

OUR ANCIENT BRETHREN
THE ORIGINATORS OF FREEMASONRY



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BY

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"Origin of the Masonic Degrees";

"The Genuine Secrets in Freemasonry Prior to A.D. 1717"; etc., etc.

AN INTRODUCTION

to the History of Rosicrucianism, dealing with the
period A.D. 1300-1600

LONDON

A. LEWIS

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OF FREEMASONRY

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English Freemasonry, as a branch of the
"Order of the Knights Templars,"
and its connection with the
"The Order of the Knights Templars,"

AN INTRODUCTION

to the History of Rosicrucianism, dealing with the
period A.D. 1500-1600

LONDON

A. LEWIS

11 PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.4

Printed in Great Britain

DEDICATED

to the memory of

an Honoured Friend

WORSHIPFUL BROTHER

MANRIQUE ALONSO LALLAVE

once a Friar of the Augustinian Order

later a Minister of the Evangelical Church of Spain

sometime Grand Secretary of the Grand Orient of Seville

a most accomplished Masonic Research Worker of the XIXth Century

who introduced Freemasonry into the Philippine Islands

becoming Tutor to the Writer of the present Book

written as a Demonstration of his Views

a Tribute of Gratitude and Affection

"He being dead yet speaketh"

PREFACE

AN American Masonic writer has remarked that in the history of Freemasonry there is a prehistoric period as well as an historic one. And realising this fact, from the beginning of our investigations we have directed all our efforts to exploring that prehistoric period so as to elucidate the origin of our Order. The fact that so few have ever sailed those unknown seas has made us all the keener; we aimed at being pioneers. At first we feared that the task was beyond our capacity, and we dreaded failing; but once we had undertaken it we determined to go on undaunted.

There are, alas! plenty of wiseacres who are satisfied with copying what others write, regardless of whether it is true or false. We leave it to our readers to say whether or no we have achieved the object of our ambition. While we have no sympathy with the destructive critics who call themselves Research Workers, we do not make any fantastic claims on behalf of Freemasonry; we have approached our subject as all real historians should.

One reviewer of our last work had a suspicion that since we said so little about the Rosicrucians we must be deficient in our knowledge of those people, and could not be acquainted with the writers who have impugned the connection of the Rosicrucians with Freemasonry. The present volume will show whether or no we ignore the excellent works in which the information about the Rosicrucians has been collected.

We have not dealt with the Rosicrucians ere this because we had not come to the particular period of history in which they made their appearance. But now having reached that stage, we are able to show that the writers in question have not always given us a correct estimate of their activities; many of them agree in assigning the rise of Freemasonry to the middle of the seventeenth century, but fail to see the obvious connection between Freemasonry and the Rosy Cross.

Even the Secretary of the London *Quatuor Coronati* Lodge, speaking of the connection between the two, has said: "The theory falls to the ground when the true history of the Rosicrucians is examined." He evidently regards it as a delusion. But has he really studied the subject?

Such people may naturally look upon us as straying wanderers in the realms of literature; but the present book ought to open their eyes. In our investigations we have been proceeding backwards, stretching out to a remote past, and we have done so on methodical lines by well-defined stages.

In this work we have had to be extremely cautious. At first we simply tried to ascertain what the Rituals now in common use among Craft Masons and Royal Arch Companions were intended to teach. This led us to write *The Apocalypse of Freemasonry* and *The Historical Analysis of the Holy Royal Arch*. Later on we followed up the subject with another book, in which we sought to vindicate *The Antiquity of the Holy Royal Arch*; another on *The Organisation of the Royal Arch Chapter Two Centuries Ago*; and more recently still one on *English Freemasonry in its Period of Transition, A.D. 1600-1700*.

Alternating with these publications we gave our

reasons for asserting that everything pointed to the philosophical movement known as Kabbalism as the goal which we must try to reach if we desired to discover the derivation of Freemasonry; and therefore we wrote *The Origin of the Masonic Degrees* and *The Genuine Secrets in Freemasonry Prior to A.D. 1717*. Now, at long last, we crown our self-imposed task with a straightforward demonstration of our thesis that Freemasonry came through the movement initiated by the Christian Kabbalists.

The Jewish Brotherhood, which had existed from a very remote age in connection with the Secret Tradition of Israel, gave rise successively to several secret associations, chief of which were the Orders of the Holy Cross, the Rosy Cross, and the Freemasonry of the middle of the seventeenth century.

There were Christians who, while addicted to the Kabbalah, could not endorse all that the Jews taught, and the new organisations diluted the ancient system of philosophy. Christian neo-Kabbalism seems to have made its first appearance in Germany, at least as an organised force. There the anti-Semitic feeling was rather strong, and as a natural consequence the new movement became exclusive, the Jews being denied admission; this was the case not only in the Rosicrucian Order, but also in the later product, Freemasonry, so far as Germany was concerned.

In England, however, the Jews were never excluded, for here Freemasonry and the Order of the Rosy Cross assumed a thoroughly English complexion, and were never decidedly Christian institutions. The vast majority of members were Christians and Protestants, but they never broke off relations with the Jews; and they always deprecated anyone disputing the characteristic dogmas of the Christian

Religion. Indeed, all along they maintained the Jewish connection. In a previous work we have shown that down to the eighteenth century the Freemasons had the assistance of Kabbalistic teachers who came from the Continent for the purpose of explaining the Temple symbolism.

This present volume deals largely with Rosicrucianism, and it has come last in our series because we have had to proceed as cautious investigators. We did not choose our path, but merely followed whither the historic evidence was leading us. We have been scrupulously faithful to that all-important principle on which the Craft is founded, namely, "Truth." Far too much fiction has been given to the world by uninstructed dreamers within our fold, and we refuse to countenance the practice.

At length, then, we have reached the goal; we have given a definite answer to the question as to the genesis of the Craft—that is, the Kabbalah. We have been convinced of this truth for many years, but it has been hard to collect the material facts that prove it, largely because of the lack of sympathy, the obstructionism and even active opposition of certain high-placed Brethren who imagine that they alone are reliable guides and are competent to pronounce on those questions. These Brethren have persisted in trying to discover the origin of Freemasonry in the operative Craft, and although the results of their researches have been most discouraging they will not change their tactics, and they do not think that they have anything to gain by working on different lines.

Much as we regret this we have kept clear of personalities, and through good report and evil report we have applied ourselves to our task with determination, working with a single eye for the best

interests of the Fraternity, eager to vindicate its traditions and its noble descent. Unfortunately the few writers who have treated this subject of the derivation of Freemasonry are so divided in their opinions, they present such a babel of voices flatly contradicting each other, that often enough what one regards as a blot is hailed by another as a pearl of great price. We ourselves have had experience of this, having been blamed and blessed simultaneously for the same thing. Nevertheless, however critics may behave we cannot but adhere to the historic reality.

Viewing our work as a venture we do not complain. We dislike unsportsmanlike action, but we know that the cause of Research, dear to our hearts, will not suffer thereby. The results speak for themselves; it is enough to say that our books are selling well. Probably if we had adopted a different criterion we would have obtained the plaudits of many who to-day sulk and misrepresent us. But in that case we should not have accomplished anything, and we should still be floundering as they are in the morass of operative Masonry; and worse still, we should not have helped the honest inquirer who, free from misconceptions, only desires the truth.

We know of only one man who has attempted to clear up the mystery of the "origin" of Freemasonry, namely, Dr Churchward, but we find it difficult to characterise his performance. In his book he begins by telling us of the supposed discoveries of Dr Le Plongeon in Yucatan and neighbouring regions in connection with the "Sacred Mysteries among the Mayas and Quichés" as they were practised eleven thousand years ago; and after that he goes on to explore the *mare magnum* of Egyptology, where, of

course, he finds everything his heart desires, his chronology covering many more thousands of years.

Dr Churchward gained considerable notoriety by doing something wonderful: he traced Freemasonry back to the remotest prehistoric ages, to "primordial man"—that is, to our simian, or anthropoid, ancestors. He addressed many Lodges on that subject; he had many admirers; and, as we might expect, scaled every height: he went through the whole gamut of Masonic Degrees, known and unknown; he had all sorts of honours showered upon him, and belonged to the most exclusive circles. He spent money lavishly, and money opens practically every door. Happily we once had the opportunity of studying the antiquities, as well as the languages, of Central America, and with the knowledge thus acquired we have no hesitation in saying that the supposed discoveries of Dr Le Plongeon were moonshine.

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OUR ANCIENT BRETHREN

CHAPTER I

“OUR ANCIENT BRETHREN—OUR HOLY ANCESTORS”

WHO were the originators of Freemasonry? Whence did they come? The formularies now in common use among us give us a scent, a slight clue, for identifying them. First of all there is the Craft Ritual, whether Emulation or Stability, which refers to “our Ancient Brethren”; and then there is the Ritual of our Supreme Degree, the Royal Arch, which has a more explicit description of those people as “our Holy Ancestors, the Atoning Priests.” These expressions open up a wide field of Research, and we should inquire what they signify.

In discussing this question we must bear in mind that, according to our *Book of Constitutions*, the Royal Arch forms an integral part of, and is inseparable from, the Third Degree; wherefore we should view the two Rituals as relating to one and the same thing, Freemasonry, the only difference between them being that one belongs to the first part of our Masonic career, while the other has to do with a more advanced stage of initiation. And there can be no doubt that both the phrases quoted are used in the sense of “our predecessors.”

