

Finally, to say nothing of the *Vocabularium* of Paracelsus, which must have been put in the grave before it existed, the Rosicrucians are said to be Protestants—though founded upwards of a century before the Reformation. In short, the fiction is monstrous, and betrays itself in every circumstance. Whosoever was its author must be looked upon as the founder in effect of the Rosicrucian order, inasmuch as this fiction was the accidental occasion of such an order's being really founded. That Andreä was that author I shall now prove by one argument: It is a presumptive argument, but in my opinion conclusive: *The armorial bearings of Andreä's family were a St. Andrew's cross and four roses.* By the order of the Rosy-cross, he means, therefore, an order founded by himself.*

* Nicolai supposes that the *rose* was assumed as the symbol of secrecy, and the *cross* to express the solemnity of the oath by which the vow of secrecy was ratified. Such an allegoric meaning is not inconsistent with that which I have assigned, and may have been a secondary purpose of Andreä. Some authors have insisted on the words *Sub Umbra Alarum tuarum Jehova*—which stand at the end of the *Fama Fraternalis*, as furnishing the initial letters of *Johannes Val Andreä, Stipendiata Tubingensis*. But on this I have not thought it necessary to lay much stress.



CHAPTER IV.

OF THE IMMEDIATE RESULTS OF THE FAMA AND THE
CONFESSIO IN GERMANY.

THE sensation which was produced throughout Germany by the works in question is sufficiently evidenced by the repeated editions of them which appeared between 1614 and 1617, but still more by the prodigious commotion which followed in the literary world. In the library at Göttingen there is a body of letters addressed to the imaginary order of Father Rosycross from 1614 to 1617, by persons offering themselves as members. These letters are filled with complimentary expressions and testimonies of the highest respect, and are all printed—the writers alleging that, being unacquainted with the address of the society (as well they might), they could not send them through any other than a public channel. As certificates of their qualifications, most of the candidates have enclosed specimens of their skill in alchemy and cabbalism. Some of the letters are signed with initials only, or with fictitious names, but assign real places of address. Many other literary persons there were at that day who forbore to write letters to the society, but threw out small pamphlets containing their opinions of the order, and of its place of residence. Each successive writer pretended to be better informed on that point than all his predecessors. Quarrels arose; partisans started up on all sides; the uproar and confusion became indescribable; cries of heresy and atheism resounded from every corner; some were for calling in the secular power; and the more coyly the invisible society retreated from the

public advances, so much the more eager and amorous were its admirers—and so much the more bloodthirsty its antagonists. Meantime there were some who from the beginning had escaped the general delusion; and there were many who had gradually recovered from it. It was remarked that of the many printed letters to the society, though courteously and often learnedly written, none had been answered; and all attempts to penetrate the darkness in which the order was shrouded by its unknown memorialist were successfully baffled. Hence arose a suspicion that some bad designs lurked under the ostensible purposes of these mysterious publications: a suspicion which was naturally strengthened by what now began to follow. Many vile impostors arose, who gave themselves out for members of the Rosicrucian order; and upon the credit which they thus obtained for a season, cheated numbers of their money by alchemy—or of their health by panaceas. Three in particular made a great noise at Wetzlar, at Nuremberg, and at Augsburg: all were punished by the magistracy, one lost his ears in running the gauntlet, and one was hanged. At this crisis stepped forward a powerful writer, who attacked the supposed order with much scorn and homely good sense. This was Andrew Libau. He exposed the impracticability of the meditated reformation—the incredibility of the legend of Father Rosycross—and the hollowness of the pretended sciences which they professed. He pointed the attention of governments to the confusions which these impostures were producing, and predicted from them a renewal of the scenes which had attended the fanaticism of the Anabaptists. These writings (of which two were Latin, Frankfurt, 1615, folio—one in German, Erfurt, 1616, 8vo), added to others of the same tendency, would possibly have laid the storm by causing the suppression

