifling and unimportant pursuit. All the general truths of religion, as they are received among Christians, are here brought into a lucid point of view, and their practice enforced from a consideration of the awful doctrine of future retribution.

I decline entering, in this place, on the Royal Arch Degree, for reasons which

* M. M. Lect. Sec. 7. from Hutchinson. Many other moral illustrations may be found on reference to the last edition of Preston, p. 83 and 84.

will be obvious to the considerate mason. It is so intimately blended with all that is dear to us in another state of existence, and divine and human affairs are interwoven so awfully and minutely in all its disquisitions, that it would be almost impossible to enlarge upon the subject without rending the veil which conceals the most sublime mysteries which can engage the attention of man; suffice it to say, that the degree is founded on the name of JEHOVAH, as Christianity is founded on the name of Jesus Christ: virtue is its aim, the glory of God its object, and the eternal welfare of man is considered in every point, part, or letter of its ineffable mysteries.

CHAP. VI.

The *mechanism* of Masonry is symbolical of its connexion with the Christian Religion.

I ENTER on the subject matter of this chapter with extreme circumspection, aware that the nature of our peculiar ceremonies cannot be exhibited in a printed form. The meagre outline only of masonic mechanism can be described, and that with the utmost care and delicacy; and therefore if this division of my subject should fail to produce the same degree of conviction which I flatter myself must have attended the preceding, it will not

H

be attributable to the inadequacy of its merits, because our mechanism is the sacred fountain whence the stream of its morality flows, but from the contracted limits by which the argument must be necessarily bounded. I shall perhaps, however, be able to show, even from the scanty use of these forbidden materials, that masonry is a religious institution; for each individual ceremony, how insignificant soever it may appear when standing alone, is still a star which sheds its lustre on religion, and the whole united system is a bright and burning constellation, which blazes amidst the darkness with unfading splendour, and proclaims with the voice of angels, Glory to God, peace on earth, good-will towards men !—So mote it be.

The first important act which takes place at the establishment of a masonic lodge is the business of dedication and consecration. This act is a solemn appropriation of masonry to God; as the lodge is, at the same time, inscribed to St. John the Evangelist, who finished by his learning what the Baptist began by his zeal; and these are the two burning and shining Lights on earth, which illuminate our journey as we travel on to attain the third Great Light in heaven.

The ceremonies, which are technically termed opening and closing* the lodge, come next to be spoken of. These are solemn rites, and derive their excellence from the name of that Being, whose bles-

* For a description of these ceremonies, vide Preston's Illustrations, Book 2. Sec. 6.

sing is invoked and whose assistance is humbly supplicated, before we can engage in any of the important business of masonry with a rational hope of success. After the lodge is closed, the brethren are dismissed with a prayer of gratitude, as the incense of an evening sacrifice, for the protection afforded by the great Author of Good, not only to the few individuals present, but to the fraternity at large, wheresoever dispersed under the wide and lofty canopy of heaven.

The lodge being opened with solemn prayer ; and impressed with the conviction that the *all seeing eye* above, observes and notes our actions, we proceed to the initiation of candidates by progressive steps or degrees. This plan of gradual admission to our privileges is sanctioned by the prac-

tice of every system of true religion which has flourished in the world. The Patriarchal scheme had its three separate degrees of perfection. The Jews had their three sorts of proselytes, and three orders of the priesthood; and the early Christians their Rulers, Believers and Catechumens, each corresponding with the three degrees of Masonry.

The admission into the First degree is on a certain text of Scripture, sanctified by a firm reliance on the protection of God. The reception is by prayer, the candidate is bound by solemn obligations to keep faith with his brethren;* and the *illumi-*

* The oaths of ancient nations differed in their nature and tendency. A most solemn oath was confirmed by an appeal to Jupiter, or any other celestial god; but on ordinary occasions they swore by the living or the dead; by their hands, feet, or head; by the thigh, which was an em-

nation is performed in the name of the Divinity. The aspirant, with his face to

blem of Noah's ark ; by these members in any other person : and an oath sanctified by an appeal to the head of a king, or a hero, was considered most solemn and binding ; for the head being esteemed the seat of reason, it was deemed impious to violate a deliberate appeal to so noble a part of the human frame. Some think the appeal was made to the head because it was the symbol of health. The soldier, the artificer, the husbandman, each swore by an implement of his calling.

