

Temple Symbolism—Part Two

RETURNING NOW for a vantage point within the Temple Sanctuary, we become aware of the Temple lighting. There are two sources of light within our Temple. There is that spiritual light which seems centered at the Altar, and, to this writer at least, seems brightest at the solstice, equinox, and Holy Night services. Then there is that physical light centered in three areas. At this time we do not consider the lights coming from the north and south banks of windows in the Sanctuary. It follows that, symbolically, each grouping of physical lights also portrays a source of spiritual light. Esoteric literature describes a spiritual lamp that burns in and sheds its light from all holy Altars. It is fueled by the love burning in the hearts of mankind as they worship before them. Symbolizing this spiritual lamp, a physical lamp illuminates the Altar alcove. Consisting of a metal frame and amber glass panes, this eight-sided lamp is suspended from the arch of the west wall, where, as emblematic also of the lamp of the heart, it sheds its golden light on the Altar, the emblem, and all the appointments in the Altar alcove. [For picture, see page 42, *March/April '96 Rays—Ed.*]

A second source of physical light hidden by curtain walls illuminates the twelve wall panels. The third source of physical light is centered in the dome

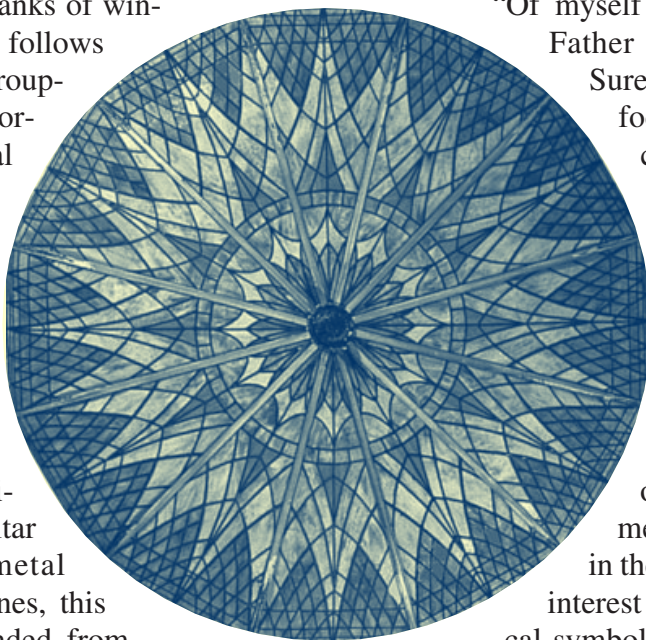
of the Sanctuary and illuminates, in the highest area within the Temple, a great emblem of leaded stained glass set in a metal frame. It has a blue background, as does the emblem of the Fellowship and the emblem found in the Altar canopy. It has a gold center from which radiates gold rays, each in turn, as it were, being absorbed in the all-encompassing blue perimeter. It is as if the gold light of the Christ blends with and becomes one with the blue of the Father. The Christ has said

“Of myself I am nothing— it is the Father who doeth the works.”

Surely this must be a special focus of spiritual force and concentration within our Sanctuary.

Space will not permit a review of the symbolism found in the beautiful windows found on the north and south sides of the Temple, with their color concentrations, nor on the seating arrangements for Probationers within the Sanctuary. It is of passing interest to note that the astrological symbols as found on the bottoms of the center panels of the Temple doors portray the seating schedule by astrological sequence within the

Sanctuary itself. Nor do we have time to fully examine the symbolism found in the lunettes over the organloft under the Pisces panel, or over the doors leading to the antechamber under the Capricorn panel. These beautiful lunettes of painted glass portray a man and child and a mother and



Starburst design in leaded glass Temple dome window.

child, respectively. [See pictures on pages 35 and 36—Ed.]

We have mentioned the three steps of the portico leading to the entranceway of the Temple and to the three steps leading from the floor of the Sanctuary to the Altar. So let us direct our attention to the symbolism as found in the latter. The first step leading to the Altar can be compared to the work of the Student who, in a comparatively short period of two years, completes assigned lessons and is then eligible for Probationership. This step is also short. Its width is equal to its rise or height.

