

Interpreting the Cardinal Signs

One who is proficient may read in a horoscope of birth the very soul of a human being—its hopes, fears, and aspirations, the faults and frailties of its mind and body. Moses was commanded to remove his shoes in front of the burning bush in recognition of the fact that he stood on holy ground illuminated by a Spirit Presence. If all the calcium lights in the world were focused upon an actor, their blinding light would be reflected from his body, but his secrets would still remain within. But when an actor enters upon the stage of life and the starry spotlights are focused upon him through the horoscope, they penetrate to the very soul of his being and lay bare the lines of his life with such clearness that he who can read the stellar script may count the pulse beats of such a one as if they were those of his own soul. Therefore Moses stood on no holier ground than the astrologer who holds in his hand a horoscope; and I feel that I cannot too often reiterate that there is a very grave responsibility connected with this wonderful privilege of the astrologer, and that it behooves him to live a holy life so that he may be worthy to stand in the sublime presence of the Human Spirit as it is revealed in the natal figure.

Nor should the student deceive himself; spiritual

secrets and the privilege of rendering spiritual help by spiritual interpretation of the message of the stars are not given to one who prostitutes this most sublime science for filthy lucre or uses it for low purposes. God is not mocked; we reap what we sow. If we betray our trust and abuse this great privilege, the day of retribution will dawn sometime and we shall eat the bread of sorrow for our

sacrilege. To whom much is given, of him much is required. I pray God that you may live up to the highest possibilities of soul growth by helping others and that the knowledge of astrology which you are acquiring may prove your most important aid, as it has been and is the greatest blessing in my life.

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It is wonderful to contemplate how the planetary forces balance each other so perfectly that universal equilibrium is maintained despite the disturbances of the 5³/₄ billion which inhabit the earth alone, not to speak of other spheres. Every moment of time, our actions, individually and collectively, interfere with terrestrial equipoise, and were not this instantly restored, the earth would leave its orbit, fly off at a tangent, and be destroyed. Nor are physical disturbances most potent in disturbing or restoring balance. It is a fallacy to confound solidity and rigidity with strength (as is most thoroughly explained in *Rosicrucian Christianity Lecture*

No. 19, "The Coming Force"). A train has no strength itself, but must be solid because it is operated upon by an invisible gas called steam. There is no force in a rigid hammer, but when driven by a column of flexible liquid, like water, backed by an elastic cushion of compressed air, the force stored in the air drives the powerful hydraulic ram irresistibly through whatever comes before it. Likewise subtle, invisible stellar rays are the

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Therefore each planet has its opposite, and every time we radiate the quality of one planet, we call forth a countercurrent of corresponding force, and by the action and reaction of those forces in and upon us and our environment we learn the lessons of life. If we vibrate to the love ray of Venus, instantly Mars comes to tempt, and tries to turn love to lust; but it depends upon *us* whether we remain steadfast in virtue or yield to vice. If we court the ideal of Jupiter, if we aim to elevate the standards of church or state, instantly the saturnine forces invite to self-aggrandizement and appeal to the passion for power. With *us* it lies to remain true to the ideal and reap laurels that last through eternity, or yield to the promise of present gain of worthless gold which we repay in sorrow when Saturn turns and becomes the chastiser. Each horoscope shows the tendencies in even the humblest life, and opportunity continually knocks. May we

all be prepared to meet it as spiritual astrologers should.

The first step in reading a horoscope is to familiarize oneself with the intrinsic nature of the signs, houses, planets, and the aspects. This will form the subject of the present and several future articles. The student is urged to thoroughly memorize our different classifications, for when reading the horoscope there is no time to look them up, any more than we would refer to the alphabet for name and sound of a letter when reading a book. The alphabet must be memorized to such a degree of proficiency that there is no tax on the consciousness when reading, for this is the basis of the art of reading; and the nature of the signs, houses, planets, and aspects which are the alphabet of the heavens, must be mastered as fully and completely before it is possible to read the mystic message, the scroll of life, which we call the horoscope.

Destiny may be divided into three kinds. In one kind we sow and reap from day to day, or from year to year, with little delay between the action and its reaction, and with the thread of fate clearly linking cause and effect. Liabilities incurred and liquidated under this "pay as you go" system of fate are particularly indicated by planets in *cardinal signs and angles*. The cardinal signs are *Aries, Cancer, Libra, and Capricorn*. These signs are called "cardinal" because when the Sun is in any one of them he is in one of the four corners of the heavens; at a turning point, where he is forced to take another direction. In Aries he is as far *east* as he can go. Cancer is the tropical point of the *north* where he gives the most *perpendicular ray* at the summer solstice, and consequently the greatest heat. Libra is the extreme *western* point of his path where he turns away from the Northern Hemisphere. In midwinter, at Christmas, he is in Capricorn at the farthest point *south*, where his *horizontal ray* leaves the people of the North in winter's icy grip.