These oaths were variously confirmed : by lifting up the hands to heaven, by placing them on the altar, or on a stone, or in the hands of the person administering the oath, &c ; and, a most solemn method of confirming an oath, was by *placing a drawn sword across the throat* of the person to whom it was administered, and invoking heaven, earth, and sea, to witness the ratification. " It was very usual," says Potter (*Arch. Græc. l.2. c.6.*) " to add a solemn imprecation to their oaths, either for the satisfaction of the person by whom the oath was imposed, or to lay a more inviolable obligation on themselves, lest they should at any time repent of their purpose
and

the East, fancies he beholds in succession,
the place where Adam enjoyed the happiest

and take contrary measures to what they then resolved upon." And the same author gives the following examples.

This penalty is taken from Sophocles.

" Curses attend you if e'er false you prove ;
Your days in bitter sorrows may you live,
And when Fate calls (but may that ling'ring come)
May your dead corpse no fit interment find ;" &c.

And this from Homer.

" While streams of pour'd out wine dye all the way
Thus they address the Gods.
Great, mighty Jove, and all ye powers divine,
Whose justice suffers no unpunished sin,
Bear witness to the solemn vows we make,
And grant the party which them first shall break ;
Whoe'er it be, as now the ground wine stains,
May so o'erspread it with their dashed out brains."

The memory of a great and good man was, in antient times, distinguished with a splendid funeral, and a tumulus of extraordinary magnitude, surmounted by a pillar, on

period of his existence ; the place where Christianity was revealed to man ; the place where the star proclaimed the birth of Jesus ; the place where Christ was crucified, and the place where he ascended into heaven. The East was always accounted holy ;* and hence our Saviour was termed **ORIENS** from an impression of the superior

which the name and good qualities of the deceased were usually inscribed ; whilst criminals, or perjured persons, were denied the rites of sepulture ; and, as an eternal mark of disgrace and infamy, their bodies were cast into the ground unburnt, and thus exposed to putrefaction ; a calamity more dreaded than death itself, *their bowels being first taken out and burnt, and the ashes scattered to the four winds of heaven.*

* The East was considered a fortunate quarter by all the world, because of the light, heat and vigour which the sun communicates to mankind from that part of the heavens ; and the West unfortunate, because of the sun's departure. The Scholiast upon Sophocles (*Ajace. v. l. 84.*) says that the
right

sanctity of his person. A white apron, made of the purest lamb-skin, is presented to him, which, he is told, derives its distinction from the purity of its colour, emblematical of innocence; which is an affection of the mind that all human honours are ineffectual to bestow. But it possesses a still higher and more glorious reference: it is right hand, or the East, signifies Prudence, and the left hand, or West, Folly. *Αρίστερά οἱ παλαιοὶ τὰ μωρὰ ἐκάλων, δεξιὰ δὲ τὰ συνετά.*

All omens were deemed propitious which appeared in the East, and the contrary if exhibited in the West.

"I am told by a learned friend," says Sir John Malcolm, in his *History of Persia*, (c. 7) "that the Hebrew term for EAST, means *before*; WEST, *behind*; SOUTH the *right* and the NORTH *obscure* or *concealed*. The three first of these terms denote the position of an adorer of the sun; the last describes the *darkness* with which the first inhabitants of the earth believed the northern part of the globe to be enveloped."

a symbol of the innocence and perfection of the Christian life, which makes *the lamb without spot* a model for its imitation, and looks to futurity for a *crown* of glory and a *sceptre* of peace. The early catechumens, when they were admitted to the first degree of Christianity, were invested with a white garment, accompanied by this solemn charge: "Receive the white and undefiled garment, and produce it without spot before the tribunal of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you may obtain eternal life." And this is made a distinguished reward even to the saints in heaven,* for their success in combating the three great earthly powers, the world, the flesh, and the devil.

