

Ancient Masonry
Mark Master, Etc.

by C.C. Zain, Elbert Benjamine May 1917 April 1927

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Part IX. Mark Master, Etc.
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The Mark Master degree relates to the realization and utilization of the powers and functions conferred in the three preceding degrees. The number four--the Mark Master degree is exemplified by the Fourth Major Arcanum of the tarot--symbolizes realization. The divine Tetragrammaton of the Kabbalists summarizes all potencies in a word of four letters. In astrology, all celestial influences are synthesized in the four-fold form of the sphinx, and in Ancient Masonry the entire Masonic doctrine is compressed within the first four degrees. Yet an acorn may grow to become an oak, and the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, when added together, become 10, and may expand to any possible number. Similarly, the first four degrees of Ancient Masonry contain all of its vital teachings, but in subsequent degrees these are greatly elaborated. The germinating and growing periods of the soul have passed when it reaches the Mark Master degree in its initiation. It is then at its period of fruition.

To open the Mark Master lodge eight officers are necessary and then usually are present, corresponding to the seven planets and man's seven-fold constitution, and in addition three overseers. Uranus, Neptune, and the Lost Orb, are truly overseers, in the sense that when injustice and tyranny become rampant on earth, they take a hand and bring, through revolution, a marked change. Uranus gives occult powers and intuition, Neptune gives psychic sensitiveness and imagination, and the Lost Orb, though yet undiscovered, is supposed to give spiritual insight. Uranus corresponds to the Junior overseer, Neptune to the Senior Overseers, and the Lost Orb to the Master Overseer. These three, according to their planetary correspondences, should represent the world's most progressive thinkers.

The Junior Overseer is placed at the South Gate, to indicate the penetration of Uranus, even as the sun's rays are more penetrating at mid-day, or the south point. The Senior Overseer is placed at the West Gate, or angle, to indicate the receptive faculties given by Neptune, even as the sun is received by the horizon as it sinks into the west. The Master Overseer is stationed at the East Gate to indicate the spiritual awakening affected by the Lost Orb, even as a rising sun revivifies a slumbering world.

The candidate is represented as having passed initiation on all three planes and returned to his body. Four raps signify the accomplishment resulting from this action on three planes, and the cable-tow is wound four times around his body to represent his realization of the complete union between soul and ego. To indicate that after his travels upon the higher planes he has now returned to physical life, the Senior Warden reads the following passage of Scripture: "Then he brought me back the way of the gate of the outward sanctuary, which looketh toward the East, and it was shut, and the Lord said unto me: Son of man, mark well." etc.

The Mark Master's sign, the Heave-over, is made by interlacing the fingers of both hands,

holding them down in front opposite the right hip and then bringing them to the left side of the neck as if to throw a weight over the left shoulder. The E.A. degree, represented by the First Major Arcanum of the tarot, corresponds to the planet Mercury. The F.C. degree, represented by the Second Major Arcanum, corresponds to the sign Virgo. The Master Mason degree, represented by the Third Major Arcanum of the tarot corresponds to the sign Libra. The Mark Master degree, represented by the Fourth Major Arcanum, corresponds to the sign Scorpio, and this Heave-over, alluding to the rejection of the Key-stone, refers to the sign Scorpio. The ten locked fingers represent the union of man and woman, and the front of the right hip symbolizes the constructive power of Scorpio, which by most is discarded, or used negatively in Venusian pleasures as indicated by the left side of the neck.

Not only for spiritual advancement, but also for the purpose of improving the race by bringing more perfect children into the world, the Ancient Masons had a high regard for marriage. It is propitious of racial improvement that there is at the present time a discussion, by eminent authorities, of the advisability of establishing schools wherein these contemplating marriage must pass examinations that prove them conversant with the laws of sex before they are granted a marriage license.

