

Ancient Masonry Historical Degrees

by C.C. Zain, Elbert Benjamine September 1917 September 1927

Issued under the auspices of The Brotherhood of Light.
Box 1525, Los Angeles, Calif. September 1917 September 1927
Ancient Masonry
Serial No. 18 Course IV.
Part XIII. Historical Degrees
by C. C. Zain

Age of a Prince of Jerusalem

Zerubbabel, while rebuilding the Temple, was interrupted by the Samaritans who finally forced him abandon the work. He thereupon sent an embassy to Darius--representing the ruler of the new winter sign entered by the sun--who issued orders prohibiting all persons from interfering with the work of construction on pain of death on the cross of Aries. The lodge consists of two apartments connected by a hall. The apartment in the west represents the western signs of the zodiac and is hung with yellow, the color sacred to Venus who rules Libra, the sign of the western equinox where Zerubbabel now holds court. The eastern apartment where the cabinet of Darius is situated represents the eastern equinox of Aries; for Aries is the leader of the eastern zodiacal signs. The hall connecting the two zodiacal divisions is the solstitial colure.

The jewel of the order exemplifies the ritual accurately. It is a golden medal, or zodiacal circle. On one side is a hand holding a balance, symbolizing the human soul involving through Libra into the winter of matter, man entering into generate union, and five planets descending into the winter signs through the door of the autumnal equinox. On the other side is a two edged sword with five stars around its blade and over it the letters D.Z. The sword symbolizes the vernal equinox. The five stars represent man evolving into spiritual summer, man entering into regenerate union, and the five planets emerging from the winter signs, victoriously crossing the vernal equinox of spring . D.Z. are the initials of Darius and Zerubbabel, and also have an esoteric significance. Thus the Hebrew letter Z means sword and symbolizes victory. The soul enters matter through Libra, the door to realization, and emerges victorious by means of the sword of intelligence, Aries. Man Enters generation by D, corresponding to the sex sign Scorpio, to realize sensation, but frees himself from bondage by means of regeneration.

The candidate with four knights--the five symbolizing man--journey from the court of Zerubbabel in Libra to the cabinet of Darius in Aries, and back to Libra, completely circling the zodiac. Each time they pass through the hall they are attacked by armed ruffians, symbolizing the struggle of the solar forces to become repolarized at the solstitial points of Capricorn and Cancer. The pass-word is Tabeth, which is a Hebrew symbol for Capricorn, the point where the soul descends no lower and becomes incarnated in the mineral. The sacred word is Adar, Hebrew symbol of Pisces, the zodiacal sign in which thanks should be given for the completion of the zodiacal Temple. The age of a Prince of Jerusalem is said to be five time fifteen. Fifteen signifies the passage of the twelve signs over the three visible angles, or

one diurnal rotation of the earth, which according to the Hermetic System of Astrology measures out to man the events of one year of life. The fourth gate to the temple-referring to the Nadir which is invisible--mythology informs us was always closed. This explains why there were but three assassins. Five times fifteen also points Mystically to the sacred cycle of the soul, called Naronia, which governs the expansion and contraction of the psychic forces and entities within the constitution of man. The age of a Prince of Jerusalem signifies that the candidate has observed the Naronic cycles of soul development--as explained in lesson No. 93--from month to month and from year to year. Serial No. 18 Course IV.

Knights of East and West

This degree is based upon a vision of St. John as given in the Apocalypse. The book of seven seals is the septenary law of nature. The One Universal Principle is refracted from seven sub-centers about the Spiritual Sun, partaking of the quality of each medium through which it passes. As a definite portion of the divine essence under the dominion of one of the planetary angels it bears the seal and is governed by the laws relating to one planet. The twenty-four elders are the twenty-four hours, and symbolizes these who have endured through great time. The seven lamps are the seven planetary angels. The four beasts, one with a head like a lion, one like a calf, one like a man, and one like an eagle, are the lords of the zodiacal quadrants; and their many eyes looking within are the stars of these quadrants which look within from the circumference of the constellations. Each beast has six wings and rests not day and night, meaning that due to the earth's diurnal rotation each quadrant flies by in six hours.

