

Alchemists, the Rosicrucians and Asiatic Brethrens

By Charles William Heckethorn

The following article is an extract from the first volume of the author's "The Secret Societies of All Ages and Countries" (revised edition of the 1875 edition) first published in 1896. Written in the quaint biased style of an outsider. It should be read with discernment, as the subject, veiled as it is, is often distorted by hearsay, and open to abuse by charlatans. The period spelling of such words as Alchemists have not been altered. Our copy of the book, a reprint, was printed by University Books, New York, 1965. A new reprint can be obtained from Kessinger Publishing.

ALC MYMISTS

"In our day men are only too much disposed to regard the views of the disciples and followers of the Arabian school, and of the late Alchemists, respecting transmutation of metals, as a mere hallucination of the human mind, and, strangely enough, to lament it. But the idea of the variable and changeable corresponds with universal experience, and always precedes that of the unchangeable."—LIEBIG

The alchemist he had his gorgeous vision
Of boundless wealth and everlasting youth;
He strove untiringly, with firm decision,
To turn his fancies into glorious truth,
Undaunted by the rabble's loud derision
Condemning without reason, without ruth,
And though he never found the pearl he sought,
Yet many a secret gem to light be brought.

238. ***Astrology perhaps Secret Heresy.***—The mystic astronomy of ancient nations produced judicial astrology, which, considered from this point of view, will appear less absurd. It was the principal study of the Middle Ages; and Rome was so violently opposed to it because, perhaps, it was not only heresy, but a wide-spread reaction against the Church of Rome. It was chiefly cultivated by the Jews, and protected by princes opposed to the papal supremacy. The Church was not satisfied with burning the books, but burned the writers; and the poor astrologers, who spent their lives in the contemplation of the heavens, mostly perished at the stake.

239. ***Process by which Astrology degenerated.***—As it often happens that the latest disciples attach themselves to the letter, understanding literally what in the first instance was only a fiction, taking the mask for a real face, so we may suppose astrology to have degenerated and become false and puerile. Hermes, the legislator of Egypt, who was revealed in the Samothracian mysteries, and often represented with a ram by his side—a constellation initiating the new course of the equinoctial sun, the conqueror of darkness—was revived in astrological practice; and a great number of astrological works, the writings of Christian Gnostics and Neo-Platonists, were attributed to him, and he was considered the father of the art from him called *hermetic*, and embracing astrology and alchemy, the rudimentary efforts of two sciences, which at first overawed ignorance by imposture, but, after labouring for centuries in the dark, conquered for themselves glorious thrones in human knowledge.

240. **Scientific Value of Alchemy.**— Though Alchemy is no longer believed in as a true science, in spite of the prophecy of Dr. Girtanner, of Göttingen, that in the nineteenth century the transmutation of metals will be generally known and practised, it will never lose its power of awakening curiosity and seducing the imagination. The aspect of the marvellous which its doctrines assume, the strange renown attaching to the memory of the adepts, and the mixture of reality and illusion, of truths and chimeras which it presents, will always exercise a powerful fascination upon many minds. And we ought also to remember that every delusion that has had a wide and enduring influence must have been founded, not on falsehood, but on misapprehended truth. This aphorism is especially applicable to Alchemy, which, in its origin, and even in its name, is identical with chemistry, the syllable *al* being merely the definite article of the Arabs. The researches of the Alchemists for the discovery of the means by which transmutation might be effected were naturally suggested by the simplest experiments in metallurgy and the amalgamation of metals it is very probable that the first man who made brass thought that he had produced imperfect gold.

241. **The Tincture.**— The transmutation of the base metal was to be effected by means of the transmuting tincture, which, however, was never found. But it exists for all that; it is the power that turns a green stalk into a golden ear of corn, that fills the sour unripe apple with sweetness and aroma, that has turned the lump of charcoal into a diamond. All these are natural processes, which, being allowed to go on, produce the above results. Now, all base metals may be said to be imperfect metals, whose progress towards perfection has been arrested, the active power of the tincture being shut up in them in the first property of nature. If a man could take hold of the tincture universally diffused in nature, and by its help assist the imprisoned tincture in the metal to stir and become active, then the transmutation into gold, or rather the manifestation of the hidden life, could be effected. But this power or tincture is so subtle that it cannot possibly be apprehended; yet the Alchemists did not seek the non-existing, but only the unattainable.

242. **Aims of Alchemy.**—The three great ends pursued by Alchemy were the transmutation of base metals into gold by means of the philosopher's stone; the discovery of the panacea, or universal medicine, the elixir of life; and the universal solvent, which, being applied to any seed, should increase its fecundity. All these three objects are attainable by means of the tincture—a vital force, whose body is electricity, by which the two latter aims have to some extent been reached, for electricity will both cure disease and promote the growth of plants. Alchemy was then in the beginning the search after means to raise matter up to its first state, whence it was supposed to have fallen. Gold was considered, as to matter, what the ether of the eighth heaven was as to souls; and the seven metals, each called by the name of one of the seven planets, the knowledge of the seven properties really implied being lost—the Sun, gold; Moon, silver; Saturn, lead; Venus, tin; Mercury, iron; Mars, mixed metal Jupiter, copper,⁽¹⁾—formed the ascending scale of purification, corresponding with the trials of the seven caverns or steps. Alchemy was thus either a bodily initiation, or an initiation into the mysteries, a spiritual Alchemy; the one formed a veil of the other, wherefore it often happened that in workshops where the vulgar thought the adepts occupied with handicraft operations, and nothing sought but the metals of the golden age, in reality, no other philosopher's stone was searched for than the cubical stone of the temple of philosophy; in fine, nothing was purified but the passions, men, and not metals, being passed through the crucible. Böhme, the greatest of mystics, has written largely on the perfect analogy between the philosophical work and spiritual regeneration.

243. **History of Alchemy.**—*Alchemy* flourished in Egypt at a very early age, and Solomon was said to have practised it. Its golden age began with the conquest of the Arabs in Asia and Africa, about the time of the destruction, of the Alexandrian Library. The Saracens, credulous, and intimate with the fables of talismans and celestial influences, eagerly admitted the wonders of Alchemy. In the splendid courts of Almansor and Haroun al Raschid, the professors of the hermetic art found patronage, disciples, and emolument. Nevertheless, from the above period until the eleventh century the only alchemist of note is the Arabian Geber, whose proper name was Abu Mussah Djafar al Sofi. His attempts to transmute the base metals into gold led him to several discoveries in chemistry and medicine. He was also a famous astronomer, but—*sic transit gloria mundi*!—he has descended to our times as the founder of that jargon known by the name of gibberish! The Crusaders brought the art to Europe; and about the thirteenth century Albertus Magnus, Roger Bacon, and Raymond Lully appeared as its revivers. Edward III. engaged John le Rouse and Master William de Dalby, alchemists, to make experiments before him; and Henry VI. of England encouraged lords, nobles, doctors, professors, and priests to pursue the search after the philosopher's stone; especially the priests, who, says the king— (ironically?) —having the power to convert bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, may well convert an impure into a perfect

metal. The next man of note that pretended to the possession of the *lapis philosophorum* was Paracelsus, whose proper name was Philip Aureolus Theophrastus Paracelsus Bombastus, of Hohenheim, and whom his followers called "Prince of Physicians, Philosopher of Fire, the Trismegistus of Switzerland, Reformer of Alchymistical Philosophy, Nature's faithful Secretary, Master of the Elixir of Life and Philosopher's Stone, Great Monarch of Cbymical Secrets." He introduced the term *alcahest* (probably a corruption of the German words "*all geist*," - "all spirit"), to express the universal solvent. The Rosicrucians, of whom Dr. Dee was the herald, next laid claim to alchymistical secrets, and were, in fact, the descendants of the Alchymists; and it is for this reason chiefly that these latter have been introduced into this work, though they cannot strictly be said to have formed a secret society.