That children are desirable, as a rule, is clearly indicated by natal astrology; for lack of children is always shown by severe afflictions in the birth-chart. Lack of marriage, also, is signified by severe afflictions. Where there are too strong rulers to the marriage rulers in the birth-chart it is advisable not to marry; as the suffering and discord springing from such a partnership prevents domestic happiness. Also when in the birth-chart the planets that rule children are too greatly afflicted, it is better not to bring children into the world; for they will die early, prove sickly, or bring great grief. Nevertheless, there probably is no greater spiritualizing influence in the world than the love and care of parents for their children. Such love, and that of husband and wife, are unselfish emotions of a very high type, that lead from habits of self-centeredness into habits of kindly thought and kindly action in behalf of others. Marriage and children, then, may be made experiences of supreme spiritual value; and their lack must be looked upon as a definite loss. But when in the birth the afflictions to the planets ruling children and marriage are too great, it is better to take this loss and compensate for it as much as possible by resolutely turning the creative energies into such channels of human uplift as will develop to their utmost unselfishness and tender emotions.

As life depends upon harmony, and discord is the harbinger of death, it is apparent that to produce offspring of the highest type there must be harmony of physical and mental temperaments between the parents. Also, if there is to be a well balanced organism for the future child--as otherwise their etheric forces do not fuse--there must be complete sympathy between husband and wife.

The father furnishes the vital power and the mother the magnetic constitution. The strength of this vital power furnished by the father is shown in the birth-chart primarily by the position and aspects of the sun in the case of a male, and primarily by the position and aspects of the moon in the case of a female. Upon the father, then, to a great extent, depends the vitality and length of life. The strength of constitution furnished by the mother is shown primarily in a birth-chart by the rising sign and moon in the case of a male, and primarily by the rising sign and the sun in the case of a female. Upon the mother, then depends to a great extent, the general state of the health. But a strong and vital body, a perfect physical organism can only be produced, according to the teachings of Ancient Masonry, when the energies of both husband and wife are harmonious, vigorous, and aroused to approximately the same degree of pitch and intensity.

Of more importance than the physical, in the application of this ancient and rejected key-stone, are the factors governing the moral and mental status of the child.' Mental ability does

not depend so much upon the spiritual state of the parents at the time of union as upon intensity and fervor, but the use toward which that ability naturally inclines depends upon the habitual spiritual state of the parents and their spiritual state at the time of union.

Thus, if there is great fervor actuated only by lush and selfish desires, and intellectual genius may be launched upon the world whose tendencies are gross and selfish. But if there is tenderness and exalted ideals, instead of attracting an entity from the lower astral spaces to scourge and harass mankind, a soul is drawn from the higher astral realms, whose great mentality will be used for the benefit of the race.

Then again, it was anciently taught that an ideal image held in the minds of both parents at the time of their union, and endowed in imagination with definite mental qualities and soul powers, has a formative value in attracting a soul possessing such qualities. The child so conceived, it was taught, would grow into the ideal image held by the parents and become a blessing to all. Likewise, during gestation the mother's mind has great power to mold her offspring; for even after conception the mother's mind plays an important part, and may warp and bias the immature organism, or through love and high aspirations do much to suppress less harmonious traits and expand and nourish the nobler qualities. Such, at least, are the ancient doctrines relating to the key-stone.

The second sign is made of dropping the right hand again to the region of Scorpio clenching the last two fingers, and leaving the thumb and the first two fingers open. It refers to the method of carrying the key-stone, and represents the male trinity. The hand is then raised to the right ear and the open thumb and two fingers passed with a circular motion about the ear. This signifies the spiritual vibrations that arise from using the virile forces constructively and the capacity for the reception of interior truths gained in this manner, the ear indicating reception. The hand is then dropped partially down, the palm and in a horizontal position, and the left is lifted penalty of having both the ear and the right hand cut off, meaning that if the wages are not properly received--these being the influx of vibrations resulting from union, whose value depends upon the plane contacted--that the ability to receive anything of value, or to execute anything meritorious, will be cut off.

