

Chapter 10

Royal Arch

THE PHYSICALLY perfect man, or adept, possesses and is master of seven physical senses, seven psychic senses, and seven states of consciousness. The number seven, denoting the complete gamut of physical life, indicates readiness for transition to a new octave of endeavor. The number of action and completion of form, astrologically it corresponds to Sagittarius; and is explained in symbolical pictograph by the Seventh Major Arcanum of the tarot, which represents the triumph over all temptations and obstacles of the physically perfect man. Upon this tarot arcanum is founded the ancient degree of the Royal Arch.

In its initiatory ritual the candidate is caused symbolically to recapitulate man's involution, and his evolution up to the state of perfect physical manhood. As the result of this perfection, or adeptship, among other priceless treasures obtained, he is given the Omnific Word.

This initiation, to represent that on every plane the soul is vitalized by its ego and functions through some kind of form—there being a trinity of ego, soul and body always present—can only take place when there are three candidates to undergo the ceremony at the same time. To indicate that these three elements of man's constitution are never entirely separated, and that during the Cycle of Necessity through the seven realms to the one where the candidate now functions there has been a constant strengthening of the bond between them, and the unfoldment of seven states of consciousness, the three candidates are tied along a single rope which is wrapped seven times around the body of each.

The Chapter represents the Tabernacle erected near the ruins of the Temple. It is an oblong square divided into separate compartments by four veils. Its square form represents the physical plane where initiation is first conducted.

The banner of the guard at the outer veil is blue, the color of the planet Saturn, and of the selfishness which must be overcome at the first step. The banner of the guard of the second veil is purple, the color of the planet Jupiter, and of the love of wealth and worldly station, which must be triumphed over at the second step. The banner of the guard of the third veil is scarlet, the color of the planet Mars, and of the hate and passion that must be left behind if the sanctuary is to be reached. The banner of the guard of the fourth, or inner veil is white, the color of the planet Uranus. This indicates that all the experiences of life, represented by the various planetary colors, must be puri-

**Significance of the
Banners and Three
Times Three**

fied and fluxed by the methods of spiritual alchemy and then combined, as the prismatic colors combine, to form the white light of spiritual gold before final adeptship is attained. These four veils also represent the four elemental kingdoms—gnomes, undines, salamanders and sylphs—which the adept of the physical plane is called upon to master.

It is asked how a Royal Arch Mason is known. The answer is that it is by three times three. This symbolizes that he possesses knowledge of the three trines of the soul's pilgrimage. The first trine, with its apex above indicating where the twin souls separated, represents by its separating sides the divergent lines followed in involution by the male and the female monads. Its base represents the mineral realm where the two souls are farthest apart. The second trine starts with the mineral as the base line and the human state of life as the point where the two sides converge. This indicates that it is possible, though only one far spiritually advanced could recognize it if it did take place, for the twin souls to meet as human beings on the physical plane. The third trine has its base in human life, and its apex in the seventh spiritual state where soul-mates are permanently united.

In opening the Chapter all kneel about the altar on their right knees in the form of a circle. The circle represents spirit, and the attitude denotes the willingness to dedicate their services unreservedly to it.

This circle is called a living arch, and is symbolical of the lives through which the soul passes in its cycle of necessity. The High Priest reads from the Bible, then each crosses his arms and gives his left hand to his left-hand companion, as token of the trials and temptations that must be surmounted. They then balance three times three with their arms, permitting them to rise and fall in three series of three, with a pause between each series, indicating the three trines of life: involution to mineral, evolution to man, and final evolution from man to angel. The pass-word, Raboni, signifies to overcome, and indicates the determination to overcome all barriers to spiritual progress.

Because the higher trinity of man's being must be present before soul-union can take place, and because it is the product of the united effort of the ego and its two monads, the Omnific Royal Arch Word can only be given in groups of three. Each of the three companions—the three representing ego and two monads—takes his brother on the left by the right wrist with his right hand, and with his left hand grasps the left wrist of his brother on the right. To indicate the three as functioning in the mineral realm of life they place their three right feet together in the form of a triangle. Their left hands form a trine in the middle region, to indicate the three functioning on the astral plane. And their right hands form a trine above their heads to typify the three functioning on the spiritual plane of life.