244. Still, Alchymists formed Secret Societies.—Still, in the dedication to the Emperor Rudolph II., prefixed to the work entitled *Thesaurinella Chyrnica—auræ tripartita*, we read "Given in the Imperial City of Hagenau, in the year 1607 of our salvation, and in the reign of the true governor of Olympus, Angelus Hagith, anno cxcvii." The author calls himself Benedictus Figulus. The dedication further mentions a Count Bernhard, evidently one of the heads of the order, as having been introduced to a society of Alchymists, numbering fourteen or fifteen members, in Italy. Further, Paracelsus is named as the *monarcha* of this order; that is, the monarch, a local head, subject to the governor of Olympus, the chief of the Italian society. The author also, beside the usual chronology, gives a separate sectarian date; if we deduct cxcvii. (197) from 1607, we obtain the date 1410 as that of the foundation of the society. Figulus says it was merged in the Rosicrucian order about the year 1607. Whether it was the same as that mentioned by Raymond Lully in his "Theatrum Chymicum," whose chief was called *Rex Physicorum*, and which existed before 1400, is uncertain.

245. Decay of Alchymy.—Alchymy lost all credit in this country by the failure, and consequent suicide, of Dr. James Price, a member of the Royal Society, to produce gold, according to promise, the experiments to be performed in the presence of the Society. This occurred in 1783. But in 1796 rumours spread throughout Germany of the existence of a great union of adepts, under the name of the Hermetic Society, which, however, consisted really of two members only, the well-known Karl Arnold Kortum, the author of the *Jobsiade*, and one Bährens, though there were many "honorary" members. The public, seeing no results, though the "Society" promised much, at last took no further notice of the Hermetics, and the wars, which soon after devastated Europe, caused Alchymy to be forgotten; though up to the year 1812 the higher society of Carlsruhe amused itself, in secret cliques, with playing at the transmutation of metals. The last of the English Alchymists seems to have been a gentleman of the name of Kellerman, who as lately as 1828 was living at Lilley, a village between Luton and Hitchin. There are, no doubt, at the present moment men engaged in the search after the philosopher's stone; we patiently wait for their discoveries.

246. Specimens of Alchymistic Language.—After Paracelsus the Alchymists divided into two classes: those that pursued useful studies, and those that took up the visionary fantastical side of Alchymy, writing books of mystical trash, which they fathered on Hermes, Aristotle, Albertus Magnus, and others. Their language is now unintelligible. One brief specimen may suffice. The power of transmutation, called the Green Lion, was to be obtained in the following manner:—"In the Green Lion's bed the sun and moon are born; they are married and beget a king; the king feeds on the lion's blood, which is the king's father and mother, who are at the same time his brother and sister. I fear I betray the secret, which I promised my master to conceal in dark speech from every one who does not know how to rule the philosopher's fire." Our ancestors must have had a great talent for finding out enigmas if they were able to elicit a meaning from these mysterious directions; still, the language was understood by the adepts, and was only intended for them. Many statements of mathematical formulæ must always appear pure gibberish to the uninitiated into the higher science of numbers; still, these statements enunciate truths well understood by the mathematician. Thus, to give but one instance, when Hermes Trismegistus, in one of the treatises attributed to him, directs the adept to catch the flying bird and to drown it, so that it fly no more, the fixation of quicksilver by a combination with gold is meant.

247. Personal Fate of the Alchymists.—The Alchymists, though chemistry is greatly indebted to them, and in their researches they stumbled on many a valuable discovery, as a rule led but sad and chequered lives, and most of them died in the utmost poverty, if no worse fate befell them. Thus one of the most famous Alchymists, Bragadino, who lived in the last quarter of the sixteenth century, who obtained large sums of money for his pretended secret from the Emperor of Germany, the Doge of Venice, and other potentates, who boasted that Satan was his slave—two ferocious black dogs that always accompanied him being demons—was at last hanged at Munich, the cheat with which he performed the pretended

transmutation having been discovered. The two dogs were shot under the gallows. But even the honest Alchemists were doomed—

"To lose good days that might be better spent,
To waste long nights in pensive discontent;
To speed *to-day*, to be put back to-morrow,
To feed on hope, to pine with fear and sorrow
To fret their souls with crosses and with cares,
To eat their hearts through comfortless despairs.
Unhappy wights, born to disastrous end,
That do their lives in tedious tendance spend!"

THE ROSICRUCIANS

268. Merits of the Rosicrucians.— A halo of poetic splendour surrounds the order of the Rosicrucians; the magic lights of fancy play around their graceful daydreams, while the mystery in which they shrouded themselves lends an additional charm to their history. But their brilliancy was that of a meteor. It just flashed across the realms of imagination and intellect, and vanished forever; not, however, without leaving behind some permanent and lovely traces of its hasty passage, just as the momentary ray of the sun, caught on the artist's lens, leaves a lasting image on the sensitive paper. Poetry and romance are deeply indebted to the Rosicrucians for many a fascinating creation. The literature of every European country contains hundreds of pleasing fictions, whose machinery has been borrowed from their system of philosophy, though that itself has passed away; and it must be admitted that many of their ideas are highly ingenious, and attain to such heights of intellectual speculation as we find to have been reached by the Sophists of India. Before their time, alchemy had sunk down, as a rule, to a grovelling delusion, seeking but temporal advantages, and occupying itself with earthly dross only: the Rosicrucians spiritualised and refined it by giving the chimerical search after the philosopher's stone a nobler aim than the attainment of wealth, namely, the opening of the spiritual eyes, whereby man should be able to see the supernal world, and be filled with an inward light to illumine his mind with true knowledge. The physical process of the transmutation of metals was by them considered as analogical with man's restoration to his unfallen state, as set forth in Böhme's *Signatura Rerum*, chapters vii., x.—xii. The true Rosicrucians, therefore, may be defined as spiritual alchemists, or Theosophists.

269. Origin of the Society doubtful.—The society is of very uncertain origin. It is affirmed by some writers that from the fourteenth century there existed a society of physicists and alchemists who laboured in the search after the philosopher's stone; and a certain Nicolo Barnaud undertook journeys through Germany and France for the purpose of establishing a Hermetic society. From the preface of the work, "Echo of the Society of the Rosy Cross," it moreover follows that in 1597 meetings were held to institute a secret society for the promotion of alchemy. Another indication of the actual existence of such a society is found in a book published in 1605, and entitled, "Restoration of the Decayed Temple of Pallas," which gives a constitution of Rosicrucians. Again, in 1610, the notary Haselmeyer pretended to have read in a MS. the *Fama Fraternalitatis*, comprising all the laws of the Order. Four years afterwards appeared a small work, entitled "General Reformation of the World," which in fact contains the *Fama Fraternalitatis*, where it is related that a German, Christian Rosenkreuz, founded such a society in the fourteenth century, after having learned the sublime science in the East. Of him it is related, that when, in 1378, he was travelling in Arabia, he was called by name and greeted by some philosophers, who had never before seen him; from them he learned many secrets, among others that of prolonging life. On his return he made many disciples, and died at the age of 150 years, not because his strength failed him, but because he was tired of life. In 1604 one of his disciples had his tomb opened, and there found strange inscriptions, and a MS. in letters of gold. The grotto in which this tomb was found, by the description given of it, strongly reminds

us of the Mithraic Cave. Another work, published in 1615, the *Confessio Fraternitatis Rosicrucian Rosææ Crucis*, contains an account of the object and spirit of the Order.