The third sign is made by extending the right arm in front with the hand clenched except the thumb and two fingers. It indicates the method of receiving wages, a sign of positive virility.

The key-stone which the builders reject is neither oblong nor square, but is composed of both straight and curved--masculine and feminine--lines. It is taken successively by the candidates to the three Overseers, who not its singular beauty and form, but finally reject it because it has not the mark of any craft upon it. It was formed by Hiram Abiff--the divine--soul to be the key-stone of the Temple; but upon his death was lost, and when later rediscovered and presented to the Overseers it was not recognized, but was cast out among the rubbish. It has the mark of no particular sign or planet upon it, because it belongs to all souls, and each must be found worthy before he can place his signature upon it. In its highest aspect it is the union of soul-mates by virtue of which they are enabled to receive the wages of immortality. On all planes the key-stone refers to proper union. The knowledge of this has for ages been lost to mankind, and now rediscovered, is in danger of being rejected by the Overseers--that is, by the occultists, mystics, and spiritualists--as was the case in the past. The penetration of Uranus, the psychic impressions of Neptune, and such little inspiration as filters through from the Lost Orb, seem inadequate, at times, to enable mankind to comprehend the exact nature of this invaluable key-stone to the arch of a happy and successful human life.

But before the temple is completed a search is made by the Craft for the missing key-stone; for the Temple can not be finished without it. It is found amid the rubbish and brought to the

Master, who reminds the Overseers, and reads the following passage from the Scripture, which clearly designates its nature: "To him that overcometh will I get to eat of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving him that receiveth it." That is, by united regeneration man becomes renewed, or given a new name, even as by soul union man becomes man no longer, but an angel.

The key-stone is said to be 4 x 6 inches dimensions, representing 24 hours, or the circumstance of united night and day. About its circumference is a circle of 8 letters, given as H-T-W-S-S-T-K-S, the initials of Hiram Tyrian, Widow's Son, sent to King Solomon. This refers to the return of the divine soul to its source, and may be rendered--He That was Slain Soars To Kindred Spirit. In humanity it also refers to regeneration supplanting generation.

Within this circle of letters every Mark Mason must place his own private mark, which of course, is his planetary signature. Thus the 8 letters together with the private mark, become the symbols of the 9 planets that circle the heavens daily. The ninth planet, or mark, is the ruler of the birth-chart.

This key-stone, as applied to natal astrology, is thus seen to be the diurnal motion of the earth, during which the 9 planets all rise and set. One such diurnal rotation measures out to man the astral energies received from the planets that will be released during one year of life. This true measure of planetary energies as influencing the time when the various events of life take place was for ages lost. It was recently recovered in part in the Progressed Horoscope System; but has never been lost to The Brotherhood of Light; and has now been fully presented as the Hermetic System of Directing. Most of the leading astrologers of the world have abandoned other systems in favor of the method of predicting corresponding to the Masonic Keystone.

At the building of the Temple it was the custom of the craft to assemble at the sixth hour of the sixth day of the week to receive their wages. The members of the lodge, therefore, march two and two to the window where they are paid. As the sixth day is Friday, ruled by Venus, and the sixth planetary hour of Friday is the hour of Mars, they typify these two planets, corresponding to the astral body and animal soul of man. The attraction of these two planets for one another is greater than that between other planets, and it is in the astral world while man possesses an astral body and an animal soul that he receives the reward of his deeds upon earth. The wages are paid by the Senior Warden, or divine soul, who gives each worthy craft a penny. When the candidate puts his hand through the lattice window, it is held fast and the order given to cut it off. This signifies that the soul may incur the penalty of being held captive in the astral world by not knowing how to receive wages, not being able to raise the vibrations of Venus and Mars to the spiritual plane, as typified by the circular con. The hand being cut off symbolizes that the result is a loss of executive power.