The candidate bares his arms and the wardens lance them so as to procure blood on a napkin to represent those who have come out of great tribulation and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. The blood of the lamb means the spiritual life of regeneration by which the body is completely purified. The Master then opens the seals of the great book. Opening the first he takes there from a quiver of arrows and a crown. It represents Sagittarius and the planetary seal of Jupiter. Opening the second seal he takes out a sword, signifying the sign Aries and the seal of Mars. Opening the third seal he takes out a balance, representing Libra and the seal of Venus. Opening the fourth seal he removes a skull, indicating the pale horse death, the sign Capricorn and the seal of Saturn. Opening the fifth seal he finds a cloth stained with blood, symbolizing the sign Virgo and the seal of Mercury. As the sixth seal is opened the sun is darkened and the Moon is stained with blood to indicated the sign Cancer and the seal of the Moon. Opening the seventh seal he removes incense, symbolizing Leo, the house of love, and also seven trumpets to show planetary dominion, and thus the seal of the Sun. The four winds signify the aspirations of those born in each zodiacal quadrant, and the precessional cycle which governs the spiritual and mental influx received by men during different stages of evolution.

Applying the book of seven seals to racial cycles there is a tradition that each period of evolution evolves seven great rounds of humanity and that each round contains seven root races of immortal beings. Seven root races, or one planetary family of immortal men would thus be evolved in seven polar days of 2,592,000 years each. Each planetary family, sealed under the law of its planetary angel, corresponds to one of the seven trumpets which heralds its resurrection. The successive sounding of the seven trumpets symbolizes the resurrection of the seven planetary families of immortal beings each containing seven root races, evolved during 127,008,000 years, or forty-nine polar days. The following cycle, the

fiftieth, would be the Jubilee, during which the purified souls of all seven planetary families would enter nirvana together and become in turn the originators and guardians of fresh rounds of humanity. This is symbolized by all seven trumpets sounding together. It is also said to mean that all true Masons having been purified will be conducted to a throne at the right hand of Deity; that is, become Angelic Guardians, or Dhyana Chohans .

The draft on the floor, a heptagon in a circle, over the angles of which are placed letters, represents the seven planetary angels surrounded by the zodiac. The six elevated canopies in the north and the six in the south are the summer and the winter zodiacal signs, eleven of which are occupied by Venerable Ancients who are the ascended souls of those belonging to the state of life and degree of emanation of each sign. The vacant seat is that from which Judas, the sign Scorpio, fell, later to be occupied by the elect, or Eagle. The man in the center of the draft is the macrocosmic man of the kabala.

Knight of Rose Croix

This degree is also called Sovereign Prince of Rose Croix de Harodin and Knight of the Eagle and Pelican. There was once a tradition that the pelican feeds its young with its own blood, hence it has been used as a symbol of sacrifices. The rose is the ancient emblem of spring. Upon the cross it signifies the resurrection of the Sun God after death on the autumnal cross, also signifies man regenerated. The eagle is sex, or Scorpio, spiritualized. The special emblem of this degree is a pelican feeding her seven young, on one side of her a rose and on the other side a sprig of cassia above her a radiant cross upon which climbs a rose. The pelican feeding her young symbolizes the sacrifice of material aims to spiritual ideals. Each planet has its evil side as well as a spiritual quality. The regeneration of all through sacrifice is indicated by the seven young pelicans partaking of blood, or spiritual sustenance, from their mother, who represents the universal mother Isis. The rose on the right signifies the rejuvenating effect of partaking of spiritual nourishment; the cassia on the left signifies immortality gained; and the radiant rosy cross above is the symbol of the conscious translation to spiritual realms of those who have sacrificed all their lower nature to the higher.

The lodge has three apartments. The first represents Calvary, or the autumn of life. It is lighted with thirty-three candles to indicate full experience under the twelve zodiacal signs, and ten planets through the kingdoms of universal life, completing the cycle of necessity. The thirty third candle signifies transition to a new cycle. Eleven lights are placed on each of three pillars six feet high. The number of eleven (see Course VI) signifies force. It is the force of the sanctified man on all three planes, corresponding to the sun at the three visible angles, culminating six hours after rising, setting six hours after culminating, and rising six hours after passing the nadir, or material point, or plane below man. The second apartment represents Christ ascending into heaven, and the third apartment represents hell, symbolizing the relative condition after death of the sanctified and the evil man.