In the eighteenth century in England there were three different Grand Lodges, viz. the Antients, the

Moderns, the York Masons. And the feeling of enmity between the first two was so strong that it is inconceivable that the Moderns could have allowed the phrase "our Ancient Brethren" as connecting the rival section, the Antients, with the historic Order of Freemasonry. Unquestionably, however, the Antients were better representatives of the common predecessors than the Moderns, for they had a little more respect for antiquity and endeavoured to retain the ancient uses and customs. The distinction between Antients and Moderns can be traced to 1726, and was due to there being Masons who refused to endorse the innovations of the Grand Lodge of 1717, and who insisted on retaining the Mastership—that is, the Royal Arch.

The "Questions before Raising" in both the Emulation and the Stability Rituals include the familiar one: "Where did our *Ancient Brethren* go to receive their wages?" The expression is one which recurs again and again in the Tracing Board of the Fellow, where unquestionably the people referred to belong to the distant past, to the time when the Temple of Solomon was being built, and therefore they cannot be the *Antients* of the eighteenth century.

The Traditional History embodied in the Fellow Degree says: "After our Ancient Brethren had entered the Porch they arrived at the foot of a Winding Staircase which led to the Middle Chamber." This Middle Chamber is historic, but yet it is a symbol of the old scheme of initiation; for we should remember that the word *degree* means a "step"; in the Temple there were three flights of steps marked by the numbers 3, 5, 7.

The mention of "the Porch," "the Staircase," and "the Middle Chamber" are obvious allusions to that

Sanctuary. The Middle Chamber of our Ritual, however, cannot be what we usually call "the Holy Place," for the Holy Place of history was practically on the ground level, whereas our Ancient Brethren could only reach their emblematic Chamber by ascending the Winding Staircase, the entrance of which was "on the South-side"; a statement which tallies with what we read in the Bible in 1 Kings vi. 8. The whole matter was fully discussed in *The Apocalypse of Freemasonry*.

The story continues: "After our Ancient Brethren had given those convincing proofs" they were allowed to pass up and learn something more. In our modern version we have *proofs* in the plural, but we should observe that the Pass Word and the accompanying signs were not the "Secrets" which the Masons are in quest of, which are only revealed in the Chamber.

"After our Ancient Brethren had gained the summit of the Winding Staircase they arrived at the door of the Middle Chamber," where the Warden demanded the additional "convincing proofs," received at the earlier stage, the Pass Word with the Sign, Token, and Word of that stage. Now at last they were considered qualified to enter "the Middle Chamber" and to explore its secrets; the Chamber itself was a discovery, for the public generally knew nothing of it. It was inside that Chamber that they obtained the "genuine secrets"; not merely the secrets of Craft Masonry, but something else; the Sign, Token, and Word mentioned in the Craft Ritual were not the Secrets, but only the safeguards to ensure that the Secrets shall be imparted to worthy men alone.

The meaning of the term *Token* calls for some explanation; but this was already given in former

works. All we can now add is that if the reader will read the *Chemical Nuptials* he will see how the Candidates received the *Tokens* from the *Porters*, who correspond to our Wardens.

Our Ancient Brethren went into the Middle Chamber "to receive their wages"; and this is to be taken metaphorically, not literally, for the wages were the benefits which the Order conferred on its members.

Finally: "When our Ancient Brethren were in the Middle Chamber of the Temple their attention was peculiarly drawn to certain Hebrew characters," which were enclosed in a certain mystic design, spelling the Ineffable Name of the Most High. The Craft Masons have substituted the said characters with the letter *G*, and its significance is explained in various ways; but our Ritual distinctly says that it denotes "God the Grand Geometrician of the Universe, to whom we must all submit and whom we ought humbly to adore." This justifies the same Ritual in saying that Freemasonry teaches us to trace the development of the intellectual faculty, "through the paths of heavenly science to the Throne of God Himself"; implying that Freemasonry is essentially a Theosophy, making use of both the Hebrew Name of the Deity and the traditional Sacred Symbol which is the Kabbalistic "Star and Seal of Solomon."

The subject is further elucidated in the interrogatory occurring at the closing of the Lodge in the Second Degree between the W.M. and his Wardens. There they hint that our Ancient Brethren made another important discovery in the Middle Chamber, for they beheld something which they partially describe. The Sacred Symbol was said to be "in the centre of the Building"—that is to say, in the centre of King

Solomon's Temple. The nature of this "centre" has already been fully examined in *The Genuine Secrets in Freemasonry Prior to A.D. 1717*. We are not told anything about the "Hebrew characters" which the modern Masons have done away with, but if they "denoted" God they must have been what all the Masonic expositors assert, a Divine Name, although it is possible that the Name was not the same in every stage of initiation. The Sacred Symbol may at first have been the "Seal of Solomon," as stated; on later occasions it may have yielded place to the Pentangle, which consisted not of two but three triangles interlaced.

As far as we can trace Freemasonry we find that it embraces a threefold scheme; and at one time it may have symbolised its constitution by the use of one, two, three triangles—that is to say, by the single Triangle, Solomon's Seal, and the Shield of David. Solomon's Seal has always been considered the National Emblem of Israel, while the Pentangle has at all times been regarded as the Badge of the true and complete Philosopher. Oliver and others have not hesitated to describe it as a Kabbalistic symbol.

The enclosing of the Divine Name in the centre of the Sacred Symbol was intended as an illustration of the fact that God had been the inspirer of the Temple, which was a reflection of the Universe, of which He was the Author, and over which He presided; the Hebrew characters were the symbol of Immanent Deity. This explains the words that follow immediately, that we ought to remember that "He (*God*) is with us," within the "Building"—that is, not merely in "the Temple," but in the Universe. The Sacred Symbol is on an elevated place, over our heads, and in that way it signifies that God is looking down

upon us through the Sacred Symbol, "wherever we are and whatever we do," our Temple comprising the whole Universe.

There can be no doubt that these things, the Sacred Symbol and the Hebrew characters, were part and parcel of the "genuine secrets" of Freemasonry mentioned by the W.M. when addressing the newly raised.

In his interrogatory with the Wardens the W.M. reveals the fact that when our Ancient Brethren beheld the Sacred Symbol they recognised it as a symbol of God, and they therefore "stood in this position," meaning that they gave a Masonic Sign. That Sign is supposed to be the one which we associate with the Fellow, and which we call the "Sign of Perseverance"; but it really is a modification of an older one, known to the Masons of the eighteenth century as the "Grand Hailing Sign," which consisted of the action of Moses when Joshua was fighting the battles of the Lord, which ever after was regarded by the Jews as the proper attitude for prayer.

We are further informed that when the fabric of the Temple was completed, King Solomon with the Princes of his royal house went to view it, and, greatly impressed with its magnificence, with one simultaneous motion gave another Sign, which was really intended to convey the idea of an arch or vault over their heads. We now call this Sign that of Joy and Exultation (corrupted into *Exaltation*), but it might more properly be called the Sign of the Vault. Those people valued their secrets and exclaimed, "Oh wonderful Masons!" to express their admiration for the wise provision that had been made for the preservation of those secrets in the hidden Chamber; for not merely the Jewish nation but the whole world would benefit by it.

And now, in the Ritual of the Royal Arch we find a parallel to this. For there the Companions speak of "our Holy Ancestors, the Atoning Priests," which is a more precise description of their predecessors. As all along the Temple referred to is that of King Solomon at Jerusalem, the Priests can only be the priests of Israel, who from the days of Moses had been offering sacrifices to Jehovah for the atonement of the people. And naturally, if those ancestors were priests, the epithet of "Holy" applied to them, and to the Supreme Degree itself, is quite appropriate. To deny this would be to deny what is perfectly obvious, our Masonic traditions and the most explicit declarations of our formularies as recognised at the time of the Union of Antients and Moderns.

It is because the originators of Freemasonry were Hebrews, of the tribe of Judah and of the Royal House of David, that when we are admitted into the inner circle, the Supreme Degree, we are asked to identify ourselves with those people, and we are expressly told that we cannot aspire to take part in the rebuilding operations unless we take that character. It is on that condition that we are allowed to proceed, to ascend the Winding Staircase, to reach the summit thereof, and to enter the Middle Chamber, where an entire participation of the secrets is to be obtained. This is the language used in our Fellow Degree, but it expresses the facts of a more advanced stage of initiation. As a reward for our zeal and fidelity we attain to that exalted position so long held by "our noble Ancestors," we are constituted Princes and Rulers in Israel, members of the Holy Sanhedrin, which survived under the name of "Academies."

In the Supreme Degree, however, we have to modify our conception of the Chamber, for now we

find that it is not reached by ascending but by descending. In the Craft the Chamber is one of three, the second as we go up, and therefore called the "Middle Chamber"; there we find many things that help to develop the mind. But now we discover another Chamber, which is underground, in the bosom of the Mount Moriah, though still related to the same Temple; and it is here that we obtain the essentials of our Speculative Science. The most important thing in it is a Sacred Shrine in a central position, and this central position must be determined by means of certain objects on the surface, as was explained in our book *The Genuine Secrets in Freemasonry* (see chapter on "The Vaulted Chamber").

