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FREEMASONRY

VERSUS

tarathustrian Religion.

BY

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INTRODUCTION

Many curious points of resemblance are said to exist between some accredited works on Freemasonry and the Parsee Religion : It is hence worth-while to set forth the principal passages of the kind alluded to in the parallel order, the extracts from the Dictionary of Freemasonry and those from the religious works and also the present custom and practice among the Parsees being shown side by side. I leave the rest to the reader who may thus be enabled to judge for himself. Since the Parsee religion is, beyond doubt, of far more ancient origin than Freemasonry (no matter how great may be the antiquity of the latter), it appears highly probable that Freemasonry is indebted to the Zoroastrian (Parsee) doctrines for some of its mystic ceremonies.

HYDERABAD DECCAN, }
India, }

B. S. T.

Freemasonry *versus* Zoroastrianism.

ABLUTION,

Freemasonry.— A purification by water, whereby in some of the higher degrees of Masonry, the candidate is supposed (as in the religious systems of antiquity) to be cleansed from the taint of an inferior and less pure condition, so as to be prepared for initiation into a higher and purer degree,

Parsees.—Ablution and purification by water are especially requisite among the Parsees for performing their religious ceremonies, and also for cleanliness from defilements. " Cleanliness is next to godliness."

Quotations.—

1. Then answered Abura-Mazda:
" Three times let them wash the body, three ~~times~~ let them wash the clothes, three times let them recite the Gathas." Ven. F. xii, v. 6.
- 2, "The water well- flowing, well-washing, desirable for both worlds." Yas, xxxviii.

3. "I praise the water: Ardvisura, the pure, which purifies the body of all men, which purifies the body of all women for delivery, which grants to all women easy deliveries, which brings to all women fit and suitable milk, the great widely renowned," Yas lxiv., v. 1 and 7 to 11.

ACACIA,

Freemasonry.—An evergreen shrub, a native of the East, growing in great abundance in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem. Botanical name is the *Mimosa nilatica* of Linnaeus. This shrub is intended to remind us of the immortality of the soul. The term means "innocence" and signifies a Mason.

Parsees. —The acacia of the Parsees is the pomegranate tree or another plant called Chheenee. They make cord of six threads or fibres of the leaves of the date tree to bind Baresma. The preparation and consecration of the Haoma (or Horn), which was the juice of a certain mountain plant, is held in the highest veneration as being the emblem of immortality.

a

Quotations _____

1. "The trees which produce Baresma, praise we." K.A. viii, p. 9.
- 2, "I am, O Zarathustra, Haoma the pure, who is far from death. He (Haoma) is very good when one eats him, and the surest for the soul." Yas ix., v. 6. & 53,

ALL-SEEING EYE.

Freemasonry.—This reminds us of that superintending Providence who knows the most secret thoughts of our hearts, and rewards us according to our merits.

Parsees.—In the Khordah Avesta (the religious book of the Parsees), "All-observing" is the seventeenth name of *God*,

Quotations. —

1. "Not to be deceived is Ahura, the All-knowing." Yas. xlv, 4, **V. 5.**
2. "Zarathustra asked Ahura-Mazda: All-wise Ahura-Mazda." Yen. F. xix., v. 67.

APRON.

Freemasonry.—The lambskin or white leather apron is the badge of a Mason and the first gift bestowed by

the R. W. Master upon the newly initiated apprentice. By the whiteness of its colour, and the innocence of the animal from which it is obtained, we are admonished to preserve that blameless purity of life and conduct which will alone enable us hereafter to present ourselves before the Grand Master of the Universe, unstained with sin and unsullied with vice.

Farsees.—The Parsees invest their children of both sexes, at the age of seven, with an investiture consisting of white cotton shirt of nine joints and a girdle of pure white wool, made of seventy-two single threads or filaments first divided into twelve parts of six threads each. This investiture is worn by the Parsees night and day till death, the times for bathing and changing the shirt for a clean one, and taking a new girdle, only excepted.

Quotation.—

"To thee (O Haoma) has Ahura Mazda first brought the girdle studded with stars, prepared in heaven according to the good Mazdayasnian law." Yas. ix v-81.