They then balance three times three and bring the right hand down upon the left, signifying victory over temptation through wisdom, indicated by the number nine (see Chapter 7, Course 6, *The Sacred Tarot*), in the union of positive (right-hand) and negative (left-hand) forces. Their right hands are next raised above their heads as they give at low breath the word: Jah-buh-lun, Jeho-vah, G-O-D. Low breath has reference to the spiritual impulse that propelled the monads upon their cyclic journey. The Omnific Word is syllabled and pronounced alternately so that each of the three speak all nine syllables, or altogether twenty-seven. These twenty-seven syllables represent the twenty-seven days it takes the moon to pass through the circle of zodiacal signs and return to its original starting point. This symbolizes the soul's journey from its differentiation back to the spiritual state.

The three candidates personate the three Most Excellent Masters who, at the destruction of Jerusalem, were carried captive into Babylon where they remained seventy years until liberated by Cyrus, King of Persia. They then returned over a rugged road to assist in rebuilding the Temple. Now the number ten represents a complete cycle (see Chapter 7, Course 6, *The Sacred Tarot*) of experience. Multiplied by seven to become seventy it indicates successive cycles during which the perfection of form is attained. This climax of evolution on the material plane, the perfect physical form, is man, who possesses a seven-fold constitution. Thus does the soul, descending into the Babylon of matter, become a captive of sense and seeming. It is only liberated when perfect physical manhood is reached and work is ready to be started in the reconstruction of its physical temple.

The candidates are permitted to enter the Chapter, representing the material world, through a living arch. This is formed by the brethren standing in two lines facing each other, each locking fingers with the brother opposite. It typifies the forms of life through which the soul passes in its cyclic journey, and to represent the struggles in each of these lives the candidates are kneaded by the brothers' knuckles. This punishment is so hard as often to prostrate them on the floor, indicating the dissolution of one form before another is attracted.

The end of the ritual that portrays involution finds the candidates confronted by a burning bush. This is the divine creative fire, by the energy of which the soul ascends through the various forms of physical life, finally to rebuild its spiritual temple, a miniature structure patterned in detail after the universal temple. The destruction of the temple signifies here the fall of spirit, or the involution of the soul into matter. This is brought out by reading the account given in the 26th Chapter of Chronicles, and throwing the candidates on the floor and binding them amid much confusion, and carrying them out into the preparation room. A few minutes later, to indicate that the evolutionary journey has commenced, they are released and told that Cyrus, king of Persia, has issued a proclamation to build another temple at Jerusalem.

The living arch by which the candidates enter the Chapter is symbolical of the elemental life-forms passed through before the soul incarnates for the first time on the physical plane.

To represent successive existences in the mineral realm of earth the candidates again pass through the living arch. Then, to typify the experiences of the impersonal soul in the astral realm after it has passed through the mineral states of life, they are led over a rugged road around the room and back again to the living arch.

The next time through the living arch—the second time after the destruction of the temple, but the third time through—they are treated more harshly. This indicates that in passing through repeated incarnations in the vegetable kingdom of life the soul awakens to greater sensitiveness, becomes more aware of external conditions. Then again the candidates are led over a rugged road, indicating the period between vegetable and animal existence spent in the astral realm where experiences in the vegetable realm are thoroughly assimilated. To show the completion of this cycle of astral existence they are led around the room to still again confront the living arch.

The third time through the arch since destruction of the temple—the fourth and last time in all—they are treated still more roughly. This denotes in the animal kingdom through which the soul evolves that sensitiveness, conscious-

The Living Arch

ness, and suffering become more intense. Then once more they are led over the rugged road, this time to indicate the period of assimilation in the astral realm after completing evolution through the animal forms, and before the soul is competent to incarnate in a human body. They are then led on around the room, but as the living arch composed of numerous brethren indicates a series of lives, and as the soul incarnates but once in the human form, they this time are not confronted by the living arch, but now are in sight of the ruins of the old temple, near the outer veil of the tabernacle. This tabernacle is the body of man, the last dwelling of the soul in physical form before the reconstruction of its spiritual temple.

To conquer the realm of gnomes and pass the veil of Saturn into the first apartment requires unselfishness. The pass-word is "I am that I am." It is said to refer to Moses who was sent by "I AM" to the Children of Israel. This means that the ego, which sends the monad into physical life for the sake of experiencing good and evil that it may reconstruct the spiritual temple, is eternal spirit, enduring forever through time without beginning and time without end. It is the realization of this divine relationship to the ego that first prompts the soul to true unselfishness.

