

A M O R C

The Rosicrucian Order

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THE CONCURRENCE

This Week's Consideration of a Famous Opinion



¶ The English word *fame* has come to mean "renown." Originally in Latin it meant "news," for its root was the verb to *speak*. *Fama Fraternitatis*, then, becomes "News of the Fraternity." Interestingly enough, the Greeks had a goddess called *Fama*, the ancient prototype of gossip. In the celebrated *Metamorphoses* of the Roman poet, Ovid, the following account of *Fama* or *Fame* is instructive and delightful:



A place there is, in the middle of the world, between the land and sea and heavenly regions, the confines of the threefold world; from whence is seen whatever is anywhere, though regions distant; and every voice does pierce the hollow ears. *Fame* holds it, and chuses for herself a seat on the topmost tower; has added avenues numberless, and a thousand openings to her house, and not shut up the entries with any doors: night and day they open stand. It is all of sounding brass, all murmuring; reflects the voices, and repeats all that it hears. No rest within, in no part silence; and yet it is not a shouting; but the murmurs of a soft voice; such as are wont to come from the sea's winds, if any one stands listening at a distance; or, such a sound as dying thunders give, when Jupiter had chid the pitchy clouds. A crowd does fill the halls; the fickle vulgar come and go; and a thousand rumours devised, mixt with true, roam up and down, and throw out words confused. Of which some fill the empty ears with speeches, some what is told convey elsewhere; the measure of the fiction grows, and each new author adds something still to what himself has heard. There stands *Credulity*; there rash *Mistake*, and empty *Joy*; astonished fears, creeping sedition, and whispers of authors doubtful. *Herself* observes what is done in heaven, and seas, and earth, and pries into all the world.

—OVID, 43 B.C.-17 A.D.

To the Members of the Esoteric Hierarchy, Greetings!

The discussion of Christian Rosenkreuz leads to one of the most interesting pieces of history in connection with the Rosicrucian Order. You should know about this if you are to continue to be part of the inner circle of the Order. This pertains to the Rosicrucian Manifesto, the Fama Fraternitatis or Fame of the Fraternity, which became popular in Europe in 1614 to 1618. It was, however, seen in manuscript form in 1610.

The art of printing was still rather new and costly, and before this period no great Rosicrucian manuscript had been printed. The Fama was printed in several editions, and in German and Latin, as well as some other languages. Thomas Vaughan's English edition appeared in 1652.

There has been more mystery about this Rosicrucian document than about most really worldwide spiritually illuminating manuscripts published in printed form. I may as well be frank with you and tell you that the Rosicrucians themselves have fostered some of this mystery, and I really think that it is a good thing even today for Rosicrucians to be somewhat mysterious about the manuscript. The more secretive we are about it, the more fascinating it appears to investigators, for human nature loves mysteries, and the book will be read and examined more. There is no need, however, for the misrepresentations and misquotations some persons have made.

One of the most unsatisfactory misrepresentations regarding the Fama is the statement that the Rosicrucian Order is not a worldly fraternal society but a mystical, spiritual organization without any physical form or association. Editors of magazines and authors of books have stated that A.M.O.R.C. could not be the true Rosicrucian Order because the genuine fraternal order never had any physical organization or existence but was always a spiritual organization. This is so absurd that we cannot understand why intelligent men and women come to such conclusions and make such statements. In order to prove this wrong, I am going to give you some extracts from the seventeenth-century English edition of the Manifesto.

The title of one of the early German editions is: Fama Fraternitatis, Oder Entdeckung der Bruderschaft dess loblichen Ordens dess Rosen Creutztes. Fame of the Fraternity, or Discovery of the Brotherhood of the laudable Order of the Rosy Cross. The title of Vaughan's edition reads: THE FAMA AND CONFESSION OF THE FRATERNITY OF R: C: Commonly, of the Rosie Cross.



The first paragraph, with its original spelling and punctuation, begins: "Seeing the only Wise and Merciful God in these latter days hath poured out so richly his mercy and goodness

to Mankind, whereby we do attain more and more to the perfect knowledge of his Son Jesus Christ and Nature, that justly we may boast of the happy time, wherein there is not only discovered unto us the half part of the World, which was heretofore unknown and hidden, but he hath also made manifest unto us many wonderful and never-heretofore seen, Works and Creatures of Nature, and moreover hath raised men, indued with great Wisdom, which might partly renew and reduce all Arts (in this our Age spotted and imperfect) to perfection; so that finally Man might thereby understand his own Nobleness and Worth, and why he is called Microcosmus, and how far his knowledge extendeth in Nature."

I have quoted this opening paragraph for two reasons: first, to let you see how the manuscript began its announcement; and second, to call your attention to the first words referring to "the only wise and merciful God." This emphasizes the Rosicrucian mystic idea of only one God who is wise and merciful. You will note that there is nothing in this statement regarding God being jealous, envious, wrathful, or otherwise.