of all the Rosicrucian books and pretensions: but this termination of the *mania* was defeated by two circumstances: the first was the conduct of the Paracelsists. With frantic eagerness they had sought to press into the imaginary order: but, finding themselves lamentably repulsed in all their efforts, at length they paused; and, turning suddenly round, they said to one another—"What need to court this perverse order any longer? We are ourselves Rosicrucians as to all the essential marks laid down in the three books. We also are holy persons of great knowledge; we also make gold, or shall make it: we also, no doubt, give us but time, shall reform the world: external ceremonies are nothing: substantially it is clear that we are the Rosicrucian order." Upon this they went on in numerous books and pamphlets to assert that they were the identical order instituted by Father Rosycross and described in the *Fama Fraternitatis*. The public mind was now perfectly distracted; no man knew what to think; and the uproar became greater than ever. The other circumstance which defeated the tendency of Libau's exertions, was the conduct of Andrea and his friends. Clear it is that Andrea enjoyed the scene of confusion, until he began to be sensible that he had called up an apparition which it was beyond his art to lay. Well knowing that in all that great crowd of aspirants, who were knocking clamorously for admittance into the airy college of Father Rosycross, though one and all pretended to be enamoured of that mystic wisdom he had promised, yet by far the majority were in fact enamoured of that *gold* which he had hinted at—it is evident that his satirical* propensities were violently

* I have no doubt that Andrea alludes to his own high diversion on this occasion in the following passage of a later work (*Mythologia Christiana*) which he printed at Strasburg in 1619. It is *Truth (die*

tickled: and he was willing to keep up the hubbub of delusion by flinging out a couple of pamphlets amongst the hungry crowd, which tended to amuse them. They were, 1. *Epistola ad Reverendam Fraternitatem R. Crucis*. Francof. 1613; 2. *Assertio Fraternitatis R. C. à quodam Frat. ejus Socio carmine expressa*, Franc. 1614: which last was translated into German in 1616; and again, in 1618, into German rhyme, under the title of *Ara Fœderis therapici*, or *Altar of the Healing Fraternity*: (the most general abstraction of the pretensions made for the Rosicrucians being—that they healed both the body and the mind). All this, in a young man and a professed satirist, was natural and excusable. But in a few years *Andréa* was shocked to find that the delusion had taken firm root in the public mind. Of the many authors who wrote with a sincere design to countenance the notion of a pretended Rosicrucian society, I shall here mention a few of the most memorable:—1. A writer calling himself *Julianus à Campis* wrote expressly to account for the Rosicrucians not revealing themselves, and not answering the letters addressed to them. He was himself, he said, a member of the order; but in all his travels he had met but three other members, there being (as he presumed) no more persons on the earth worthy of being entrusted with its

Alethia who is speaking: "Planissime nihil cum hac Fraternitate (sc. Ros. Crucis) commune habeo. Nam, cum paullo ante lusum quendam ingeniosorem personatus aliquis (no doubt himself) in literario foro agere vellet—nihil mota sum libelis inter se conflictantibus; sed velut in scenâ prodeuntes histriones non sine voluptate spectavi."—Like *Miss in her Teens* (in the excellent farce of Garrick) who so much enjoys the prospect of a battle between her two lovers, *Andréa*—instead of calming the tumult which he had caused—was disposed at first to cry out to the angry polemics—"Stick him, Captain Flash; do,—stick him, Captain Flash."

mysteries. The Rosicrucian wisdom was to be more extensively diffused in future, but still not to be hawked about in market-places.—2. Julius Sperber of Anhalt-Dessau (according to common repute) wrote* the "Echo of the Divinely illuminated fraternity of the admirable order of the R.C." In this there is a passage which I recommend to the especial notice of Freemasons:—Having maintained the probability of the Rosicrucian pretensions on the ground that such *magnalia Dei* had from the creation downwards been confined to the keeping of a few individuals, agreeably to which he affirms that Adam was the first Rosicrucian of the Old Testament and Simeon the last, he goes on to ask whether the Gospel put an end to the secret tradition? By no means, he answers; Christ established a new "college of magic" amongst his disciples, and the greater mysteries were revealed to St. John and St. Paul. In this passage, which I shall notice farther on, we find the Grand-Master, and the St. John of masonry.—3. Radtich Brotoffer was not so much a Cabbalist, like Julius Sperber, as an Alchemist. He understood the three Rosicrucian books not in a literal sense, but allegorically, as a description of the art of making gold and finding the Philosopher's stone. He even favoured the public with an interpretation of it; so that both "*materia et præparatio lapidis aurei*" were laid bare to the profane. With this practical test of his own pretensions, it might have been supposed that Brotoffer would have exposed himself as an impostor; but on the contrary his works sold well, and were several times reprinted.