CHARITY & RELIEF.

Freemasonry,—Of the philanthropic tendency of Masonry there is abundant evidence afforded in every country in which a Lodge exists. Its charities are extended to the poor and destitute, to the widow and the orphan, with a liberal hand, and its numerous institutions for improving the physical and moral condition of the human race prove that "*Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth*" are not the mere idle and unmeaning language of a boastful motto, but the true and guiding principles of our association.

Parsees—The Parsees' charity is proverbial; they provide for their poor—there is no beggar amongst them; they contribute largely for the support of other professions and of foreign countries; there is no earthly law to force them to such benevolent acts. The whole religion abounds in charity and succour to the poor.

Quotations,—

1. "Accomplish here good deeds; afford help to the helpless."
Vis, xviii. v. 4 and 5.

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2. "With purity and good-mindedness, will I support your poor." Yas. xxxiv, v. 5.
3. "And the kingdom (we give) to Ahura when we offer succour to the poor." K. A. Yatha Ahu Vairyo, v. 8.
4. "Charity which feeds the poor praise we." K. A. Yasht of the Seven Amshaspands, v. 7.

CHAIN MYSTIC,

Freemasonry.—To form a mystic chain is for the brethren to make a circle, holding each other by the hands, as in surrounding a grave, etc.

Parsees.—The Parsee priests, on the day of a great feast, after finishing all other prayers, stand in a circle, holding each other by the hands, and recite the Atas Nyayis.

COCK.

Freemasonry.—The jewel of a Knight Templar is the cock and is symbolic of the resurrection. The cock was a symbol among the early Christians and is repeatedly to be found on the tombs in the catacombs of Rome.

Quotation.—

" Blessed art thou, O Lord our God!,
King of the Universe, who
gran test to the cock understand-
ing to distinguish between day
and night." Jewish prayer.

Parsees —According to Parsee religion, this bird
(the cock) hfts up his voice at
every godly morning dawn :
" Stand up, ye men, praise the
best purity, destroy the Daeva."
Ven. P. xviii. v. 36 and 37.
The Parsees do not cat a cock
after it has begun to crow : its
crowing awakes and convinces
us that what we saw in sleep
was nothing but a dream and in
like manner when we die we
shall know that the corporeal
world was the same. Hence
the cock is the symbol of resur-
rection.

CROSS LEGGED.

Freemasonry.—It was an invariable custom in
the middle ages, in laying out
the body of a Knight Templar
after death, to cross one leg over
the other. When, in the 16th
century, a portion of the Knight
Templars of Scotland united
themselves with a masonic lodge
at Stirling, they were commonly
known as the Gressed-legged
Masons.

Parsees.—The Parsees, with a very exceptions, carry, their dead bodies cross-legged.

BAR OF CORN.

Freemasonry. —This was among all the ancients an emblem of plenty. Corn is one of the masonic elements of consecration.

Parsees.—Reference to corn is made in the religion :—

1. " When there are thick ears of corn, then the Daevas fly."—Yen. F. iii. v, 108.
2. " With an uplifted Draona, or one not uplifted." Ven F, v. v. 75.

EXPULSION.

Freemasonry.—A mason who is a bad man is to the fraternity what a mortified limb is to the body, and should be treated with the same mode of cure—he should be cut off, lest his example spread, and disease be propagated through the constitution.

Parsees.—Allusions to a bad man are found in the religion : --

1. " Creator! If it is a pernicious, bad two legged being, a very noxious and impure one. Veu. F. Y., v. 113.

2. " When one of the seed (kindred) dies, who has another faith, another opinion, how many of the creatures of Sapentainyns does he defile directly, how many indirectly? Then answered Ahura-Mazda : (He is) like the lizard whose moisture is dried up, who has been dead more than a year. For (only) living, O holy Zarathustra, the deadly snake, the two footed, very noxious and unclean (defiles). " Ven F, xii, v. 66-67.

FAITH.

Freemasonry,—Faith may be lost in sight;
 Hope ends *in* fruition ; but
 Charity extends beyond the
 grave, through the boundless
 realms of eternity.