270. **Rosicrucian Literature.**—*The Thesamarinella Chymicaaurea*, already referred to (sect. 244) may have been a Rosicrucian work, as also *Raymundii Lullii Theoria*. In 1615, Michael Meyer published at Cologne his *Themis Aurea, hoc est, de legibus Fraternitatis Rosææ Crucis*, which purported to contain all the laws and ordinances of the brotherhood. Another work, entitled “The Chymical Marriage of Christian Rosenkreuz,” and published in 1616, in the shape of a comic romance, is really a satire on the alchymistical delusions of the author’s time. Both works were written, as we learn from his autobiography, by Valentine Andrea, a Lutheran clergyman of Herrenberg, near Tübingen. But instead of being taken for what the author intended them—satires on the follies of Paracelsus, Weigel, and the alchymists—the public swallowed his fictions as facts: printed letters and pamphlets appeared everywhere, addressed to the imaginary brotherhood, whilst others denounced and condemned it. One Christopher Nigrinus wrote a book to prove the Rosicrucians were Calvinists, but a passage taken from one of their writings showed them to be zealous Lutherans. Andrea himself, in his “Turns Babel” and “*Mythologia Christiana*,” published *circa* 1619, condemns Rosicrucianism. Impostors, indeed, pretended to belong to the fraternity, and to possess its secrets, and found plenty of dupes. Numerous works also continued to appear. Here are the titles of a few of them

“*Epistola ad patres de Rosea Cruce.*” Frankfurt, 1617.

“Quick Message to the Philosophical Society of the Rosy Cross.” By Valentine Ischirnessus. Danzig, 1617.

“The Whole Art and Science of the God-Illuminated Fraternity of Christian Rosenkreuz.” By Theophilus Schweighart. 1617.

“Discovery of the Colleges and Axioms of the Illuminated Fraternity of Christian Rosenkreuz.” By Theophilus Schweighart. 1618.

“*De naturæ secretis quibusdam at Vulcaniam artem chymicæ ante omnia necessariis*, addressed to the Masters of the Philosophic Fraternity of the Rosy Cross.” 1618. N. P.

“Sisters of the Rosy Cross; or, Short Discovery of these Ladies, and what Religion, Knowledge of Divine and Natural Things, Trades and Arts, Medicines, &c., may be found therein.” Parthenopolis, 1620.

“The Most Secret and Hitherto Unknown Mysteries of All Nature.” By the Collegium Rosianum. Leyden, 1630.

Of course the scientific value of all these writings was *nil*, the literary scarcely more.

271. **Real Objects and Results of Andrea’s Writings.**—*The* account given in the preceding paragraph of the literary performances of John Valentine Andrea is the popular one. But certain explanations are necessary. Andrea’s Rosicrucian writings concealed political objects, the chief of which was the support of the Lutheran religion, which the Rosicrucians themselves followed. Andrea made two journeys to Austria—the first in 1612, when the Emperor Mathias ascended the throne; and the second in 1619, a few months after the Emperor’s death. At Linz he had private interviews with several Austrian noblemen, all of them Lutherans. Rosicrucian lodges, to further the objects of the Reformation, were established, but numerous Catholics obtained admission to them, and gradually turned their tendencies in the very opposite direction. Andrea perceiving this withdrew from Rosicrucianism, and endeavoured by the subsequent writings, mentioned above, to disavow his former connection with it. With the same object also he, during his second residence in Austria, founded the “*Fraternitas Christi*,” to which many members of the Protestant Austrian nobility sought admission. Three years after the society was prohibited by the Government, and its final suppression hastened by an opposition society, founded by the Catholics, with the sanction of the Pope, first at Olmütz and then at Vienna, the leaders being the Counts Althan, Gonzaga, and Sforza; the order was called that of the “Blue Cross.” The Rosicrucians, being no longer under the influence of Andrea, broke up into a number of independent lodges, which quickly degenerated into mere traps to catch credulous dupes and their money; hence the duration of most was short. But on the accession of Joseph II., whose liberal principles were known, the Rosicrucians, as well as other secret societies, sprang into life again. Freemasonry became the fashion of the day. Masonic implements were worn as “charms;” the ladies carried muffs of white silk edged with blue, to represent the Mason’s aprons, and so on. The Emperor found it necessary to regulate the conduct of these secret societies. He suppressed all except that of the Freemasons, to whom in 1785 he granted a patent, which began thus: “Since nothing is to exist in a well-regulated state without proper supervision, We deem it necessary thus to declare our will: The so-called Masonic Societies, whose secrets are unknown to us, since we never were curious enough to inquire into their juggleries (*gauckeleien*),” &c. This edict, which abolished the

other societies, but allowed the Freemasons to continue their “juggleries,” as the Emperor called their ceremonies, threw many of the suppressed societies, including the Rosicrucians, into the arms of the Masonic Fraternity; the Asiatic Brethren, as we shall see further on (281), transferred their activity from Vienna to Sleswick.

272. Ritual and Ceremonies.—The “juggleries” of the Rosicrucians, whom the Emperor suppressed, were those of the “constitution” of 1763, and as follows :—The apartment where the initiation took place contained the *tabella mystica*, presently to be described. The floor was covered with a green carpet, and on it were placed the following objects:— A glass globe, standing on a pedestal of seven steps, and divided into two parts, representing light and darkness; three candelabra, placed triangularly; nine glasses, symbolising male and female properties; the quintessence, and various other things; a brazier, a circle, and a napkin.

The candidate for initiation is introduced by a brother, who takes him into a room where a light, pen, ink, and paper, sealing-wax, two red cords, and a bare sword are laid on a table. The candidate is asked whether he firmly intends to become a pupil of true wisdom. Having answered affirmatively, he gives up his hat and sword, and pays the fees. His hands having been bound, and his eyes bandaged and a red cord put round his neck, he is led to the door of the lodge, on which the introducer gently knocks nine times. The doorkeeper opens it and asks “Who is there?” The hierophant answers, “An earthly body holding the spiritual man imprisoned in ignorance.” The doorkeeper, “What is to be done to him?” The introducer, “Kill his body and purify his spirit.” The doorkeeper, “Then bring him into the place of justice.” They enter, place themselves in front of the circle, the candidate kneeling on one knee. The master stands at his right hand, with a white wand, the introducer at his left, holding a sword; both wear their aprons. The master says, “Child of man, I conjure you through all degrees of profane Freemasonry, and by the endless circle, which comprises all creatures and the highest wisdom, to tell me for what purpose you have come here?” The candidate, “To acquire wisdom, art, and virtue.” The master, “Then live! But your spirit must again rule over your body; you have found grace, arise and be free.” He is then unbound, steps into the circle, the master and the introducer hold the wand and sword crosswise, the candidate lays three fingers thereon, and as soon as the master says “Now listen,” the candidate repeats the oath propounded to him, which is simply a declaration that he will have no secrets from his brethren, and will lead a virtuous life. Then he is invested with the title of the order, the seal, password and sign, hat and sword, and has the mystical table interpreted to him, after which, like the Masons, he and the other brethren go from “labour” to “refreshment.”