The pass grip is made by grasping the fingers as though to assist another, and refers to the assistance given to each other by the workmen as they climbed the steep banks of the river Joppa when bringing timber from Lebanon. It symbolizes the mutual assistance that may be given in reaching the astral plane--Joppa-Joppa, therefore, is the pass-word.

The true grip is made by passing from the pass-grip to the Mark Master's grip, which is given by locking the little fingers of the right hand, turning the backs of the hands together and touching the thumbs. It is called Siroc, or Mark Well; symbolizing that the lower passions and desires have all been conquered and that the spiritual bodies unite in a mutual use of the will. The little finger is ruled by Mercury, emblem of the spiritual body, and the thumbs signify will. The neophyte should Mark Well, therefore, that as he climbs the height

of occultism all passion will have gradually to be overcome to enable the soul to direct its will without the aid of passionate excitement.

The candidate is received into the Mark Master degree upon the edge of the indenting chisel. This represents vivid formulation of the object to be attained and the constant application of the will to that attainment. He is finally instructed how to receive his wages, and receives a penny. At this the others murmur and throw their coins upon the floor, protesting that one inexperienced should not receive the same wages as an accomplished workman. But the justice of so paying is supported by a passage of scripture, and the craft are at last satisfied. Thus in life some must toil long and laboriously to become worthy of receiving a spiritual reward, while others make attainment almost immediately which apparently is an injustice. But time and opportunity, in the course of divine providence, are meted out to all, and only the foolish question divine justice.

A brother in asking a favor pledges his Mark, and so resembles Hiram Abiff, the divine soul, who seeks sustenance from Solomon--the ego--in order to accomplish destiny. The divine soul receives succor only as it pledges its immortal nature to work in harmony with the universal will. It is symbolized by the Moon seeking the beneficence of the sun's rays. For a similar reason, a brother receiving a pledge and granting a favor, is like King Solomon, who was renounced for his beneficence. He resembles the sun which sheds its rays upon the moon, and he is like the ego which sustains and inspires the soul.

Past Master Degree

A Master Mason can not preside over a Master Mason Lodge until he has taken the Past Master degree. It has to do with man's intellectual and religious qualifications, and much light is shed upon it by the Fifth Major Arcanum of the Tarot, to which it corresponds. This Arcanum, ruled by the planet Jupiter, represents the hierophant, prince of occult science, who by his knowledge and goodness is enabled to exercise authority and command obedience. Man rules over the four elements of nature by virtue of his intellect. This is expressed by the number five.

The Past Master Lodge is opened by the same officers, and the lodge room is the same, as in the E.A. degree. It typifies man in his normal physical state. The only difference is that they all wear hats. This symbolizes their knowledge concerning union; for the head in the hat astrologically represents the sun and moon conjoined.

The step is made by placing the heel of the right foot against the toe of the left to form a right angle. It symbolizes mental union. The first sign is made by placing the thumb of the clenched right hand to the lips, and means, the Will to keep Silent regarding knowledge that would prove dangerous to others. The due-guard is made by drawing the right hand from the left side of the neck down diagonally across the breast. It signifies the transference of negative affections into positive aspirations.

The grip of a Past Master is made by first taking the Lion's grip, and then as they say, "from grip to span", slipping right hands so as to catch each other by the wrist, grasping each other by the right elbow with the left hand. It refers to the interplay of forces between those who have lived together a spiritual life and understand the inner laws.

The chief feature of this degree is the abdication of the Master in favor of the candidate. The candidate attempts to conduct the Lodge, but is made the target of witty remarks, the Lodge breaking up in confusion. It is meant to teach the folly of attempting prematurely to control the inhabitants of the astral realm. The elementals that the neophyte attempts to force into his service will turn and rend him unless he has undergone the necessary preparatory

training.

Most Excellent Master

"When the Temple of Jerusalem was finished, those who had proved themselves worthy by their virtue, skill and fidelity, were installed as Most Excellent Masters". This degree is founded upon the Sixth Major Arcanum of the Tarot, ruled by Venus, and pictured as Temptation. The degree represents the trials surmounted, and indicated by the significance of the Scripture read by the Master: "He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor swore deceitfully. He shall receive the blessings from the Lord." etc.