Parsees—It is customary with the Parsees to contribute to Charitable Institutions, on the 3rd day after the death of a friend or relation, for his soul—believing that the soul passes over the bridge Chinvat on the fourth morning dawn. Ven. F. xix, v. 89-97.

Quotation.—

"Come to our offering, (O Mithra),
 accept our alma, accept the
 offered gifts, carry them

together to the gathering place (Chinvat), and lay them down in the place of praise (Garoneman)." K, A. Mihr Yast. c. 8, V. 32.

FEASTS.

Freemasonry—The convocation of the craft together at an annual feast, for the laudable purpose of promoting social feelings and cementing the bonds of brotherly love by the interchange of courtesies, is a time-honoured custom, which is still and will ever be observed.

Parsees,—The Parsees have grand feasts many times in a year, to which the whole male community is invited, where rich and poor alike meet together, and partake of very simple but substantial food. On these Festivals no animal food is eaten : these Festivals are called the Gahambar Feasts and are in commemoration of the creation of the world.

Quotation—

" All the Lords, the very great, praise we: the days, daytimes, monthly feasts, yearly feasts, years." Yas. vi, v. 50.

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GENUFLEXION.

Freemasonry.—Bending the knees has, in all ages of the world, been considered as an act of reverence and humility. The Masons use the same posture in some portions of their ceremonies, as a token of solemn reverence. In Mark Master's Degree, the aspirant was taught to kneel before the pot of incense.

Parsees.—The Parsees also kneel in their church and at home before the fire, the Fire being emblematic of Life and Purity.

INNOVATION.

Freemasonry.—Nothing is more offensive to the true Mason than any innovations on the ancient usages and customs of the order. This conservative principle enables Freemasonry to remain unchanged as it has always been. A firm determination is said to exist among the craft to admit no change. "Modern Masons" is the most abusive and opprobrious epithet that can be applied to a Masonic body.

Parsees.—The Parsees in general have strictly adhered to their time-honoured customs,

LIGHT.

Freemasonry.--Masons, remembering that they are brought out of darkness into light, are admonished to let the light which is in them so shine before all men that their good works may be seen, and the great fountain of that light be glorified.

Quotation —

" Worshipful Master to the Aspirant :—
Having been kept a considerable time in a state of darkness, what, in your present situation, is the most predominant wish of your heart ? Aspirant would answer : Light."
First Degree in Freemasonry.

Parsees,—The Parsees consecrate the fire as containing the principle of light, They have a light at childbirth, near the dead bodies, at the sepulchre, and on the occasion of other ceremonies.

Quotations—

1. "I do that which others have done before, what appears worthy in the eyes through Vohumano, by the light, by the sun, *ike* day of the morning, to your praise, Aaha, Mazda Ahura !"—

2. "Shining inwardly with its own light, starlike outwardly."—Yas. lvi, c. 9, v. 4.

LUSTRATION.

Freemasonry.—This literally means purification by water. In Freemasonry it is mental. No aspirant can be admitted to participate in our sacred rites until he is thoroughly cleansed from all pollution of guilt. In some of the higher degrees of the ancient and accepted rite, a lustration or ablution is practised.

Parsees.—Lustration is especially among the Parsees for performing religious ceremonies and also for cleanliness from defilements, (*Vide Ablution.*)

MASON.

Freemasonry.—According to some, the word MASON is derived from the Persian "Magi," or disciples of Zoroaster,

Parsees.—The Disciples of Zoroaster are opponents of the Daevas, *i. e.*, the Devil. Freemasons in India do not admit Daeva (Devil) worshippers into their craft.

MOPSES.

Freemasonry—In 1788, Pope Clement XII, had issued a bull condemning and forbidding the practice of rites of Freemasonry. Several brethren in the Catholic States of Germany formed in 1740 under the name of MOPSES. The title is derived from the German word "*mops*" which signifies a young mastiff, and was indicative of the mutual fidelity and attachment of the brethren, these qualities and virtues being characteristic of that noble animal. The dog represents the unknown person, or good citizen, who conducted the nine elect to the retreat of the murderers of Hiram Abiff.

