



A M O R C

The Rosicrucian Order

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THE CONCURRENCE

This Week's Consideration of a Famous Opinion



¶ A concomitant aspect of spiritual unfoldment is the desire to serve mankind by employing for the benefit of others that which has been divinely bestowed. As beginning students, we were advised with our very first lesson, *Secret Mandamus Number One*, to determine just what we ultimately seek to obtain through study and knowledge. The life of our former Emperor, Francis Bacon, was dedicated to the advancement of knowledge. He knew the danger to the aspiring mystic in mistaking the ultimate end of knowledge. It is well to pause now and meditate again upon his warning, quoted for us when we first set out upon the Path.



But the greatest error of all is, mistaking the ultimate end of knowledge; for some men covet knowledge out of a natural curiosity and inquisitive temper; some to entertain the mind with variety and delight; some for ornament and reputation; some for victory and contention; many for lucre and a livelihood; and but few for employing the Divine gift of reason to the use and benefit of mankind. Thus some appear to seek in knowledge a couch for a searching spirit; others, a walk for a wondering mind; others a tower of state; others, a fort or commanding ground; and others, a shop for profit or sale, instead of a storehouse for the glory of the Creator and the endowment of human life. But that which must dignify and exalt knowledge is the more intimate and strict conjunction of contemplation and action; a conjunction like that of Saturn, the planet of rest and contemplation, and Jupiter, the planet of civil society and action. But here, by use and action, we do not mean the applying of knowledge for lucre, for that diverts the advancement of knowledge, as the golden ball thrown before Atalanta, which, while she stoops to take up, the race is hindered.

—FRANCIS BACON, 1561-1626

To the Members of the Esoteric Hierarchy, Greetings!

Continuing the examination of questions presented by the Hierarchy members at the private session during Convention and in interviews and correspondence during the year, the matter of astrology which frequently arises deserves consideration.

The impression seems to persist that the Order unreservedly condemns it. This is far from true. Dr. H. Spencer Lewis spent more than twenty years studying the subject, applying its principles and analyzing the exemplification of them in the lives of men and women everywhere. Through this study he became thoroughly convinced that astrology is not a subject for the amateur or mere dabbler any more than is medicine or music. To be a worth-while astrologer demands a scientific bent, a willingness to devote an unconscionable number of hours to constant and careful study, a large reference library and an ability to handle data as exactly and as surely as a musician reads a score of music or a physician makes a diagnosis.

It is the fact that so few are aware of the necessity for this that has made it necessary to admonish the Rosicrucian student against accepting as astrology the unscientific and slipshod systems of guessing represented by the eye-and-mind-catching publications available on newstands.

In this connection, it is well to recall the words of Sir Francis Bacon, our former Imperator, as to the ultimate end of knowledge which he took to be the glorification of the Creator and the improvement of man's estate. As philosopher, scientist, and Rosicrucian Imperator, he was at pains to point out both in his public writings and in his private endeavors among mystics and Rosicrucians that the greatest error men made was in mistaking the ultimate end of knowledge. This caused them to "seek in knowledge a couch for a searching spirit . . . a walk for a wondering mind . . . a tower of state . . . a fort or commanding ground; . . ." or "a shop for profit or sale."

"That which must dignify and exalt knowledge," he maintained, "is the more intimate and strict conjunction of contemplation and action; a conjunction like that of Saturn, the planet of rest and contemplation, and Jupiter, the planet of civil society and action." It is to be noted that Bacon uses astrological phraseology for the correct statement of his thought. We may be certain he would not have done so had not his knowledge of its reliability been soundly established. Astrology, as Francis Bacon and his Rosicrucian and mystic forebears knew it, was a very different thing from what is so often designated by that name today.



Our mistake, no doubt, lies in confusing these two very different though unfortunately too little differentiated

procedures: One is a careful analysis of exactly calculated data and reasoned judgment therefrom based upon solid experience. The other is a series of opinions given with much enthusiasm and little thought drawn from inexact and careless generality. There is, we must recognize, little or nothing in common between the two. If as Rosicrucians we cannot find the time to make ourselves respectably proficient in the one, we certainly cannot, considering the end we have in view, allow ourselves to give credence to the other.