This mystical table is divided into nine vertical and thirteen horizontal compartments. The first column of nine divisions gives the numbers, the second the names of the different degrees. The lowest comprises the *Juniores*, who know next to nothing; the highest the *Magi*, from whom nothing is hidden, who are masters over all things, like Moses, Hermes, Hiram. Their jewel is an equilateral triangle. According to the table, the different degrees have meeting-places all over Europe and Asia; the *Magi* meet at Smyrna [Izmir, Turkey] every ten years; the *Magistri*, a degree below, at Camra, in Poland, and Paris, in France, every nine years; the *Juniores* every two years at such a place as may be most convenient. The admission fee to the degree of *Magus* is ninety-nine gold marks; to that of *Junior*, three marks. The *Minores*, who know the “philosophical sun,” and “perform marvellous cures,” pay what they choose.

273. Rosicrucians in England in the Past.—The works of Andrea excited much attention in England, where mysticism and astrology at that time had many adherents, as Wood’s “*Athenm Oxonienses*” fully shows. Robert Fludd in this country was the great champion of the Rosicrucians. His two most important works concerning them are “*Apologia et Compendiaria Fraternalitatem de Rosea Cruce suspicionis et infamiae maculis aspersam. veritatis quasi Fluctibus abluens et abstergens.*” Leyden, 1616. “*Tractatus Apologeticus integritatem Societatis de Roseae Cruce defendeus.*” Lugdvai Batavorum, 1617. This latter is really a duplicate of the former with a new title.

Fludd was followed by one Heydon, born 1629. Strange to say, an attorney, who, among other works on the Rosicrucians wrote “An Epologue for an Apilogue,” wherein occur passages such as this: “I shall tell you what Rosicrucians are, and that Moses was their father. Some say they were of the order of Elias, some of Ezechiel, others define them to be the officers of the generalissimo of the world; that are as the eyes and ears of the great king, seeing and hearing all things, for they are seraphically illuminated as Moses was, according to this order of the elements, earth refined to water, water to air, air to fire.” Such gibberish as this was served up for the reading public some centuries ago, and, I suppose, satisfied them. In another of his works Heydon maintained that it was criminal to eat—though he did not abstain from the practice himself—but that there was a fine fatness in the air quite sufficient for nourishment, and that for

men of very voracious appetites, it was enough to place a cataplasm of cooked meat on the epigastrium to satisfy their hunger.

In 1646 Elias Ashmole, William Lilly, Dr. Thomas Wharton, George Wharton, Dr. J. Hewitt, Dr. J. Pearson, and others formed a Rosicrucian society in London, practically to carry out the scheme propounded in Bacon's "New Atlantis," that is, the erection of the House of Solomon. It was to remain as unknown as the island of Bensalem, that is to say, the study of nature was to be pursued esoterically, not exoterically. The carpet in their lodge represented the pillars of Hermes; seven steps, the first four of which symbolised the four elements, and the other three salt, sulphur, and mercury, led to an "exchequer," or higher court, or stage, on which were displayed the symbols of creation, or of the work of the six days. Some of the members of this society were Freemasons, hence they were enabled to hold their meetings in Masons' Hall, Masons' Alley, Basinghall Street. They kept nothing secret except their signs.

274. Origin of Name.—The name is generally derived, from the supposed founder of the order, Rosenkreuz, Rose Cross; but according to others, it is taken from the armorial bearings of the Andrea family, which were a St. Andrew's cross and four roses. Others again, modern writers, say it is composed of *ros*, dew, and *crux*, tile cross; *crux* is supposed mystically to represent LVX, or light, because the figure X exhibits the three letters; and light, in the opinion of the Rosicrucians, produces gold; whilst dew, *ros*, with the (modern) alchymists, was a powerful solvent. But Mr. Waite, in his "Real History of the Rosicrucians" (London, 1887), argues with much force, that tile Rosicrucians bore the rose and cross as their badge because they were ardent Protestants, to whom Martin Luther was an idol, prophet, and master, and the device on the seal of Martin Luther was a cross-crowned heart rising from the centre of a rose. The theory has much in its favour, but we cannot quite set aside tile fact that in all mystical systems the rose and the cross have always been emblems of paramount importance. We meet with them in the most ancient Hindu mythology. Lackschemi, the wife of Vishnu, was found in a rose with 108 leaves, whence the Indian rosary has the same number of beads, and to the Hindus the cross was the symbol of creation. We have already seen in the account of the Eleusinian Mysteries what importance was attached to the rose, and that Apuleius makes Lucius to be restored to his primitive form by eating roses; and the "Romance of the Rose" was considered by the Rosicrucians as one of the most perfect specimens of Provençal literature, and as the allegorical *chef d'oeuvre* of their sect. It is undeniable that this was coeval with chivalry, and had from thenceforth a literature rich in works, in whose titles the word *Rosa* is incorporated; as the *Rosa Philosophorum*, of which no less than ten occur in the *Artis Auriferæ quam Chiemiam vocant* (Basilea, 1610). The connection of the Rosicrucians with chivalry, the Troubadours, and the Albigenses, cannot be denied. Like these, they swore the same hatred to Rome; like these, they called Catholicism the religion of hate. They solemnly declared that the Pope was Antichrist.

275. Statements concerning themselves—They pretended to feel neither hunger nor thirst, nor to be subject to age or disease; to possess the power of commanding spirits, and attracting pearls and precious stones, and of rendering themselves invisible. They stated the aim of their society to be the restoration of all the sciences and especially of medicine and by occult artifices to procure treasures and riches sufficient to supply the rulers and kings with the necessary means for promoting the great reforms of society then needed. They were bound to conform to five fundamental Laws:— 1. Gratuitously to heal the sick. 2. To dress in the costume of the country in which they lived. 3. To attend every year the meeting of the Order. 4. When dying to choose a successor. 5. To preserve the secret one hundred years.

276. Poetical Fictions of Rosicrucians. — These are best known from the work of Joseph Francis Borri, a native of Milan. and it is to them the "poetic splendour which surrounds the Order," which, in fact, gave real existence to it, is due. Having preached against the abuses of the Papacy, and promulgated opinions which were deemed heretical. Borri was seized by order of the Inquisition and condemned to perpetual imprisonment, He died in the Castle of St. Angelo in 1695. The work referred to is entitled *The Key of the Cabinet of Signor Borri*," and is, in substance, nothing but the cabalistic romance entitled "The Count de Gabalis," published in 1670 by the Abbé de Villars. What we gather from this work is that the Rosicrucians discarded for ever all the old tales of sorcery and witchcraft and communion with the devil. They denied the existence of incubi and succubi, and of all the grotesque imps monkish brains had hatched and superstitious nations believed in. Man, they said, was surrounded by myriads of beautiful and beneficent beings, all anxious to do him service. These beings were the elemental spirits; the air was peopled with sylphs, the water with undines or naiads, the earth with gnomes, and the fire with salamanders. These the Rosicrucian could bind to his service, and imprison in a ring, a mirror, or a stone, and compel to appear when called, and render answers to such questions as he chose to put. All these

beings possessed great powers, and were unrestrained by the barriers of space or matter. But man was in one respect their superior: he had an immortal soul, they had not. They could, however, become sharers in man's immortality, if they could inspire one of that race with the passion of love towards them. On this notion is founded the charming story of "Undine"; "Shakespeare's Ariel is a sylph; the "Rape of the Lock," the Masque of "Comus," the poem of "Salamandrine," all owe their machinery to the poetic fancies of the Rosicrucians. Among other things they taught concerning the elemental spirits, they asserted that they were composed of the purest particles of the element they inhabited, and that in consequence of having within them no antagonistic qualities, being made of but one element (II), they could live for thousands of years. The Rosicrucians further held the doctrine of the *signatura rerum*, by which they meant that everything in this visible world has outwardly impressed on it its inward spiritual character. Moreover, they said that by the practice of virtue man could even on earth obtain a glimpse of the spiritual world, and above all things discover the philosopher's stone, which, however, could not be found except by the regenerate, for "it is in close communion with the heavenly essence." According to them the letters **INRI**, the sacred word of the Order of Rose Croix, signified *Igne Natura Regenerando Integrat*.