Parsees.—The dog plays a part in the Parsee religion and is mentioned in the books:—

1. "Which (the dog) every morning at the rising of the sun comes forth as a thousand-slayer of Anramainyus." Ven. F. xiii. v. 5.
2. "Thither comes the beautiful, well-created, swift, and well-formed (soul)—accompanied by ft dog." Ven, xix, v. 98 & 99.

MORALITY.

Freemasonry—Requires U3 to deal justly with others ; not to defraud, cheat, or wrong them of their dues and rights. But it goes farther : regarding all as the children of One Great Father, it regards man as bound by piety, masonic morality, and fraternal bonds, to minister to the wants of the destitute and afflicted ; and that we may be enabled to fulfil this high behest of humanity, it strictly enjoins industry and frugality, that so our hands may ever be filled with the means of exercising that charity to which our hearts should ever dispose us.

Parsees.—Charity and morality among the Parsees are proverbial.

Quotations.—

1. " Who to a lending man does not pay back the debt is a thief of the loan, a robber of what is lent to him ; Creator ! how many are these thy Mithras (=contracts), Ahura-Mazda ? Then answered Ahura-Mazda : Six, O pure Zarathustra." Ven, F. iv, v. 1, 2, 4 and 5,
2. " For Ahura-Mazda does not throw away even things of the smallest value ; not even of the

value of a thread, not even so much in value as a single reel throws off in quantity." Ven. F. v, v. 168 to 170.

8. " Always thou (who dost not cultivate this earth) standest there, going to the doors of others to beg for food. Always they bring food to you, thou who beggest lazily out of doors." Ven. F. iii, v. 93, 94.

NORTH.

Freemasonry—*The north is masonically called a place of darkness. This is astronomically true: the sun, in his progress though the ecliptic never reaches farther than 23° 28' north of the equator. A wall, if erected on any part of the earth farther north than that, will therefore receive the rays of the sun only on its south side, while the north will be entirely in shadow at the hour of meridian.*

Parsees.—The same is held to be the case among the Parsees,

Quotations—

1. " From *the north region, from the north regions, rushed forth Angra mainyus, he who is full*

of death, the Daevas (= the Devil)." *Ven*, F xix, v. 1.

2, " Will at the rising of the sun smite the north region." K. A. Vast. Khordat, cent. 9.

3. " The wind which comes straight from the north is utterly undone." K. A. Yasht Aidi-bihist, cant. 9.

POMEGRANATE.

Freemasonry,—The pomegranate, as an emblem, was known to and highly esteemed by the tuitions of antaqaity.....(which) is added another to the many al'eady existing proofs of the antiquity, as well as the beauty, of our beloved order. Pomegranates, from the exuberance of their seed, denote plenty. (Fellowcraft's Degree),

Parsees __ Amongst the Parsees, the pomegranate is essentially necessary in the Myazda of Afri gan. Its grains are thrown on the head of the child—accompanied with blessingr—by the priest at the time of investiture ; the juice is administered to the dy ing ; and its twigs are required for the *Parsees* and the wood for fire.

Quotation.—

" Eat, ye men, of this Myazda, ye
 who are worthy of it, through
 purity and piety." Yas. viii,
 V. 4.

POT OF INCENSE.

*Freemasonry.--*The " sweet smelling savour " of
 fragrant herbs has, among all
 nations and modes of worship,
 been considered an acceptable
 offering to the Deity, as an
 evidence of the desire of the
 worshipper to honor and please
 the object of his adoration.
 Hence the pot of incense, with
 a view to remind us of this
 truth, has been adopted as an
 emblem in the third degree.
 The office of the High Priest is
 to burn incense to the honor
 and glory of the Most High.
 Incense figures also in the
 Jewish religion :—

".....They (angels) admonish
 each other not to quench the
 fire; they are supported by
 the mighty strength of Him
 whose divine presence is as
 fire. Thou art the holy One
 who is as consuming fire...*'

Extracts from Sublime Poem in
 Jewish Prayer.

Parsees.—The Parsees fumigate their dwelling* twice every day—at the dawn and the dusk—and for almost all kinds of ceremonies and at the places of prayers they have a pot of incense.

Quotation.—

"They shall fumigate the dwelling with.... and all kinds of sweet smelling trees." Veu. F. viii, v, 7.