The purpose of this assembly is said to be the recovery of the Lost Word. The means of recovery is indicated by the candidate presenting to each of the brethren one pair of men's gloves and one pair of women's gloves and two sticks of sealing wax, symbolizing united work. The result is referred to as, --The moment when the word was recovered; when the cubic stone was changed into a mysterious rose, when the falling star appeared in all its splendor; when our altars resumed their ordinary form; when the true light dispelled darkness, and the new law became

visible in all our works". The cubic stone is physical gratification, which when the Lost Word, is found is transmuted into the rose of spiritual union, revealing the pole star, Truth; illuminating all mysteries, causing oblation to be made to the soul rather than to the senses, and work to be performed harmonious with the new laws thus discovered.

Grand Pontiff

The New Jerusalem as seen by St. John is the foundation of this degree. It is square with twelve gates; and in the midst a tree bearing twelve kinds of fruit. Above the earth, it descends upon the old Jerusalem crushing a three-headed hydra chained on the ruins. The New Jerusalem is the celestial heavens bounded by the twelve zodiacal constellations, or gates. The tree is that of immortal life and the twelve fruits that it yields are the immortal souls of those born under each sign through which the sun passes by precession of the equinoxes. The moon's nodes are known astronomically as the dragon's head and tail. The dragon is the serpentine cycle of the moon; corresponding to the cycle of the soul. The dragon has three heads, which symbolizes that the cycle of necessity embraces three planes. The New Jerusalem or angelic realm, is attained only after the soul has successfully completed this cycle, leaving the attractions of each realm conquered and chained to the plain of their origin. The mountain at one side of the city indicates that the path to celestial realms lies along the summit of the highest type of physical development and union.

Grand Master of All symbolic Lodges

The brethren in this degree wear blue and yellow scarfs crossed in front and rear, indicating the union of wisdom with love. The wardens wear a jewel suspended from the yellow scarf of love. It is a triangular golden plate with the sword on one side and the letter R on the other. The Hebrew R symbolizes ascension. The jewel signifies the secret rejuvenation of the soul through the power of love. The same thought is more specifically expressed in the closing lecture : "My Brother, enter into the cave of Silol, work with Grand Rofdam, measure your steps to the sun, and then the great black eagle will cover you with its wings, to the end of what you desire, by the help of the most sublime Princes Grand Commanders." The cave of Silol is union, Rofdam is vibration, the sun refers to the virile power generated, and the eagle is the spiritual plane contacted, by the help of whose denizens will be attained that which is desired.

Chief of the Tabernacle

This degree is based upon the establishment of the Jewish Order of Priesthood, and their work of offering sacrifices. There are two side altars, one on the right in front of a representation of the sun, for sacrifices; and on the left in front of transparency of the moon, for incense. Man makes oblation of his animal nature to his ego, and exerts his executive power to direct his energies to noble purpose. To his soul he offers the sweet incense of aspiration and loving thought. Both execution and reception are necessary to propitiate his divine nature. The brethren, representing Levites, wear white robes, symbols of purity. Over each robe is a scarlet sash trimmed with gold fringe, and at the bottom on the right hip is a black rosette from which hangs a golden censor. The black rosette symbolizes death on the physical plane, and the scarlet sash symbolizes virile energies used to build up the spiritual body, as signified by the censor. On the apron is pictured a golden chandelier with seven branches, and on the flap is a violet colored myrtle. The

chandelier symbolizes the seven active principles of nature which are consciously utilized by the Magus. Violet is the color sacred to Mercury. Myrtle is evergreen, and emits a sweet smelling odor. The violet myrtle symbolizes the intelligent use of the creative principle which, typified by the flap, is directed to the construction of the spiritual body--ruled by Mercury--and to the attainment of immortality as indicated by the evergreen.