The second step leading to the Altar is very broad and can be compared to the Probationer status. From this step all the work performed by Probationers within the Temple, with but one exception, is performed. All words, with the exception of the Fellowship reading given at the special services held at the New and Full Moons, the solstice, equinox and Holy Night services, are spoken here. This step symbolically refers to the working life of the Probationer. On this broad step are placed several articles of interest to us. On opposite sides of this broad area are found two plants, one on each side. They are emblematic of the life wave ensouling the plant kingdom from which the Probationer obtains the nourishment that sustains physical life and comfort, and to which our life wave owes a great debt of gratitude and service.

There is to our left, as we review this second level, a lectern from which the spoken word at all services is given by the reader. Next to the lectern is a chair—a most remarkable chair. Behind the chair and hanging from the wall section just under the Virgo panel is a full picture of our Savior, the Christ of the Resurrection with His implied message: Follow Me. This is a point for meditation for all Probationers. Are you aware that there are 339 Temple and Healing Services, 26 Moon and four

Equinox and Solstice services, and one Holy Night service, totaling 370 services within the Temple in a year? Symbolically these total to ten, and again we find the perfect number within our Temple, in the fullness of the services held therein.

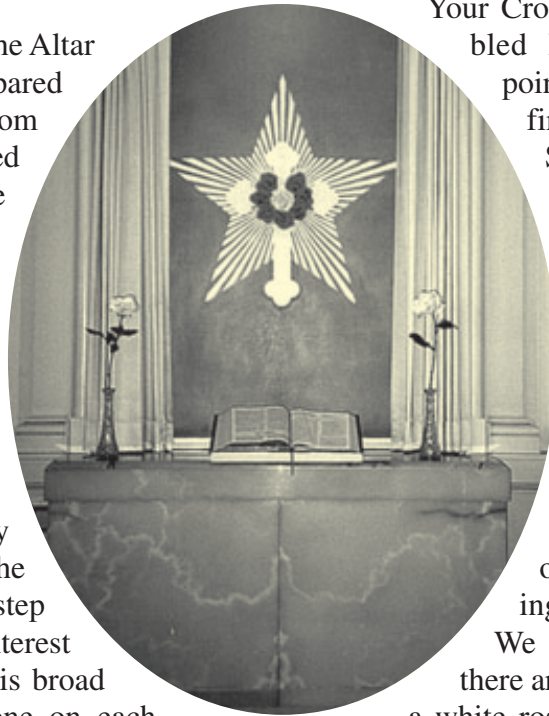
The third step leads directly to the Altar and can be compared to the Disciple's work. From this step the emblem is unveiled and veiled, the Altar is serviced, and at all special services the only words not sounded from the Probationer's step are given here when that mantram of great spiritual invocation of love and power, "May the Roses Bloom Upon

Your Cross," are directed to the assembled Probationers from this holy point. Symbolically then, the short first step equals a step for the Student. It leads to the broad full second step, the working step of the Probationer, the step of service, which in turn leads to the third or Disciple step, the step of Devotion before the Altar and the Emblem of our Fellowship.

At this time may the writer be forgiven for referring to two personal incidents which occurred as he was contemplating the symbolism just described.

We have noted that on the Altar there are two glass vases, each holding a white rose. So too there was then, and there still is, a glass vase holding a white rose on the lectern that is placed on the second, or Probationer's step. The writer's gaze, at that time, on returning from the Altar to the lectern as this symbolism was unfolding, came to rest on the glass vase on the lectern and on the rose contained therein. This rose appeared a brilliant red, the color of the Probationer's rose as given in Mr. Heindel's writings, and as seen as part of the seven roses garlanding our Cross and Emblem. Symbolically this would be quite proper, that a red rose should be displayed on the lectern, and the white roses on the Altar.

The second incident involved the speaker's chair, which we have stated is a most remarkable





On the west wall above the Altar the Leo panel depicts a couchant lion, king of his realm, half silhouetted against a blazing sun encircling the emblem of itself. The majestic towers of a medieval castle provide a worldly metaphor for the regal might of the Leo vibration. The rich tropical growth suggests the life-giving power of the summer sun in its zodiacal dignity. Leo is the sign of the risen Christ and the emblem of spiritual unfoldment. Leo represents the path to Initiation through the heart. The Rosicrucian path of initiation commences at the door of intellect under the mental sign Aquarius (eastern door of Temple sanctuary) and leads to liberation at the altar of the heart under the dominion of the Leo hierarchy.