The candidate is taken by the right hand, as a proof of friendship and faithfulness; for the right hand was always

* Rev. c. iii. v. 5.

esteemed an eminent symbol of fidelity. In all compacts and agreements it was usual to take each other by the right hand, that being the manner of plighting faith ; and this was done, either out of the respect they had to the number ten, as some say, there being ten fingers in the two hands ; or because such a conjunction was a token of amity and concord ; whence, at all friendly meetings, they joined hands, as a design of the union of their souls ; and the right hand seems to have been used rather than the left, because it was more honourable, as being the instrument by which superiors give commands to those below them ; whence Crinagoras in an epigram saith, it was impossible that all the enemies in the world should ever prevail against Rome,

“ While godlike Cæsar, shall a *right hand* have
Fit for command.—”*

The aspirant is then shewn the three *greater* and *lesser* lights of Masonry ; the former as rules of faith and practice, and the latter to express the regularity and usefulness of the creatures which God has graciously formed for the use of man. The *form* and *dimensions* of the lodge now engage his attention, while he is taught the invaluable lessons which they inculcate.†

* Potter's Arch. Græc. 1. 2. c. 6.

† The form of the lodge is an oblong square, or double cube, of extensive dimensions. The double cube was esteemed sacred all over the world, as an expressive emblem of the powers of light and darkness, proceeding from the chaotic egg. The Chinese adored the divinity under this form ; and the inhabitants of Stony Arabia worshipped a black cubical stone. The oracle at Delphos recommended doubling the cubical altar of Apollo as a
means

“ When we look into a Mason’s lodge, we behold it *extending from the heavens to the centre of the earth*. High as the heavens, we behold Him who is the manager of all creation, in the exercise of his wisdom and power. Deeper than hell, we see Him carrying on redemption beyond the narrow limits of all human philanthropy, saving not only a part, but the whole : saying unto death, ‘ I will be thy plagues,’ and unto hell, ‘ I will be thy destruction ;’ breaking all its massy doors, and setting its despairing prisoners free. Look we *from the East to the West, from the North to the South*, we see the seasons means of stopping a destructive pestilence which raged amongst the people ; and even the true religion had its cubical altars, by the express direction of God himself ; for the ark, and the altar of incense were *double cubes*. (*Exod. 37 c. 1, & 25 v.*)

roll their usual round of uninterrupted variety. First comes smiling Spring in all her tender softness; the fostering sun, the moistening shower, and all the pleasing promises of plenty. Next shoots the Summer's sun in full perfection, to bless the ripening year; which Autumn, with her full fed fatness, showers upon the earth for man's enjoyment; and even when surly Winter blows, we lose its essence of intention, if, even in that inclement moment, we ever lose sight of a *God of Love.*"*

There are innumerable ceremonies attached to this degree which have a similar reference, but I am withheld from introducing them here for obvious reasons; but it will be plainly perceived that they are

* Inwood.

calculated to promote the glory of God, as well as the happiness of man, from the specimen already given ; for they leave an impression of peculiar solemnity on the candidate's mind, which is seldom effaced to the latest hour of his existence. Our ceremonies embrace such a wide extent of illustration, that their full import cannot be wholly developed within the limits of a single lecture ; much appropriation of talent, and much deliberate investigation must be used by the Mason who would become master of the science, or even elucidate the hidden meaning of all our forms, symbols, and ceremonies. The comprehensive nature of Masonry affords full scope to exercise the abilities of any friend of scientific research ; while all its illustrations are accompanied with a warm

glow of devotion which will penetrate the most indolent, and make him feel and acknowledge his dependance on the gracious Author of his being.