To conquer the realm of undines and pass the veil of Jupiter requires knowledge and sacrifice. The pass-words are Shem, Ham, and Japhet. The sign is to cast a rod upon the ground and pick it up again by the end. This indicates that a knowledge of magic is necessary to the adept, and also that the creative energy, typified by the rod, to be of greatest service, must be given a spiral (spiritual) form and made to serve a living purpose, as indicated by the serpent. This sign also refers to the fourth chapter of Exodus: "And the Lord said unto Moses, what is in thy hand? And he said a rod. And the Lord said, Cast it on the ground, and he cast it and it became a serpent."

Noah, of course, personifies the sun. His three sons—the three important visible stations of the sun—are the Ascendant, the Midheaven, and the Descendant. Ham, who beholds the nakedness of his father, the sun, as the latter rises and ascends to the midheaven, growing in illumination, represents the Ascendant. But when the sun reaches the Midheaven its illumination begins to diminish, and as it moves forward the Midheaven and Descendant, corresponding to Japhet and Shem, seem to move backward toward him, finally covering him with the garment of night. Ham, symbolizing the sun rising in the sign Scorpio, indicated by Noah's drunkenness, uncovers the sun after he has yielded to base desire. This represents indulgence and degeneration. He therefore does not receive the parental blessing bestowed upon the other two, who show base desire on the wane, and who are ashamed of depravity. These three pass-words, to be understood, imply a knowledge of astrology. To be used in overcoming the realm of the undines they imply that the candidate no longer delights in satisfying base desires, but through his knowledge of generation has become master of his desires.

To conquer the realm of salamanders and pass the veil of Mars into the third apartment requires purity and strength. The pass-words are Shem, Japhet, and Adoniram, and the sign is made by thrusting the hand into the bosom and again drawing it out. This sign is said to refer to the fourth chapter of Exodus: "And the Lord said unto Moses, put now thine hand into thy bosom; and he put his hand into his bosom; and when he took it out, behold his hand was leprous as snow." In the pass-words here Adoniram, typifying the soul-mate of Hiram Abiff, is substituted for Ham who belongs to the realm of external desires. Adoniram indicates the sun rising in the sign Taurus, the

sign of regeneration, instead of in Scorpio. This reference indicates that the candidate is expected to understand spiritual astrology as well as the more physical branches. And it signifies that at this stage of his initiation, regenerate union must entirely supersede generation. The sign indicates the powers that may be exercised by the adept in high magic. It also warns of the frightful penalty that those must pay who fall into the snare of sex magic.

To conquer the realm of sylphs and pass the veil of Uranus into the inmost compartment where adeptship is finally attained requires great self mastery and wisdom. The pass-words are Haggai, Joshua, and Zerubbabel. These characters were holy men who came into possession of wonderful powers through the consecration of their lives to the work of God. Only such others, therefore, as likewise consecrate their energies to the performance of the divine will, and strive to assist the progressive evolution of creation, can ever arrive at true adeptship.

The sign is made by holding out a tumbler of water and pouring a little on the floor. This is said to refer to the fourth chapter of Exodus:

And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe in the two former signs, thou shalt take the water of the river and pour it upon the dry land; and the water shall become blood upon the dry land."

Thus is signified that when properly understood the creative periods of woman are a source of occult power. Alchemy, as well as astrology and magic must be mastered by the would-be adept. At the point of progression now considered the grosser energies are transmuted to build up electro-magnetic power. The form of the finer bodies, as symbolized by the earth, is subject to the molding influence of the passions and aspirations. The sign, consequently, refers to the transmutation of the emotions, symbolized by the water, into living active energies.

To pass the inner veil it is also necessary for the candidate to present the signet of Truth of Zerubbabel. This is a triangular piece of metal with the name Zerubbabel engraved upon it. Zerubbabel was the chosen of the Lord. In other words, he understood and conformed to the Law. He was present at the building of the first temple and his hand saw the completion of the new one.

Now the trine represents the ego and its twin souls, the metal signifying their most valuable experiences on the physical plane. Zerubbabel being present at the beginning signifies that the differentiation of the twin souls was under law. His being present at the completion of the new temple signifies that the reunion of twin souls is likewise under law. The signet of Truth, therefore, is that the ego and twin souls stand in relation to each other as Life, Light, and Love. Furthermore, those who, like Zerubbabel, understand and obey nature's laws, interiorly recognize the truth, even when external evidence is lacking to substantiate it, that the twin souls of one ego must join to build the new temple of the angelic form.