On the Shrine certain things were found, the principal of which was the Mirific Word. These things were the "genuine secrets," handed down to us by the Kabbalists, the Brethren of the Rosy Cross and the early Freemasons. According to the tradition they had been lost sight of for about five centuries, and all along they had been the object of an unremitting quest on the part of our Ancient Brethren, for of course they retained the tradition of the Secret Vault; and at length it was discovered, as we hear, in the Royal Arch.

Our formularies give us an outline of these things, very briefly and imperfectly, that we may realise the great antiquity of Freemasonry; but the Old American Ritual, which has continued substantially in use down to our day, is far more explicit than our English one, both as regards the mysterious Chamber and the way our Ancient Brethren brought the "genuine secrets" to light. All the material facts of our traditional history can be verified by statements found in the writings of Ezra, Haggai, and Zechariah—those least

studied by Christians in the past, but to which the Hebrews attached the greatest importance.

The Temple of Jerusalem, its Priesthood and its Ritual, have now vanished, but in the Middle Ages practically all the Rabbis were Kabbalists; and we know that at a time when the Jews were not permitted to reside in England some of those Kabbalistic teachers came over to instruct our Brethren here about these things. In our book *The Organisation of the Royal Arch Chapter Two Centuries Ago* this fact has been made perfectly clear. One such teacher, Manasseh ben Israel, the author of *El Conciliador* (Frankfort, 1632), was so keen to help that he came from Holland disguised as "a merchant." And it is interesting to find that in his work he refers to a class of people whom he calls "The Ancients"; they were the discoverers of the Vaulted Chamber, of which he speaks thus:

"According to the Ancients . . . Solomon had a deep cave dug underground, with many intricacies, over which he fixed a stone (*the Keystone*), where he put the Ark of the Cherubim. . . . And they are of opinion that subsequently Josiah secreted therein the Ark of the Covenant." He gives some detailed information about Josiah's doings, and then he repeats that his information comes from "the Ancients." In fact practically everything is accounted for in the same way, "The Ancients say this and that."

Again, examining the Old Charges of the seventeenth century we come across a phrase which resembles this conception of Manasseh ben Israel. Dr Plot in 1686 speaks of "the Ancients of the Order," and says that it was indispensable to have a minimum number of such men present at every ceremony of *Acception*; leaving us to infer that otherwise the

acception of any man would have been irregular, if not actually invalid.

These "Ancients of the Order" must have been the men who were in full possession of the secrets of Freemasonry, having in consequence more authority than the rest. In the *Beaumont MS.*, 1690, they are called in Latin the *Seniores*, "the Elders"; which was the term used to designate the members of the Holy Sanhedrin, the "Princes or Rulers" to which we refer in the Royal Arch. Let us remember, too, that when the Staff is entrusted to a newly exalted Companion we tell him that he will not be allowed to bear it "unless Seventy-two of your *Elders* are present"—that is to say, unless there is an actual gathering of the Holy Sanhedrin, which originally consisted of seventy-two Elders. In that case the junior Companion will have to give precedence to "the Ancients of the Order."

This suggests all that we contend for—that Freemasonry originated with certain Hebrew mystics associated with the Temple of Jerusalem, and that they are represented by the Kabbalists of historic times. In this chapter we are only dealing with what our present-day formularies expressly state. But if we go back two centuries, to 1725, we shall find that the organisers of the premier Grand Lodge claimed to be real Kabbalists; for in the "Two Letters" which form an Appendix to Gould's *History of Freemasonry*, bearing that date, there is a statement by one who knew all about them to the effect that "They assume to themselves the august title of Kabbalists." They must have had some ground for that claim; it may have been something debatable, open to question; it may have been something which was not borne out by the facts; but the presumption is that

they considered themselves entitled to be described as Kabbalists because they endorsed some of their tenets and principles.

Finally, we have to observe that in the *Book of the Greater Holy Assembly*, which is an integral part of the *Zohar*, verse 920, there is this statement: "The sum of all is this: the Ancient of the Ancient ones existeth in the Microprosopus, etc." And referring to the secret Words of which the Kabbalists made use, we read: "And truly I have revealed them before the Ancient of the Ancient ones, etc." The "Ancient of Days" was God, the title being used in the Bible, and the Kabbalists gloried in the title of the "Ancient ones," because their Order had existed from time immemorial; indeed, they traced back to Adam. It was this conception, then, that suggested the expression, and which at a later date, under the ægis of Freemasonry, led to the designation of "Our Ancient Brethren."

CHAPTER II

WHO WERE THE KABBALISTS?

HERE we do not propose to expound the views of the Kabbalists, or the intricacies of their peculiar philosophy. Nor do we intend to deal with the subject of their organisation, or the analogies between their practices and those of the Rosicrucians and their successors, although they bear out our contention that Kabbalism is the source from which Freemasonry has been derived. These matters have been sufficiently elucidated in our work *The Genuine Secrets in Freemasonry Prior to A.D. 1717*.

What we desire to do now is to identify the people who first bore the name of *Kabbalists*. In the thirteenth century a Spanish Jew, Abraham ben David Ha-Levi, composed a treatise under the title of *Seder ha Kabbalah*, "The Order of the Kabbalah"; and this title implies a secret association of students of the Theosophy of Israel; we say *secret*, because the Kabbalah was absolutely secret, and those cultivating it must of necessity have worked in secret. The said treatise does not reveal the secrets of the Order; really and truly it was written to vindicate true Judaism from a Sadducean heresy which had spread at the time among the Jews of Spain. And the title suggests that the author, a representative Kabbalist, was speaking on behalf of the Order the members whereof pursued the study of the Kabbalah; they naturally

viewed Judaism as a spiritual force, and they upheld the Secret Tradition of Israel.

The word *Kabbalah* has frequently been made to mean some sort of doctrine connected with some sort of Magic, or the Black Art; but this is quite wrong. Our own English word *Cabal* is a derivative of it, introduced into the language in the sense of "a clandestine gathering of people for more or less sinister purposes," because it had transpired that there was a secret association called after the "Kabbalah." Thus it was that people began to speak of *Cabals*.

But the historic Kabbalah was something definitely Jewish, something very ancient, something which, being of Eastern origin and quite out of date, has become unintelligible, or at least most obscure, for the vast majority of people.

Waite says that "Kabbalah equals Reception"; and in *Doctrine and Literature of the Kabbalah* he has appended a footnote which reads thus: "There can be, I think, little doubt that the Kabbalah was the 'Reception' of the *Beresbith* and *Bercabab* Mysteries mentioned in the Talmud, or that this was always the view taken by Kabbalistic Jews." The *Beresbith* mystery related to the Creation, and the *Bercabab* mystery was concerned with Ezekiel's Vision; the first dealt with the work of the Divine Architect, the second with the wonderful constitution of the Universe.

The Kabbalists claimed that the Volume of the Sacred Law contained a divine revelation, and that the substance of this revelation had been communicated by God Himself to Adam in his unfallen state. Afterwards it was handed down through Noah and Abraham to Moses and Solomon, the Regent of the Secret Tradition. It comprised a series of mysteries, which became the dogmas of Judaism and gave rise

to the speculations characteristic of the Order, thereby bringing Judaism very near Christianity, for it threw great light on the problems of the Christian Faith.

A Kabbalistic treatise entitled *Phosphorus Orthodoxæ Fidei Veterum Cabbalistarum*, published in Amsterdam in 1720, heightens and magnifies the authority of the *Zohar* by alleging that its author flourished before Judah the Prince. The Talmud is there quoted to prove that Rabbi Simeon studied the Kabbalah in the cave, and that afterwards he and his son wrote the *Zohar* in that cave, or at least as much of it as is written in the Jerusalem dialect, the Hebrew portions of it being admitted to be from another writer. The *Zohar* is pronounced to be superior to the Talmud. This traditional authorship of the *Zohar* has been fully discussed in our book *Origin of the Masonic Degrees*, where we maintain that it is almost as ancient as the Christian Religion.

The historic Kabbalah is a body of doctrine which in the Middle Ages attracted much attention among the learned in Europe, and although imperfectly grasped, it came to be recognised by Christians as a most helpful philosophical system. It started from the fundamental principle that God was in all things and everything was in Him; it was designed to elucidate the relation of the creature to the absolute Creator. It made much of the Law of Moses, which the Kabbalists claimed to have preserved across the ages for the benefit of the world.

Manasseh ben Israel, one of the most active Kabbalistic teachers of his day, distinguished the men who made use of the Law of Moses into three classes, viz.:

(1) The "Masters of the Reading," meaning those who were well versed in the literal, historical, and practical interpretation of the Hebrew Scriptures.

(2) The "Masters of the Second or Double Reading," that is, the Talmudists, who could go much deeper than the former and understand the profound things it contained, in the light of the Oral Law as codified in both Talmuds. The *Mishnah* was formed into a body of doctrine about A.D. 200 by collecting all the *mishnayoth* in one volume, and this was supplemented later by the various independent *midrashim*.

(3) The "Masters of the Kabbalah," who were the students of the metaphysical and mystic doctrine which underlay the Hebrew Scriptures, something that had been handed down secretly from the days of Moses, through the "Elders," the "Ancient Brethren" of the Craft Masons, the "Holy Ancestors" of the R.A. Companions.