Masonry, like all other sciences, cannot be attained without assiduous and diligent labour ; for the signs and tokens of external communication are but the keys of the cabinet in which all our valuable knowledge is stored up. Without initiation, this knowledge is unattainable ; and initiation, without subsequent research, is an acquisition which can scarcely be pronounced desirable ; but he who uses the keys of our treasure with *freedom, fervency, and zeal* ; or, in the language of Masonry, he who keeps them highly polished with *chalk, charcoal, and clay*, will find a precious jewel at every step he takes ; and

while he presses on with ardour in the pursuit of knowledge and virtue, he may be certain of attaining the rich prize he has in view.

The Fellow craft, like the entered apprentice, is admitted in the name of God ; and is received and consecrated by prayer. He enters between the two great pillars, which are emblems of the *strength* of mind and *stability* of disposition, which he must display in his new character as a Mason ; not only to promote his own ultimate benefit, but that the order in which he has enrolled himself may not be exposed to public censure from the licentiousness of his propensities, or the irregularity of his conduct. Before he can participate in the privileges of this degree, the candidate must ascend a winding stair-

case, after having safely passed the pillars of strength and stability. This staircase consists of *eleven* steps, and *five* divisions. As he ascends the *first* step he is taught the unity of the Godhead, who created the world by his power, and governs it by his wisdom and justice. At the *third* step he is reminded that this one sacred Being comprehends three distinct persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. He is instructed also in the nature of the three dispensations, the Patriarchal, the Jewish, and the Christian. At the *fifth* step his progress is again arrested to explain the goodness of Providence in man's behalf, by the distribution of the five external senses; hearing, seeing, feeling, tasting, and smelling; all of which he has also bestowed on the brutes; but to stamp a

decided ascendancy on the Lord of the creation, he endowed him with the attribute of reason, that he might be enabled to convert the gifts of heaven to his own eternal welfare. Hence the necessity of a diligent application of this inestimable present, to the service equally of such human sciences as are placed by the Almighty within the reach of his capacity, and of the study of religion, and the worship of God. To keep the reasoning faculty in exercise, the five noble orders of architecture are proposed as subjects of contemplation and research; and this being a progressive study, if carried to perfection, will fill the mind with lofty and comprehensive ideas of God and his works. Here, too, the candidate is reminded of the five remarkable points in the ever-

blessed career of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. A regular series of consequences, affecting our temporal and eternal welfare, are deduced from his birth, his life, his death, his resurrection, and his ascension. Bending in reverence before the awful subject, the candidate proceeds to the *seventh** step, where his in-

* The number SEVEN has been considered, in every age of the world, as possessing extraordinary qualities; and this belief was most probably derived from the creation being completed in seven days. The patriarchal sacrifices were usually offered by sevens; and the number of many things recorded in the Apocalypse are seven. This number, among the Cabalists, denoted universality; and amongst the Pythagoreans it was termed *σεβασμὸς ἀξίος*, *worthy of veneration*. They pronounced it perfect, and most fit for religious purposes. And Bishop Horsley says, "I am persuaded that the choice of the number seven was a solemn and significant appropriation of the offerings of the supreme God, the maker of the world." (*Dis. on Proph.*)

structor points out these seven liberal sciences as objects of his rational ambition; and acquaints him that a perfect knowledge of grammar, rhetoric, logic, arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy, will lead him "through nature up to nature's God," and elevate his mind to the contemplation of heavenly things; preparing him by gradual approaches to perfection here, for a full display of light and knowledge in a future state. When the candidate has arrived at the summit of the winding staircase, by ascending the *eleventh* step, he is reminded of the miraculous preservation of Joseph, who preceded his eleven brethren into Egypt under the direction of God, that he might be the means of preserving his whole race from the effects of the seven years' famine, which raged with

unaccustomed violence throughout all the East. He is further put in mind of the treachery of Judas Iscariot, who betrayed his master; and being seized with an agonizing remorse of conscience, which rendered life insupportable, he violently terminated his own existence, and reduced the number of Apostles to eleven. The closely tyled door of the middle chamber then gives way at his *word*, and he enters to behold the superb illumination of that blazing central star, which refers to the God of his creation; and the mystical application of the successive numbers of 3, 5, 7, and 11, is explained to signify the GREAT JEHOVAH, who is so brilliantly represented in the chamber to which that staircase leads; for in the Hebrew notation, I represents 10, the sum of 7+3, A 5, and H 11.