The question, then, why the Order does not teach astrology is a natural one. Briefly, it might be answered, for the same reason that the Order does not teach medicine or music. The Order does not seek to prepare its members for the practice of medicine; neither does it undertake to guide them to careers in music. While recognizing the value of both these avenues of endeavor, the Order realizes that its own mission is somewhat more all-inclusive. It does, however, encourage its members to be satisfied only with the best instruction in any endeavor and to put into its practice their wholehearted effort and enthusiasm. This applies to astrology as well.

At a Convention some years ago the matter of whether the Order should include astrology in its curriculum was thoroughly examined. It may be helpful to review some of the facts established at that time. Foremost, naturally, was the fact that only a relatively small segment of AMORC membership would be served; the majority finding the material now presented to be sufficient and perhaps more likely to bring about the over-all ends in view. Further, there was mentioned the repetition that would occur in restating principles into the specific terminology of astrology while leaving to others the task of making their own re-statements of those same principles in the terminology of other specific fields.

It must be remembered that Rosicrucian principles stem from viewpoints and concepts prevalent when the field of knowledge was unified and undivided. Astrology and other specialized systems after all are but segments of that one common view expressed by Rosicrucian principles. A Rosicrucian of advanced degree should therefore be able to bring those principles to bear directly upon all problems even though he might not be thoroughly conversant with a particular vocabulary.

In view of these considerations it was the consensus of that Convention—and since the conditions remain unchanged, the judgment of the Order today—that instruction in astrology had better be left to other competent hands while the traditional pattern of the Order's teachings remain unchanged. Thus, the Order would remain free and unhampered in its traditional statement of mysticism, and those members interested and willing to assume the additional responsibility of equipping themselves with specialized knowl-



edge would be equally free and unhampered in applying for specialized training elsewhere.

This, it will be seen, is a very different thing from being against or condemning astrology per se. It is also far from a narrow or dogmatic pronouncement on the subject. Our Rosicrucian masters and teachers in the past were astrologers and gave a dignity and distinction to the study which it behooves every sincere student to recognize. Had it been possible to limit the study of astrology to those especially fitted for it by scientific temperament and educational and moral background, the story would be quite different.

As with other mystical studies, however—alchemy furnishes a good example—outside pressures engendered by wrong motives forced the real mystics to take refuge in silence while half-truths and hearsay opinions were left to gain popularity and credence. By the time mysticism was able to speak openly once more to the world, mistaken, superstitious, and altogether wrong ideas of what the mystery schools taught had become deeply entrenched in man's consciousness. This meant that even initiates of the Order, before they could be entrusted with many of the principles and their application, had to undergo a long process of differentiation so that their minds would be free to accept the teachings in the original sense.

The necessity for such precaution still exists, and those inclined to minimize that necessity would be amazed to realize how persistently even today those otherwise qualified trip over the matter of astrology, accepting as valid all the popular misconceptions and practices and finding themselves hopelessly confused and at sea. One example from perhaps thousands will be sufficient to convince you that—as our honored Frater Heinrich Khunrath once wrote—"He who sets out to make wise men of fools will be kept very busy."

A lower Degree member, a father and a respected public school official, wrote a frantic and discouraged note to the Council of Solace to say that his horoscope showed severe illness to be his lot within the next sixty days. The "astrologer"—and it would seem fair to put the word in quotes to distinguish him from one sincerely and competently engaged in such work—whom he consulted had predicted the likelihood of his not surviving. For a month he had suffered keenly from this prediction, had gone to doctors for examinations, and had made feverish attempts to ward off the oncoming disaster. Because the doctor's examination had disclosed nothing, he had become all the more concerned and in desperation had written for the Order's protective help.

All this because of quackery and his own gullibility! Fortunately for him, a mental purgative was all that was needed to bring him to the realization of something his Rosicrucian



Neophyte lessons should have taught him—" the ultimate end of knowledge." Had he carefully read the Concurrence to his first Mandamus, he would have taken note of Bacon's reference to the race Atalanta lost by being diverted from her course by the golden ball which she stooped to take up along the way.

May Peace Profound abide with each of you.