The word *Kabbalah* is Hebrew and, as stated, means "the Received." Manasseh ben Israel explained it in 1632 in that way. The Freemasons of the same period rendered it by "the Acception," which also meant "the Received" in Old English; and they applied the expression to a Masonic Lodge, the records of which, now extant, go back to 1620. The Kabbalah, therefore, must be what the Freemasons always term their "Speculative Science."

Manasseh ben Israel in *El Conciliador* is insistent that the Kabbalah "was very secret and mysterious," and asserted that he, as a Kabbalist, belonged to a class of people who acknowledged God as "the sole Architect and Governor of the Universe, and in their affection immediately invoke His Holy Name." Kabbalism was also spoken of as "the Secret Wisdom," which was the truest and highest Wisdom. One thing that greatly recommended it to non-Jews was its syncretism, for it aimed at reconciling the various types of monotheism that there were in Europe in

the Middle Ages, Mohammedans and Christians, with Judaism, as the Kabbalists conceived Judaism.

In the *Zohar* the Kabbalists are described as "the Wise," who regarded the Sacred Law as merely "the vestment" which covered the soul, not the soul itself; whence we read: "And there are the Wise, the servants of the great King, who dwell on the heights of Sinai and concern themselves only with the soul, which is the foundation of all and the true Law. These shall be ready in the coming time to contemplate the soul of that soul which breathes in the Law."

According to this, the Kabbalists were the servants of God, who sought God in Sinai as Moses did, and, far from being satisfied with the outward and the literal, went down to the foundation of things. As Isaac Myer puts it, "that higher soul which breathes in the *Taurah* is God Himself"; and this is what the early Freemasons meant when they referred to "the Volume of the Sacred Law."

The Kabbalah was a Theosophy which both Christians and Mohammedans found they could accept, although of Jewish origin; and on that basis they were able to treat one another as brethren. But Leo di Modena, who was a strict orthodox Jew, and most jealous of the treasures of Jewry, thought it questionable whether God would ever forgive those who first published the Kabbalistic works. They were supposed to keep their contents absolutely secret, but instead, they allowed the world to sack and pillage the rich storehouse of Kabbalism.

And yet we may rejoice that the popularisation of Kabbalism brought about the rise of Rosicrucianism and the whole evolution of Freemasonry. The Rosicrucians were not perfect Kabbalists, and the Jews may have regarded the profanation that had taken

place as an unpardonable sin; but good was to come out of evil. Moreover, although the Order of the Rosy Cross was founded on the Kabbalah, the Kabbalists might still carry on as they had done all along. All that happened was, as Dr Ginsburg says, that "the Kabbalah became partially known to Christians."

Now unquestionably the Kabbalah degenerated greatly in the hands of Christians, many of whom had only a smattering of Hebrew. That is why we find the Kabbalism of some Christian Kabbalists questioned. As an example we may mention the case of Henry More, whom Rosenroth included in his *Kabbala Denudata*, to which a later author (Adolphe Franck) objected because some of his speculations were not at all in harmony with Kabbalistic teaching. The explanation is that Henry More was a Christian Kabbalist, and, like a Christian Kabbalist, he was somewhat amateurish. Moreover, the Christian Kabbalists were animated with a different spirit, for they regarded the Kabbalah as a fitting instrument to effect the conversion of the Jews, as we may see in the writings of Pico della Mirandola, Postel, Reuchlin, and Rosenroth himself.

On the other hand, some non-Jewish Kabbalists took the view that the Kabbalah had been the means of leading the Jews astray, for, while professing to follow the Law of Moses, they had wandered into the paths of ancient philosophy. But as long as the Jews were in control the Fraternity was kept very select, and, as Gould says, the secrets of the Kabbalah were only revealed "to those who were bound to secrecy by the most solemn oaths." He adds that they did this "after the manner of the Egyptians and Pythagorean Mysteries." The Kabbalists were strongly averse to letting the world at large into their secrets, for they

felt that they must not cast their pearls before swine; they therefore heled and concealed; they made their Order invisible. Thus it is that we have practically no details of their doings.

From the ninth century the Spanish Kabbalists made use of an ancient primer, now widely known as the *Sepher Jetzirah*, and which Professor Dr Schiller Szinessy, a great authority on Hebrew literature, has pronounced beyond question to be from the hand of Akiba "both in substance and in form." This implies that the *Sepher Jetzirah* was composed about the second century, for Rabbi Akiba ben Joseph was a pupil of Rabbi Joshua ben Chananja, who was the successor of the Gamaliel mentioned in the New Testament, a contemporary of St Paul. And most certainly the language of *Sepher Jetzirah* recalls that of the *Mishnah*, which took its present form about A.D. 200.

From the thirteenth century some Christians were drawn into the movement, as witness the Spanish philosopher Raymond Lully (A.D. 1236-1315). In 1409 Moses Boturelo wrote a commentary on the *Jetzirah*, to instruct another Christian Spaniard, Maestre Juan. And in the fifteenth century several Kabbalistic books were translated into Latin, whereby the influence of the Kabbalah spread wider and wider, and many Christian people were not only influenced but helped by its principles, which they embraced with enthusiasm.

Unfortunately it was impossible to grasp the subject without a fair knowledge of Hebrew; but this fact caused many people to apply themselves to the study of that language. The Gentile inquirers who desired to fathom it were seriously handicapped unless they had mastered Hebrew; although they tried to obviate the difficulty by the adoption of various systems of

symbols, geometrical or otherwise; these artificial expedients led to the script of the Rosicrucians and the several Masonic alphabets.

The Kabbalists illustrated their ideas frequently by a play with the words, and even with the letters, of the Sacred Law. And they had various methods of permuting the letters and of calculating their numerical value; by which methods they claimed to discover the sense of Holy Writ; they certainly brought to light some very remarkable coincidences. Some of their practices have left their impression in the Ritual of the Royal Arch, as was shown by us in *The Antiquity of the Holy Royal Arch*.

At length, by such methods quite a number of people were made to understand the gist of the Kabbalistic philosophy; and so the Kabbalah became public property. Then it was that some of its cultivators became free lances, unattached Kabbalists, mere amateurs, who juggled with its speculations, sometimes in a childish way, discussing it independently of school or party; for of course they would not entertain the idea of becoming Jews.

The real Kabbalists, however, continued to be a close corporation, a secret fraternity, into which it was difficult to gain admission. Anyone desiring to enter into it had to take the oath of fidelity and secrecy, by which he practically became a proselyte of the Gate. It was only by submitting to this ordeal that he could be recognised as a Kabbalist, or that he could obtain the benefit of Jewish experts as tutors.

The ceremonial of the Order was based largely on the worship of Jewry, the Tabernacle, the Temple of Solomon, and the Second Temple; and apparently the candidates were taught by means of *Tableaux*

Vivants, in which they enacted the principal episodes of Hebrew history, particularly those of the setting up of the Tabernacle of the Wilderness, the construction of the Temple of King Solomon at Jerusalem, and the rebuilding of the same by the returned Exiles after the Babylonian Captivity. And who cannot see in this the counterpart of Freemasonry? There is still extant a very ancient treatise entitled *Gate of Light*, by Joseph Gikatilla ben Abraham, a disciple of Abulafia, published at Mantua, which deals with the mystic Names of God and with the *Sephiroth*. There the Gate is supposed to be between the twin Pillars, B. and J.; and it is said that in order to attain to the knowledge of God, that is to say, the Theosophy of Kabbalism, the aspirant has to learn to "unite the Blessed Name and the Mystery of B. and J." So that according to this Kabbalist the Pillars B. and J. were emblematical, embodying some mystery, and that the two Names B. and J. had to be joined to another Name, a divine one, not given in the book because it was to be kept secret; it was "the Blessed Name."

Here we might point out that B. and J. are the initials of two of the three particles, J-B-O, communicated in the Royal Arch, which have also a divine significance. This throws some light on what the Bible says, that the Temple of Jerusalem was intended by God to be "a House for My Name." Accordingly the Kabbalists said: "By these Pillars and by the Living God the mind and the soul ascend as by their passages and channels."

The ancient ceremony of the three Veils, still practised at Bristol and wherever the old Ritual has been retained, is of Kabbalistic origin, as we have shown in *The Genuine Secrets in Freemasonry Prior to A.D. 1717*. And our identification of the Companions with the

“Princes and Rulers” of the August Sanhedrin is further corroboration of the Kabbalistic conception, implying that we are the successors of an Order which has been in existence throughout the whole span of Hebrew history, from the days of Moses to King Solomon and the children of the Captivity.

Reuchlin was a Kabbalist, but he was courageous enough to strike out on independent lines, maintaining that a man could be a true Kabbalist without giving up his Christian faith—that is, without becoming a Jew. Evidently Raymond Lully, three centuries before, held the same view.

Menendez Pelayo, the historian of Spanish heterodoxy, in referring to two eminent ecclesiastics of the twelfth century, Domingo Gundisalvo and John Hispalense, tells us that these men had embraced the theosophy of the Kabbalah and were in consequence “unconscious heretics.” And after them there were many Christians who adopted the Kabbalah in the same way, as may be inferred from the existence of some copies of the *Zohar* (mentioned by Dr Ginsburg in the *Kabbalah*) still extant, which comment on the Trisagion of Isaiah vi. 3 thus: “The first *Holy* refers to the Holy Father, the second to the Holy Son, and the third to the Holy Ghost.” Some Jewish scholars regard these words as an interpolation, but there are some other scholars who have no difficulty over this passage, explaining it by a reference to the first three *Sephiroth*, which were usually viewed as forming a Trinity. The Rosicrucians were Christians in so far as they were members of the Church, but in so far as they followed the Kabbalah they also were “unconscious heretics.” And it is notorious that many Christians felt that the Kabbalah was no bar to Christianity; indeed that was the reason why many

Jewish Kabbalists became Christians: the Christian Kabbalists took the view that the Kabbalah was designed as a sort of preparation for Christianity.