Prince of the Tabernacle

The main apartment in this degree is made perfectly circular to represent the zodiac. In the middle is a chandelier with seven branches, each branch having seven lights. There is also a round table on which is a cluster of inflamed hearts and some incense. The apartment symbolizes the zodiac as the cycle of life, and the seven branches of the chandelier represent the septenary of planetary influence affecting the physical under which the neophyte struggles. The other planets of the chain affect man solely through his mental and astral nature., thus operating indirectly to produce physical conditions and events. The forty-nine lights symbolize seven branches of astrology, seven branches of alchemy, seven branches of magic, man's septenary constitution, seven physical senses, seven psychic senses, and seven states of consciousness; all of which must be mastered before reaching adeptship. The inflamed heart symbolize the burning desire of the aspirant to learn the great truths concerning life and immortality, and the devotion to the work given him by his Master to perform on the plane where he commonly functions. The incense symbolizes the thoughts and aspirations ascending to higher worlds. The candidate approaches the altar by six equal steps and one long one. The long seventh step symbolizes that in evolution when the six states below man from mineral up are passed, and the seventh state--the state of manhood--is reached there is offered the possibility of encompassing much in one life and gaining heaven, at it were, in a single bound.

Knight of the Brazen Serpent

This degree is founded upon the history of the brazen serpent set up by Moses that those bitten by fiery serpents might look thereon and live, Fiery serpents symbolize impure desires. The brazen serpent entwined on a T. or on a phallic Tau, symbolizes wisdom of good and evil gained through experience with generation. Moses healed his people of their licentiousness by teaching them the truths concerning generation. And it is of equal importance today that proper generation should be understood. No one can truly be regenerate until he has first mastered the mysteries of generation. Those who isolate themselves from the other sex in the hope of attaining regeneration without passing through the intermediate grade of generation only deceive themselves, and become bitten by the fiery serpents that infest the astral regions and prey upon the imagination of celibates.

The lodge is opened at one past meridian, the time when the sun is transiting the house in the horoscope ruling instruction and philosophy. The nature of the instruction is disclosed by the lodge being closed at four past meridian, the sun just having completed its daily journey through the house of death, ruled by Scorpio, the sign of sex. The serpent is of brass, a union of positive and negative metals; and on the flap of the apron is the Hebrew feminine letter He, indicating the importance of both man and woman to produce the serpentine spiral called life.

Prince of Mercy

The Bible speaks of three sacred covenants: one with Abraham by circumcision, one with the Israelites in the wilderness through the intercession of Moses, and one with mankind through the resurrection of the Christ. These are the acts of mercy upon which the degree is founded. Circumcision is a rite symbolizing the passage of the sun completely around the zodiac, and is performed to commemorate his virile strength in triumphing over the forces of evil. Abraham means the father of a multitude, and the first covenant signifies the law of physical union as applied merely to multiplication of the species. Israel means one who wrestles with the Lord, and the second covenant indicates the struggle to subjugate the laws of multiplication to the law of generation as taught by Moses; for generation is not confined to the production of physical offspring. The third covenant made through the resurrection of the mystical Christos after crucifixion on the material cross refers to the laws of regeneration.

The jewel is a golden equilateral triangle, upon which is a hearth with the Hebrew He in the center. It symbolizes the receptive quality engendered by the affections resulting in illumination. A Special emblem of the order is an arrow, the feather on one side green, on the other side red, the shaft white, and the point gold. It symbolizes the soul penetrating all mysteries by means of its spiritual illumination supported by purity and guided by the dual attributes of execution and reception.

Sovereign Commander of the Temple

This is a Chivalric Degree. The Wardens wear the order of the degree about their necks. It consists of a white ribbon edged with red, symbolizing purity and energy; having embroidered on it four Teutonic crosses, each indicating one cycle of the sun past the solstices, and all symbolizing complete realization -- the passage through the three planes of the cycle of necessity, after the cycle of involution. From the ribbon hangs a golden triangle upon which is engraved the Tetragrammaton, or sacred name of Deity, meaning that the wearer has complied with the requisites of the divine law on the three evolutionary planes. On the flap of the apron worn by the brethren is a cross encircle with a laurel wreath, signifying victory over death; and on the apron is a key, indicating that the region where the apron is worn is the key to higher life and attainment.