When they have passed the inner veil the candidates arrive at that portion of the Chapter where they are ready to take the final initiation that confers upon them adeptship on the physical plane. They consequently are examined by the brethren and declared eligible and "just such men as are wanted in building the temple." Asked what work they will undertake, they reply that they will undertake any service, however servile or dangerous. All aspirants to adeptship are given a work, more often than not bringing hardships

and the condemnation of the ignorant, and sometimes making them outcasts and subjects of persecution. The neophyte's future progress depends upon the manner in which he accomplishes that which has been given him to do. If he shirks it because of its arduous nature, or because it lends to unpopularity, or because it interferes with worldly interests, he is barred from further initiation.

Next the candidates are directed to go to the northeast corner of the old temple and remove the rubbish preparatory to starting the new building. The northeast is the portion of the mundane sphere where the sun rises in spring at the renewal of the year after it crosses the equinox. It is the point where its regeneration commences. The candidates are furnished, one with a crowbar, typical of the plumb, and the masculine in nature; one with a shovel, in form representing the sun of spirit penetrating the square of matter; and the other with a pick, symbolizing the plumb, or vertical line of the sun's rays, uniting with the moon, or crescent of soul. The crowbar thus symbolizes the ego. The shovel symbolizes the ego sending a ray of itself, the soul, into matter. The pick symbolizes that the result is union of ego and soul. In other words, the product of the soul's experiences in material environment is self-consciousness.

After digging awhile in the rubbish of dogmatic science and religious superstition, the candidates find a ring, typical of their evolving spiritual insight, by which they pull up a keystone of an arch disclosing an entrance to a vault below. This keystone is the one wrought by Hiram Abiff. It signifies, as elsewhere explained, that the key to soul power is union between harmoniously wedded man and woman, and that the key to occult science is the knowledge of astrology.

One of the candidates agrees to descend into the vault. This vault represents the lowest grade of adeptship where treasures of knowledge are concealed. A rope is wound seven times around his body, to typify his possession of the seven states of consciousness, and he is lowered by a companion into the vault. Here he finds three small trying squares which prove to be the jewels of the Ancient Grand Masters, King Solomon, Hiram, King of Tyre, and Hiram Abiff.

First Step Toward Adeptship

These trying squares typify the three planes of adeptship, each having three grades, that are discovered by the worthy neophyte. These on the physical plane are the scientific grade, the lucidic grade and the grade of soul consciousness. In natal astrology they represent the birth-chart, progressed aspects, and cycles, each of which is triune, and taken together as the Hermetic System of Natal Astrology, comprise a perfect system. The birth-chart embraces zodiacal signs, planets and mundane houses, related to each other as spirit, soul and body. Progressions consist of major progressions, minor progressions and transits, related to each other in the same manner. Cycles likewise correspond to man's triune nature, being divided into solar revolutions, lunar revolutions and planetary periods. These three try squares where humanity is concerned signify man and woman united in a common work; functioning on all three planes of life. The recognition of these jewels is the first step toward actual adeptship.

After the discovery of the jewels—the discovery of the methods by which knowledge may be tried and its value proved so that if it is found of correct proportions it may be used as a stone in building the temple—one of the candidates is again lowered into the vault. During this event the sun is at

meridian height, and its illuminating rays enable him to discover a small box standing on a pedestal. The light and heat from the sun at this time are so intense that he raises his hand and draws it briskly across his forehead, then drops it again to his side. This is the dieugard of the Royal Arch degree.

The sun is represented as at its strongest position, typical of the virility which if utilized to furnish electromagnetic vibrations that can be used in Intellectual ESP, may result in illumination, signified by the dieugard. The dieugard further refers to the fact that when such illumination is present, the attention has become so absorbed in exploring regions of the inner plane and acquiring from it information of value, that the individual for the time being is quite blinded to all that happens in the physical world.

The box discovered by the neophyte through his exercise of Intellectual ESP is removed to the external world and examined. The High Priest pronounces it to be the Ark of the Covenant of God.