Reuchlin composed his book *De Verbo Mirifico*, printed at Basle, 1494, in order to show, as many other scholars had done before, that the Kabbalah illuminated the Old Testament, and helped the Christian to find new evidences of the truth of the Christian Religion, particularly of the Holy Trinity, the Incarnation and the Atonement of Christ, the Heavenly Jerusalem, the Fall of the Angels, and so forth. He also held that all true Wisdom and all true philosophy had been derived from the Hebrews; that Plato, Pythagoras, and Zoroaster drew their ideas from the Hebrew Scriptures. Pico della Mirandola also endorsed this view, for in one of his *Theses* he said: "No science yields greater proof of the divinity of Christ than Magia and the Kabbalah."

Reuchlin in the fifteenth century saw his contemporaries dabbling in the Kabbalah in various ways, and expressed his disapproval, asserting that they were not to be regarded as Kabbalists; it was necessary to discriminate; some knew what they were talking about, but others did not. He therefore proposed the employment of different designations for the three classes of people which he detected, viz.:

Cabalici, for the true Kabbalists, the men who found a heavenly inspiration in the Kabbalah.

Cabalaai, for the followers of the former, who were faithful enough but unqualified to teach or even to speak authoritatively, largely because they were ignorant of the Hebrew tongue and not completely illuminated.

Cabalistæ, for the mere imitators, of whom there were many, who adopted such ideas as were suitable

to illustrate their doctrine, but were so deficient in "Wisdom" as to be quite unreliable when they attempted to expound the Kabbalah.

The second of these terms, *Cabalaai*, may have been a proper designation for the Rosicrucians, but the later Freemasons could only have been described by the third, *Cabalistæ*.

In 1516 Reuchlin published at Hagenau another book entitled *De Arte Cabalistica*, which is a very masterly exposition. It takes the form of a Dialogue between a Mohammedan, a Pythagorean philosopher, and a Jewish doctor—that is, a Kabbalistic teacher. But the Pythagorean and the Mohammedan have come in search of the light, that they may be initiated into the mysteries of the Kabbalah; therefore this book is a tribute to the Jews, the originators of the system.

The erudite scholar Dr Ginsburg bears testimony to the work of Reuchlin in these words: "The extraordinary influence which Reuchlin's Kabbalistic Treatises exercised upon the greatest thinkers of the time and upon the early reformers may be judged of from the unmeasured terms of praise which they bestowed upon their author. The Treatises were regarded as heavenly communications, revealing new divine wisdom."

Nor should we think that the Kabbalists confined themselves exclusively to the archaic speculations of their Theosophy; for in reality they were very progressive people who gave a great impetus to the study of philosophy and the exact sciences. In the sixteenth century one of their teachers, Moses Cordovero, who, far from being a dreamer, was a highly intellectual man, became widely known as the exponent of the scientific speculations of the Kabbalah in contradistinction to the wonder-working element of that

system of learning, which in some books looms so large.

Myer, one of the highest authorities, has defined Kabbalism as an attempt to harmonise the monotheistic conception with "the fundamental principle of ancient philosophy," viz. that from nothing nothing comes (*ex nihilo nihil fit*).

Solomon ben Yahudah Ibn Gebirol of Cordoba, who flourished towards the middle of the eleventh century, was in his day considered to be the Solomon of the *Sephardi*—that is to say, of the Spanish Jews—and undoubtedly he was the greatest philosopher of that period.

CHAPTER III

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF C.:R.:C.:?

EVERY Masonic student on being introduced to the subject of Rosicrucianism naturally asks, What did the letters C.:R.:C.: mean when first brought into use in the beginning of the sixteenth century? We know that they were read as meaning *Christian Rosy Cross*, and that they were supposed to be the initials of a man so named, the Founder and first Imperator of the Order of the Rosy Cross. The date of his birth was given as 1378 and that of his death as 1484, so that he attained to the good old age of 106 years. In the official documents of the Order he is described as "our Father," "our highly illuminated Father," *centenario major*, and so forth.

The question raised, however, is not so easily disposed of, for there is no philosopher, occultist, or mystic of that name in any history, legend, or biographical dictionary; and, in fact, many students have been led to believe that the three letters stand for a mythical individual. Anyhow, the problem of what C.:R.:C.: meant is not considered to have been solved. The Rosicrucians were wont to allegorising everything, and therefore we may hypothetically assume that the story of C.:R.:C.: embodied an allegory.

In the *Fama Fraternitatis* the traditional Founder of the Order is described as "the Chief and Original of our Fraternity." We are indeed told that Michael Maier in 1616 gave a personal interpretation to the

letters C.:R.:C.:; but this has no practical value for evidential purposes, because he was a member of the Order, and, speaking in German, he was bound to conform to the common mode of parlance, the *usus loquendi* of the name. In German, however, that man was usually called *Rosenkreutz*. Why, then, should the letters be C.:R.:C.: and not C.:R.:K.:? The C. stands for the Latin word *Cruce*; but this increases the difficulty.

Solomon Semler outlines the tradition of the Order by saying that Rosenkreutz lived in the fifteenth century; that in 1410 a Rosicrucian Society was founded in Italy; that in 1430 another appeared in Flanders; that in 1459 another is heard of in Germany. But if the Order was founded in Germany, why should Italy and Flanders be the first mentioned? Why should they come first? We suspect that there has been some confusion between the Order of the Rosy Cross and that of the Holy Cross, of which we shall speak presently.

As the Brethren of the Rosy Cross allegorised everything, what they said was not always literally true. But we must observe that in attributing the foundation of the Order and certain writings to a hypothetical individual there was no intention to deceive. In the Middle Ages it was thought quite legitimate to palm off a book expounding the views of any great teacher as if it had been written by him, though it came from the pen of one of his disciples. Thus, for instance, the *Sepher Jetzirah* was attributed to the patriarch Abraham, but no one ever thought that its Kabbalistic author had intended to deceive.

Naturally there must have been some individual who was the prime mover among those who founded the Order, and the Rosicrucians must have had some

tradition about him; but the sole source of our information is what the Rosicrucians themselves said. The tradition had been handed down orally, and probably had been somewhat embroidered in the process of time. In the documents of the early seventeenth century there is a reference to a "Brother" of C.:R.:C.: as having been one of the First Circle in the original Councils of the Order; he bears what appears to be the surname of "Rosy Cross"; but it remains to be proved that the name is not a symbolic one. We shall come to this by and by.

The fact is that no one can say where history ends and allegory begins in the life of the supposed individual. From what has been said in the preceding chapter there seems to be some *prima facie* evidence for believing that C.:R.:C.: did not designate an *individual*, but *the Order* of the Rosy Cross. By the hypothesis of tradition he was indeed a German and a Christian, but he honoured the Cross, disliked Judaism, and hated the Crescent. He was a much-travelled man, but we cannot be absolutely certain that the Order was founded in Germany. If the letters C.:R.:C.: be a personification of the Order all is perfectly clear.

The name suggests an Order which is distinguished by a Cross, one of a rosy colour, and therefore a characteristically Christian Order. On this understanding, therefore, the name has a perfectly obvious sense, and agrees with the facts of history, for it suggests that there was a Christian branch of a brotherhood which originally was purely and exclusively Jewish; and C.:R.:C.: was the hypothetical man who had Christianised that Order, and so had become the founder of the branch which thereafter was to become known as the *Christian Rosy Cross*.

With this interpretation, then, we now begin to see light, and we obtain the desired confirmation of all that we have written before on the subject. As a matter of fact, Rosicrucianism is only Kabbalism in a Christian garb; and as no great historical movement can come out of the void, we must now inquire into the contributory causes that brought about the transition from the Kabbalah to the Rosy Cross.

In the fifteenth century the learned men of Europe took up the subject of the Kabbalah with great zest, and they were greatly fascinated by it. Dr Ginsburg sums up the circumstances under which the development was brought about by saying: "Such was the interest that this newly revealed Kabbalah created among Christians that not only the learned men, but statesmen and warriors, began to study the Oriental languages in order to be able to fathom the mysteries of this Theosophy."

During the Renaissance many European scholars came to the conclusion that Kabbalism, although essentially a Jewish system of learning, far from being incompatible with the Christian Religion, was an excellent stimulant to their belief, for it confirmed their religious convictions. To establish this important thesis it will be sufficient to review what the leading Christian Kabbalists of the period had to say about the Kabbalah.

Pico della Mirandola (1463-93), who made known the Kabbalah to Christians in Italy, held that in the Kabbalah there is more Christianity than Judaism, for, as stated, it affords proofs for the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, the Incarnation and Divinity of Christ, the Heavenly Jerusalem, the Fall of Angels, the various Orders of Angelic Beings, Purgatory, and Hell-fire (see *Index a Jacobo Gafarello*). We need not inquire

whether or no these statements are correct; it is enough for us to take note of what were his views on the subject.