Knights of the Sun

This degree is said to be the key of historical and philosophical Masonry. It is really the key to the history of the world and the philosophy of its inhabitants. Father Adam is stationed in the east to symbolize primitive man, and Brother Truth in the west to represent intellectual man. They signify the alpha and omega of the human race. The lodge is lighted by a sun in the south. There are seven officers called Zaphriel, Zebriel, Camiel, Uriel, Michael, Zaphael, and Gabriel. These are ancient names for the seven planetary angels, who after God actuate the universe. The deific radiance of Life, Light, and Love from the spiritual sun is refracted from these seven sub-centers, and constitute the source of all life, love, energy, and intelligence manifest on earth. This one universal principle received from the sun enables man to grasp truth, and this truth embraces the law of cycles. The sun's cycles are the key to history and philosophy; for by calculating his precession at the rate of about 2,160 years through each sign the quality of mental and spiritual force received by humanity at any date can be determine. A definite portion of this sub-solar period is under the rulership of each of the planetary forces named above, and this directs the channels into which the mental and spiritual forces are turned for its term of power--whether for military, artistic, literary, or other purpose. And as the

earth's climatic condition is determined by solar periods it will be seen that the physical environment as well as the intellectual and moral status of the earth's inhabitants at any time past or future can be calculated within narrow limits by a true Knight of the sun. The jewel of the degree is a golden sun with a globe engraved upon it, signifying that the earth owes its existence to the sun and depends upon him for all. The sign is made by placing the hand upon the heart, the thumb forming a square. The answer is to raise the hand with the index finger pointing to heaven. It means that as the heart is the source of will and energy to the body as is the sun the source of all power in the solar system.

Knight of Kadosh

This is a higher aspect of the principle exemplified in Knights Templar work and is also called Knight of the White and Black Eagle. The eagle is the symbol of sex spiritualized, the power that carries the soul to higher spheres. The white eagle is regenerate and spiritualized man, the black eagle represents woman similarly refined and elevated. Five apartments are necessary, the first four typifying the zodiacal quadrants, symbolizing the completion of the cycle of earthly experiences. The fifth represents the spiritual realm to which the adept has been translated. It is hung with red to indicate action and energy. In the east is a throne over which is a crowned double-headed eagle with wings outspread, holding in its talons a two-edged sword. This is the reward awaiting the spiritualized man and woman, the white and black eagles. The two-headed eagle represents the permanent reunion of soul-mates both intelligence occupying one body. The crown symbolizes the natural right to rule of those who have attained this exalted state. The jewel of the order is suspended from the neck of the eagle to indicate the victory won by love. On its breast is an equilateral triangle bearing the letters of the Tetragrammaton meaning that the sovereignty was gained through obedience to divine laws on all three planes.

The candidates during initiation must climb a ladder having two supports and Seven steps. The supports of all initiation are the two pillars, Wisdom and Love. The steps are the seven states from man to angel, the two-headed eagle symbolizing angelhood attained. The crown of human life is the attainment of angelhood through the reunion of the two portions of the ego, the reunion of soul-mates. Human no longer the angel then occupies a throne at the right hand of Deity.

Sublime Prince of the Royal Secret

The lecture of this degree explains "that the mysteries of the Craft are the Mysteries of religion". The special emblem of the degree figures a human being having two heads, one a man's and one a woman's. It stands on the back of a dragon, the dragon crouched on a winged globe. On the globe is traced a trine, a four-sided square and a cross dividing the globe into quadrants. The human being holds in its right hand a compass, and its left a square. In a semi-circle over it are the planets, each sending a ray to a cuirass on the front of which is the word Rebis. This figure reveals man's past, and his future destiny. The globe is the earth, and the dragon represents the cycle of necessity that the soul must ravel. The globe is winged to indicate its motion. The cross marking the quadrants represent the crossing of the solstice and the equinox. At the lower solstice is the letter Z, indicating the victory over matter. At the upper solstice is the letter I, representing the divine fire that exalts the soul above matter. The trine and square on the earth, and the number 3 and 4 accompanying each, symbolize the harmonies and discords through which the soul evolved its septenary constitution and became a microcosm. The feminine