PROCESSIONS.

*Freemasonry.—*The brethren in a masonic procession always walk two and two. They should be dressed in proper masonic costume, which is a suit of black, white shoes and white stockings, white gloves, and white leather aprons. The aprons must be of lamb's skin.

*Parsees.—*The Parsees follow their dead in procession two and two, every pair holding a handkerchief between them; all wear a long coat of white muslin.

Quotations.—

1. "Nowhere shall a single (man) carry a dead body/' Yen, F. iii, v. 44.

- 2, "Two men shall take him (the dead) up - pure and strong ones." Ven. F. viii, v. 25.

QUALIFICATIONS OF CANDIDATES.

Freemasonry.—These qualifications are of three kinds :—mental, moral, and physical. Of sane mind, shall be no "irreligious libertine," of 21 years old or more, free born, of able body and "of limbs whole as a man ought to be." Another important moral qualification is that the candidate must come of his "own free will and accord" Masonry does not delight in proselytism.

Parsees.—The Parsees observe the qualifications for their priests only, and they even are reluctant to admit others into their sect and religion. Bodily deformities of every kind are regarded as tokens of the Devil. This similarity is also seen, in the Jewish Law where no priest having a blemish might approach to offer the holy bread.

Quotations.—

- 1, "I deny rule to the bad, wicked, wandering in error, evil-witting Daevas- the most lying of beings, the most reprobate of beings." Yas. xiii, v. 14 & 15.

2. "No teeth exceeding the proportion ; no stature exceeding the due proportion of the body ; no other tokens which are the tokens of Anga-m inyus (= the Devil) which he has made amongst men." Ven. F. ii, v. 84-86.

RIGHT HAND.

Freemasonry.—The joining of the right hand was esteemed among the ancients as conveying a most inviolable obligation of fidelity..... A fact which will account for the very important station it occupies among the symbols of Freemasonry.

Parsees.—In a Parsee marriage, the bride and bridegroom join their right hands. Joining of right hands denotes a contract and if broken is punishable.

Quotations.—

1. "Creator! with how **much does** the contract, when broken, affect which is committed by the joining' of hands? Then answersd Ahurs. Mazda : With six hundred similar punishments Which it brings upon the nearest relations. Ven. F. iv. v. 26 & 27.

SACRED NUMBERS,

Freemasonry.—The mystical meaning and divine virtues of numbers formed an **important part of the philoso-**

phy of Pythagoras, and from him have been translated into and transmitted to the masonic system of symbolism. In numbers, Pythagoras saw the principal of all things : he believed that the creation of the world was produced by their harmonious combination and that they existed before the world.

Parsees.—The symbolic meaning and divine virtues of numbers are mentioned in various passages in the Avesta :—

- i. " (The words) which Ahura-Mazda created, He created in the infinite time." Ven F. xix, v. 33.
- ii. "Then answered Ahura-Mazda: This portion of the Ahuua-vairya it was, O holy Zarathustra, which I have taught thee ; (as being) before the heaven, before the water, before the fire, Son of Ahura-Mazda, before the pure man, before the daevas who are of perverted soul, and before mankind, before the whole corporeal world, before all the good things created by Mazda, which have a pure origin." Yas. xix, v. 4 and 5.
- iii. "Who (Sharaosha) first bound together to Baresma, three

twigs, five twigs, seven twigs,
 nine twigs." Yas. lvi. cant. 2,
 v. 2 and 3.

iv. "The lights without a beginning
 we praise." K. A. Gab Uziren
 v. 6.

V. "The endless Time we praise."
 K. A. Quarset Nyayis v. 2.

ONE.

Freemasonry.—In Freemasonry, ONE—the Mo-
 nad—represented the central
 fire, or God, without beginning
 and without end, the point
 within the circle.

Parsees.—ONE represents the central Fire—or
 Ahura-Mazda, i.e., God Al-
 mighty, without beginning and
 without end.

THREE.