The nature of the *angles*, and the effect of the 1st, 4th, 7th and 10th houses, is similar to the effect of the cardinal signs because these houses are at the east, north, west, and south points of the horoscope. The nature and effect of cardinal signs and angles may be summed up in the words, *action* and

initiative, though each acts differently from the others. Planets placed in cardinal signs and angles give zest to life according to the nature of the particular planet, sign and angle. For instance, the intrinsic nature of the Sun is *life*; the cardinal sign Aries is aggressive, forceful and *self-assertive*. Therefore, when the Sun is in Aries in the spring, nature bubbles over with life; there is such a superabundance of vital force that all creation is impelled to procreate itself in order to use the surplus.

In the human horoscope the solar life is similarly intensified when expressed through the cardinal sign Aries or when it is in the eastern angle (the first house), which corresponds to Aries. This position makes for greater vitality, so great in fact that it frequently runs amuck, overheats the blood, and sends it racing through the veins. Therefore we find people with the Sun in Aries subject to fevers; but it is also a fact, not generally known to physicians, that in Sun-in-Aries people the temperature may rise far above the ordinary extreme danger point, remain there for hours, burn every hair of the patient's head, and yet produce no fatality, because the spark of life is too strong to be extinguished, even when it has burned the body to a cinder.

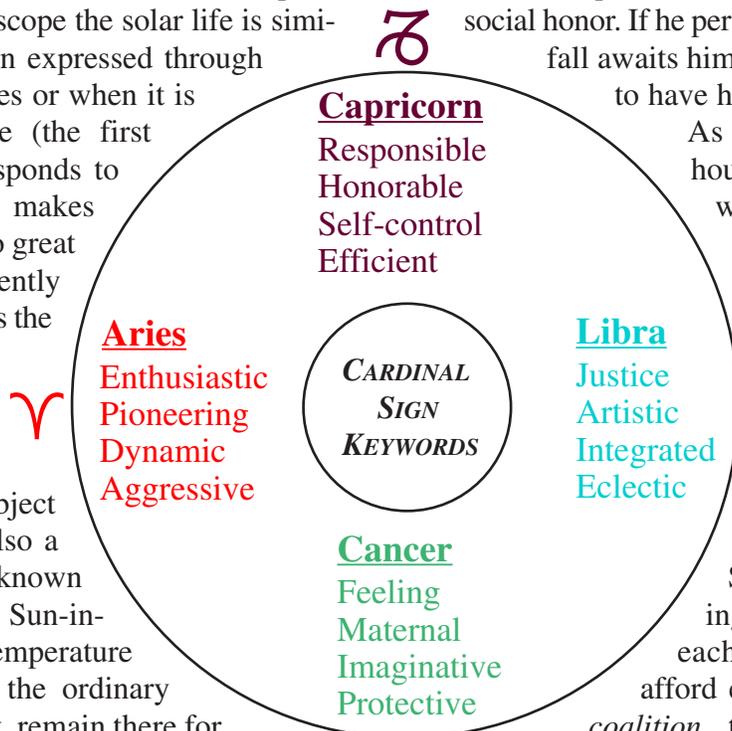
While Aries gives *self-esteem*, Capricorn, or the 10th house (the southern angle), which corresponds to Capricorn, brings *social honor*; that is to say, the esteem of others and benefic planets in Capricorn or the 10th house will certainly bring preferment. Take, as usual, the keyword of a planet, combine it with the keyword of the sign and you have the interpretation. For instance, the keyword of the Sun is *life*, of Capricorn, *social honor*. Therefore the Sun in Capricorn or the 10th house will promote a lively social esteem for one with that configuration, and, as a matter of fact, people who rise to high and responsible positions generally have

the Sun so placed and well aspected, for aspects have to be taken into consideration also in judgment—but one thing at a time.

The keyword of Saturn is *obstruction*, of Capricorn *social honor*, of Aries self-esteem. If Saturn is in Aries he will tend to obstruct self-esteem, crush the spirit, and make a man timid and shrinking. If Saturn is afflicted in Capricorn or the 10th house, the man may strive to rise, but obstructions will pile mountain high to bar his way to social honor. If he persists and does attain, downfall awaits him anyway. Napoleon is said to have had this configuration.