* This was printed at Dantzic in 1616. Nicolai, however, cites an edition printed in 1615. Whether Sperber was the author, is a point not quite settled. Katzauer, in his *Dissert. de Rosicrucianis*, p. 33, takes him for the same person as Julianus à Campis: but from internal grounds this is very improbable.

—4. A far more important person in the history of Rosicrucianism was Michael Maier: he it was that first transplanted it into England, where (as we shall see) it led ultimately to more lasting effects than in Germany. He was born in Holstein, and was physician to the Emperor Rudolph II., who, being possessed by the mystical frenzy of the age, sent for him to Prague. In 1622 he died at Magdeburg, having previously travelled extensively, and particularly to England. His works are among the rarities of bibliography, and fetch very high prices. The first of them, which concerns our present inquiry, is that entitled *Jocus Severus; Francof.* 1617. It is addressed (in a dedication written on his road from England to Bohemia, “*omnibus veræ chymixæ amantibus per Germaniam,*” and amongst them more especially “*illi ordini adhuc debitescenti, at Famâ Fraternitatis et Confessione suâ admirandâ et probabili manifestato.*” This work, it appears, had been written in England. On his return to Germany he became acquainted with the fierce controversy on the Rosicrucian sect; and as he firmly believed in the existence of such a sect, he sought to introduce himself to its notice: but finding this impossible, he set himself to establish such an order by his own efforts; and in his future writings he spoke of it as already existing—going so far even as to publish its laws which indeed had previously been done by the author of the *Echo*). From the principal work which he wrote on this subject, entitled *Silentium post clamores*,* I shall make an extract, because in this work it is that we meet with the first traces

* *Silentium post clamores*, h. e. *Tractatus Apologeticus, quo causæ non solum Clamorum (seu revelationem) Fraternitatis Germanicæ de R. C., sed et Silentii (seu non reddite, ad singulorum vota responsionis) traduntur et demonstrantur. Autore Michaelæ Maiero, Imp. Consist. Comite, et Med. Doct. Francof. 1617.*

of Masonry. “Nature is yet but half unveiled. What we want is chiefly experiment and tentative inquiry. Great, therefore, are our obligations to the Rosicrucians for labouring to supply this want. Their weightiest mystery is a Universal Medicine. Such a Catholicon lies hid in nature. It is, however, no simple, but a very compound medicine. For out of the meanest pebbles and weeds, medicine, *and even gold*, is to be extracted.” “He that doubts the existence of the R. O. should recollect that the Greeks, Egyptians, Arabians, etc., had such secret societies; where, then, is the absurdity in their existing at this day? Their maxims of self-discipline are these—To honour and fear God above all things; to do all the good in their power to their fellow-men:” and so on. “What is contained in the Fama and Confessio is true. It is a very childish objection that the brotherhood have promised so much and performed so little. With them, as elsewhere, many are called but few are chosen. The masters of the order hold out the rose as a remote prize, but they impose the cross on those who are entering.”* “Like the Pythagoreans and Egyptians, the Rosicrucians exact vows of silence and secrecy. Ignorant men have treated the whole as a fiction; but this has arisen from the five years’ probation to which they subject even well-qualified novices before they are admitted to the higher mysteries: within this period they are to learn how to govern their tongues.” In the same year with this book he published a work of Robert Fludd’s (with whom he had lived on friendly terms in England), *De vitâ, morte, et resurrectione*. Of other works, which he published afterwards, I shall here say nothing: neither

