

For the CRAFTSMAN.

LANDMARKS OF MASONRY.

BY BRO. ROB. MORRIS.

Among the more striking objects in Holy Land that may be named "Landmarks" are the Highways, which run in general where they did in the earliest days; the *Bevel Marks* on all ancient Asilars; the Names of all the ancient Localities are unchanged in so many thousands of years; the trees, plants, and flowers cited in the Masonic Lectures; the architectural Emblems of Masonry; the ancient idea still entertained that the East is always *before us*, South being the *right hand*, North the *left hand*, West the *rear* etc.

A good explanation of the slowness of Orientals to adopt improvements in Agriculture, Mechanics etc, is, that a superstitious reverence surrounds all old customs in the mind of an Oriental, a masonic dread of innovation, a religious sentiment like that with which they view all sacred places, trees etc, and the cemeteries of their fathers. It is this idea that makes the Holy Scriptures as good a *pathfinder* through these hills and valleys as it is through the meanderings of the human heart, and we may follow its injunctions as surely through the *terrestrial* as the *celestial* Canaan.

The traveller in the lands of the East will soon discover that the *relics of Freemasonry*, like those of *operative* Masonry, must be chiefly sought for, *under ground*. As only here and there, a weather-beaten shaft, or an almost shapeless wall, or a patch of mosaic pavement, remains *above the surface*, yet all artistically framed and wrought, to encourage us to search for foundations deep and large that will afford a clue to the majestic edifices which they once supported. So what we call *Freemasonry*, or the architecture of the soil, is chiefly to be traced up to its sources by means of *Oriental customs*,—forms of speech,—religious observances and the like that evidently came to us from the most ancient times. As these elegant remains of columns, and chapiters and the pavements of royal courts are now found in singular want of harmony with their surroundings, often built into mud walls or supporting the roofs of vile stables, so the eye and ear of the traveller are often startled to observe signs and words singularly *out of keeping* with the general habits of the people, and referring to periods antedating the *very existence of the races* who now inhabit those countries.

Ancient York Masonry is found at Beyrout and there is a prospect of the early foundation of a Lodge at Jerusalem.

But there are already great native Societies in the East so much resembling Freemasonry that I am justified in referring to them here, and in expressing the belief that, once a Grand Lodge is formed in Syria and the Order worked with the dignity, precision, and religious fervor that characterize it in America, the leading members of those organizations will hasten to attach themselves to it. I will name them in order.

1. THE DERVISHES.—This is a Society of great antiquity immensely diffused through the Turkish Empire, and highly respectable in the character of its emblems. Bro. John P. Brown of Constantinople has written two volumes descriptive of this Society, and gives favorable accounts of their moral character and importance as an affiliation. They are divided into brotherhoods of which the *Bektashees* most resemble Craft-Masonry. The initiation of a *Bektashee* is thus described. The