277. **The Hague Lodge.**— In the year 1622, Montanus, or, by his real name, Ludwig Conrad, of Bingen, was expelled from an order of Rosicrucians which then existed at The Hague, where they had a grand palace. They held their meetings by order of the master, called "imperator," in great cities, such as Amsterdam, Danzig, Nuremberg, Hamburg, Mantua, Venice, besides such as were held at The Hague. They publicly wore a black silk cord, but at their meetings they put on a gold band, to which were attached a golden cross and rose. Their card of membership was a large parchment, with many seals affixed with great ceremony. When holding a public procession, they carried a small green flag. This Montanus, who wrote a book entitled "Introduction to the Hermetic Science," says that he spent his patrimony and his wife's fortune, of eleven thousand dollars, for the benefit of the society, and that when he was totally impoverished he was expelled, being, however, bound over to keep their secrets, "which latter, indeed, I kept, as women do not reveal anything where there is nothing to reveal." These pretended secrets are supposed to be contained in a book entitled "Sinceri Renati Theophilosophia Theoretico-practica," but I have not been able to obtain or see a copy of this work. The society is supposed to have become extinct at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

278. **A Rosicrucian MS.**— According to a statement made by Dr. von Harless in his "Jacob Bohme and the Alchymists" (2nd ed., Leipzig, 1882), a society of Rosicrucians must have existed in Germany in the year 1641. Dr. von Harless says, "I have recently had an opportunity of inspecting a Rosicrucian MS. hitherto unknown. It was probably written about 1765, and contains the statutes of an order of Rosicrucians, with the title *Testamentum*. The original must date from the middle of the seventeenth century, as is proved by a special warning given to members to observe secrecy, especially towards Roman Catholic ecclesiastics, two members having, from not attending to this caution, been great sufferers in 1641. The MS., besides the statutes, also contains instructions for alchymistic operations. The Order, according to the MS., had one chief, called *imperator*; its chief seats were Ancona, Nuremberg, Hamburg, and Amsterdam. The members were to change their residence every ten years, and maintain the greatest secrecy as to their existence. The apprenticeship lasted seven years. Their mode of addressing one another was: *ave frater*; the answer: ~ *rosæ et aurææ*. The first: *crucis*; then both together: *Benedictus Deus qui dedit nobis signum*. Then the mutual production of the *signum*, consisting of an engraved seal, a specimen of which was also shown to Dr. von Harless."

On taking steps to obtain further particulars from Dr. von Harless himself, I learnt to my regret that he had died in 1878; and as he had given no intimation in the above-named works where the MS. is deposited, I am unable to report further thereon. But it would seem that the society referred to in the MS. was the same as the one spoken of in the "Thesaurinella," mentioned towards the end of sect. 244.

279. **New Rosicrucian Constitution.**—In 1714, or one hundred years after Andreä's writings, there appeared a new Rosicrucian constitution, entitled, "The True and Perfect Preparation of the Philosopher's Stone of the Brotherhood of the Golden and Rosy Cross. Published for the benefit *Filiorum Doctrinæ* by Sincero Renato, Breslau." The preface stated that the treatise was not the writer's work, but intrusted to him by a professor of the art, whom he was not allowed to name. The author divides the work into *practica ordinis minoris* and *practica ordinis majoris*, indicating the division of the Order into two distinct fraternities, the superior one being known as the "Brethren of the Golden Cross," their symbol being a red cross, and the inferior one as the "Brethren of the Rosy Cross," their symbol being a green cross, from which it is evident that the real work of the Order was alchymy. Each brother, on being initiated, dropped

his real name, and assumed a fictitious one, as we have seen that Ludwig Conrad was known in the Order as Montanus (277), and as hereafter we find the Illuminati assume all kinds of fancy names. Renato's book further states that the Order possessed large seminaries, as the above-named Montanus had asserted. Article 42 of the statutes prohibited the reception of married men into the Order; in Article 17 members who wished to marry were allowed to take wives, but were to live with them *philosophice*, whatever that may have meant. Article 44 enjoined that if a brother should, by misfortune or want of caution, be discovered by any potentate, he was rather to die than reveal the secrets of the Order.

280. *The Duke of Saxe-Weimar and other Rosicrucians.*— The first modern writer who openly professed himself a Rosicrucian was Duke Ernest Augustus of Saxe-Weimar, who in 1742 published his "Theosophic Devotions" in a small edition, copies of which are easily recognised by their red morocco binding and the ducal crown and cipher on the cover. In it he refers to the "last great union of brethren," and, according to the vignette at the end of the book, he must mean Rosicrucians.

We hear of a society of Rosicrucians founded by Freemasons, whose "General Constitutions" were settled in 1763; they were based on the "Themis Aurea" of Michael Maier, who had been physician-in-ordinary and alchemist to the Emperor Rudolph (1576 — 1612). This revived taste was taken advantage of by many adventurers. John George Schroepfer, who kept a coffee-house at Nuremberg in 1777. established at his house a lodge, and made so much pretence to secret and exclusive knowledge, that the Duke Ferdinand of Brunswick and the Duke of Courland—by whose order Schroepfer had once been flogged—invited him to Dresden, where they openly patronised him, while he deluded them with the apparitions of ghosts and magical phantasma—really produced by magic-lanterns and concave mirrors. But his conduct eventually so disgusted his patrons that they refused him further supplies of money, whereupon he shot himself in a wood near Leipzig.

But this vulgar cheat left credulous disciples behind. John Rudolph Bischofswerder (1741—1803), a major, and afterwards Prussian Minister of War, who had almost been a witness of Schroepfer's death, and John Christopher Wöllner (1732— 1800), a clergyman, and afterwards Prussian Minister of Public Cult, continued what Schroepfer had started. Under the patronage of the Crown Prince, Frederick William of Prussia, the nephew of Frederick the Great, whom he succeeded in 1786 as King Frederick William II., established at Berlin a Rosicrucian lodge, and the enlightened views which had been introduced by, and had prevailed during the reign of, old Fritz were quickly suppressed by religious persecution. At that time Bahrdt had considerable success with his resuscitated order of Illuminati. The two highly-placed rogues saw in this plebeian a man who might some day compete with them for the king's favour; so whilst they, in league with his mistress, the Countess Lichtenau, more than ever amused their silly royal patron with the calling up of ghosts and drunken orgies, they induced him to put forth the notorious Religious Edict of 1788, which was to stem the ungodly advances of the Illuminati, and which also restored the censorship of the Press. The book (in German). entitled "The Rosicrucian in his Nakedness," published by Master "Pianco," an ex-member of the society, in 1782, was a violent attack and *exposé* of the Rosicrucians; but the delusion continued to flourish.