hand holding the square indicates the laws of physical union that were obeyed, and the compass in the masculine hand that spiritual laws also have been complied with. The rays of the seven planets converging on the breast-plate bearing the word Rebis means that they have an influence and perfect correspondence within this being. This figure stands on the dragon, having passed triumphantly through the cycle of necessity, and has a man's head and a woman's head to indicate the two halves of the divine soul permanently united. The whole is enclosed in an oval like an egg to convey the idea that every immortal soul when united to its mate is the germ of a future universe. The lodge is always on the top floor of a building, representing the realm of spirit.

Knight of the Sword

The Knight of the sword is intimately connected with the Prince of Jerusalem, and is founded upon the first journey of Zerubbabel to Persia, during which he obtained from Cyrus, King of Persia, permission to rebuild the Temple and the freedom of Jewish prisoners who had been held captive seventy years. Ten is the number expressing cyclic duration. The seventy years refers to the seven cycles through the seven states of life from mineral up to and including man during which the soul is imprisoned in matter or the astral realm immediately associated with it. Cyrus typifies the material captor, Saturn, the king of the winter zodiacal signs. He is said to have had a dream as follows: "I imagined I saw a ferocious lion about to throw himself upon me and devour me: his appearances terrified me, and I hastily looked for shelter from his fury; but at the moment I saw two predecessors, habited as slaves, beneath a glory, which Masons designate by the name of the Grand Architect of the Universe. I was made to understand two words which I saw issuing from a blazing star. They signified, Liberate the Captives, and I understood that if I did not do this my crown would pass from me to strangers."

The lion symbolizes the creative energy which misused destroys. It thus enslaves the soul to the senses making it a captive of its appetites while on earth, and after death still bound to earth by the magnetic ties of its desires. The creative energy may be used also to free the soul from the senses, even as Leo draws the sun from the domain of Saturn. The blazing star is enlightened man, and the two words that liberate him from bondage to the flesh are Wisdom and Love. The glory spoken of is represented in the lodge by a triangle in which is the ineffable name of Deity. It rests upon a luminous cloud from which an eagle soars, carrying in its beak a banner on which are the words, "Liberate the Captives." It is the eagle of spiritual love freeing the soul and carrying it into brighter spheres than the sub-lunary realms of suffering where it has so long sojourned.

Sovereign Grand Inspector General

The lodge of this degree is painted with skeletons and skull and cross-bones. This symbolizes association with the dead. The room is lighted with eleven candles, the number symbolizing psychic force, and at the north of the pedestal on which rests the Bible is a skeleton holding in its left hand the banner of the Order, and in its right hand a poniard as in the attitude of striking. This signifies that while members of the Supreme Council on the external plane are the physical instruments through which are governed the lodges of any country, the real Masters have passed the borders of physical life yet are still potent to enlighten and protect those who have proved worthy neophytes and to strike down any who attempt to desecrate and profane the sacred mysteries. The jewel of this degree is the thirty-third degree emblem.

This emblem is a two-headed golden eagle, wings outspread, holding a sword in its talons. From the two ends of the sword hangs a belt forming an under arc. Below the outspread wings are thirty-two stars. Above and between the eagle's heads is a golden crown surmounted by a Maltese cross. The upper bar of the cross touches an inverted radiant trine having in its center the number thirty-three. The two-headed eagle symbolizes two intelligences occupying one spiritual body., soul mates permanently reunited in one form on the spiritual plane . An eagle is the symbol of sex in its spiritual aspect, the two-headed eagle thus representing the fusion of two spiritually evolved souls who have obeyed the inner promptings of their sexual natures. In this final Masonic revelation is disclosed the reason that prompted the ancients to commence the symbolic cyclic pilgrimage of the soul in the zodiacal sign Leo; for Leo is the sign of that love that springs into existence as the result of natural affinity between soul-mates. These were differentiated at the same moment and constitute the eternal north and south poles of one deific ego. Leo, the mansion of Sol, well represents the spiritual spheres of the angelic parents; and as the sign ruling the house of love in a natural birth0chart it symbolizes that form of spiritual love resulting from common parentage, state of spiritual life, and degree of emanation. Love is signified by Venus and her signs, on the other hand, may be the result of planetary affinity, mental compatibility, or other causes.