* *Ecce innumeri adsunt ex vocatis, seseque offerunt: at non audivunt à magistras R. Crucis, qui rosas ostentant, at crucem exhibent. P. 77.*

shall I detain my reader with any account of his fellow-labourers in this path—Theophilus Schweighart of Constance, Josephus Stellatus, or Giles Gutmann. The books I have mentioned were enough to convince Andreä that his romance had succeeded in a way which he had never designed. The public had accredited the *charlatanerie* of his books, but gave no welcome to that for the sake of which this *charlatanerie* was adopted as a vehicle. The Alchemy had been approved, the moral and religious scheme slighted. And societies were forming even amongst the learned upon the basis of all that was false in the system, to the exclusion of all that was true. This was a spectacle which could no longer be viewed in the light of a joke: the folly was becoming too serious; and Andreä set himself to counteract it with all his powers. For this purpose he now published his *Chemical Nuptials of Christian Rosycross*, which he had written in 1601-2 (when only in his sixteenth year), but not printed. This is a comic romance of extraordinary talent, the covert purpose of it being a refined and delicate banter of the Pedants, Theosophists, Goldmakers, and Enthusiasts of every class with whom Germany at that time swarmed. In his former works he had treated the Paracelsists with forbearance, hoping by such treatment to have won them over to his own elevated designs: but in this they were invested with the cap and bells. Unfortunately for the purpose of Andreä, however, even this romance was swallowed by the public as true and serious history. Upon this, in the following year, he published a collection of satirical dialogues under the title of *Menippus; sive dial satyricorum centuria, inanitatum nostratum Speculum*. In this he more openly unveils his true design—revolution of method in the arts and sciences, and a general religious reformation.

The efforts of Andreä were seconded by those of his friends, especially of Irenæus, Agnostus, and of Joh. Val. Alberti under the name of Menapius. Both wrote with great energy against the Rosicrucians: the former, indeed, from having ironically styled himself "an unworthy clerk of the Fraternity of the R. C.," has been classed by some learned writers on the Rosicrucians as one of that sect; but it is impossible to read his writings without detecting the lurking satire. Soon after these writers, a learned foreigner placed the Rosicrucian pretensions in a still more ludicrous light; this was the celebrated Thomas Campanella. In his work upon the Spanish Monarchy, which was translated into German, published, and universally read in Germany some time* before the original work appeared, the Italian philosopher—speaking of the follies of the age—thus expresses himself of the R. C.: "That the whole of Christendom teems with such heads (viz., Reformation jobbers) we have one proof more than was wanted in the Fraternity of the R. C. For scarcely was that absurdity hatched, when—notwithstanding it was many times declared to be nothing more than a *lusus ingenii nimium lascivientis*, a mere hoax of some man of wit troubled with a superfluity of youthful spirits—yet, because it dealt in reformations and in pretences to mystical arts, straightway from every country in Christendom pious and learned men, passively surrendering themselves dupes to this delusion, made offers of their good wishes and services; some by name; others anonymously, but constantly maintaining that the brothers of the R. C. could easily discover their names by Solomon's mirror or other cabbalistic means. Nay, to such a pass of

* It was published in 1620, at which time Campanella was confined in prison at Naples. The publishers had obtained the original copy, either from some traveller, or during their own residence in Italy.

absurdity did they advance, that they represented the first of the three Rosicrucian books (the *Universal Reformation*) as a high mystery, and expounded it in a chemical sense, as if it had contained a cryptical account of the art of gold-making, whereas it is nothing more than a literal translation, word for word, of the *Parnasso* of Boccacini." The effect of all this ridicule and satire was, that in Germany, as there is the best reason to believe, no regular lodge of Rosicrucians was ever established. *Des Cartes*, who had heard a great deal of talk about them in 1619, during his residence at Frankfort-on-the-Maine, sought to connect himself with some lodge (for which he was afterwards exposed to the ridicule of his enemies); but the impossibility of finding any body of them formally connected together, and a perusal of the Rosicrucian writings, satisfied him in the end that no such order was in existence. Many years after, Leibnitz came to the same conclusion. He was actually connected in early life with a soi-disant society of the R. O. in Nuremberg; for even at this day there is obviously nothing to prevent any society in any place from assuming that or any other title: but that they were not connected traditionally with the alleged society of Father Rosycross, Leibnitz was convinced. "Il me paroît," says he, in a letter to a friend, published by Feller in the *Otium Hannoveranum* (p. 222), "il me paroît que tout ce, que l'on a dit des Freres de la Croix de la Rose, est une pure invention de quelque personne ingenieuse." And again, so late as the year 1696, he says in another letter—"Fratres Roseæ Crucis fictitios fuisse suspicor; quod et Helmontius mihi confirmavit." Adepts there were here and there, it is true, and even whole clubs of swindlers who called themselves Rosicrucians: thus Ludov. Conr. Orvins, in his *Occulta Philosophia, sive Cælum sapientum et Vexatio*