ASIATIC BRETHREN

281. *Origin of the Order*—This Order originated probably about the year 1780, though its chiefs were not known in 1788; it was, however, suspected that Baron Ecker and Eckhofen was one of them. He resided at first at Vienna, but afterwards settled at Sleswick; he distinguished himself by his writings, but the superstitious proclaimed him a terrible *Cacomagus* [note: Gr. black magician] . The order spread from Italy to Russia. Its basis was Rosicrucian, its meetings were called Melchisedeck lodges, and Jews, Turks, Persians, and Armenians might be received as members. The masters were called the Worshipful Chiefs of the Seven Churches of Asia. The full title of the Order was "Order of the Knights and Brethren of St. John the Evangelist from Asia in Europe." The teaching of the Order was partly moral, that is to say, it instructed how to rule spirits, by breaking the seven seals; and partly physical, by showing how to prepare miraculous medicines and to make gold. It inculcated cabalistic doctrines. The names of the degrees were taken from the Hebrew, and were symbolical of their characteristics. The Order did not profess Rosicrucianism, yet in the Third Chief Degree the members were styled "True Rosicrucians." The results of the scientific researches of the masters were not communicated to aspirants; these had to discover them as they could. The fact seemed to be that the masters had nothing to communicate, but this admission would have been fatal to the Order its secrets appearing to exist in the credulity of outsiders only.

282. Divisions of the Order—The Order was divided into five degrees *viz.*, two probationary and three chief degrees. The first probationary degree, that of the "Seekers", never consisted of more than ten members. The period of probation was fourteen months. They had lectures delivered to them every fortnight, and the costume they wore at their meetings consisted of a round black hat with black feathers, a black cloak, a black sash with three buttons in the shape of roses, white gloves, and sword with a black tassel, a black ribbon, from which was suspended a double triangle, which symbol was also embroidered on the left side of the cloak.

The second probationary degree, consisting of ten members, was called that of the "Sufferers." Its duration was seven months. Whilst the "Seekers" were theorists only, the "Sufferers" were supposed to make practical researches in physical science. They wore round black hats with black and white feathers, black cloaks with white linings and collars, on which double triangles were embroidered in gold, black sashes with white edging and three rosettes, white gloves, and swords with black and white tassels.

The First Chief Degree styled its members "Knights and Brother-Initiates from Asia in Europe [note: Asian Minor/Anatolia, the Asian part of Turkey]." They wore round black hats with white, black, yellow, and red feathers, black cloaks with white linings and collars and gold lace; on the left breast of the cloak there was a red cross with four green roses, having in their centre a green shield with the monogram M and A. The same cross, of gold, and enamelled, was worn on a red ribbon; the member further wore a pink sash round the body edged with green and with three red roses, white gloves with a red cross and four green roses; the tassels of the swords displayed the four colours of the feathers.

283. Initiation into this Degree—On the reception of a "Sufferer" into this degree he was led into a room hung with black; the floor and furniture were covered with black cloth. The room was lit up with seven golden candlesticks, six of which had five branches each, whilst the seventh, standing in the centre, represented a human figure in a white dress and golden girdle. The chair of the master stood in the centre of the room on a dais of three steps, under a square black canopy; the back wall was partly open, but held back with seven tassels, and behind it was the Holiest of Holies, consisting of a balustrade of ten columns, on the basement of which was a picture of the sun in a triangle, surrounded by the divine fire. Under the centre candlestick was the carpet of the three masonic degrees, surrounded by nine lights, a tenth light standing a little further off at the foot of the throne. There stood, on the right, a small table, on which were placed a flaming sword, with the number 56 engraved thereon, and a green rod, with two red ends; to the left lay the Book of the Law.

The "Sufferer," being then in an adjoining room, was asked three times if he desired to be initiated. His answer being in the affirmative, the Grand Master ordered him to be introduced, after having read the inscription on a red shield in letters of gold over the door: "Here is the Door of the Eternal; the just enter here." The introducer then rang a bell twice, the Grand Master rang once, and the door was opened. The candidate stepped up to the table, and thrice made the Master's sign. He was then told that he was accepted, and had to sign an obligation never to reveal the secrets of the Chapter. After a few other childish ceremonies, he was led to the Table of Purification, on which stood three lights on as many columns. The one represented a man with the triangle, the other a woman with the triangle reversed; the central one a man with a double triangle. In the centre of the table stood a crystal cup, filled with water, in which salt had been dissolved, another cup with salt, a spoon, a bundle of cedar-wood bound with hyssop and pink and green silk. The candidate had his coat and waist-coat taken off, the collar of his shirt opened, and his right arm bared. Having knelt down, the Grand Master sprinkled his neck thrice with the water, saying, "May the Merciful One give thee the knowledge of thy weapons, of thy lance, and of the number Four [which with Rosicrucians is the root and beginning of all numbers]. Then touching his right arm he said, "May the Almighty give thee strength in battle;" and touching his breast, "May the Just One give thee as a conqueror rest in the centre." The "Sufferer" was then dressed again, the Grand Master opened the Holiest of Holies, and the candidate having taken the oath, the Grand Master dabbed him a Knight. Touching his right shoulder he said, "May the Infinite give thee strength, beauty, and wisdom for the fight;" and touching the left shoulder, "We receive thee, in the name of the most worshipful and wisest seven Fathers and Rulers of the seven Unknown Churches in Asia, as a Knight and initiated Brother." Touching him on the head, he said, "May the Eternal One give thee the light of the number Four, and thou shalt be delivered from the Eternal Death." Then there ensued mutual embracing, a little more speechifying by the Grand Master, and then the servants brought in salt, bread, wine, lamb and pork, the latter being symbolical of the Old and the New Covenant!

284. Second Chief Degree, Wise Masters.—This degree could only be obtained from the Sanhedrim, which constituted the highest authority, for in this degree began the revelation of secrets. What they were

has never become known to outsiders. We may assume them to have been wonderful, considering the wonderful costume the knights were entitled to wear in this degree, viz., a red hat with stripes of the four different colours mentioned, in a red cloak, with a green cross and roses, having in their centre the monogram J and C embroidered in gold on a red field; the same cross in gold, and enamelled in the same four colours, attached to a green ribbon, edged with red, and three green roses; white gloves, decorated with red crosses and green roses inside and out; sword, with green and red tassel.

285. Their Chief Degree, or Royal Priests, or True Rosicrucians, or the Degree of Melchisedeck.—

This degree also could be obtained from the Sanhedrim only. The number of its members was restricted to seventy-two. Solomon in all his glory was nothing compared with the True Rosicrucians in their official costume. Here it is: a hat, gold, pink, and green, the brim turned up in front, and the name Jehovah embroidered thereon in gold, and surmounted with white, red, yellow, black, and green feathers; a long pink undergarment, fitting closely to the body, the cuffs of the sleeves being made of materials similar to those composing the hat, as also the sash, worn round the waist, whereon were embroidered three roses, one white, one red, and the centre one the colours of the sash; the stockings or hose and shoes were of pink silk. The cloak consisted of materials similar to those of the hat, and was lined with green; on the left breast was seen a point with many rays issuing from it. Round the neck the knight wore a gold chain, having alternately between the ordinary links shields with the mono-grams M and A and J and C, and the representation of a tree, having on the right hand a man, and on the left a woman, who with one hand cover the *pudenda*, and touch the tree with the other; to the end of the chain the Urim and Thummim were attached. White gloves, decorated with green and red roses within and without, completed this gorgeous apparel.

286. Organisation of the Order - The Sanhedrim exercised the highest authority, which it could delegate to committees. appointed from among its members. The authority next under the Sanhedrim was the General Chapter, after which came the Provincial Chapters. All these various departments had every one their own officials, with high-sounding titles, which need not be given here—the reader will find enough of them among the Freemasons; but on reading a list of them, one cannot help exclaiming—

"And every one is Knighted,
And every one is Grand,
Who would not be delighted
To join in such a band?"