The German Hebrew scholar, John Reuchlin (1455-1522), also thought that all the various Christian dogmas could be found in the Kabbalah, and therefore he affirmed that a man could be a "good Kabbalist without being a Jew." We know that even Pope Leo X and Cardinal Di Medici used to read his books (see *Life and Times of John Reuchlin*, by Francis Besham). Reuchlin asserted that the Tetrad—that is, the *Tetraktys* of Pythagoras—was an imitation of the *Tetragrammaton*, the Ineffable Four-Lettered Name of God, and that the honour paid to the Decade had arisen from the sanctity attaching to the *Ten Sephiroth*.

Archangelus di Burgo Nuovo, a Roman Catholic prelate, in 1564 wrote a little volume entitled *Apologia pro Defensione Doctrinæ Cabalæ, etc.*, and in it he expressed his view that the Kabbalah was practically "a notebook to the New Testament." It is true that Archangelus at the time was toying with Lutheranism, and that he frequently did outrage to good sense; but the point is, that he considered that the Christian interpretation of the Kabbalah was perfectly correct.

Paracelsus (1493-1541) was an occult philosopher who had learned a great deal from the Kabbalah, and, being a man of an independent spirit, was not likely to submit to Jewish tutors. He once wrote that "a man should not be another when he can be his own self." He had learned much also from Theophrastus of Hohenheim, and scorned the physician who had not studied natural Magia nor the Kabbalah. In one of his writings he mentions some "books of the Cabala" which he had composed at some time or other, but these are no longer extant.

Evidently he had been expounding the Kabbalah to his contemporaries. We know, however, that he was a Knight of "the Holy Cross," which was an earlier form of Rosicrucianism.

Khunrath is another scholar who deserves to be mentioned here. Waite describes him as follows: "Khunrath was an illuminated Christian Kabbalist, and so far as the Secret Doctrine of the Brotherhood showed forth the mystical Theosophy of Israel under the light of the New and Eternal Covenant, so far the author of the *Amphitheatre of Eternal Wisdom* is on common ground with Rosicrucians and was to this extent their precursor."

Khunrath was born in Saxony about the year 1560 and died in 1601, "before Rosicrucianism had emerged at least definitely above the horizon of history." But this is only partly true, for the chronological data do not bear out the idea of his being the "precursor" of the Rosicrucians, whose Order is older than has been supposed. We recognise the fact that the publication of his work posthumously in 1609 does not affect the issue, for undoubtedly during his lifetime he exercised considerable influence among the learned. The fact has been emphasised that he was addicted to Alchemy; but neither the Kabbalah nor the *Fama Fraternitatis* gave much encouragement to the Alchemists as such, for they are represented as being at fault in concentrating too much on "the tinctures of metals."

The Latin collection of Pistorius presents Kabbalism in the form of terse expositions. It comprises a variety of writers whose views are as follows:—

There are some Jews, like Riccius, who obviously feel that the proper thing for them to do is to become Christians; Riccius himself had actually done so.

There are Christians who, having found how the Kabbalah helped to clear up the dogmas of the Holy Trinity, the *Logos*, and so forth, argued that it was utterly inconsistent for a Jew to remain a Jew.

And there are mystics who, as Kabbalists, were unwilling to discuss the merits or demerits of this or that creed, because they viewed all of them at bottom to be equally true. Pistorius included such men in his collection because he understood them to favour Christianity and to regard the Kabbalah as a support of the essentials of the Christian Religion.

This, then, explains how it was that the Order of the Kabbalah came to be Christianised under the title of the Order of the Rosy Cross. Naturally, when such a thing happened many changes took place in the constitution and mode of working of the new body.

Riccus felt that the Kabbalah favoured Christianity, and he was not slow to embrace it as its logical outcome. And in *Doctrine and Literature of the Kabbalah* we come across another such man, viz. "Aaron Margalita, whose many works attempted to Christianise the Kabbalah" in the sixteenth century. A statement which amounts to saying that there were Rosicrucians in the sixteenth century, before 1601.

Pistorius, in collecting the writings of Christian Kabbalists, showed where his sympathies lay. He was a staunch Protestant, having been one of the deputies charged with the presentation of the Lutheran Confession of Faith to the Diet of Augsburg. Catholic Germany had always been bitterly hostile to the Jews, and when the Catholics saw the Reformers studying the Jewish Kabbalah, which had great influence upon them, they denounced it. But Pistorius defied this opposition, and was instrumental

in saving the Kabbalistic books from being confiscated and burnt up throughout Germany. Most copies of Reuchlin's works, *De Verbo Mirifico* and *De Arte Cabbalistica*, were then destroyed, because they were considered to be tainted with Jewish poison. But Pistorius did his best to preserve the Kabbalah for the benefit of Christian people.

The Rosicrucians had imbibed the doctrine of the Kabbalah, and thought of "C.:.R.:.C.:." as the man who had first adapted Kabbalism to the Christian mind. And they did not see any inconsistency in their conduct. Almost every work on the subject of Kabbalism before and after Rosenroth's *Kabbala Denudata*, if written by a Christian adept, was intended to draw people to the movement, as was the case with Rosenroth's own book. He thought it right for Christians to embrace the Kabbalah, and he expected every Kabbalistic Jew to become a Christian. But somehow or other the early Christian Kabbalists do not appear to have made much use of the *Zohar*, which was the *magnum opus* of Kabbalism; indeed, it is not even mentioned by Mirandola, Agrippa, or Postel. It suggests that the Christians were not perfectly illuminated.

In their allegories the Rosicrucians were very subtle, as we shall have occasion to see. C.:.R.:.C.:. is said to have gone to the East, and to have met with some Wise Men at "Damcar." But where was this city of Damcar? No one can tell us, and there is a disposition on the part of many scholars to regard it as mythical. In the course of our investigation we shall see that those men made use of geographical names, too, in a symbolical way.

Damcar has been taken to be either a cryptic or a corrupt form of *Damascus*; and it is at least curious

that in the Chapters of Harodim, the *Rulers* (the "Men of Understanding," of Consideration XIV in the *Confessio*) were called the *Domaskin*, because they wore robes made of *damaskin*—that is, silk damask—or of Damascus. We cannot trace this term further back than 1740; but by then it was employed as a familiar term, which presumably had been in common use from much earlier times. In 1730 "A. Z.," writing in the London *Daily Journal*, tells us that on those robes there appeared some *appliqué* "red crosses," which had been what gave its name, *Rosy Cross*, to the Order.

From the East C.:R.:C.: came to the West, and then the City of Fez is mentioned, which is the most westerly point we can conceive of in the Middle Ages, before the discovery of America. In the interrogatory of our Third Degree, *Coming from the East and Going to the West* are expressions which have a mystic significance. Pico della Mirandola in his *Kabbalistic Conclusions* said: "Every good soul is a new soul coming from the East." And Thomas Vaughan, who probably was quite orthodox, defined the "East" as being *Kokmah*, that is to say "Wisdom," the second *Sephira*—"which the Kabbalists style the supernatural East." On the other hand, in the work *Ancient Supplements* Fez is distinctly stated to have been long ago the centre of much Kabbalistic influence. At the beginning of *Tiqquneb-ba-Zobar*, by Prophos (Amsterdam, 1718), it is stated that the *Zobar* was well known at Fez from time immemorial.

The Rosicrucians represented C.:R.:C.:, the ideal of the Order, as a Christian who desired to remain a Christian. And, therefore, while it is said in the *Fama* that he found *Magia* and the Kabbalah being practised at Fez, the Holy City of Morocco, in his

estimation it "was defiled by their Religion"; which can only be an animadversion against the Religion prevailing at the place, Mohammedanism. Presumably the Kabbalists he had met at Damascus were Jews, or perhaps both Jews and Christians mixed. At any rate, it is clear that C.:.R.:.C.:. desired a purer Kabbalah than what he found at Fez.

From Fez he crossed over to Spain: "he sailed with many costly things into Spain," the classical home of Kabbalism in the West, hoping that the learned of that country would give him the encouragement and sympathy he longed for. But he was disappointed; he could not even persuade the Christian scholars of Spain "to order all their studies according to those sound and solid foundations" which he had conceived, but they chose to go the way they had always gone.

Our conclusion, then, is that the letters "C.:.R.:.C.:." stand for the ideal Rosicrucian, which is tantamount to saying for "the Order." The three dots in triangular form after each of the three letters are the terminals of an equilateral triangle, and these have always been used by Freemasons in the abbreviation of certain words which they did not desire outsiders to understand. This, therefore, implies that the meaning of the letters goes deeper than the explanation which was usually given; that there is in them something more than catches the eye. The individual they thought of had been not so much a founder as an adapter and reformer of the Order to which they belonged, an offshoot of an older one. This has been admitted by other investigators.

There are many things which suggest that Germany was the country where Rosicrucianism began, but it

cannot be stated with any certainty. Indeed the Rosicrucians are mentioned in England at an earlier date than in Germany, although at the opening of the seventeenth century the German Rosicrucians made a great effort to popularise their Order over the whole of Europe. And it was in England that Rosicrucianism was changed into what we now call "Freemasonry." In this country neither Freemasonry nor the Order of the Rosy Cross was ever connected officially with the Christian Church; indeed both flourished under the fostering influences of the Jews, as has been shown in a previous work, where we traced several Kabbalistic teachers who came to England in the seventeenth century to teach the Brethren. Thus it is that, while both the German Rosicrucians and the German Freemasons have always excluded the Jews from membership, we in England have never discriminated against those people.