The belt suspended from the sword on which the reunited souls rest is the zodiacal cycle of necessity from which they are now ready to soar, having risen superior to its attractions by means of the intelligent use of the regenerate sword, the vernal transmutation on the cross of Aries. This means is still further exemplified by the words on the belt signifying "To my God's Will is Law". And the result of the adoption of the spiritual life is signified by words above the belt meaning that Order has been established from Chaos. The thirty-two stars under the wings represent the twelve zodiacal signs, ten planets, and ten kingdoms of universal life under whose influences the soul pilgrimaged. These kingdoms involved are: I. Celestial, II Spiritual, III Astral, IV Mineral, in the involutory arc, and V vegetable, VI Animal, VII Human, VIII Astral, IX Spiritual, X Celestial on the evolutionary arc.

The crown above the heads of the eagle symbolizes the agent by which both have become consciously united completing the trinity and conferring upon them the crown of everlasting life. The Maltese cross above the crown indicates the beginning of a new cycle in realms above the spiritual upon which they will now enter which opens up vistas and possibilities undreamed of by man. The ego, as it were, is at the lower solstice of this new cycle, the upper solstice contacting the very presence of the triune God, symbolized by the effulgent trine. Such is the exalted destiny of man. The number thirty-three signifies the cycle of necessity having been completed that the triumphant souls are translated to a new and higher round of life and action. The two three united as thirty-three indicate the union of two souls having had complete experience on all three planes. And by their union their powers are multiplied as greatly as is the case when the two separate threes are joined in the manner indicated.

Conclusion

The degree which we have now considered, including various side degrees of recent origin, are considerably in excess of the thirty-three which constitute Ancient Masonic Initiation. Rather than risk becoming tiresome I have greatly condensed the interpretation of the advanced degrees. I believe, however, that the interpretations given in this series of lessons are extensive enough that the

discerning student will find no difficulty in learning not only significance of any symbol used in the Mysteries of ancient times, but that he will find no difficulty in learning the true significance of the ritual paraphernalia of any established church.

I have shown, I trust, that Ancient Masonry instructs in a mode of life that leads Gradually, through the purification of the thoughts, desires, and actions to greatest efficiency in the interests of society as a whole, and ultimately to the highest spiritual unfoldment. In this ancient teaching I observe no admonitions to make abrupt and revolutionary changes in the mode of life. Rather it is a gradual refinement, little by little, of the whole nature, attuning it to harmonious cooperation with the cosmos.

Because man's sexual nature is such an impelling force in his life, and because it may become, through vitalizing those lofty emotions that alone are unselfish and intense enough to affect spiritual substance, the greatest of all spiritualizing agents, the Ancient Masons have left in their symbolism precise instructions on the use and sublimation of sex. They taught that sex may manifest on any plane, that it is transmutable, and that the aim of every aspirant should be to refine his creative forces to the point where they function in a spiritual way upon the spiritual plane. But they did not teach, as do certain religious fanatics, that physical manifestations of sex in marriage are impure, or that physical expressions of the sexual nature should abruptly be repressed. Their wisdom in regard to this is each year more fully substantiated by the findings of critical scientific men. (From the purely physical standpoint the best exposition of this important subject that I have yet read is: "Sex and the Love Life", by W.J. Fielding.)

These Ancient Masons taught further that in addition to mere physical union in marriage, there is also attainable a regenerate union. This regenerate union consists of a complete rapport between husband and wife in which the finer forces and the astral bodies fuse and blend as one harmonious unity. It is essentially an emotional state, and physical sensations inhibit its expression. Therefore, while physical union need not be completely abandoned in order to experience this regenerate expression, yet because physical unions are correlated to physical sensations the regenerate union may not take place at the same time as physical union. Regeneration, according to the teachings of Ancient Masonry, is something to be brought about gradually through the refinement of the feelings, converting desire into high and unselfish emotions, until finally regenerate union entirely takes the place of physical union.