This Ark is a miniature representation of the universe and contains a condensed copy of both the Oral Law and the Written Law. The square form of the base, as described in the Scripture and in Ancient Masonry, symbolizes the world of matter and the physical body of man. The coffer above the base typifies man's soul and the astral world. The mercy seat which is over the coffer represents man's ego and the spiritual world. These three main divisions of the Ark are the same as the three worlds mentioned in the Kabala. They are: Asiah, the world of action, or physical world; Yetsirah, the world of formation, or astral realm; and Briah, the world of creation, or spiritual realm. Alchemically these main divisions are Salt, Mercury, and Sulphur. Astrologically they are Mundane Houses, Planets, and Zodiacal Signs. Still above the realms mentioned is the Angelic world, the world of Emanation, or Atziluth of the Kabala, represented in alchemy by Azoth, and in astrology by starry constellations. In the Ark of the Covenant it is present as the overshadowing wings of the Cherubims.

Upon the Ark and around it, to represent the zodiac, is a crown of gold. At each corner of the square base is a ring, two on one side and two on the other. Through the two rings on one side, to represent the pillar Jachin there is run a carrying stave; and through the two rings on the other side another stave to represent Boaz is run. Thus is this representation of the universe divided into masculine and feminine, as the zodiac is divided by summer and winter signs into north and south. Each ring with the pole through it has the elements of the number ten. So do astrologers divide the zodiac into spaces of ten degrees each, calling these important sections decanates. Each such decanate is ruled by a planet. Likewise the nine decanates of each quarter are presided over by one of the symbolical forms of the sphinx, that is, by the Bull, Lion, Eagle, or Man. The planetary rulers of the decanates of a quadrant, together with the ruler of the quadrant as a whole—for the symbolical forms of the sphinx are governed by Venus, Sun, Pluto, and Uranus—gives ten planetary rulers to each quarter of the heavens. These are symbolized by the four rings with the poles through them.

The two cherubims are in the two ends of the Mercy Seat, or realm of spirit. They are placed facing each other with their wings covering the Mercy Seat and meeting over it. They represent the highest mystery of man's being, the meeting of soul-mates in the realm of spirit. This attainment of angelhood is the climax of spiritual life, and is symbolized by the meeting of the overshadowing wings. The cherubims represent the angelic progenitors of the

Ark of the Covenant

human race and the purified souls of previous rounds of humanity who through the union of the two monads have attained to angelhood. It was from this realm of life that Moses was instructed, as revealed by the twenty-fifth chapter of Exodus:

And there I will meet thee, and I will commune with thee from above the Mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the Children of Israel.

Within the Ark are four emblems: the rod of Aaron that budded, the cup that contains the manna, the tablets of the Law, and the manna contained in the cup. It is these four emblems, slightly altered, that today constitute the four suits of the tarot, and somewhat further altered are pictured as the four suits of common playing cards.

The rod of Aaron in the tarot has become the scepter of power, the clubs of common playing cards. It expresses creative force, the source of human energy; represents the executive attribute, and signifies virility. Astrologically it corresponds to the fiery signs of the zodiac.

The cup by its form represents reception, the feminine in nature. It remains unaltered in the tarot, and not less expresses the emotional nature of the watery signs of the zodiac when represented in modern playing cards by hearts.

The tablets of the Law have been supplanted in the tarot by the sword of retribution by which infringement of the Law is punished. These in common playing cards have given way to spades; the spade, a symbol of toil, being likewise an emblem of affliction. The tablets of the Law were joined to express the union of positive and negative forces, a thought preserved by the form of the cross in both the spade and the sword. Astrologically the tablets symbolize the earthy signs of the zodiac.

The manna held by the cup symbolizes the fruit of the union of positive and negative forces. What this fruit may be depends upon the forces united, but the product is considered as of value. Manna was of value at the time of its use. Money is of value, and the suit of pentacles of the tarot pictures this thought by coins. Intelligence is of even greater value; therefore, upon each coin, as symbol of intelligence, is depicted a five-point star. But in modern times diamonds came to be considered as of more value than silver or gold, and we consequently find diamonds pictured on the playing cards. Astrologically the manna symbolizes the airy signs of the zodiac.

These four emblems represent the four great universal principles everywhere and at all times operative. On every plane positive and negative forces unite in the production of new conditions. Man and woman unite physically in the production of children, they unite in regeneration to accomplish the Great Work, and twin souls unite to become the angel.

The High Priest of the Chapter looking into the Ark discovers the long lost book of the law and says:

You now see that the world is indebted to Masonry for the preservation of this sacred volume. Had it not been for the wisdom and precaution of our Ancient Brethren, this, the only remaining copy of the Law, would have been destroyed at the destruction of Jerusalem.