As Capricorn or the 10th house gives our status in the world, the human family, so the opposite cardinal sign, Cancer, or its correspondent, the 4th house (the northern angle), determines our *home life*. Take a horoscope with Venus there, another with Mars, and a third with Saturn. What is the meaning of the stellar script in each? Again the keywords afford easy reading, for Venus is *coalition*, the force that binds and attracts and smooths out all unpleasantness.

When she is in Cancer or the 4th house, love will brighten the hearth and house. There may be a hard battle with the world, but peace will reign by the fireside. Mars is *dynamic energy*; he rides roughshod over everything and everybody. In Cancer or the 4th house he is a tartar, and tyrant in the home, and it is strange how dual we may be, for the man who is such a bear at home, may have Venus in the west and be an angel in public. Nor should we call him a hypocrite; it is simply that in one department of life he feels the influence of the martial ray, and the Venusian dominates another. It should excite our compassion, and show the way to overcome by knowledge, if we can reach and teach him the stellar science. The keynote of Saturn is *obstruction*, and it is easy to see what he



would do in Cancer, or the 4th house.

Faust, though most of us think of it as written by Goethe, is not a human creation. The plot is found in one of the ancient myths and though our modern stage rendering makes it seem only the story of an ordinary seduction, the myth itself, and even Goethe's rendering, brings out much of the esoteric truth. Among other pearls is Satan's description of himself. When asked by Faust, "Who art thou?" he says: "The spirit of negation, the power that still works for good, though scheming ill." That fits Saturn. I know that all in God's world work for ultimate *good*, and that physical resistance develops physical muscle—that spiritual obstruction is necessary to grind away the rough edges from the soul and polish it to diamond brightness. Saturn is chief of the lapidaries. Knowing that he hurts to help, we must try to be patient. When even the stone in being ground gives sounds of seeming suffering, who shall blame us if we wail at the time when the hand of Saturn is heavy or applied in a particularly sensitive place? Although I thank him for benefit received from chastisements, and recognize the benefit of his restraining influence at times when he makes me feel like a dog on the leash, I cannot help thinking of him as a cold, clammy hand of huge proportions, ready to wet-blanket all ambition, self-assertion, and other martial characteristics. "The spirit of negation"—no bit ever fretted a spirited horse as much as the curb of Saturn, which says: "DON'T, DON'T, DON'T." Saturn can fret and worry a martial spirit bubbling over with energy and ambition, and as *a planet is always most evil, so-called, in the sign where it is weakest*, Saturn in Cancer or the 4th house is particularly severe. Children whose parents have Saturn in Cancer or the 4th house may or may not be kicked and cuffed physically; that depends upon other factors. But there Saturn has them cornered; they are helpless children, they cannot run away from the parental

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home, no matter how they feel, and the saturnine DON'T, DON'T, DON'T will wet-blanket their spirits, quench their ambition, and make it a thousand times more difficult for them to fight the battle of life. Oh! that we could realize our wrong when we unthinkingly betray the trust of the little ones who come to us for protection and a home until they are able to fight their own battle in the world. If we could only see how the saturnine ray in the home hampers our mate, and how much better it would be for him, or her, if we would cease to restrain and throw cold water, if we would give encouragement instead of always having DON'T on the tip of the tongue.

Aries being the fountainhead of egoism (the force which aims to center everything on the individual regardless of all others), it is reasonable that the opposite sign must have the opposite qualities, and signify what we share with others or have in community with others. *Partnership* may therefore be said to be the keyword of Libra, its corresponding western angle being the 7th house. As marriage is the most important partnership of life, capable of making or marring it as no other relation can, the configurations in this sign and angle are particularly vital in that respect.

Speaking generally, the Sun is positive and masculine in its nature and signifies, therefore, the marriage partner in the horoscope of a woman, while the negative, feminine Moon indicates the partner for a man. However, planets in Libra and the 7th house gives particular testimony in this respect. The Sun thus placed gives *life* and zest, here as elsewhere, regardless of sex. Saturn obstructs successful intercourse with our fellows; Mars gives dynamic energy, makes us aggressive; we put down our rivals though we may also ruin ourselves by so doing.

You have now the method and must learn to apply it so that you may read the stellar script as you read a book. There is no time like the present. □