



The Rosicrucian Order

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THE CONCURRENCE

This Week's Consideration of a Famous Opinion



¶ Neo-Platonism, of which Plotinus is the most original and important philosopher, needs no introduction to the serious student of mysticism. Based chiefly on Plato's theory of ideas, the new system further maintains the doctrine of emanation, advocating intellectual meditation as the nearest approach to the spiritual realm and eventual union with God. The following quotation is pertinent to this week's lesson.



... He who does not understand how the soul contains the Beautiful within itself, seeks to realize beauty without, by laborious production. His aim should rather be to concentrate and simplify, and so to expand his being; instead of going out into the Manifold, to forsake it for the One, and so to float upwards towards the divine fount of being whose stream flows within him.

... You can only apprehend the Infinite by a faculty superior to reason, by entering into a state in which you are your finite self no longer, in which the Divine Essence is communicated to you. This is Ecstasy. It is the liberation of your mind from its finite consciousness. ... In the reduction of your soul to its simplest self, its divine essence, you realize this Union, this Identity.

—PLOTINUS, c.205-270 A.D.

To the Members of the Esoteric Hierarchy, Greetings!

At this point in our procedure with the various esoteric laws, I think it important to call your attention to something that may interfere with your Cosmic attunement. I want to be sure that no error of thought or practice creeps in to interfere with your proper progress. It is so easy to develop a wrong idea through the misunderstanding or misinterpretation of words or phrases. This artificially created idea becomes a fixed thing in the mind and influences the individual to a greater extent than he is aware of. Sometimes such erroneous ideas are difficult to dislodge and even more difficult to remove altogether from the consciousness.

One such is this: Because you use a candle flame—or some other object—upon which to fix your attention or concentrate during your periods of attunement, you may come to believe that you are attuning yourself to the Cosmic through the candle, or through the object at which you are gazing. This erroneous idea may develop into the belief that by this attunement with the object, your mind and consciousness automatically become attuned with the Cosmic.

In the early part of the twentieth century a scientist in France, attempting to carry Mesmer's experiments further than he himself did, utilized a revolving mirror—much like those used in laboratories for experiments in physics, and for the analysis of the principles of physics. He used it for the purpose of attracting and holding the attention of persons whom he wanted to "hypnotize" or "mesmerize." He placed this revolving mirror which was much like a cube five inches in width with small mirrors on each of its four sides, on a table in the center of a large room and caused it to revolve very rapidly by a spring motor. The rapidly revolving mirrors caught the reflections of the light in the room and caused a continuous scintillation of multi-colored lights like a sparkling diamond being turned rapidly. The persons seated in a large circle around the walls, all gazing intently at the revolving mirror, experienced ocular fatigue because of their fixed attention.

Because of this, drowsiness overcame them and caused them gradually to go into a light sleep. The psychological result was that many of them thought that the revolving mirror had some strange power and was responsible for the sleep produced. This belief, becoming a fixed idea in their minds, caused the light degree of natural sleep to turn into the early stages of hypnotic sleep. From there on, it was easy for the professional hypnotist to control the hypnotic sleep of those affected in this manner. (Of course, some did not become drowsy and did not go to sleep at all.)



I am not going to discuss the psychological principles involved in this, but I want to state that one of the problems

this scientist and his investigating committee faced was that after months of such experimentation with the most susceptible of his subjects, he could not hypnotize them or even cause them to go into a natural sleep without the use of revolving mirrors. It was discovered, then, that those most quickly affected psychologically and physically by the methods used were those who had developed or held the erroneous idea that there was some power in the mirror itself. Their faith, therefore, in their ability to go into any form of induced sleep was attached to and a part of their faith in the powers possessed by the mirror. When the scientist spoke to a few of these persons in private and showed them the mirror and explained that there was no power in the mirror at all, they lost faith in the entire process and thereafter could not be put into an induced sleep state by the use of mirrors or any other method.

We see the same thing in the religious faith of many in amulets, talismans, good luck charms, and sacred emblems. There were many young men, one in particular of whom we know, in World War I whose bravery and fearlessness were entirely dependent upon a religious emblem which he wore around his neck. There are thousands, or even millions, of persons today whose faith in the possibility of future life or the forgiveness of sin and the resurrection of the body is attached to and a part of their faith in the Cross as a sacred emblem or in some ritual or rite performed during their illness. It is not our privilege to argue for or against any element of religious symbols, emblems, or devices; yet the mystic will never pin his faith on some inanimate object, nor will he have any degree of faith in those things which are not essentially and in every way a part of God Himself.