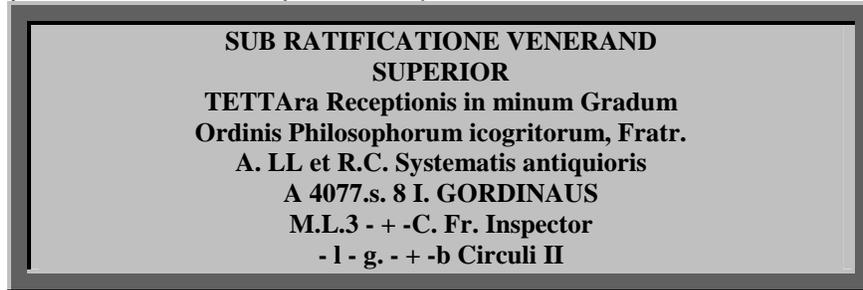
But to join in this band was somewhat expensive; the Order was a fee-trap of no mean order, something like a few of the spurious degrees in Masonry. On his initiation into the order of the Asiatic Brethren the candidate paid a fee of two ducats; when he took it into his head to found a Master Lodge, he had to pay seven ducats for the privilege, and two ducats for the carpet; for every folio of the Rules of the Lodge, ten kreuzer, or about twopence-halfpenny. The foundation of a Superior Master Lodge cost twelve ducats; of a Provincial Chapter, twenty-five ducats; of a General Chapter, fifty ducats. Every Brother paid to the Superior Master Lodge a monthly contribution of eightpence, and for extraordinary expenses and correspondence a fee proportionate to his means on the days of John the Baptist and John the Evangelist. These fees and subscriptions must annually have amounted to a goodly sum. What became of it? Rolling, a member, in 1787, published the laughable secrets of the Order.

* * *

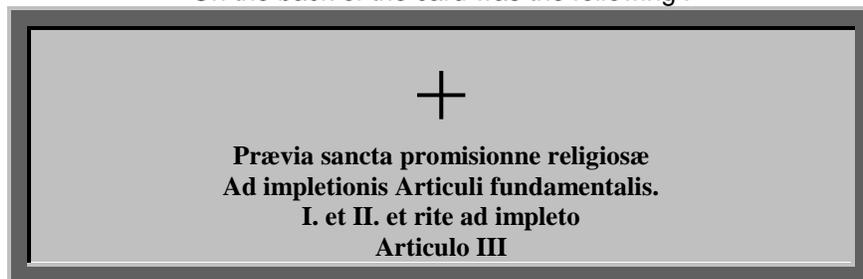
287. Rosicrucian Adventurers.—In 1781 there appeared at Vienna "An Address to the Rosicrucians of the Ancient System." The Order seems to have been revived about that time by Fraxinus—evidently a fictitious name—who was Provincial Grand Master of the four united Masonic Lodges at Hamburg. The Masons did not know that Fraxinus was a Rosicrucian, but he evidently knew how to fleece his dupes. We learn from one Cedrinus, who was a member of one of the Hamburg lodges, that for the initiation into the Rosicrucian degrees he was by installments mulcted in the sum of nearly 150 dollars. When Cedrinus began to express dissatisfaction at these continual extortions, Fraxinus, to quiet him, made Cedrinus keeper of the Great Seal of the Hamburg lodges. This gave the latter an opportunity of gaining an insight into the way in which degrees were manufactured, and how Masonry was corrupted by them. He fell out with Fraxinus, and everywhere proclaimed the machinations of the Rosicrucians. Fraxinus expelled him as a perjured brother.

Another Rosicrucian who obtained notoriety at about the same time was Brother Gordianus, who resided at Tübingen. He was supposed to be a Rosicrucian and an alchymist, since he lived well without having any visible means of subsistence. A schoolmaster, known by the initial L. only, had long desired to become a Rosicrucian; he consequently paid Gordianus a visit, who informed him, amongst other

matters, that the object of the Order was to carry out the intentions of Valentine Andrea; that certain conditions were imposed on every member, viz., eternal silence on all concerning the Order, the introduction within six weeks of another member, to show that he was capable of winning the confidence of his fellowmen, and the payment of an initiation fee of fifty dollars. The poor schoolmaster after a time raised the money, and received the subjoined receipt, on a small blue card



On the back of the card was the following :



Gordianus then proposed to L. that he should translate hermetical and magical writings from Latin into German, which L. did. Gordianus published these translations in a periodical he was then the editor of, without, however, remunerating L., but keeping his faith alive by repeated promises shortly to introduce him to the heads of the Order, who would communicate to him great and valuable secrets. But it seems L. became impatient. He and friends of his made inquiries, and ascertained that Gordianus had boasted that he intended to form a society of cheats and dupes. One of L.'s friends charged Gordianus with it. The latter, in 1785, in writing to L. tried to justify himself, but eventually disappeared from Tübingen, when L. made known the above facts as a warning to others.

288. Theoretical Brethren.—According to the book, “The Theoretical Brethren, or Second Degree of Rosicrucians,” published in 1785, the Rosicrucian ritual was as follows:— The candidate must have been initiated into the Scotch rite; he is led into a large room lighted with candelabra; at the upper end is a square with a black cloth, on which lie an open Bible, the Laws of the Order, and a black embroidered apron. On the carpet there is a globe, surrounded by two rings; from the outer one rays proceed into a circle of cloud, in which are seen the seven planets. A cubical stone is placed above Mars, and the Blazing Star above the globe. An unhewn stone stands opposite to Saturn. The planets promote the growth of the seven metals; the Blazing Star represents Nature; the two circles typify the *agens* and *patiens*, the male and female principles. The unhewn stone is the *materia prima philosophorum*; the cubical stone, the *patiens philosophorum*. The globe signifies the lodge. The oath is confined to promising fidelity to the Order, secrecy and devotion to the study of nature. The apron is white lined with black, and embroidered. The jewel is of gilt brass, and consists of two triangles with rays issuing therefrom, the name of Jehovah in Hebrew letters, and on the reverse the signs ☉ ♀ ☿. It is attached to a black ribbon.

Sign: raising the right hand, with the thumb and two fore-fingers extended, which is answered by placing the thumb and two fore-fingers on the heart. The grip is given by taking the brother with the right hand round the waist. The word is Chaos. In Hamburg the initiation fee was forty gold marks, about £23; monthly contributions amounted to about eighteen shillings. There are nine degrees. We need not go through the whole of them; a few may suffice.

The third degree is called *Bracheus*, in which the word is Majim, the answer to which is Brocha. The next degree is that of *Philosophus*; the word, Ruachhiber; initiation fee of about twenty dollars. There is a ninth degree, the initiation fee to which is ninety-nine gold marks, for which the member becomes a true

Magus, knowing all the secrets of nature, with power over all angels, devils, and men; the philosopher's stone is the least of his possessions.