Freemasonry —This is one of the sacred numbers
 of Freemasonry. THREE was
 considered among all the Pagan
 nations as the chief of the mys-
 tical numbers, because, as Aris-
 totle remarks, it contains within
 itself a beginning, a middle and
 an end. Hence we find it de-
 signating some of the attributes
 of almost all the ancient gods :—

The thunder-bolt of Jove was
 three-forked.

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- b. The sceptre of Neptune was a trident.
- c. Cerberus, the dog of Pluto, was three-headed.
- d. The Sun had three names : Apollo, Sol, and Liber.
- e. The Moon also had three names: Diana, Luna, and Hecate.
- f. There were three Fates and three Furies.

Parsees.—THREE holds an equally important designation:

- a. In the rites of Mithras, the Em-pyrean was said to be supported by three intelligences: Ormazd, Mithra, and Mithras,
- b. Zoroaster's great axiom, so full of intelligence, was that—"the highest Trinity (I)rigu) is *Thought, Word, Deed.*" These three he considers to be pure in the pure, evil in the evil : from the *Thought* emanates the *Word*, from the two together the *Deed*.
- c. **The Kusti** (i. e. the sacred girdle) goes three times round the **waist**, and it has three tassels to each end, (*Vide SEVEN.*)

Quotations—

1. " I lay hold on all good thoughts words, and works. I abandon all evil thoughts, words, and works." Yas. xii, v. 2 and 3.
2. "All good thoughts, words, and works lead to Paradise. All evil thoughts, words, and works lead to hell." K. A. Vishpa Humata v. 3 and 4.

FIVE.

Freemasonry.—One of the sacred numbers of Freemasonry. Among the Freemasons, five is more particularly symbolical of the five orders of architecture and the five human senses—*viz.*, seeing, hearing, feeling, smelling and tasting, but still more especially of the FIVE Points of Fellowship.

Parsees.—This number is equally of import among the Parsees :

- a. The Gahambars—six great Festivals in commemoration of the creation of the World—consist of Five (5) days each,
- b. For the purpose of prayers, the daytime is divided into five (5) different sub-divisions: that is to say, there are five (5) Gahs or

or prayers belonging to each different period and with each of the Gahs different Genii are said to be associated.

Quotations—

1. " Five things acceptable, five displeasing, and five rejoice the earth." Ven. F. iii.
2. " Five sins of commission." Ven, F. xv.
3. " To five I (Haoma) belong: to five I belong not." Yas. x, v. 45.
4. " That will I ask Thee, tell me the right, O Ahura! Thy five-fold precept, O Mazda." Yas, xliii, V. 8.

SEVEN.

Freemasonry.—The emblematic age of the Master Mason is seven years.

Tarsees—The religious investiture (*vide* Apron) is *not* worn until the children have reached the seventh year, The investiture consists of white cotton shirt and a girdle : This girdle-known as KŪSTI-has to be bound and unbound many times daily, and always with the recitation of prayers. It is made of pure white wool woven and of sufficient length to go round the waist three times,

It must be worn by men and women alike, but, as above stated, children do *not* receive it until their seventh year.

NINE.

Freemasonry.—If the number THREE is sacred among Masons, the number NINE—or Three times Three—is scarcely less so. The Pythagoreans, remarking that this number has the power of always reproducing itself by multiplication, consider it as an emblem of matter, which, though continually changing its form, is never annihilated. It was also consecrated to the spheres, because the circumference of a sphere is 360 degrees—the total of these figured 3, 6, and 0 = 9.

In Freemasonry NINE derives its value from its being the product of Three multiplied into itself and so consequently in masonic language the number NINE is always denoted by the expression *Three times Three*. For a similar reason, TWENTY SEVEN (= 3 x 9) and EIGHTY ONE (= 9 X 9) are also esteemed as sacred numbers in the higher degrees.

NINE was called by Pythagoras "perfect" or "finished," because NINE is the period re-

quired for the perfection of a human being in the womb before birth.

Parsees.—NINE holds an equally important designation :—

- a. The Parsees' white shirt has NINE joints.
- b. The Draona—which they prepare for consecration—has NINE marks—three in each row,
- c. Certain of their religious rites—*e.g.*, Baresma—last for NINE nights in three equal parts, the place of which has NINE circles.
- d. The sieve for shifting Haoma has has NINE holes.
- e. The Parsee Calendar consists of 365 days : so that after deducting the last five days of Gathas, the remaining 860 days of the year make a total of also NINE $3 + 6 + 0 = 9$.
- f. Even the Secret Number among the Parsees is "NUV" which is equivalent to NINE.
- g. The ceremony of Investiture among the Parsees is called "NUVJOTE" which means "Light of NINE."