A few lines later we read, "whereby we do attain more and more to the perfect knowledge of his Son Jesus Crist and Nature." Jesus Christ is referred to as the Son of God, of which we attain perfect knowledge. We are told also that Nature is a great school of knowledge. In other words, we as mystics should look to such wisdom as exemplified by Jesus and the revelations of the laws of nature for our instruction and guidance.

The paragraph also tells us that God made manifest to us many wonderful laws and works and creatures of nature. The purpose of the Order is to renew all arts or knowledge so that man may understand his nobleness and worth, and why he is called a microcosm, a small world, and how far his knowledge of nature extends.

This is the first great mystical revelation of the purpose of Rosicrucianism. It is to teach man how to develop and improve himself in all the arts and in wisdom so that he may become acquainted with his own real faculties, powers, and abilities, and so discover why he is like the great universe. At the same time, he is to learn through his practices and exercises how to direct his knowledge into the mysteries of nature and nature's laws. Certainly this is an excellent summary of the purposes of the Rosicrucian Order.

The second paragraph warns us that "although in Theologie, Physic, and the Mathematic, the Truth doth oppose it self; nevertheless the old Enemy by his subtilty and craft doth shew himself in hindering every good purpose by his Instruments and contentious wavering people." We must always watch out for the enemy of man, which is man himself, or that portion of mankind which desires to oppose truth and seeks in subtle and crafty ways to hinder every good purpose. We know that today we have enemies to deal with. They are



enemies of truth, light, life, and love. We all know we have such enemies to deal with now in the work of our own organization, and this fact was recognized in 1615 as a result of hundreds of years of experience in trying to help mankind.

After telling us the aims of the organization, the Fama says, "To such an intent of a general Reformation, the most godly and highly illuminated Father, our Brother, C. R. a German, the chief and original of our Fraternity, hath much and long time laboured, who by reason of his poverty (although descended of Noble Parents) in the fifth year of his age was placed in a Cloyster, where he had learned indifferently the Greek and Latin Tongues, . . ." The initials of the name of Christian Rosenkreuz are given differently in the early texts, C. R., C. R. C., R. C.

The Fama relates how, after many vicissitudes, C.R.C. travelled alone to the East. The eminent Rosicrucian, Thomas Vaughan, more generally known by his pseudonym, Eugenius Philalethes, relates in his classical translation, that C. R. C. "shipped himself over, and went to Damasco (Damascus), minding from thence to go to Jerusalem; but by reason of the feebleness of his body, he remained there, and by his skill in physics he obtained much favor with the Turks; in the meantime he became by chance acquainted with the Wise Men of Damasco in Arabia, and beheld what great wonders they wrought, and how nature was discovered unto them; hereby was that high and noble spirit of Brother C.R. so stirred up, that Jerusalem was not so much now in his mind as Damasco."

It is related that C.R.C. was but sixteen years old when he arrived at Damascus! These Wise Men had never met him and yet, to the surprise of C.R.C., they called him by name upon his arrival. They caused him to stay and introduced him to many secrets. To further quote from Vaughan's translation of the Fama: "He learned there better the Arabian tongue; so that the year following he translated the Book M into good Latin which he afterwards brought with him. This is the place where he learned his physics, his mathematics, whereof the world hath just cause to rejoice."

Of C.R.C.'s journey to Egypt, we are told: "After three years he . . . shipped himself over Sinus Arabicus into Egypt, where he remained not long, but only took better notice there of the plants and creatures." Afterwards he sailed the Mediterranean Sea and arrived at Fez where the Wise Men had directed him. He found Fez a great center of learning to which men journeyed who sought further knowledge. "Yearly there came something to Light, whereby the Mathematics, Physic and Magic (for in those are they of Fez most skilful) were amended."



After two years' study of the secrets and mysteries (sciences and arts) in Fez, C.R.C. journeyed to Spain. He

expected to be well received because of his learning. When he left Fez, he took with him "many costly things into Spain." He had learned so much in his travels and personally had so profited by his knowledge that he hoped "the learned in Europe would highly rejoice with him, and begin to rule and order all their studies according to those sound and sure foundations." To his great disappointment, however, all his learning "was to them a laughing matter; and being a new thing unto them, they feared that their great name should be lessened, if they should now begin to learn and acknowledge their many errors."

We can see that the spread of the Rosicrucians in the early seventeenth century encountered many of the same difficulties which members now experience in endeavoring to introduce the teachings of the Order. Many people are inclined to laugh at that which is different from their habitual beliefs, not even acknowledging the merit of what is offered. Still others will not admit the obvious errors of their thinking for fear that their personal integrity will be lessened. However, as do all Rosicrucians of today, C.R.C. kept up his campaign of interesting others in the wisdom of the Order. Eventually, according to the account, he "undertook, with some few adjoined with him" to further expand the teachings.