There is a state of union, a state of cooperation between husband and wife, according to Ancient Masonry, still higher than regenerate union. It is the reunion of soul-mates. That is there is a distinctly physical union, a distinctly astral union, or regenerate union, and a distinctly spiritual union, that may be possible for man and wife to attain while yet living on the physical plane. Except that ignorance is never better than knowledge, this doctrine of soul-mates might better, perhaps, never be mentioned. In the vast majority of lives it is of no practical importance. The knowledge of the soul-mate can not be forced. It is the natural result of reaching a certain state of spiritual development. Until this high degree of spiritual unfoldment is reached positive recognition of the soul-mate is impossible. Yet when this state of spiritual development is reached it brings with it the consciousness of the whereabouts and identity of the soul-mate.

Very few, indeed, have reached this spiritual state. But these less advanced, who have some knowledge of the theory, sometime set out in a determined search for

their mate. Not having sufficient spiritual discrimination the results in usually disastrous; for their determination to find the true mate sets up forces that attract someone whom they imagine must be their other half, but whom, in the majority of instances, they find ultimately to their sorrow is not even a suitable companion. The doctrine of soul-mates is often further abused by being made the excuse for misconduct between people who claim to be affinities; but the original doctrine as propounded by the Ancient Masons was a pure spiritual concept concerning a truly spiritual reunion.

Two things stand for the with exceptional prominence in this study of Ancient Masonry: One is that the best guide to the laws of nature as applied to man is an understanding of the relation between the soul and the stars. The other is that a thorough knowledge of his love nature is essential to anyone who hopes to scale the spiritual heights. Astrology properly understood points the way. When the way is thus clearly shown it takes energy to follow it, and this energy, as the heights are scaled, must progressively become more and more spiritual in quality. It is man's love power that furnishes this energy, which, as it becomes more and more refined, like a golden eagle, lifts the soul higher and higher into the ineffable realms of spiritual splendor.

The Brotherhood of Light
Box 1525, Los Angeles, Calif.
Serial No. 18, Branch Letter -- M
Course IV. Branch of Science -- Ancient Masonry
Part XIII. Historical Degrees.

Examination Questions

1. What is symbolized by a round table on which is a cluster of inflamed hearts?
2. What is symbolized by the radiant rosy cross?
3. What is meant by the successive sounding of seven trumpets as mentioned in the Apocalypse?
4. What are the four beasts mentioned in the Apocalypse?
5. What is symbolized by the court of Zerubbabel?
6. What does the number thirty-three symbolize ?
7. What are two things that stand forth with exceptional importance in Ancient Masonry in regard to understanding the relation of man to nature, and the acquisition of energy to scale the heights?
8. What is symbolized by the White Eagle, and what by the Black Eagle?
9. What is signified by the ability of the brazen serpent to heal?
10. What is the significance of violet myrtle?
11. Explain what is meant by the Jubilee.?

12. Why does each of the four beasts mentioned in the Apocalypse have six wings?
13. What is the Book of Seven Seals, as mentioned in the Apocalypse?
14. What is symbolized by the cabinet of Darius?
15. What is symbolized by the two-headed golden eagle?
16. What is by the ladder of two supports and seven steps?
17. What is symbolized by the rite of circumcision?
18. What is symbolized by the New Jerusalem crushing the three-headed hydra?
19. What is symbolized by the pelican feeding her seven young?
20. What is symbolized by the blood of the lamb?
21. What are the twenty-four elders mentioned in the Apocalypse?
22. What is symbolized by five times fifteen?
23. What is symbolized by the golden crown surmounted by a Maltese Cross above the heads of the golden eagle?
24. What is symbolized by the human being with two heads standing on the back of a dragon crouched on a winged globe?
25. What is symbolized by a golden sun with a globe engraved upon it ?
26. What are the conditions under which regenerate union is possible, and to what extent does physical union assist or inhibit these conditions in marriage?