This is undoubtedly true; for had not the Ancient Masons taken the precaution to conceal their wisdom in the allegories of the various Scriptures, it would have been destroyed by religious fanaticism. And with even greater cunning, and in a manner more easily interpreted because less covered with irrelevant rubbish, they concealed their wisdom, yet perpetuated it with certainty, by engraving it on plates and giving these into the hands of ignorant persons as a means of gambling. They capitalized a popular vice and made it serve a good end; for although the Church has ever been suspicious of playing cards, they have been perpetuated and in the Egyptian Tarot we today possess an accurate copy of the Oral Law as it was understood of old.

Upon finding the manna in the Ark the High Priest says: "Companions, we read in the book of the law, that he that overcometh, will I give to eat of the hidden manna." He then gives each of the candidates a piece of the manna as a token that they have triumphed over their animal natures. Next he finds a stick with some buds upon it, which he proclaims is the rod of Aaron. Then he takes from the Ark four pieces of paper which he places together so as to show a key to the ineffable characters of this degree. Needless to say these pieces of paper represent the scroll of heaven divided into four quadrants, and the characters, which may be translated in terms of the alphabet of any language, are the signs of the zodiac and the planets; for each planet and each sign corresponds to one letter of the alphabet.

By this correspondence between the common alphabet and the alphabet of the skies the vibratory influence of any name may be determined. And through the correspondence of the starry alphabet to numbers, tones, and colors the vibratory influences of these also are known. Then as the thought-cells within the astral body of man mapped in the birth-chart by the corresponding sign or planet pick up, radio fashion, the astral vibrations radiated by name, tone, number or color, and influence the individual's life and destiny accordingly, it is but a matter of comparing it with the birth-chart and progressed aspects to determine the precise influence on the individual of any name, tone, number or color with which there is close association. Those whose vibrations are similar to discordant thought-cells in his astral body increase the power of such thought-cells to attract disaster. On the other hand, those whose vibrations are similar to harmonious thought-cells (see Course 6 *The Sacred Tarot* for details) give added power to attract events which are fortunate.

When the Ark is first found the three trying squares, which are the jewels of the three ancient Grand Masters, cover the names of Deity written in three different languages. This proves to be the lost Master Mason's Word which becomes the Grand Omnific Arch Word. It is written in three languages to indicate its application on all three planes of life. Its correct pronunciation is Jod-He-Vau-He but this is not revealed to the candidate until the ineffable degrees are reached, and he is then sworn not to pronounce it more than once in his life. As the word refers to marriage this vow signifies that promiscuity is not countenanced; for high magic depends for its success upon absolute purity. The Master Mason's Word, so long lost, and recovered as Jod-He-Vau-He, denotes that in every sphere and on every plane the spiral of life depends upon the interaction of positive and negative forces.

This Word applied on the plane of generation relates to bringing perfect children into the world. The Ancient Masons believed that children should not be the result of chance, but that they should be religiously prepared for.

The Lost Word Recovered

In the first place a time was selected for union that would bring the child into the world when the planetary influences were favorable to the qualities and fortune it was desired he should have. Then for a period of not less than a lunar month before union great temperance in all directions was exercised that both might be exceedingly virile and capable of great intensity. During this preparatory period the mind was kept lofty and as spiritual as possible through reading and devotional exercises. Also, during this period, the qualities to be possessed by the child were daily and vividly formulated and held in the mind by both, these qualities having been agreed upon. Then during the time of union these qualities were again held in the imaginations of both. The Ancients held that under these conditions, if there was true love between the husband and wife and their energies blended harmoniously, that the child would be conceived who when born would possess the abilities and tendencies so formulated.

On the plane of regeneration the Master's Word relates to the blending of etheric and astral energies by which work is accomplished on the astral plane. Such blending of forces between man and wife only takes place when the energies have been raised to a higher vibratory frequency than that accompanying purely physical desire. Physical desire gives way to the mood of tender affection. And while caresses may assist to bring about the rapport between them, physical contact is not necessary, and they may be thousands of miles apart. Nor are any particular organs concerned in this higher union. It is a complete fusion of the finer forces and a blending of the astral bodies. There is an exchange of energy, a complete sympathy and a mutual understanding without the necessity of the spoken work, an entire absence of selfishness, the mind being lifted to new heights where the soul pants and longs for all that is spiritual and good, and pours itself out in blessings upon others. In this ecstatic union the participants are incapable of any thought that is base or gross or worldly. And because of the exalted vibratory state which they temporarily occupy, their minds are capable both of receiving priceless information from the inner realm and of creating conditions on the astral plane that later will externalize on earth for the benefit of all.