He was qualified and initiated to go into the world and form his great secret society. Finally, he returned to Germany where he was to revive the work in its new cycle. There he first built himself a proper habitation, with buildings, and scientific and experimental instruments. He spent five years getting ready for the announcement which he made through manuscripts such as the Fama. After five years, he needed the help of additional workers in carrying out the great scheme throughout the country. "Wherefore he desired to that end, to have out of his first Cloyster (to the which he bare a great affection) three of his Brethren." These he bound to himself "to be faithful, diligent, and secret."

The next paragraph says, "After this manner began the Fraternity of the Rosie Cross; first, by four persons onely, and by them was made the Magical Language and writing, with a large Dictionary, which we yet dayly use to Gods praise and glory, and do finde great wisdom therein; they made also the first part of the Book M."

They erected a building called the Domus Sancti Spiritus, the House of the Holy Spirit, or the Sovereign Sanctuary as these places are still called throughout the world. Then they decided they were ready for more members. "To this end was chosen brother R. C. his deceased fathers brothers son, brother B. a skilful Painter, G. and P.D. their Secretary, all Germaines except I. A. so in all they were eight in number."



In analyzing parts of the Fama we come face to face with some facts regarding the life of C.R.C., and we also have an opportunity to analyze his own expressions of thought. Whoever actually composed the Manifesto was representing the thoughts and personality of the character who assumed the symbolic name of Christian Rosenkreuz.

The next paragraphs give directions as to how these members, constituting a board of members working in various lands, should come together for periodic consultation and further instruction.

It is contended by some that the original Rosicrucian Order consisted of only the eight members who scattered themselves throughout the world and met together only once a year in secrecy, that they never organized a regular group of students and never created lodges, chapters, or branches of the organization. In other words, critics contend that the Rosicrucian Order was originally an invisible group of only a few persons and never had a nationwide or worldwide body. They never actually formed a solid, physical organization but remained merely something spiritual and more or less mythical.

Such critics evidently never read the Fama carefully nor analyzed it properly. Granting that these eight founders did disperse themselves into other lands, what was their work to be? You do not have such emissaries unless they are working toward some end and for a purpose. The Fama distinctly reveals that these men went to various parts of Europe for the purpose of spreading the great work of Rosicrucians and to carry the Light into those lands.

Why do this if no more than eight men were ever to be a part of the organization? The critics say these eight men went out as missionaries to reform the world, not to secure new members, and that they were going to carry on the great reformation quietly and secretly, without letting anyone know they were members, and without admitting any new members to their group. Such a statement is ridiculous. How could eight men, scattered throughout Europe, bring about a reformation of any kind? If all eight had centered their activities in just one field of effort to reveal just one thing, it would have taken a lifetime, but for eight men separately to reform all Europe and to spread the Light to all people would have been a tremendous task that never would have been finished.

We know from the results accomplished that these men in each district where they went carried on some outer propaganda and other missionary work without revealing that they were Rosicrucians, but after they had gathered around them certain followers and seekers for Light, they selected the most eager and sincere seekers and brought them into the inner circle of the organization, that they, when qualified, might seek for others to be brought into the Order.





In this way the organization grew, increasing in membership and in power and influence. It was necessary, however, for each of these eight original founders to act as Grand Masters in each of the countries where they were located to supervise the work of the others. Once a year they were to come together as Grand Masters or Grand Councilors in a serious session to compare notes and receive additional instruction from the Father of the Order.

Fraternally,

YOUR CLASS MASTER

NOTE: The symbol of this degree, as you will observe on each page, is a scarabaeus (scarab) within the equilateral triangle. To the ancient Egyptians, the scarabaeus, one of several species of natural beetles, had a number of symbolic meanings. It frequently was held to be the emblem of the sun, sometimes appearing in the sun bark or boat, which depicted the apparent movement of the sun across the heavens. At other times, it would be represented as having extended wings and holding the globe of the sun in its claws—symbolizing the creative power of the sun, and the Greater Light or illumination. Winged scarabs have often been found in the sarcophagi (coffins) with prayers to the dead engraved upon them.

However, the generally accepted symbolic meaning of the scarab was immortality. The beetle would at times be so dormant as to appear dead and yet when placed with its head toward the sun would revive as though its life had been restored by the touch of the sun's rays. Consequently, it depicted the early Egyptian conception of rebirth and life everlasting, which comes from the light of understanding touching the human consciousness. It has been used by Rosicrucians for centuries to symbolize immortality and rebirth. It is thus a very appropriate symbol for the content of the teachings of this most illustrious degree.