For that reason, I do not want any member of this class unconsciously to develop the idea that the candle flame or bowl of water or Rosy Cross emblem, or the mirror in his sanctum, or any other object is an intermediary of some power or mystical consciousness that establishes Cosmic attunement between the Cosmic and himself. The candle flame or bowl of water is used merely to attract and hold the attention of the eyes, for as was said in an earlier monograph, it is possible to concentrate the attention upon the head of a pin or any small bright object held in the hand or placed on the table in front of you. Have you ever noticed in an intensely interesting motion picture that everyone becomes so concentrated that they lose consciousness of their surroundings and even of themselves and become a part of the picture for the time being? Have you noticed, too, that you yourself have become so unaware of your surroundings that you did not sense people behind you getting up and going out, or the person next you rising and even passing in front of you without diverting your attention from the screen?



This should indicate that we can become unconscious of our environment through concentrating attention along one line. In the theater, we are usually unaware of what is going on

behind us and think only of what is before us. If there were no picture on the screen but only a blank space, our attention would be more easily diverted by things going on around us. In such a case the mere concentration of our eyes—and not our thought—would not be sufficient to hold us. The thinking must be concentrated and focused upon one point or one line of reasoning and realization if we are to have good attunement, or concentrated attention.

When looking at the candle flame or bowl of water, the mind as well as the eyes must be centered upon what you are attempting to do. In other words, your eyes may be fixed in a gaze on the candle flame, but your mind at the moment is freeing itself from association with physical conditions and lifting itself, beyond the candle flame, beyond even the room in which you are seated to the transcendental world of Cosmic power, Cosmic mind, and Cosmic laws. Just as in the motion-picture theater you allow your consciousness to leave your body and become a part of what is going on in the place pictured on the screen, so you must allow your consciousness to rise up and away from the candle, the bowl of water, the sanctum mirror or anything else and become a part of life in the Cosmic.

There is just this one difference between becoming a part of the action on the screen and becoming a part of the Cosmic: In letting yourself become one of the persons on the screen, you take your physical body with you. You are there mentally and physically, not necessarily in a spiritual sense. In letting yourself become a part of the Cosmic, however, you have thought only of your consciousness, of the inner self that does not have to drag a body of 100 or 150 pounds along with it. Until you do feel that you are in the Cosmic in a spiritual or soul sense, separated from your body momentarily, and living a life of utmost freedom in action and movement, you will not attain a proper degree of Cosmic attunement.

In other words, you must lose consciousness of yourself and your environment. While attuned with the great space and world beyond the earth, you must have no sense of who, what, or where you may be at that moment. Once you feel that you are a part of the Cosmic kingdom beyond this earth plane, you will find breathing easier, your heart-beat slightly slower, and your entire being will seem the essence of something intangible moving in space, conscious of law and principle and the spiritual nature of Cosmic existence. Your mind may fill with beautiful thoughts and inspiring ideas; but you will remain in that open, free form of attunement as though you were suspended in the great open space ready to obey any instructions you may receive.

After a few minutes, you will find yourself very relaxed. Your heart will beat a little slower, your respiration will slow, and you will feel a calmness as well as a magnetic power sweeping through your very being. This is the time, then, to



TWELFTH DEGREE

NUMBER EIGHTY-THREE

PAGE FOUR

take hold of any inspiring thought or idea and hold fast to it while you discontinue your concentration, and sit back in your chair in further relaxation to discuss with yourself the idea or thought that has come to you from the Cosmic. In this way, you will be given guidance, or perhaps an answer to a question or problem that has been in your mind. When an idea or prophecy has come and you have thought it over carefully and digested its value to you, you should write in a notebook the date and hour when the idea first came and what it seemed to signify. As the days and weeks go by, you will find that many of these revelations or inspiring messages become very helpful and instructive and, particularly, answer the questions that are uppermost in your personal life.

Throughout this coming week I want you to continue the matter of attainment by using the candle. Always think of it as a torch that is lighting your way to the path of glory, not as something of value to you otherwise. If you will do this throughout the coming week, I am sure you will be prepared for what other points I give you next week.

May Peace Profound abide with each of you.