CHAPTER IV

THE CROSS OF THE ROSICRUCIANS

WE have seen that the Order of the Rosy Cross was evolved out of an older Society making use of some sort of Cross as a distinctive emblem, which on that account was called the Order of the Holy Cross. Its members went under the designation of "Knights of the Holy Cross." Thus Semler, in his *History of the Rosicrucians* (Leipzig, 1786), describes Adam Haselmayer as such a knight. He belonged to the Order before the publication of the *Fama Fraternitatis*, but found that there was very little to choose between the two, and he therefore commended it to all and sundry. Haselmayer was a notary public of the Archduke Maximilian, and later became an Imperial Judge. He therefore was a serious man whose testimony must count.

From the name of the newer Order, *Rosy Cross*, it is clear that the use of the Cross continued. There might, of course, be other associations named after the Cross. The idea of the Cross as something *holy* was current in all Christian lands, but the Orders named after the Cross used a Cross of peculiar pattern. It was not an ordinary one; it seems to have had some special feature. For one thing it was of a *Rosy* colour, and although nothing is said about its shape, we have reason to believe that it embodied an esoteric idea.

This can be confirmed by what A. Z. wrote in

1730 in the London *Daily Journal*, that the Rosicrucians were so called "from their Prime Officers being distinguished on their High Days with red crosses." In any case, his explanation of the name is quite rational. Elsewhere we have stated our reasons for believing A. Z. to have been one of the said Prime Officers. From his statement it appears that the Rosicrucians had certain Festivals when their Principals came on the scene robed in the canonicals of the Order; and on such occasions one might observe some conspicuous devices, here called *Crosses*, on the robes, which were *Rosy*, that is, *Red*, although the word seems to have been favoured because it suggested another symbol of the Order, viz. the Rose.

When the *Fama* was first published it was accompanied with a so-called *Responsio* by Haselmayer, which was in reality an endorsement of the new movement. In his *Responsio* he, as a representative of the older organisation, told the world that he had seen and read a copy of the work in 1610 (five years before its publication), when he was living at a small village of the Tyrol, named *Croix*, near Hal; and of course he approved of the Order. Incidentally we may notice that the *Fama* had for some years been in circulation in MS. form outside Germany before it was printed and issued to all the learned people of Europe. When Haselmayer read the document he was drawn to the Order because he recognised it as expressing practically his own views, which were those of the school of the Kabbalist Paracelsus. It is evident, then, that the Order of the Rosy Cross had been preceded by a similar movement, that which was supported by Haselmayer, the "Order of the Holy Cross," and that both taught the same Kabbalistic doctrine of Paracelsus, who was a Christian.

This testimony about the *Fama* is supported by Julius Sperber, who, writing in 1615, affirmed that it was known to some people in Germany "these nineteen years" before it was printed. And Büleh cites a letter dated "Jan. 2, 1614," in which the writer, one I.:B.:P.:, asserts that he had seen the *Fama* on 28th June 1612, two years before its publication.

Waite tells us that he has "failed to find traces of any Rosicrucian Fraternity prior to the seventeenth century"; but if the *Chemical Nuptials* belong to 1603, as he believes, he is cutting things rather fine. For the Order of the "Golden Stone," with which the *Chemical Nuptials* is concerned, was a development of the Rosy Cross, which had existed before; and therefore if the later Order be dated 1603, we come perilously near the end of the seventeenth century.

On the other hand, we are told that "in the year 1604 there was a complete work which is Rosicrucian in respect of doctrine and symbolism"; meaning by this the *Militia Crucifera Evangelica*, "the Evangelical Cross-bearing Army." This is connected with the unprinted work of Simon Studion, *Naometria*, "Temple measurements"—a title suggested by the passage in the Apocalypse, x. 1, of which work we are told that it "is reminiscent of Kabbalistic or pro-Kabbalistic tracts on the delineation of Celestial Temples, the measurement of the Divine Body, and R. Eleazar's Measurement of the Earthly Temple." Waite's own idea, then, is that in the *Militia* we have something similar to the Rosy Cross; that the two are founded on Kabbalistic doctrine; and that the *Militia* may be the prototype of the Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross.

But now this *Militia* is supposed to have been

founded by Simon Studion in 1586, while the *Reperitorium der Litteratur* of 1782-83, two centuries later, describes it as (a) "a strong sect," and (b) a "well-known" branch of the Order of the Rosy Cross. As the Rosicrucians were still in existence in 1782-83, and the *Militia* was then a thing of the past, we are inclined to believe that there was no real connection between the two; that at the most it was an Order in which some of the mysticism of the Kabbalists had been adopted, and that is why it was called a Branch of the Rosy Cross.

If the *Militia* was an out-and-out "Evangelical" movement, its Cross must have been the Cross of Calvary, which would be destructive of Kabbalistic symbolism, and then all it could be was "a kind of spiritual chivalry, in respect of official belief, interpretation, and astronomical signs and use of symbols." If we view it this way there can be no question of its being "substantially identical with the record of the later Order"; on the contrary, the two Orders become vastly dissimilar, but with points of contact.) 2x.

The Fraternity of the R.:C.: was at work in the fifteenth century, and so it is inconceivable that it could be identical with one which confessedly arose at the close of the sixteenth century. In justice to Waite, however, it should be mentioned that after he had written that the *Militia* was "the prototype" of the Rosy Cross and "identical" with it, in an Appendix he completely abandoned the notion, and said: "I have done nothing to put it forward as other than a Rosicrucian precursor, characterised by similar concerns, the same spirit and analogous forms of symbolism. The *Militia* was no more than a field in which the Order may have sprung up." This is in reality a retractation due to a wise afterthought; he realised

that his previous statement was untenable. The two Orders may have had some features in common, but the real field in which the Order of the Rosy Cross originated was Kabbalism; and the *Militia*, whatever we conceive to be its origin, was something futile and ephemeral; we believe that Büleh was right in representing it as "neither very large nor important."

According to Michael Maier, the earliest Rosicrucian Society was founded in 1413. This was the view given out in *Themis Aurea* (Frankfort, 1618). On the other hand, Solomon Semler, another German writer in 1786, tells us that a Rosicrucian Society had been founded in Italy in 1410, or existed then in that country; that another such Society was established in Flanders in 1430; and that there was one in Germany in 1459. These reports are scarcely consistent with the idea that Germany had been the cradle of Rosicrucianism.

At that time all Europe, including England, was full of secret societies, but the Rosy Cross was peculiar and could not be confounded with any other. But we have seen that the "Order of the Holy Cross" has been mistaken for a Rosicrucian organisation. In the seventeenth century the Rosicrucians, *alias* Freemasons, had a scheme for founding a "Philosophical College," and they succeeded. Samuel Hartlib was one of them, and a strong supporter of the plan. In June 1660 he wrote to Dr Worthington: "I am most willing to serve him (i.e. *Dr Henry More, who was a thoroughgoing Kabbalist*) by procuring if I can a transcript of a letter or two of the supposed Brothers Ros(eæ) Crucis." He evidently had in mind some people who were not exactly Rosicrucians, but members of the Order of "the Holy Cross."

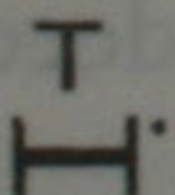
The two Societies seem to have stood in the same

relation to each other as the Antients and Moderns at a later day. They could not agree, although professedly Brothers. Hartlib calls the men he is referring to "the supposed Brothers," because he did not know how he would succeed as an intermediary. Six months later, however, in another letter, having been disappointed, he writes about "the cheats of the Fraternity of the Holy Cross (w^h they call Mysteries), etc." He scorns the idea of their being sincere at all in their allegiance, because while they had "Mysteries" similar to those of the Rosicrucians, including those of the Building and Rebuilding of the Temple, which taught the duty of promoting the diffusion of knowledge, they were taking no interest in the creation of the Philosophical College. This, then, is clear evidence that "the Fraternity of the Holy Cross" had continued in existence, but as something distinct from the Rosy Cross. The latter were now comparatively free and easy, whereas the Brethren of the Holy Cross insisted on carrying on as they had always done; for Hartlib says, somewhat reproachfully, that they were guilty of deception, "had infinite disguises and subterfuges."

The Cross of the Rosicrucians has at length become the Cross of the Companions of the Royal Arch. To see how they inherited it we have to look at the By-Laws of the Chapter of 1765 in London; it opens with the declaration: "*We, the Companions of the E.G. and R.C., commonly called the Royal Arch, etc.*" The term *Royal Arch* had by that time been adopted everywhere, but here we are told that the Degree consisted of a combination of "E.G.," *i.e.* Excellent Grands, and "R.C.," *i.e.* Rosicrucians. So that according to this statement the Triple Tau should be the Badge of both Excellent Grands and Rosicrucians, the men of

the "First or Holy Lodge," and those of the "Third or Grand and Royal Lodge."

The Chapter ordered that the Companions should wear an Apron on which there was to be an emblem which in those days took the form of "T.H.," and was therefore called "T.H." It was also stipulated that they should wear "purple Garters indented with Pink"; the *pink* being in this case intended for *Rosy*.