In opening the Lodge the brethren gather round altar and kneel on the left knee with their arms crossed and holdings hands so that each gives his right hand brother his left hand, and his left hand brother his right hand. When the scriptural reading is over they lift their hands up and down six times while the Master counts-- "One, Two, Three; One, Two Three". This is called balancing, and refers to the wavering of the soul between good and evil, and to the extreme tendencies that produce disastrous reactions. This also signifies the sexes in antagonism, as well as loss of equilibrium. The crossed arms represent inversion, but more particularly the cross-roads where the neophyte must decide whether he will follow the path of black magic or the path of magic that is white.

After balancing, the brethren lift their hands, no free, above their heads rolling up their eyes in an attitude of astonishment. This indicates that they have been confronted by temptation. They turn to the right extending their arms, afterwards permitting them to fall nerveless at their sides. It indicates they have yielded to temptation. This sign is said to represent the Queen of Sheba on first viewing Solomon's Temple. It really indicates that man progresses by alternately yielding to and struggling with his animal desires, and that not without repeated effort is the final victory won.

The candidate is received into this degree upon the key-stone, or as applied to man, the fundamentals of sex. The pass-word is Raboni, signifying, to overcome. The sign is made by placing the two hands, one on each breast, the fingers meeting at the 5. center, and jerking them apart violently. It refers to the antagonism that arises between man and woman, and to triumph over temptation of a sexual nature by the aid of the aspirations. The grip is given by grasping the other's hand and pressing with the thumb the base of the third finger where it joins the hand. This is the Sun Finger of palmistry, and presides over worldly honors. The grip signifies the Will to resist the temptation to use psychic powers for temporal advantage. As the candidate receives the grip the Master places the inside of his right foot inside the candidate's right foot and whispers the word, Raboni. This symbolizes that the candidate must understand the necessity for resisting temptation.

Next, an arch is brought out supported by two pillars, Jachin and Boaz, each about five feet high. It consists of ten blocks, five on either side, with a mortice between for the reception of the key-stone. The key-stone, symbol of union, is placed into the arch between the five blocks representing man, and the five symbolizing woman, and is driven down by six raps of the gavel, indicating the use of the Will in overcoming the temptation to abuse the sacred function denoted by the key-stone.

The brethren then march around and hang their jewels, sashes, aprons, etc., on the arch to denote their willingness to make sacrifices that the marriage relation may be perfect. The ark, which has been carried around by four brethren, is then brought forward and placed on the altar and a pot of incense is placed on the ark. The symbol of the ark, as well as that of incense, has already been explained, and the four brethren carrying it typify the four

quadrants of the heavens, and thus represent a cycle of time in which sought for results are realized.

In closing the Most Excellent Master Lodge, all kneel around the altar while the Master reads out of the Bible, then they balance six times, arise and balance six more, and give the signs form this degree downward to indicate complete mastery of the knowledge received in the past, and that they have finally overcome all indecision, and have surmounted all temptation by obedience to the Law.

Royal Master.

This degree corresponds to the sign Capricorn, and to the Eighth Major Arcanum of the Tarot, the significance of which is Justice and Equilibrium.

At the building of the Temple, King Solomon, Hiram King of Tyre, and Hiram Abiff decided to award the most skillful and faithful of the Master Masons by imparting to them the Omnific Word. But they took a solemn oath not to impart the Word until the completion of the Temple, and then only when all three were present . As this Omnific word is the immortal union soul-mates, it is at once apparent that it can only be imparted in the presence of the ego, divine soul, and spiritual body; for if the divine soul, corresponding to Hiram Abiff, be slain, its union with its mate is impossible. Furthermore, it can only be imparted at the completion of the Temple; for man must have completed the construction of his spiritual body before this permanent union can take place.