Quotations —

1. "Nine sorts of willows brought he ; he drew nine circles." Vendidad, last verse.
2. " Nine sorts of male horses, nine sorts of male camels, nine sorts of male homed cattle, nine sorts of male small cattle, brought the desirable Airyama*" Ven. F. xxii, v. 54 to 57.
3. " Thereupon the serpent Anramainyus, who is full of death, made—in reference to me—nine sicknesses, &c." Ven. F. xxii, v. 6.

THIRTY-THREE.

Freemasonry.—The Supreme Council of Grand Inspectors-General constitutes the THIRTY-THIRD (33) Masonic Degree. Not more than one Supreme Council can exist in each nation.

Parsees.— There are THIRTY-THREE Amshaspands—*i.e.* Angels and Archangels-surrounding the Throne of Ormazd.

Quotations. -

- 1, "May the Thirty-three (three and thirty) Amshaspands and Ormazd be 'victorious **and pure,**' **Khordah Avesta iii.**

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2. "I invite and announce to all the lords who are lords of purity—the thirty-three nearest who are round about Havana." Yas, **i, v. 33,**

SEVENTY-TWO.

Freemasonry—The Council Chamber of the Degree of Knight of the East is illuminated by seventy-two lights, in memory of the 72 years of captivity of the Jews. The nine words—Eloah, Adonai, Jehovah, Jashe, Job, Elchim, Echad, Ozze, and Jesai—are composed of letters which compose 72 names and are taken from the name of the Divinity, according to angels' alphabet and the cabalistical tree, (Secret Master's Degree).

Parsees,—

- a. The Yasna has 72 chapters,
- b. The sacred girdle (=Kustee) of the Parsees has also seventy-two (72) threads.
- c. The names of God in the Ormazd. Yasht are 72,

SECRECY.

Freemasonry—The objection, which has been urged against Freemasonry on the ground of its secret character, is scarcely worthy of serious refutation. The traditions and asoteric doctrines of our order are too valuable and too sacred to be permitted to become the topic of conversation for every idler who may desire to occupy his moments of leisure in speculating upon subjects which require much previous study and preparation to qualify the critic for a ripe and equitable judgement.

Parsees.—The Parsees do not admit those of another creed into their church or into any of the ceremonies.

Quotations.—

1. " Zarathustra ! mayest thou teach this Manthra to none other than the father, or the son, or the whole brother, or the Ath-rava possessed of nourishment, who will order all circles as a believer not-erring/' K. A. Yasht Khordat, v, 10. .
2. " The good purity which the pure knows. May the bad not know it; may we nob procure that he may surpass, neither with

thoughts, nor with words, nor with works. At no time may he attain to it." Vis. xxv, v. 3 and 4,

SQUARE.

Freemasonry.—The square is an angle of ninety degrees, or fourth part of a circle. It is one of the working tools of a fellow-craft, and the distinctive jewel of the master of the lodge. An adjustment of Masons can be preserved by a constant application of the square of morality.

Parsees—The Parsees have short sleeves to their white cotton shirt (*vide* Apron), so arranged that their joints would appear like squares.

SYMBOL.

Freemasonry.— This is a sensible image used to express an occult but analogical signification. Almost all the instructions given in Masonry is by symbols, as was also the case in the ancient mysteries.

Parsees.—A Parsee's salutation is given by bending the head a little forward, and by striking the right hand gently on the forehead. This corresponds exactly to the sign of sympathy or sorrow as is given in the Third Degree,

Freemasonry.—The blazing star, or the glory in the centre, refers Masons to that grand luminary—the Sun, which enlightens the earth and by its benign influence dispenses its blessings to mankind in general. The Sun rises in the East to open the day and dispenses light, life, and nourishment to the whole creation. The Sun in the centre with its diverging rays is an emblem of the Deity.