The lily of purity is held by the white-clad maiden in the Virgo panel. The learning and wisdom aspect of Mercury are designated by the library of books. The service aspect of Virgo is shown by the depiction of Mercury in the sixth house of the horoscopic wheel, the quote from from Thessalonians on the blue scroll held by the two angels, and the sheaves of ripe grain, representing the harvest of worldly deeds to be amalgamated into the soul body, which is represented by the window.



The Libra panel depicts the hand of God depending the golden scales of Justice, whose two equally balanced trays are ruled by Saturn, governing cosmic Law, and Venus, dispensing Love and Mercy. Right relationships are ordered on these twin principles. Autumnal fields and forests share equal space with sky. The windmill denotes Libra as the cardinal air sign.



Painted in 1920, before the discovery of Pluto (1930), this panel shows Mars as ruler and Uranus exalted, with the celestial Scorpion centered. The scene in color and content is similar to Pisces, a dusky, opaque light suffusing both murals. But here the contained water of a lake is represented, denoting Scorpio as a fixed water sign. A latent or brooding mood is projected.



The Centaur's bow of aspiration is fully drawn and aimed at the lofty Jupiterian ideals radiating from the higher worlds. On the west coast of the United States, the Rosicrucian emblem shines as a beacon from the Fellowship's International Headquarters, generating an aurora of violet lights, signifying the global impact of the Western Wisdom Teachings.



The celestial Goat and its associated planet, ringed Saturn, dominate a wintry landscape, which suggests the restriction and minimalism that these energies can effect. Mars is exalted in Capricorn, where its primal power is given form and order.



The Aquarius panel over the double-door entrance to the sanctuary designates the Ecclesia as a temple for the Aquarian Age. It shows the androgynous Waterbearer pouring the etheric waters of life upon the globe of earth. The figure bears a likeness to the Gemini twins, who also represent an airy, mental sign. The icy-grey rings of Saturn, planet of prudence and containment, is contrasted with a luminous Uranus, planet of transformation and universal love, radiating spokes of light. A wintry urban scene suggests the “living together” that this vibration promotes, while the scattering of stars on both sides of the panel suggests the activation of new Aquarian energies and the coming of age of the stellar science of astrology.



Like its elemental mate Cancer, Pisces shows a twilight waterfront scene, but the mood here is tranquil. The empty boats denote a withdrawal from the outer world of practical affairs and a going within. Three planetary influences are depicted—Jupiter flanked by Venus and Neptune. Two ethereal fish centered in the violet sky above a placid inlet indicate the doubleness or mutability of this sign, ease of movement in the fluid medium of emotions, and a sensitivity to subtle impressions.



The Aries panel depicts the iconic Ram, powerfully poised, head lowered in the aggressive, martial butting mode, but actually just eating the tender springtime plants. It has drawn away from the brood of ewes and kids to the top of a hillock where its prominence in the budding vernal landscape attests to its readiness to assert its energies. In its most exalted reading, the Ram is the Lamb of God, Who is forever guarding, guiding, and sacrificing for the flock of souls seeking the Light.



The Taurus panel, acknowledging Venus’ dignity and the moon’s exaltation, depicts an ethereal Bull as a celestial group spirit dominating the horizon in a pastoral scene. Several bovines seem to sense the presence of this influence as they gaze toward it in stolid attentiveness. A cottage, smoke issuing from its chimney, suggesting bucolic comforts, nestles in the verdant earth.



Mercury-ruled Gemini depicts twin girls in landscape of flowering trees and fields. Only one of three panels with human subjects, it most conspicuously delineates that part of the anatomy ruled by this sign (shoulders, arms, and hands). The bouquet and lei of flowers represent the first gleanings of the mercurial intellect as it applies its powers of observation and discrimination in gathering sensory data. Here the visible world is a garden rife with blooms to be picked and perused by the concrete mind.