stultorum, tells a lamentable tale of such a society, pretending to deduce themselves from Father Rosycross, who were settled at the Hague in 1622, and after swindling him out of his own and his wife's fortune, amounting to eleven thousand dollars, kicked him out of the order, with the assurance that they would murder him if he revealed their secrets: "which secrets," says he, "I have faithfully kept, and for the same reason that women keep secrets—viz., because I have none to reveal; for their knavery is no secret." There is a well-known story also in Voltaire's *Diction. Philosoph.*, Art. *Alchimiste*, of a rogue who cheated the Duke of Bouillon of 40,000 dollars under the masque of Rosicrucianism. But these were cases for the police-office, and the gross impostures of jail-birds. As the aberration of learned men, and as a case for the satirist, Rosicrucianism received a shock from the writings of its accidental Father Andreä and others, such as in Germany* it never recovered.

* In France it never had even a momentary success. It was met by the ridicule of P. Garasse and of Gabriel Naudé in his *Instruction à la France sur vérité de l'histoire des Freres de la Rose-Croix*: Paris, 1623; and in *Le Mascarat*, a rare work, printed in 1624, and of which the second edition 1650 is still rarer. Independently of these works, France was at that time the rival of Italy in science, and had greatly the start of Germany and England in general illumination. She was thus sufficiently protected from such a delusion. Thus far Professor Buhle. But pace tuâ, worthy Professor, I—the translator of your book—affirm that France had *not* the start of England, nor wanted then or since the ignobler elements of credulity, as the History of Animal Magnetism and many other fantastic follies before that have sufficiently shown. But she has always wanted the nobler (i.e., the imaginative) elements of credulity. On this account the French have always been an irreligious people. And the scheme of Father Rosycross was too much connected with religious feelings, and moved too much under a religious impulse, to recommend itself to the French. This reason apart, however, accident had much to do with the ill fortune of Rosicrucianism in France.

And hence it has happened that, whatever number there may have been of individual mystics calling themselves Rosicrucians, no collective body of Rosicrucians acting in conjunction was ever matured and actually established in Germany. In England the case was otherwise; for there, as I shall show, the order still subsists under a different name. But this will furnish matter for a separate chapter. Meantime, one word remains to be said of Andrea's labours with respect to the Rosicrucians. He was not content with opposing gravely and satirically the erroneous societies which learned men were attempting to found upon his own romance of the *Fama Fraternitatis*, but laboured more earnestly than ever to mature and to establish that genuine society for the propagation of truth, which has been the real though misinterpreted object of his romance, and indeed of his whole life. Such a society he lived to see accomplished: and in order to mark upon what foundation he placed all hopes of any great improvement in the condition of human nature, he called it by the name of *the Christian Fraternity*. This fact I have recorded, in order to complete the account of Andrea's history in relation to Rosicrucianism: but I shall not further pursue the history of *the Christian Fraternity*,* as it is no ways connected with the subject of the present inquiry.

* See the *Invitatio Fraternitatis Christi ad Sacri amoris candidatos*: Argentur, 1617; the *Christianæ societatis idea*: Tubingæ, 1624; the *Veræ unionis in Christo Jesu specimen*: Norimb., 1628; and other works on the same subject. A list of the members composing this Christian Brotherhood, which continued its labours after Andrea's death, is still preserved.



CHAPTER V.

OF THE ORIGIN OF FREEMASONRY IN ENGLAND.

