

ON THE NAME OF THE DEITY.

The great name of the deity was incommunicable among the ancients and they were only permitted to designate it by symbols. The name itself was preserved and transmitted by the Essenes, it was always communicated in a whisper and under such disguised form, that while the component parts were universally known, the connected whole was an incommunicable mystery.

The Essenes, used in common with Jewish nation, the ancient and significant symbol by which the name was designated, viz;—*three jods* with the point *hametz* placed underneath, to express the equality of the three persons of which they believed the god-head to be composed.

The letter *shin* was adopted as a mysterious emblem to designate the *Tetragramaton* (a word of four letters, the name of the deity.)

Another symbol was an equilateral triangle illuminated with a single jod. This initial letter jod, denotes the thought, the idea of God.

THE TROWEL.

The triangle was an emblem of very extensive application and was much revered by the ancients, as containing the greatest and most abstruse mysteries as has been explained. It signified equally the *Deity Creation and Fire*.

The trowel was formerly also called a triangle from the similarity of shape which it had with an equilateral triangle, though its present shape resembles that of an isosceles triangle.

ON THE MYSTERIOUS DARKNESS OF THE THIRD DEGREE.

In the ancient mysteries, the perfect initiates, the Epoptes, were reputed to have attained a state of pure and ineffable *light* and pronounced safe under the protection of the celestial gods, while the unhappy multitude who had not undergone the purifying ceremonies, were declared reprobate, said to wander in all the obscurity of darkness, to be deprived of the divine favor and doomed to perpetual residence in the infernal regions amidst a cheerless and overwhelming contamination. Before however an aspirant could claim to participate in the higher secrets of the institution, he was placed within the *pastos* or *bed*, or *coffin*, or in other words, was subjected to a solitary confinement for a prescribed period of time, that he might reflect seriously, in seclusion and *darkness* on what he was about to undertake, and be reduced to a proper state of mind for the reception of great and important truths, by a course of fasting and mortification. This was the *symbolical death of the mysteries* and his deliverance from confinement was the act of regeneration, or being born again, or as it was also termed, *being raised from the dead*. This resurrection from the bed or coffin was his restoration to life, or his regeneration into a new world.

The candidate was made to undergo these changes in scenic representation, and was placed under the *pastos* in perfect darkness, generally for the space of ten days and nights. The time of this solitary confinement however varied in different nations. In Britain nine days and nights, in Greece three times nine days and in Persia it extended to fifty days and nights of darkness, want of rest and fasting!

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

From the foregoing explanations it will appear that there is no doubt that the mysteries, ceremonies and symbols of the Masonic fraternity are derived from the rites, ceremonies and institutions of the ancients