The water element, symbolizing the soul, is shown in its cardinal (active) mode in Cancer, where the lunar (unconscious) influences create the greatest turbulence, the conscious Jupiterian energies moderate the desire nature through abstract thinking, and the superconscious influence of Neptune’s ray, positively employed (signified by the enveloping five-pointed star), presides over the most pacific expanse of water. The classical god Neptune’s ability to govern water with his trident (♆) is thus a reality.



Lectern, speaker's chair, and picture of the resurrected Christ.

chair. The writer has seen the original drawings of this chair made prior to the completion of the Temple, but at that time the symbolism quite escaped him. At the time when the red rose came before his vision, so did an awareness of the chair present itself. The speaker's eyes were directed as if a finger were outlining the contour of the reader's chair, for this chair's number is nine, the number of our humanity. From whatever side the chair is viewed—from the front, sides, or back—the outline of that side when the lines and arcs or curves of the side are numbered total nine. The original symbol on that chair was the symbol of Uranus. It takes five strokes to form the symbol of Uranus, and the four broken lines of the circle around it total to nine. The symbol has been changed over the passing time to what is now displayed—the symbol of Leo. Originally it was the nine-numbered symbol.

We have as yet to consider the Emblem of the Fellowship that is veiled from our sight, the Emblem above the Altar on the reredos or wall of the Altar. It is a most precious Emblem, for in its unity it portrays the path we must all travel. It gives the accolade that is individually ours when we finally overcome the last obstacle and hear that

Voice that shall greet us with the words, 'Well done thou good and faithful servant'.

There are, when the Emblem is unveiled, three crosses to be found within the Temple Sanctuary. The first cross is over the east entrance to the Sanctuary as part of the Emblem outlined in the lunette over that doorway. This cross does not contain the white rose. The second cross is part of our Emblem when unveiled. It is a white cross, and it is garlanded with both the seven red roses and the white rose. The third cross is found in one of the twelve panels to which we shall soon direct our mind's eye. This third cross is also part of the Emblem. It has both the wreath of red roses and the single centered white rose. It is a white cross bordered in black, like the original cross of the Emblem known to Mr. Heindel during his days at Mt. Ecclesia.

We now turn our attention to the twelve beautiful panels encircling the Sanctuary. They are placed one over each of the twelve wall sections which form the main structure of the Temple. They are situated between the dome of the Temple and the walls, symbolically the circle between heaven and earth, for they portray the celestial equator, and are composed of the twelve zodiacal signs. There seems to be no end to the message each presents in spiritual outline. Together they represent the God of our universe and all the hosts of the twelve great spiritual hierarchies, which symbolically is God in manifestation. Let us consider only three interesting aspects found therein, as they apply directly to our status in time and place.

1. Every panel but one has its zodiacal sign or representative in the direct center of the panel. Eleven do, the twelfth does not. That one panel is the Leo panel, which will be the first panel in our review.

2. Seven of the twelve signs are based, as it were, on the earth's sphere, and five are based on the heaven, or spiritual, worlds. We are reminded that, of the twelve Brothers of the Order of the Rose Cross, seven go forth in their physical bodies to work among and with men, and five Brothers never leave the Temple, but work in their spiritual bodies—another point for meditation.

3. Only one panel contains any written words and they are the words of Christ. This is the verbal

panel and in the eyes of this writer, perhaps the most powerfully spiritual of all the panels. But this is only his reaction. Others may find other panels to be as rewarding to them as this panel is to him.

Now as space permits, let us review the several panels. The Leo panel is placed on the west side of the Sanctuary over the Altar alcove. This is the only panel whose astrological sign is not directly in the center of the panel. On the right, a figure of Leo, crouching somewhat as the [Gizeh] Sphinx, presses the line of center, while a brilliant sun bearing the sign of Leo is to the left of center. In the full left section of the panel there is a prodigal use of rich and opulent colors, a profligate scene, in the midst of which is to be found a great gold goblet overflowing with this richness. Mark well this golden goblet in this luxurious setting, for it has but one handle. Symbolically it portrays the wealth and reward of the material world, but also this section of the panel bears this warning:

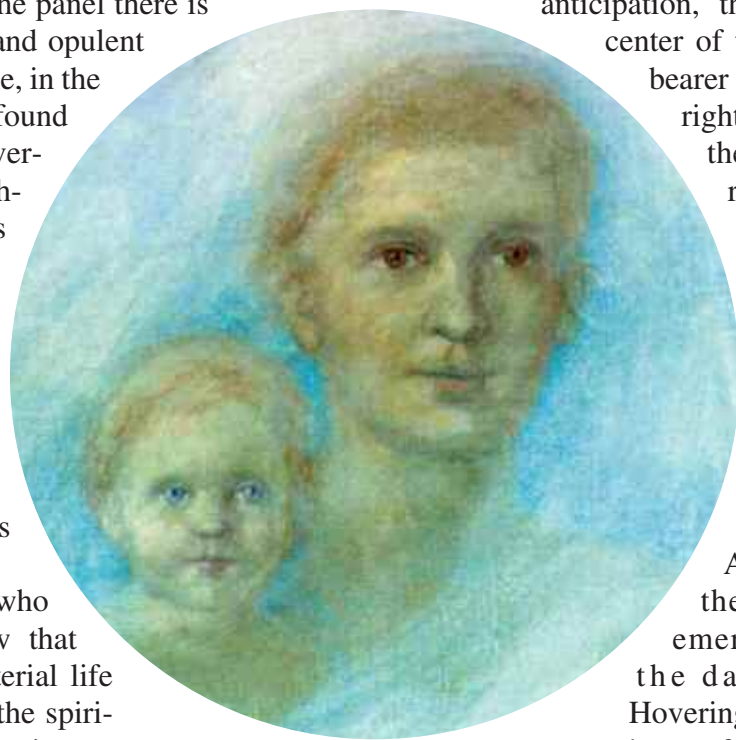
To all probationers who view this scene, know that the rewards of the material life are not the rewards of the spiritual life. Those Probationers who take their reward now, in position, in title, in authority, in power, in prestige, will truly find the gold of material reward, but they will have little or no bread to show at the feast of the Full Moon. The Probationer must seek to acquire that other golden goblet with its two handles, the Chalice, wherein the spiritual essence of humble and selfless service may be presented at their feast of the Full Moon.

To the right of center in the Leo panel, a different scene is presented. There looms in the gold rays of a sun not seen a great fortress, whose towers and battlements glow in the sunlight. In the background are seen the dark crags and sheer walls

of great chasms. Symbolically, this scene portrays the strength and glory of this sign rising over the chasms of materiality. Symbolically, the crouching lion and the great sun globe in the center of the panel vividly portray the struggle for material reward prominent in many, as against the spiritual reward awaiting the fulfillment of spiritual living—self-service as opposed to selfless service.

The Aquarius panel is placed over the east entrance of the Temple Sanctuary. This is a beautiful spiritual panel for it portrays symbolically the New Age we are now beginning to enter, at least in anticipation, through service. In the

center of this panel is the water-bearer carrying an urn on the right shoulder supported by the left hand, with the right hand and arm over the urn, from which a stream pours out onto a portion of a globe. Under this figure in a blue semicircle the sign of Aquarius is found. Symbolically, this scene portrays the beginning of the Age of Aquarius. Note that the earth globe is just emerging into the scene, the dawn of a New Age. Hovering over it is the water-bearer from whose urn is flowing the living waters—the water of life.



*Detail from **Father and Child** lunette under Pisces panel.*

Look closely at the figure of the waterbearer. At first it appeared to the writer as the figure of a beautiful young woman. To another it appeared as a handsome young man. Symbolically, it is the figure of a member of the angelic lifewave, an androgynous figure. For the angels combine the masculine and feminine principles within themselves in perfect balance—a stage of spiritual development towards which we are striving that we too may attain to that balance of strength and beauty, as portrayed by the columns of our Temple, for we are our own temples.

We are taught that in the New Age, the glory that is the Lords of Flame will come to us through the hierarchy of Aquarius, the angels, who will be as visible to us then as we are to ourselves at this present point in development. Just right of the water-bearer is the luminous globe of Uranus, whose soft light is cast over the ringed globe of Saturn, found to the left of center, symbolically showing the influence of these great spiritual entities in this the coming New Age.