The candidate impersonates Adoniram, a worthy Master, who symbolizes the twin soul of Hiram Abiff. As Hiram is leaving his Sanctuary he is accosted by Adoniram who asks him at what time he shall receive the Omnific Word. Hiram answers: "My worthy friend, it is uncertain when, or whether you will ever receive it at all; for the Omnific Word can not be given until the Temple is completed, and then only by the free consent of the three Grand Masters". Adoniram then asks how he can expect to receive it if one of the three should be removed by death. Hiram answers by tapping the floor three times with his foot, saying: "When I die, they will bury it there." Thus is imparted the knowledge that in case one of the twin souls sins against his immortal nature and sinks into the night of dissolution of the eighth orb, it will be long ere the other received the Word. Yet all things being possible in the accomplishment of divine justice, a new monad is budded to take the place of the prodigal, and is sent on its pilgrimage through the three planes alluded to by the taps on the floor. Thus the word is buried between the three planes, but will be recovered at the end of the new monad's cycle of involution and evolution. Justice will finally be meted out unto all.

The Master, representing Hiram Abiff, tapping the floor three times asks the candidate; "Do you know about this". The candidate replies, referring to the Omnific 6. Word of soul union, " I now something about it". He is then asked what he knows about it, and replies that he knows something of the beginning of it, at the same time tapping the floor three times with his toe. That is, as impersonating one of the twin souls, he knows they were together at the beginning of the cyclic pilgrimage. Asked what was the beginning the answers that it is Alpha, and that the end is Omega. And truly the separation of the twin souls is the beginning of their career, and the reunion is the end of the cycle in which manhood is attained. The next cycle is that of the angel.

Separation and reunion close the great orbit of the Cycle of Necessity. Reunion is the tree of life, the reward of the faithful, as indicated by the Master reading from the Bible the following: "And behold, I come quickly ; and my reward is with me to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have a right to the

tree of life, and may enter in at the gate of the city".

The grip of this degree is given by each taking his left wrist with his right hand, and his left hand taking hold of the other's right wrist, forming a square seat. It typifies inertia and stability resulting from forces in equilibrium. The Word is given by letting the left hand fall to the side, and placing the right toe to The other's right heel, making a triangle, saying, "Alas, poor Hiram!" This indicates Dissolution, and refers to the disintegration of the wicked. The feet forming the triangle refers to understanding that the three parts of man's spiritual being must be present before union of soul mates is possible. The due-guard is made by placing the fore finger of the right hand to the lips. It enjoins silence concerning such sacred things in the presence of the profane.

Select Master 9.

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.

Adeptship is naturally divided into separate grades. There are nine states of wisdom recognized as belonging to adepts in different stages of progress, the tenth being the transition to an unknown sphere of activity. There are three grades each on the Natural, the Spiritual, and the Celestial, plane of life.

The natural plane includes the physical and the astral; worlds. Adepts of the Three grades of this plane exercise their powers upon the plane of matter, in the zone of elementals, and upon the currents of energy of the astral world. Their powers are largely within the boundary of magical phenomena upon the earth.

The spiritual adepts are those of the natural plane who have been translated to the realms of spiritual life. Those of the three grades of this plane exercise their functions in the astral world as well as in the spiritual realms occupied by those of disembodied humanity who have passed through the second death. They become the Masters of adepts upon the natural plane.

The three grades of celestial adeptship pertain to the higher realms of purified souls where man is no longer; for dual souls in the highest spiritual state have become united as an angel. Adepts of these grades are the Masters of those yet on the spiritual plane.

From the most interior grade, such truth as can be utilized is passed down through the adepts of the outer grades to humanity at large. Members of the highest grade are the repositories of the most recondite secrets of nature, and occupy the sanctum sanctorum of the Macrocosmic Temple.

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

Correspondence, 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 horoscopes 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 zealousness 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. That is 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 workmen 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 danger, and that when found worthy he will be admitted to the inner secrets. Should he, however, stumble unwittingly upon esoteric 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.

