

keeping inviolate our valuable secrets amidst the various vicissitudes the Craft have experienced; either by ravages of time, the rise and fall of empires, the tyranny and oppression of cruel and despotic governors, or the base insinuations and illiberal attacks of calumny, superstition, and ignorance. Thus virtue and honour have been, and no doubt will continue to be, the distinguishing characteristics of our Order, and the guardian angels of the secrets of our Fraternity.

MERCY is a refined virtue, a tenet sacred in every good mind; if possessed by the monarch adds a brilliancy to every gem that adorns his crown gives glory to his ministers, and to the soldier an everlasting freshness to the wreath that decks his brow. It is the companion of true honour and the ameliorator of justice; on whose bench when enthroned presents the shield of defence. As the vernal showers descend from the liquid circumference of the atmosphere, to invigorate the whole vegetable creation; so mercy resting on the human heart, when its vital fluids are condensed by rancour or revenge by its exhilarating warmth turns perverse nature to its original source in purer streams. It is the chief attribute of the Deity, on whom we must all rest our hope and dependence. It is a duty we owe even to our enemies, for to show mercy and forgiveness is highly pleasing to our Creator, who hath told us "blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy," not only in this life, but at that great and final day of retribution, when summoned to the bar of His divine justice, and the actions of our mortal lives are unfolded to our view, though his justice may demand the fiat we hope and trust His mercy will avert the doom.

#### MASONIC DUTIES.

A Mason is bound to consult the happiness and to promote the interests of his brother; to avoid everything offensive to his feelings; to abstain from reproach, censure and unjust suspicions; to warn him of the machinations of his enemies; to advise him of his errors; to advance the reputation and welfare of his family; to protect the chastity of his house; to defend his life, his property, and, what is dearer to a man of honor, his character, against unjust attacks; to relieve his wants and his distress; to instill into his mind proper ideas of conduct in the department of life which he is called to fill; and, let me add, to foster his schemes of interest and promotion, if compatible with the paramount duties a man owes to the community. If such are the obligations which a man owes to his brother, they are precisely the duties that one Freemason ought to perform to another. Our Order enjoins them as rules from which nothing can justify a deviation, and considers their infraction a violation of honor, conscience and religion,—a prostitution of all that is deemed sacred and venerable among men.

But Masonry does not confine the benignity of her precepts to her followers; she rises higher in the scale of excellence, and enjoins the observance of honor, honesty, and good faith to all men; she espouses the cause of universal benevolence and virtue; she declares as unworthy of her patronage those who violate the laws of rectitude, and her votaries exemplify in their lives the truth of the remark, that, although there be vicious men in the fraternity, yet that they are better than if they were not Masons.

#### ON THE NUMBERS 1, 3, 5 AND 7.

BY H. W. BRO. S. D. FOWLEN, P. O. S. W.

(Continued from our last.)

7.

The Septennary, or number 7, is one of the most celebrated of all symbolic ciphers. No number has ever been so universally in repute as the Septennary. Perhaps its celebrity may be originally in a great measure due to the science of Astronomy, in which the number 7 typifies the greater planets, 7 in number; but this cipher belongs also to the list of *Sacred Symbols*, and is abundantly used in an allegorical sense in that volume of the Sacred Law which lies on our altar as the most ancient trust deed of our society.

In six days God created the heavens and the earth, and rested on the seventh day, and thus has one day in seven been accounted more holy than the others by every nation under heaven, from the most remote antiquity. All have not chosen the same day; for instance, Sunday is set apart by Christians, Monday by the Grecians, Tuesday by the Persians, Wednesday by the Assyrians, Thursday by the Egyptians, Friday by the Turks and Saturday by the Jews.

The references to this number in our Scriptures are so abundant, that it is impossible for any one who possesses the true religion to remain ignorant of his obligation to keep the seventh day holy.

Enoch, the seventh from Adam was translated without seeing death; before the flood Noah received seven day's notice of its commencement; seven persons accompanied him into the ark, and he was commanded to take clean beasts and fowls by sevens, while the unclean were only admitted by pairs; on the seventh month the ark rested on Ararat, and Noah dispatched a dove at the distance of seven days each time; Abraham pleaded seven times for Sodom; Jacob served seven years for each of Laban's daughters, Rachael and Leah; Jacob mourned seven days for Rachael, and Joseph the same for Jacob; the seven years of plenty and seven years of famine were foretold in Pharaoh's dream by the seven fat and seven lean kine, and the seven good and seven blasted ears of corn; at the institution of the Passover the children of Israel were to eat unleavened bread seven days; and not only was the seventh day to be honored, but the seventh year was directed to be a Sabbath of rest for the land; and a grand Jubilee commenced at the end of seven times seven years, the blood of the sacrifice for sin offering, for cleansing a leper, and for various other important purposes, was to be sprinkled before the Lord seven times; the destruction of Jericho was miraculously effected by the use of this number, for seven priests bearing seven ram's horns for trumpets were directed by the Almighty to compass the city seven days and