

**THE DRUIDICAL
TEMPLES OF THE
COUNTY OF WILTS**

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The Druidical Temples of the County of Wilts by E. Duke

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E. DUKE

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DRUIDICAL TEMPLES

OF THE
COUNTY OF WILTS,

BY
THE REV. E. DUKE, M.A. F.A.S. F.L.S.
AND MEMBER OF THE ARCHÆOLOGICAL INSTITUTE
OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

"Veterum volvens monumenta vicarum."—VIGOR.



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TO
The Archaeologists
OF
GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND;
ESPECIALLY TO
THE FELLOWS OF THE ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY,
TO
THE MEMBERS OF THE ARCHÆOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION,
AND TO
THE MEMBERS OF THE ARCHÆOLOGICAL INSTITUTE,
THIS BOOK,
(THE AMUSEMENT AND OCCUPATION OF HIS LEISURE HOURS,)
IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,
BY THEIR
OBEDIENT AND HUMBLE SERVANT,
THE AUTHOR.

LAKE HOUSE, AMESBURY,
August 13th, 1846.

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THE DRUIDICAL TEMPLES OF WILTSHIRE.

CHAPTER I.

ORIGIN AND PROGRESS OF IDOLATRY.

It pleased the Almighty, in his infinite wisdom, to select from among the nations of the earth one chosen race to keep alive the spirit of true religion, to preserve the knowledge of Himself, the one true and only God, to be the depository of His laws, and the promulgators of His counsels to future and successive generations. In His unerring wisdom, and for reasons inscrutable by man, He withdrew the light of His countenance from the rest of the world, and yielded them up to their own hearts' lusts. The consequence was, that they forgot God, and gave themselves up to idolatry, they worshipped the created instead of the Creator, and well may we believe, that thus the holy Psalmist was in the grief of his heart tempted to exclaim, "the whole world lieth in wickedness." In the divine appointment of one day in seven to keep it holy in remembrance of the Creation, the wisdom of God manifestly shines forth. By ceasing to labour after the sixth day, man is afforded an interval to recruit his

strength, and the hebdomadal recurrence of this day reminds and admonishes him of his duties of prayer and praise to his great Creator, for His mercies vouchsafed unto him; and there can be no doubt, that a tradition of this Divine appointment prevailed generally throughout the world; but, when man forgot the one only true and living God, there is every reason to believe, that the earlier objects of his adoration were the Sun and Moon alone. The worship of the Planets arose in Chaldæa, and from thence pervaded Egypt and Arabia, and spread far and wide. At the entrance of the Israelites into the promised land all the surrounding nations were more or less imbued with this sin. It is supposed, that the Sun and Moon were the deities spoken of in Scripture under the titles of Baal and Ashtaroth. They imparted names to the two first days of the septenary cycle, or the week, as is apparent by the Sun-day, and Moon-day, even in Christian times, and it was easy (whether written numerals were then in use or not) to reckon the remainder of the week-days until the recurring Sunday again arrived. I must here beg leave to quote from Cæsar a passage admirably illustrative of this subject, and to which it will be necessary to refer again in a future portion of this work. In describing the manners and customs of the Germans in his days, he says, "*Deorum numero eos solos ducunt, quos cernunt, et quorum opibus apertè juvantur, Solem et Vulcanum, et Lunam; reliquos ne famâ quidem acceperunt.*" Here Cæsar confirms my