It is asserted that Masons conceal, among other secret arts in their possession, "the faculty of A brae." This is an evident allusion to the word "Abraxas." It, like the incommunicable name of God among the Jews, was supposed to be possessed of magical virtues,

Parsees.—Among the Parsees, the Sun—as the mightiest light—is an especial terror to all evil beings, who work in darkness. The Sun and Moon are in intimate friendship because they work in common.

Quotation.—

"With purity I offer it: to Ahura and Mithra(=the Sun), both

great, imperishable, pure; to the stars, the creatures of Sapentamainyus; to the star Tistria, the brilliant, shining; to the moon, which contains the seed of the cattle; to the bright Sun with swift horses, the eye of Ahura-Mazda; and to Mithra, the lord of the regions." Yas. vii, v. 40.

* * The deity "Abraxas" is said to be identical with "Mithras" (= Sun). It is a singular coincidence that "Belinus"—the deity of the Gauls—to be identical with "Mithras." The seven (7) letters of these names, taken according to their numerical value in the Greek language, amount exactly to 365. Thus : —

A	b	r	a	x	a	s	
1	2	100	1	60	1	200	= 365.
M	i	t	h	r	a	s	
40	5	10		100	1	200	= 365.
B	8	1	i	n	u	s	
2	8	30	5	50	70	200	= 365

TRUTH.

Freemasonry.—*Truth* is one of the three principal tenets of our order, *Brotherly Love* and *Belief* being the other two. To be "true and trusty" is one of the first lessons in which the aspirant is instructed. Truth alone is immutable

and eternal ; it is the attribute of Him in whom there is no variableness nor shadow of changing.

Parsees.—The love of the Parsees for Truth is recognized by all the ancient writers: particularly Herodotus, Xenophon, and Plato. The Avesta (- the religious book) abounds in passages directed against falsehood,

WHITE.

Freemasonry.—One of the emblematic colours of Masonry is *White*, which is preserved in the apron and gloves with which the initiate is invested. It is a symbol of innocence and purity. The white investiture—as may be seen throughout the work—was a part of the ceremonies of all the ancient mysteries.

Parsees.—Among the Parsees this colour—WHITE—prevails in almost all their ceremonies and rites which are performed in a white dress. The dress of the Parsee priests is entirely white : that of the corpse and its bearers is also entirely pure white--the Parsees dress their dead in the oldest white clothes; the followers and mourners are also in white, while the hearse which is painted white is drawn by a

pair of pure and spotless white bullocks. The pall-bearers wear white gloves, white shirts, white caps—in fact everything is pure and spotless white. White denotes Purity : hence the idea.

Quotations—

1. " Purity is the best good. Prosperity, prosperity is to him, namely, to the best pure in purity." K, A. Ashem-Vohu.
2. "To this (Mithra's) chariot are yoked four white horses white—a similitude of the Mazdayasuan law." K. A. Mihr Yasht, v. 123-126.

WOMAN.

Freemasonry.--The objection so often made by the fair sex, that they are most ungallantly refused entrance into our order, and a knowledge of our secrets, is best answered by a reference to the originality and the originally operative character of our institute. That woman is not admitted to a participation in our ceremonies and rites is most true. But it is not because we deem her unworthy, or unfaithful, or deny her the mind to understand, or the heart to appreciate our princi-

ples; but simply because, in the very organisation of Masonry, MAN alone can fulfil the duties it inculcates, or perform the labours it enjoins,

Parsees.—Among the Parsees, women enjoy the same rights as their European sisters do. Women are mentioned in the Parsee book of religion :—

- i, "The Fravashis of the pure men praise we. The Fravashis of the pure women praise we." Vis. xix, V. C.
- ii. "Thou art our Ruler, possessed of the good kingdom, for men as well as for women." Yas. xli, v. 4.
- iii. "The good men and women of the whole world of purity praise I. Of the being, the having been, the about to be." Yas. li, v. 1 and 2.
- iv. "The pure women we praise, who especially thinks good, speaks good, does good; lets herself be ruled well, and obeys the master the pure," K. A. Gah Aiwisruthrema v. 9.

FINIS.