Fraternally,

YOUR CLASS MASTER

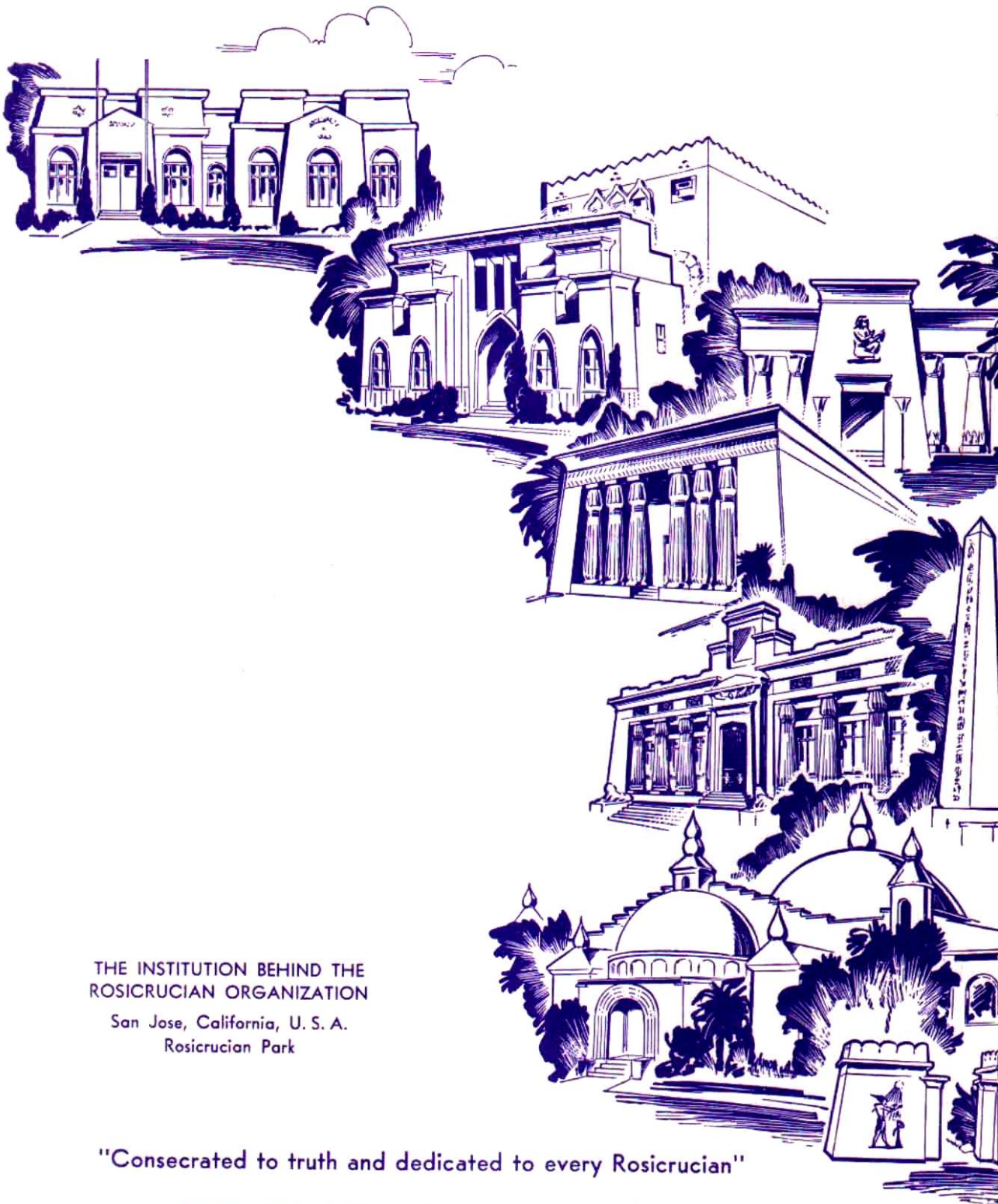


Summary of This Monograph



Below is a summary of the important principles of this monograph. It contains the essential statements which you should not forget. After you have carefully read the complete monograph, try to recall as many as you can of the important points you read. Then read this summary and see if you have forgotten any. Also refer to this summary during the ensuing week to refresh your memory.

- ¶ The Order does not condemn astrology *per se*. With the “ultimate end of knowledge” in mind, it seeks merely to protect its members from the half-truths and hearsay opinions of popular and unscientific methods.
- ¶ To be a worth-while astrologer demands a scientific bent and an ability to handle data exactly, a willingness to devote many hours to constant and careful study, and a large reference library. For this reason, astrology is not a subject for the amateur or dabbler.
- ¶ As Rosicrucians, we cannot be satisfied with less than the best instruction in any endeavor.
- ¶ Astrology and other specialized systems are but segments of that one common view expressed by Rosicrucian principles.
- ¶ Careful consideration of the matter has led the Order to decide that instruction in astrology had better be left to other competent hands while the traditional pattern of the teachings remains unchanged.



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