Super Excellent Master. 10.

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

The degree centers around Zedekiah, the late king of Israel, who is suddenly set upon with innumerable forces by Nebuchadnezzar. They first take the city, and 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 brass 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 darkness, made their captive, and carried into lower 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.

Heroine of Jerico. 11.

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 replies 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.

Secret Monitor. 12.

This trading degree is founded upon the Twelfth Major Arcanum of the Tarot, called the Hanged Man, corresponding to the sign Pisces, ruling universal brotherhood as well as intrigues and secret organizations.

The history of this degree refers to the brotherly love existing between Jonathon and David in the time of Saul. By means of arrows, symbolical of evil news, Jonathon warned David to flee the wrath of Saul, or Saturn. David represents the sun, and Jonathon represents Jupiter,

the co-ruler of Pisces and the ruler of Sagittarius the zodiacal sign of the arrows, which adjoining the sign Capricorn, ruled by Saturn, or Saul.

The sign of this degree are made secretly to assist each other in financial transactions. Yet to use psychic warnings from the invisible brethren for material advantages over our fellowmen is contrary to occult law, and is apt to be punished with the arrows of affliction. Those who proclaim the Piscean doctrine of universal brotherhood should be willing to make the necessary sacrifices to practice their doctrines. Failing to do so the penalty of expiation will fall as indicated by the due guard, which is made by assuming the attitude of one who shoots an arrow. It is the symbol of vengeance.

The sign of approbation to buy, or proceed, given by holding up one finger, signifies that in unity there is strength. The symbol of admonition to desist is made by holding up two fingers. It refers to the struggle of conflicting forces.

The Brotherhood of Light
Box 1525, Los Angeles, Calif.
Serial No. 14, Branch Letter -- I
Course IV. Branch of Science -- Ancient Masonry
Part IX. Mark Master, etc.

Examination Questions

1. Why is the Key-stone 4 X 6 inches dimensions?
2. What is symbolized by the abdication of the Master in favor of the candidate in the Past Master degree?
3. Why do the craft receive their wages at the Sixth hour of the Sixth day of the week?
4. What does the Key-stone symbolize in human life?
5. Why are ten officers usually present in opening a Mark Master degree?
6. What is symbolized by assuming the attitude of shooting an arrow?
7. What is symbolized by Zedekiah being captured, his thumbs cut off, his eyes put out, and his body bound in fetters of brass?
8. What is the range of effort of Adepts belonging to each of the Great Planes?
9. What is symbolized by the ten blocks of the arch in the Most Excellent Master degree?
10. What is symbolized by the edge of the indenting chisel?
11. What do the letters: H-T-W-S-S-T-K-S mean?
12. What do the Junior Overseer and Senior Overseer represent, and why are they placed in the South and West respectively?
13. Why are the first four the most important degrees of Masonry?
14. What is the wall of the city where live the Heroine of Jerico, and who were the two spies

she helped?

15. What is symbolized by the triangular tables arranged in a row, at each corner a lighted candle, and in the center of each table a triangular plate of gold?

16. What is meant in the Royal Master degree by Hiram Abiff answering Adoniram about the Omnific Word; "When I die they will bury it there".

17. What is symbolized by the balancing in the Most Excellent Master degree?

18. What is the Keystone as applied to astrology?

19. What is signified by the sign of receiving wages?

20. What is meant in the Royal Master degree by stating the beginning of the matter is Alpha and the end Omega?

21. What is symbolized by the Omnific Word and why can it only be imparted when all three Masters are present?

22. What is the private mark of a Master Mason?

23. What is symbolized by the Heave-Over?

24. Why do Past Masters all wear hats in the Lodge room?

25. What is the ancient teaching regarding the method by which a soul may be attracted which when born as a child will prove a blessing to the human race?

26. In what manner does natal astrology indicate that both marriage and children are usually a decided advantage?