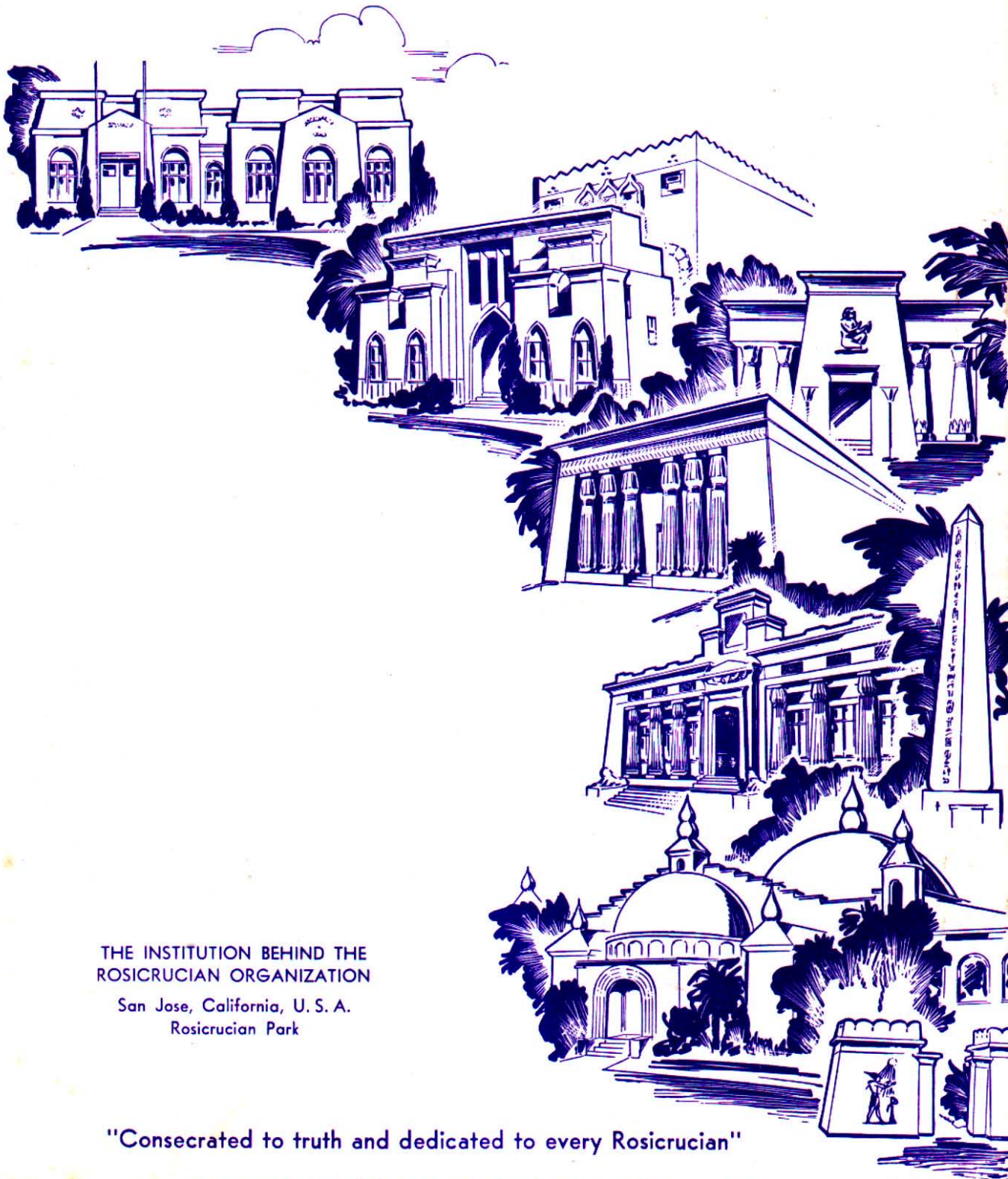


Summary of This Monograph



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 *Fama Fraternitatis* was popular in Europe in 1614 to 1618. Thomas Vaughan's English edition appeared in 1652.
- ¶ It is a misrepresentation to say that the Rosicrucian Order is not a worldly fraternal society but a mystical, spiritual organization without any physical form.
- ¶ The opening of the Manifesto emphasized the Rosicrucian idea of only one God who is wise and merciful.
- ¶ The purpose of the Order is to renew all arts or knowledge so that man may understand his nobleness and worth, and why he is called a microcosm.
- ¶ C. R. C. laboured for a general Reformation of knowledge. He travelled to the East, arriving in Damascus at the age of sixteen.
- ¶ He went also to Egypt and Fez, and after two years' study he journeyed to Spain. To his disappointment, his learning was to them a laughing matter.
- ¶ He returned to Germany, built himself a "fitting habitation," and in five years he bound to himself three of his Brethren. They erected a building called *Domus Sancti Spiritus*, and decided they were ready for more members. These eight members worked in various lands to spread the great work of the Order.



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