289. Spread of Rosicrucianism.— These Rosicrucians assert that they had lodges in various countries. Vienna, according to their statements, was the seat of the Grand Master of the eighth degree⁽²⁾; Königsberg, Stettin, Berlin, and Danzig, meeting places of the Brethren of the fifth degree; at Breslau and Leipzig the Brethren of the fourth degree assembled; at Hamburg the Brethren of the sixth degree had a lodge, which cost nine thousand marks. The Order, moreover, had lodges at Nuremberg, Augsburg, Innsbruck, Prague, Paris, Venice, Naples, Malta, Lisbon, Bergen-op-Zoom, Cracow, Warsaw, Basle, Zurich in Europe, and at Smyrna and Ispahan in Asia. The sect was also known in Sweden and Scotland, where it had its own traditions, claiming to be descended from the Alexandrian priesthood of Ormuzd, who embraced Christianity in consequence of the preaching of St. Mark, founding the society of Ormuzd, or of the "Sages of Light." This tradition is founded on the Manichæism preserved among the Coptic priests, and explains the seal impressed on the ancient parchments of the Order, representing a lion placing his paw on a paper, on which is written the famous sentence, "*Pax tibi, Marce Evangelista meus*," from which we might infer that Venice had some connection with the spreading of that tradition. In fact, Nicolai tells us that at Venice and Mantua there were Rosicrucians, connected with those of Erfurt, Leipzig, and Amsterdam. And we also know that at Venice congresses of Alchemists were held; and the connection between these latter and the Rosicrucians has already been pointed out. Nevertheless the Scotch and Swedish Rosicrucians called themselves the most ancient, and asserted Edward, the son of Henry III., to have been initiated into the Order in 1191, by Raymond Lully, the alchemist. The Fraternity of the Rosy Cross is still flourishing in England (see below).

290. Transitions to Freemasons.—From the Templars and Rosicrucians the transition to the Freemasons is easy. With these latter alchemy receives a wholly symbolical explanation; the philosopher's stone is a figure of human perfectibility. In the Masonic degree called the "Key of Masonry," or "Knight of the Sun," and the work "The Blazing Star," by Tshudi we discover the parallel aims of the two societies. From the "Blazing Star" I extract the following portion of the ritual: "When the hermetic philosophers speak of gold and silver, do they mean common gold and silver?—"No, because common gold and silver are dead, whilst the gold and silver of the philosophers are full of life." "What is the object of Masonic inquiries?"—"The art of knowing how to render perfect what Nature has left imperfect in man." "What is the object of philosophic inquiry?"—"The art of knowing how to render perfect what Nature has left imperfect in minerals, and to increase the power of the philosopher's stone." "Is it the same stone whose symbol distinguishes our first degrees?"—"Yes, it is the same stone which the Freemasons seek to polish." So also the Phoenix is common to Hermetic and Masonic initiation, and the emblem of the new birth of the neophyte. Now, we have already seen the meaning of this figure, and its connection with the sun. We might multiply comparisons to strengthen the parallelism between hidden arts and secret societies, and trace back the hermetic art to the mysteries of Mithras, where man is said to ascend to heaven through seven steps or gates of lead, brass, copper, iron, bronze, silver, and gold.

291. Progress and Extinction of Rosicrucians.— After having excited much attention throughout Germany, the Rosicrucians endeavoured to spread their doctrines in France, but with little success. In order to attract attention, they in 1623 secretly posted certain notices in the streets of Paris to this effect: "We, the deputies of the College of the Rosy Cross, visibly and invisibly dwell in the city. We teach without books or signs every language that can draw men from mortal error," &c. &c. A work by Gabriel Naudé gave them the final blow. Peter Mormio, not having succeeded in reviving the society in Holland, where it existed in 1622, published at Leyden in 1630, a work entitled "*Arcana Naturæ Secretissima*," wherein he reduced the secrets of the brethren to three—viz., perpetual motion, the transmutation of metals, and the universal medicine.

292. Rosicrucians in the Mauritius.—I am indebted to Mr. Waite's "Real History of the Rosicrucians" (published by George Redway, 1888) for the following particulars:— It appears that a society of Rosicrucians existed in 1794 in the island of Mauritius. "My authority," says Mr. Waite, gives at length a copy of 'the admission of Dr. Bacstrom' into that society by Le Comte de Chazal. In that document Dr. Bacstrom promises, among other things, 'never to reveal the secret knowledge he receives,' 'to initiate such persons as he may deem worthy,' including women, seeing that 'Leona Constantia, Abbess of Clermont, was actually received as a practical member and master into the Society in 1736 as a Soror Crucis;' that he will 'commence the great work as soon as circumstances permit,' that he 'will give nothing to the Church,' that he will 'never give the fermented metallic medicine for transmutation to any person living, unless he be a member of the Rosy Cross.'" To this document is appended the philosophic seal of

the society, representing a man standing in a triangle, enclosed in a square, and surrounded by a circle. At the head and feet of the man are various cabalistic signs. The whole resembles some of the diagrams which may be found in the *Magical Works of Cornelius Agrippa*," in the chapter treating of the proportions, measures, and harmony of the human body.

293. Modern English Rosicrucians.— Mr. Waite further states that a pseudo-society existed in England before the year 1836, because Godfrey Higgins says that "He had joined neither the Templars nor the Rosicrucians." The present Rosicrucian Society was remodelled about thirty years ago. A previous initiation into Masonry is an indispensable qualification of candidates "the officers of the society shall consist of three Magi, a Master-General, a Treasurer-General, a Secretary-General, and seven Ancients. There is also an Organist, a Torchbearer, a herald, a Guardian of the Temple and a Medallist. The members are to meet four times a year, and dine together once a year. Every novice on admission shall adopt a Latin motto, to be appended to his signature in all communications with the Order. The jewel of the Supreme Magus is an ebony cross, with golden roses at its extremities, and the jewel of the Rosie Cross in the centre. It is surmounted by a crown of gold for the Supreme Magus alone, and is worn round the neck, suspended by a crimson velvet ribbon. The jewel of the general officers is a Lozenge-shaped plate of gold, enamelled white, with the Rosie Cross in the centre, surmounted by a golden mitre, on the rim of which is enamelled in rose-coloured characters LUX, and in its centre a small cross of the same colour. The jewel is worn suspended from a button-hole by a green ribbon an inch wide, and with a cross also embroidered on it in rose-coloured silk. The jewel of the fraternity is the lozenge-shaped jewel of the Rosie Cross, without the mitre, suspended by a green ribbon an inch in width, and without the embroidered cross. Mr. Waite derived this information from a secret record of the association entitled *The Rosicrucian*, a very small quarterly of twelve pages, first published in 1863, which ceased in 1879. In 1871 the society informed its members that their objects were purely literary and antiquarian; that it consisted of 134 fratres, ruled over by three Supreme Magi. Seventy-two members composed the London colleges, the others formed the Bristol and Manchester colleges. A Yorkshire college was consecrated in 1877; a college in Edinburgh had been established some time previously. The prime mover in the association was Robert Wentworth Little; the late Lord Lytton was Grand Patron. But as to Rosicrucian knowledge the Brethren were altogether destitute of it, as they themselves admitted.

(1) New arrangement: Venus, copper; Mercury, mixed metal; Mars, iron; Jupiter, tin.

(2) A somewhat curious fact may be mentioned here. The Rosicrucians generally adopted sidereal or alchymistic pseudonyms. In the seventeenth century, under the Emperor Ferdinand III., one John Konrad Richthausen came to Vienna. He was a Rosicrucian, and as such bore the name of Chaos, and eventually was ennobled as Herr von Chaos. In 1663 he erected an institution for the sons of poor or deceased parents. When, three Years after, the Plague raged in Vienna and attacked some of the youths in the Institution, the executors of Richthausen's will — the testator having died—quickly erected in the district of Mariahilf, almost in the centre of Vienna, another building, to separate the youths attacked by the disease from the others. Gradually the building was enlarged, so that in 1773 it could receive 145 pupils. It was known as the Chaos Foundation (Chaoaische Stift). In 1752 the Empress Maria Theresa purchased the house for a military academy, which purpose it still serves but it continues to be called tile Stift, and the street facing it is still called the Stiflgasse.