A certain part of the mechanism attached to this degree cannot be exposed ; in fact, it requires years and experience, patient industry and laborious toil, to become acquainted with all the subjects embraced by this comprehensive step ; and he whose various talent shall allow him to conquer all the impediments opposed to his advancement in the knowledge of fellow craft Masonry, will be eminently entitled to the honourable distinction of a master of science, and a perfect moralist.

The ceremonies of the Third degree are introduced by a prayer expressive of the feeble and inefficient nature of man without the blessing of God's assistance ; and the duration of that eternity to which death is the avenue, is depicted by circumambulation. The candidate is burdened with

ceremonies, to denote the galling nature of the Jewish dispensation, even when at its highest stage of perfection. The surrounding idolators, envying privileges which appeared to insure the favour of the Deity, determined to become possessed of these invaluable secrets, or to extirpate the Jewish nation. The Jews refusing to abandon their religion to the profanations of idolatry, finally suffered a moral death in the extermination of their polity. The three assassins were the Assyrians, the Chaldeans, and the Romans. The first *blow* which this dispensation received, was inflicted by Shalmanezzer, who carried the ten tribes into captivity, from which they never returned. The second *blow* was still more severe. It was inflicted by Nebuchadnezzar, who utterly destroyed

their city and temple, and carried the two remaining tribes to Babylon. Weakened, but not destroyed by these attacks, they rebuilt their temple, and assumed the semblance of their former system of worship, though much deteriorated, from the loss of many valuable privileges. At length came the ruffian band, more determined than either of the former, under the command of Herod, who gave the *death blow* to their civil and religious liberties by the conquest of Jerusalem, and the reduction of Judea to the state of a Roman province, over which this tyrant, not of their own regal line, nor even a Jew, was appointed king. The old law was now *dead*, and was become perfect *rottenness*; *her tomb was in the rubbish and filth cast forth of the temple, and acacia*

wove its branches over her monument. They attempted to raise her from the dead, but she fell from their grasp, a mass of putrefaction ; until at length the resurrection of Jesus cemented the bands of Christian fellowship, and formed an indissoluble chain of connexion, of which Christianity was the basis amongst all mankind, who were inclined to comply with the terms of initiation into the covenant of grace.

Here then the perfected mason feels and acknowledges the power of Religion over the soul, by a full and striking proof of that resurrection from the dead, which is the precursor to a new accession of light and knowledge, that bursts upon him like an ethereal flood, and leaves him astonished at his own acquisitions.

The symbols, the tokens, the landmarks of the order, are now fully entrusted to

his care ; but, lest he should be too highly elated by his newly acquired privileges, a most solemn charge is delivered, reminding him, that though he is now ranked with those distinguished few to whom the appellation of master-mason may with propriety be applied, yet he is still, in the sight of God, only a weak and fallible mortal ; that death may in an instant deprive him of that knowledge, which it is his province to improve ; and that the talent committed to his charge cannot, without danger, be hid in a napkin, but must be profitably and actively employed to the salvation of his soul.

Thus is the mechanism of the three degrees of masonry most admirably constructed to enforce the great truths of morality and religion ; and I see not how it can fail to produce that salutary impres-

sion on every mind, except it be distorted by innovations, prostituted by a deviation from the antient landmarks, and thus converted into the mere shibboleth of a sect or party. But masonry, in its broad and permanent acceptation, is the handmaid of religion; and if practised with his fundamental principle in view, may assist us in profitably running our race on earth, that at the final consummation of all things we may receive the reward of our faith, even a joyful exaltation to the blessed mansions of eternal felicity.

FINIS.

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