In its highest application the Master's Word becomes the Omnific Word, the union of soul-mates to become the angel.

The grand sign of the Royal Arch degree is made by locking the fingers of both hands together and carrying them to the top of the head, the palms upward. The interlocking hands refer to the union of man and woman. Being carried to the top of the head indicates regenerate union. The palms up signifies the expectation of receiving divine illumination as the result.

The initiation passed, the candidate is crowned by the High Priest. This indicates the natural right and ability of one to rule who has surmounted the trials, received divine illumination, and entered the most exterior grade of adeptship.

In this Royal Arch degree, which we have been considering, the construction of the temple is not attempted. The rubbish is removed and the site of the new temple is purified. During this work the key to the lowest arch of adeptship is discovered. This teaches that those who would entertain celestial visitors must purify themselves and thus have the temple a fit place to receive such exalted beings. When the candidate enters the vault by the light of virile illumination both the Oral Law and the Written Law are discovered and the Master's Word is received. Thus in the seventh degree the Lost Word is recovered. By the law of numbers, then, in the fourteenth degree it should

be applied to the reconstruction of the temple, that is, given the correct pronunciation. And the twenty-first degree should see the temple erected.

The particular symbol of the Royal Arch degree is the two interlaced equilateral triangles in the center of which are two clasped hands, one a man's and the other a woman's. It is a symbolical representation of the Lost Master's Word. It means the marriage of man possessing an equally developed body, intellect, and soul with a woman possessing a proportionally developed body, intellect, and soul, by which they evolve the highest potencies of their spiritual and mental natures.

This symbol has a significance not unrelated to the symbol of the password Shibboleth of the F.C. degree. The latter is represented by a sheaf of wheat near a water-ford. The water-ford signifies the emotional nature by which the transition from generation to regeneration is accomplished, and the suspended sheaf of wheat represents the excellent harvest of new powers that are attained when the emotions are lifted to a higher plane of action.

The Select Master degree is based upon the Ninth Major Arcanum of the tarot, corresponding to Aquarius, which is emblematical of Wisdom gained through experience. It is the emblem of Prudence.

At the building of Solomon's Temple it was feared that should the Children of Israel continue to disobey the Law, the temple would be destroyed by their enemies, and the knowledge of the arts and sciences, as well as that of the Oral Law, and of the models of the temple, would be lost. To prevent such priceless knowledge being lost to the human race, a secret vault was built leading from King Solomon's most retired apartment, or the most interior realm, in a westerly, or material, direction, and ending beneath the Sanctum Sanctorum. It was divided into nine separate arches, or grades, the ninth, or lowest, being a place for holding grand council, and to contain an exact copy of all in the Sanctum Sanctorum above.

This ninth arch represents the most external plane of adeptship, in which, by the Law of Correspondences, the candidate who has reached this state of wisdom recognizes that his constitution contains an exact copy of all that is in the sky above. The vault was built by 24 workmen, representing the diurnal rotation of the earth during 24 hours. This rotation progresses the horoscope and builds the various events into the life. The time for work was from 9 to 12 P.M. At that time the sun was entirely hidden from view, sinking to the lowest portion of the chart and passing from the house of pleasure through that part of the horoscope that rules hidden treasure, mystery, secret things, and the end of all undertakings.

The particular symbol of this degree represents three triangular tables arranged in a row. At each corner of a table is a lighted candle, and in the center a triangular plate of gold. Each table represents one of the three planes, and the three candles of each table represent the light shed by the three grades of adeptship belonging to each plane. The triangle of gold is the symbol of man's higher trinity seeking the golden light of wisdom.

The candidate to this degree is made to enact the part of Izabud, a friend of King Solomon, who through an oversight of the latter, and over zealotness on his own part, entered the ninth arch, and for so doing was condemned to death. He pleads for clemency, but is informed that only three can be employed in each arch, the number being already full. In the work of the adept, it is the higher trinity of his constitution that governs, the lower section having no voice in his doings; therefore, it is represented that only three work-

9. Select Master Degree

men are able to work in each arch, or grade, of wisdom.