Fraternally,

YOUR CLASS MASTER

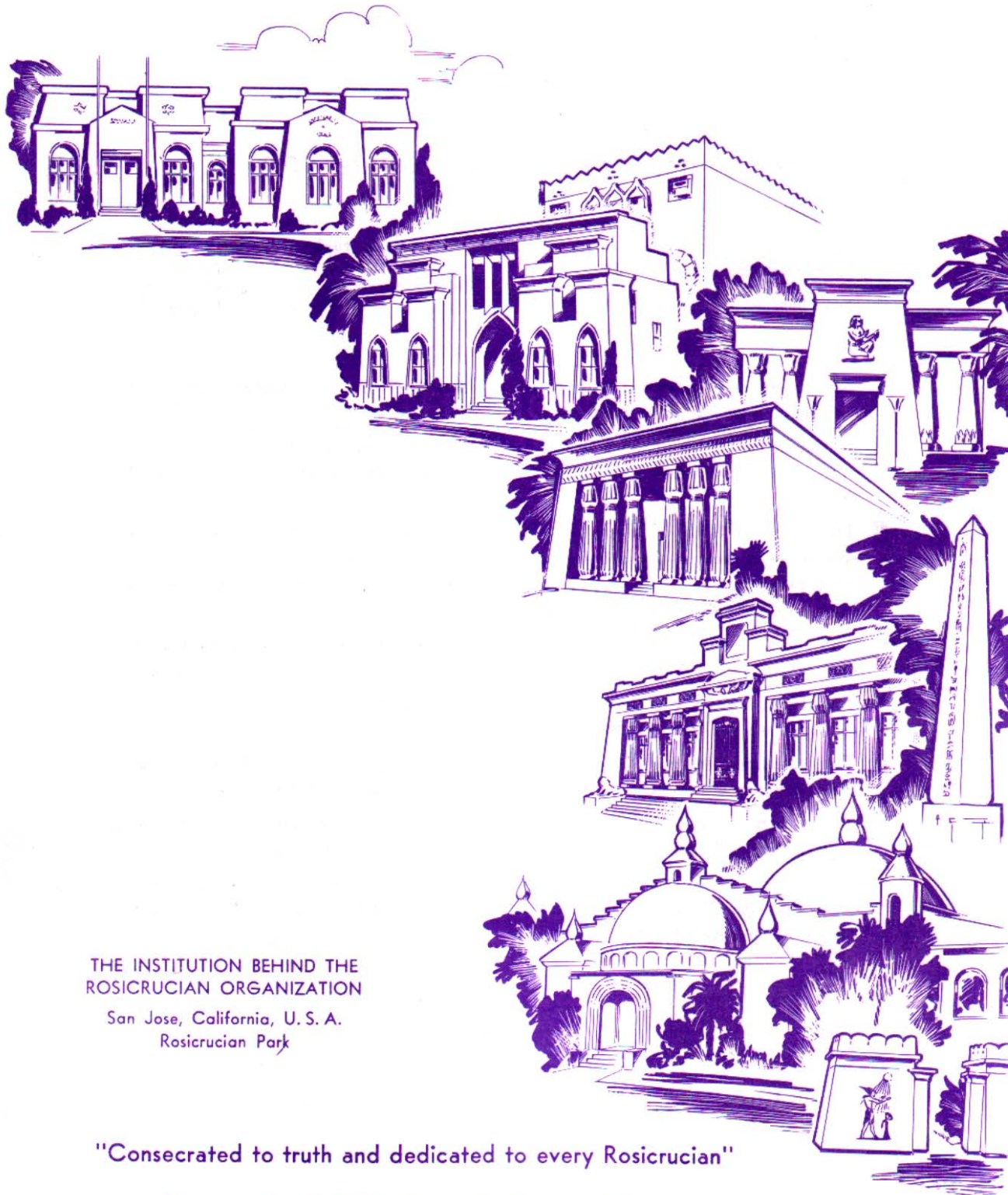


Summary of This Monograph



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.

- ¶ An idea artificially created through a misunderstanding or misinterpretation of words or phrases may be difficult to remove from the consciousness.
- ¶ Just such an erroneous idea is the belief that by attuning with a candle flame or other object the mind and consciousness automatically become attuned to the Cosmic.
- ¶ The religious faith of many in amulets, talismans, good luck charms, and sacred emblems—as well as the belief in a power in the mirror by those participating as subjects in the scientist's experiments to induce hypnotic sleep with the aid of mirrors—are examples of this mistaken idea.
- ¶ The candle flame or bowl of water is used merely to attract and hold the attention of the eyes. Any small bright object may be used for the same purpose.
- ¶ The thinking must be concentrated and focused upon one point or one line of reasoning if we are to have good attunement.
- ¶ The consciousness must rise up and away from the object used for concentration purposes and become a part of the spiritual nature of the Cosmic.
- ¶ When such attunement has been achieved, breathing will become easier, the heart-beat slower, and one will sense a calmness and a magnetic power.
- ¶ It is at this point that any inspiring thought or idea must be held fast, the concentration discontinued, while the idea is then considered objectively and carefully before being entered into a notebook.



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