THUS I have traced the history of Rosicrucianism from its birth in Germany; and have ended with showing that, from the energetic opposition and ridicule which it latterly incurred, no college or lodge of Rosicrucian brethren, professing occult knowledge, and communicating it under solemn forms and vows of secrecy, can be shown from historical records to have been ever established in Germany. I shall now undertake to prove that Rosicrucianism was transplanted to England, where it flourished under a new name, under which name it has been since re-exported to us in common with the other countries of Christendom. For I affirm, as the main thesis of my concluding labours, THAT FREEMASONRY IS NEITHER MORE NOR LESS THAN ROSICRUCIANISM AS MODIFIED BY THOSE WHO TRANSPLANTED IT TO ENGLAND.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century many learned heads in England were occupied with Theosophy, Cabbalism, and Alchemy: amongst the proofs of this (for many of which see the *Athenæ Oxonienses*) may be cited the works of John Pordage, of Norbert, of Thomas and Samuel Norton, but above all (in reference to our present inquiry), of Robert Fludd. Fludd it was, or whosoever was the author of the *Summum Bonum*, 1629, that must be considered as the immediate father of Freemasonry, as Andrea was its remote father. What was the particular occasion of his own first acquaintance with Rosicrucianism is not recorded; all the books of Alchemy or other occult

knowledge, published in Germany, were at that time immediately carried over to England—provided they were written in Latin; and, if written in German, were soon translated for the benefit of English students. He may therefore have gained his knowledge immediately from the three Rosicrucian books. But it is more probable that he acquired his knowledge on this head from his friend Maier (mentioned in the preceding chapter), who was intimate with Fludd during his stay in England, and corresponded with him after he left it. At all events, he must have been initiated into Rosicrucianism at an early period, having published his *apology** for it in the year 1617. This indeed is denied to be his work, though ascribed to him in the title-page; but, be that as it may, it was at any rate the work of the same author who wrote the *Summum Bonum*,† being expressly claimed by him at p. 39. If not Fludd's, it was the work of a friend of Fludd's: and, as the name is of no importance, I shall continue to refer to it as Fludd's—having once apprised my reader that I mean by Fludd the author, be he who he may, of these two works. Now the first question which arises is this: for what reason did Fludd drop the name of Rosicrucians? The reason was briefly this: his apology for the Rosicrucians was attacked by the celebrated Father Mersenne. To this Fludd replied, under the name of Joachim Fritz, in two witty but

* *Tractatus apologeticus—integritatem Societatis de Roseâ Cruce defendens. Authore Roberto De Fluctibus, Anglo, M.D.L. Lugd. Bat. 1617.*

† This work was disavowed by Fludd. But as the principles, the style, the animosity towards Mersenne, the publisher, and the year, were severally the same in this as in the *Sophiæ cum Moriâ certamen*, which Fludd acknowledged, there cannot be much reason to doubt that it was his. Consult the "Catalogue of some rare books" by G. Serpilius, No. II. p. 238.

coarse books, entitled *Summum Bonum*, and *Sophiæ cum Moriâ certamen*; in the first of which, to the question—"Where the Rosicrucians resided?" he replied thus—"In the houses of God, where Christ is the corner-stone;" and he explained the symbols of the Rose and Cross in a new sense, as meaning "the Cross sprinkled with the rosy blood of Christ." Mersenne being obviously no match for Fludd either in learning or polemic wit, Gassendi stepped forward into his place, and published (in 1630) an excellent rejoinder to Fludd in his *Excercitatio Epistolica*, which analysed and ridiculed the principles of Fludd in general, and in particular reproached him with his belief in the romantic legend of the Rosicrucians. Upon this, Fludd, finding himself hard pressed under his conscious inability to assign their place of abode, evades the question in his answer to Gassendi (published in 1633) by formally withdrawing the name *Rosicrucians*: for, having occasion to speak of them, he calls them "*Fratres R. C. olim sic dicti, quos nos hodie Sapientes (Sophos) vocamus; omisso illo nomine (tanquam odioso miseris mortalibus velo ignorantie obductis) et in oblivione hominum jam fere sepulto.*" Here, then, we have the negative question answered—why and when they ceased to be called Rosicrucians. But now comes the second, or affirmative question—why and when they began to be called Freemasons. In 1633 we have seen that the old name was abolished; but as yet no new name was substituted; in default of such a name they were styled *ad interim* by the general term, *wise men*. This, however, being too vague an appellation for men who wished to form themselves into a separate and exclusive society, a new one was to be devised bearing a more special allusion to their characteristic objects. Now the immediate hint for the name *Masons* was derived from the legend, contained in