There are three groupings of stars to be found in this panel. In their placement we may symbolically read the future age as it pertains to us.

On the right the panel depicts the sturdy walls and roofs of human dwellings, as if we were looking at a portion of a great city. Snow covers the roofs and clouds fill the sky. From the window openings we see the warm head in the cloud covering is one cluster of six and one of three gold stars—nine, the number of humanity, now found safe and secure in the New Age.

At left the scene in the panel has changed. It is as if we were looking now at a winter scene. Symbolically we see portrayed the bright clear lines of a higher world. In the sharpness of outline in this panel, we find a grouping of twelve gold stars around a thirteenth, a white star, portraying the twelve disciples around Christ; or, more recent, the twelve Brothers around the Head of the Order. Symbolically we have the promise of their guidance in our new and higher age. In the center of the panel, close to the waterbearer, is a small cluster of three bright, gold-colored stars, so placed as to form an equilateral triangle, the sign of Trinity, threefold Deity.

The panel that has proven to be a source of delight and of strength to this writer illustrates the

sign of Virgo. Throughout this panel the beautiful lavender or orchid background predominates. In the center we find in blue and white colors the Celestial Virgin holding in her left hand a lily, the symbol of purity. In the far right portion of the panel is a window containing eight lights or panes and an adjacent grouping of one large and three small tent-like structures. Symbolically, the window portrays a vision into the higher world.

The eight panels portray the heart path of devotion, and the tent-like structures resemble the Tabernacle in the Wilderness. On the far left of the panel is a bookcase with two shelves containing nine volumes. Next to this is the wheel of life at the sign of Mercury and Virgo.

Symbolically, the bookcase and the nine volumes portray the intellectual path of development, with Mercury and Virgo at the zenith of their spiritual powers. Just inside both the window and the bookcase, two spiritual beings kneel, one on either side. They appear in their ethereal bodies with golden halos, and their great wings unfold seemingly far beyond the scope of the panel. They are facing inward, and are holding between

them a blue ribbon or scroll on which is inscribed: "He who would be the greatest among you, let him be the servant of all." These words are cast in dark blue letters except for the word *servant*, which is in gold. This is the only panel in which words appear. Symbolically, we have the blending or union of the intellectual and devotional aspects of mankind, combined now with the selfless service of being a servant of all, added to the purity of being as portrayed by the lily in the hand of the Celestial Virgin.

The Sagittarius panel contains the third cross to



Detail from Mother and Child lunette under the Capricorn panel.

which we have earlier alluded. The center of this panel is dominated by the figure of a giant Centaur which is facing the viewer. He has bent his mighty bow and has shot his arrow into the Midheaven. The left section of the panel is illuminated by a great white globe contained in the sign of Jupiter, from which are radiating bands of light. To the right of center the panel is colored by the somber shades of night. From the lower center of the panel, we trace a curve upward to our right. Looking more closely, we see in this curve the outline of a portion of the earth. Here it seems as if it were connected with the dark mass of the sky in the panel by a golden shaft of light in the form of the sign of Sagittarius. As we examine this section of the earth globe we see the outline of a portion of the North American continent. To the lower right just being crowned by the rays of morning, we view the Gulf of Mexico and upwards past the eastern seaboard is the United States to the St. Lawrence waterway and then westward to the Great Lakes. Here the earth's curvature blends into

the heavens above. If we follow the curve of the earth on this western side, we see the outline of the western and upper portion of Baja, California and the coastline of Southern California, until it too fades as the curvature of the earth fades into the night. Now there appears at the exact spot where one would mark as the site of Oceanside on the coast of California, a small brilliant gold star. There are five radiating shafts or gold rays, one from each of its five points. Out in the heavens there is a gold ring or circle of gold through which the five rays penetrate as they spread out over the earth and the heavens. On that golden star on its blue background is a cross and on the cross is that garland, the seven red roses and in the center of the cross is a white rose. This cross is white and it is edged in black.

We must never translate our symbols into the trivial and commonplace for that is mediocrity, but to that which is uplifting, for it is through the heart that symbols speak and teach. □

—A Probationer

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