Finally it is decided to execute the guard Ahishar, who was asleep at his post and allowed Izabud to pass unchallenged, and to permit Izabud to live and fill his place. This drama impresses upon the candidate the necessity of prudence, that undue haste in matters of soul development is fraught with peril, and that when found worthy he will be admitted to the inner secrets. Should he, however, stumble unwittingly upon dangerous knowledge, he must never reveal it to the unworthy, and once initiated into its secrets he must ever be awake to his obligations and to his higher self; otherwise he will be found unworthy of such trust and will deserve the fate of Ahishar.

10. Super Excellent Master Degree

The Super Excellent Master degree is based upon the Tenth Major Arcanum of the tarot, presided over by the planet Uranus. This Arcanum is called the Wheel of Destiny, and depicts sudden alterations of fortune.

The degree centers around Zedekiah, the last king of Israel, who is suddenly set upon with innumerable forces by Nebuchadnezzar. They first take the city, then the temple; and pursuing the king into the plains of Jerico whither he had fled by way of the gate which is by the king's garden between two walls, they capture and carry him to Babylon. In the prison of Babylon his thumbs are cut off, his eyes put out, and his body bound in fetters of brass. As a penalty for perjury he is carried captive into a strange land.

In the macrocosm the sun, bounded on either side by the wall of the northern and southern signs, is assailed by the forces of winter and flees through the gate of the autumnal equinox. He is carried captive into the winter signs, where his strength of will, symbolized by the thumbs, is cut off. His light is dimmed—put out—and his body is bound in the icy fetters between Libra and Sagittarius, these signs ruling the metals copper and tin, of which bronze is composed.

In this manner is indicated the fate of those who are weak enough to misuse their powers; for the Bible states Zedekiah did evil in the sight of the Lord, and as a consequence the temple was destroyed. Nebuchadnezzar typifies the forces of evil that beset the neophyte who disobeys the Law. And even when he deserts the temple and attempts by way of the astral world to flee through the gateway of death, bounded by the two external sheaths, or bodies, that encompass the garden of his desires, he is yet pursued by the legions of Lower-Pluto, made their captive, and carried into iniquitous realms. His will is destroyed, symbolized by the loss of thumbs, his spiritual sight is put out, and he is bound to the nether regions by the fetters of his gross desires. Such is the fate of those disobedient to the admonitions of their higher selves.

11. Heroine of Jerico

This degree is based upon the Eleventh Major Arcanum of the tarot, which is a pictorial representation of occult forces and feminine power. It corresponds to the planet Neptune.

The Heroine of Jerico was a woman who protected two spies sent from Israel.

She hid them from the King of Jerico by covering them over with stalks of flax. Flax is a symbol of strength. They made their escape by permitting her to let down a cord through the window; for her house was upon the wall of the city. The house of Neptune is Pisces and is on the wall, or equinoctial colure, dividing summer and winter. By means of the feminine powers of Neptune,

the sun and moon, typified by the two spies, make their escape from the city of winter into the region of summer.

The sign of this degree is made by the candidate, who may be the wife of a Royal Arch Mason. She imitates the scarlet line let down for the escape of the spies. Taking a red handkerchief, she places one corner of it in her mouth and lets it hang down in front of her, crossing her hands on her breast over it. The red handkerchief is symbolical of woman's creative periods, which, did she but know it, are the source of her greatest strength. They constitute the index of her magical possibilities, and have been recognized in all ages as a source of occult power. The crossed hands upon the breast signify the use or abuse of the power according to good or evil inspiration.

The word is given by the man placing his right foot inside the lady's foot, his toe to her heel, denoting mutual understanding. He puts his right hand on her shoulder and says, "My life"; to which she replies by putting her right hand on his shoulder—the hands on each other's shoulders symbolizing mutual aid—and saying as she bends forward, "For yours." He then puts his left hand on her shoulder and says, "If ye utter not"; to which she replies by placing her left hand on his shoulder and saying, "This is our business." This is a symbol of mutual reception. Then he whispers the word Rahab. Thus is symbolized by these various actions the interdependence of man and woman for progress.

The brother then says, "It is very dark tonight." The candidate answers, "Yes, but not so dark but that I can see." He then asks, "What can you see?" She answers, "A scarlet line." Then she says, "Because it saved my life in the hour of danger." All of which refers to the life giving powers of woman.