Some time ago, having had our attention drawn to the statements made by a member of the Supreme Grand Chapter about this symbol, which were palpably untrue, we wrote to him controverting what he said. He failed to see that what the Companions of 1765 called "T.H." was something more than the Roman letters T.H. As it often happens, he could not bear being contradicted; he was afraid of losing prestige as a scholar, and very abruptly closed our correspondence on the pretext that we might publish his letters. None the less the view we presented to him was fully vindicated in our book *Organisation of the Royal Arch Chapter*. "T.H." is simply the Triple Tau, which has often been written thus: 

Let us therefore inquire into the history of this Triple Tau and see if our view can be verified. The *Tau* was a letter of the Hebrew alphabet, and so the reader will naturally ask, How then can it be described as a Cross? And what was there to induce the Rosicrucians to adopt it as an emblem? We shall deal with these questions in detail; they involve other points.

The *Tau* has often been called a "patibulary Cross." It is not the same as the Calvary Cross, but Dr Otto Zoeckler, in his book *The Cross of Christ*, refers to some Christian graves of the first centuries of our

era, on which was depicted the T-Cross, or *Tau*, instead of the common one.

The difference between the *Tau* and the Christian symbol has always been obvious to all; it was probably on account of this difference that a pamphlet published in 1617 bore the title *Crux absque Cruce*, "A Cross without a Cross." It was made *red* because that colour was distinctive of the Order; and we suspect that it was called *Rosy* to suggest another symbol, viz. the mystic Rose of Israel. There was a tendency to Christianise the Cross as other things were Christianised, but the attempt failed.

The *Tau* has always been regarded by occultists as having a deep significance. The R.A. Companions refer to the passage in Ezekiel where it is described as something whereby the lives of God's faithful people, those who had neither part nor parcel in the idolatries of that period, were to be protected. There is another passage (Revelation vii.) resembling this, but in that case the mark is the Name of God. Isaac Myer, in *The Qabbalah*, has a comment which we would endorse: "The prophet who wrote on the banks of the Ke'bar, Ezekiel, is one of the greatest ancient Qabalists, as appears from his assured vision, which is really a Qabalistic statement."

Smith's *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities* recognises the Jewish character of the *Tau*, and asserts that it is a pre-Christian symbol; and therefore there can be no doubt that it was more than well known, familiar to the Kabbalists, whose teachings, says the *Jewish Encyclopædia*, can be traced to the second century B.C. Most certainly the Kabbalists made use of it for didactic purposes, as we have shown in *The Genuine Secrets in Freemasonry*.

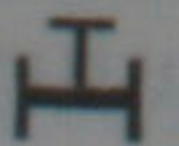
Tyndale, in the sixteenth century (*Exposition* xiii.),

long before there were any "Freemasons" and before the name "Royal Arch" had come into use, wrote: "The sign *Tbau* that defendeth us from the smiting and power of the evil Angels."

What was it, then, that made those people seize on the T-Cross as a distinctive Badge? It was simply that their predecessors, the Kabbalists, had always made use of it in the same way. The chief passage in the *Zohar* bearing on this topic occurs in the *Book of the Lesser Holy Assembly*, saying: "Among the signatures of the letters is *Tau*; nevertheless, He impresseth it as the sign of the Ancient of Days, from Whom dependeth the perfection of knowledge, etc." From this it is clear that the Kabbalists looked on the *Tau* as the Signature of God, which He was supposed to "impress" on the countenance of His faithful people to certify that the person so marked had the divine approval and need not fear anything; God in His Providence would protect him.

The Kabbalists found the *Tau* pregnant with meaning and full of instruction.

As a numeral it expressed the highest quantity indicated by any single Hebrew character, and on that account it had come to convey the idea of fullness, and they therefore said: "The just ones shall inherit 400 desirable worlds"; which meant that the men restored to primeval innocence were to be masters of a large portion of the Universe, and this because they had the approval of God.

Then, when triplicated, the Three Taus became doubly significant, and they said: "The Most Ancient One is found to have Three Heads, which are contained in one Head." The three constituent parts of the Triple Tau might be represented as a single device thus: ; or they might be disintegrated

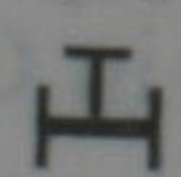

thus: $\begin{array}{c} \text{T} \\ \text{—} \\ \text{—} \end{array}$; or, again, they might take the form of the letters **T H**. The first expressed the truth of the Unity of God; the second gave the idea of a Trinity; the last provided a convenient way of referring to the Symbol. The Christian Kabbalists felt that the Kabbalah had rationalised the dogma of the Trinity, and they therefore valued it.


We conclude, then, that the Rosicrucians adopted this Cross as their Badge because of the importance which their predecessors had attributed to it; and whether or no they wanted to substitute it for the Calvary Cross, the genuine Freemasons stuck to the *Tau*, as the present-day Royal Arch Masons still do. In reality the *Tau* was a foreshadowing of the Cross, an anticipatory Cross.

Nineteen centuries ago the Gnostics of Greece also used the symbol, and then they placed the **T** on the **H** as the Companions of 1765 did. Barnabas noticed it, but did not understand its significance; still he brought it into requisition, and made it convey a Biblical idea; for he pointed out that by adding the *I*, the initial of *Jesus* in Greek, which stood for 10, the total obtained was the number of Abraham's Household: the *H* represented 8, *T* stood for 300, and with the *I* the total was 318, emblematic of the whole body of believers, the Church of God.

The Kabbalists, and before them the Jewish Gnostics, looked upon the Triple *Tau* as made up of three *Taus*, thus: $\begin{array}{c} \text{T} \\ \text{—} \\ \text{—} \end{array}$; while the name "Triple Tau," which their successors gave to it, has come to demonstrate to us that although they spoke of "T.H." they were under no sort of illusion. They knew as well as we do that *Tau* was the name for the last letter

of the Hebrew alphabet, the archaic form of which was that of our Roman *T*, very different from the *Tau* in the modern square Hebrew character. And for the Jewish Gnostics, as for the Kabbalists, its numerical value was 400; wherefore Barnabas was at fault when he took it for 300.

In dealing with this symbol the Rosicrucians made some mistakes too, but, having been taught by the Kabbalists, they knew it to be a Hebrew symbol. They treated it as something secret and mysterious, and would not refer to it publicly as the *Tau*, or as the *Triple Tau*. This accounts for the expression used in the eighteenth century, "T.H." The Royal Arch Masons of that time, prompted by "its figurative appearance," pretended that T.H. stood for *Templum Hierosolyma*. And it seems that the predecessors of the Rosicrucians, following also the figurative appearance of the initials H.T., read the symbol as meaning *Holy Cross*, actually calling themselves *Knights of the Holy Cross*. On the other hand, the Rosicrucians, being Christians, disguised it as a Christian symbol which we meet with in Church architecture in these forms: I  S; I  S.

In 1606 Jacobus Typutus published his work *Symbola Divina et Humana, Pontificum Imperatorum, Regum*, and on the frontispiece there was the symbol I  S, with the words beneath *Soli Deo Honos et Gloria*; which (whatever we make of the I. and S.) embodies a divine symbol, the Cross over an H. There was also another device consisting of a *Symbolum Sanctæ Crucis*—that is, a Calvary Cross surmounted by a Pelican. The significance of the Pelican is explained in the Ritual of the Eighteenth Degree, the Rose Croix.

In *English Freemasonry in its Period of Transition* we

have shown that the *Tau* was "the Freemason's Mark" mentioned in an Irish document in 1688 (see Dean Swift's Works, *Discourse by Dr John Jones*).

In conclusion we would call the reader's attention to what our present Craft Ritual declares to be a fact, that "All Levels and Perpendiculars are true and proper Signs to know a Mason by." The Craft Mason takes this to be a truism, a self-evident proposition; but if we ask him to explain it he will be nonplussed. Indeed, the sense only dawns upon him when he has become a Royal Arch Mason, and is able to reflect that the Triple Tau is a figure resolvable into three elements composed of as many Levels and Perpendiculars, which have to be put together in a certain way to project the Badge of the Companion. The trite statement of the Craft Mason was a common saying of our ancient Brethren and became a caption of the Freemasons, which, having slipped into its present position in the Ritual, has been preserved for us down to the twentieth century. If only we were more observant we would find that there are many similar sayings which are perfectly true, but beyond the comprehension of a Craft Mason, and they only become clear when we have completed the Third Degree.

CHAPTER V

LOOKING BACK, THE ROSICRUCIANS WERE KABBALISTS

IN previous works we have insisted, and have endeavoured to prove, that Freemasonry was derived from Kabbalism, having been evolved through the medium of Rosicrucianism. Here, then, we shall outline the resemblances and points of contact that can still be discerned in comparing the two Orders.

As to the actual founder of the Rosy Cross there have been several opinions. Some writers have identified him with Joachim Junge, some with Valentine Andreaä, some with Lord Bacon, Robert Fludd, Ægidius Guthman, and others. No one, however, can pretend to have solved the riddle. And the reason is obvious: Rosicrucianism was not the invention of any individual; it was evolved from a Theosophy much older than the various philosophers so far named.

Unfortunately there are very few people who have studied either subject, Kabbalism or Rosicrucianism. We propose to establish our thesis on facts, although what we have already written has made it patent enough. Looking back into the past, the Rosicrucians could only see the Kabbalah; that had been the solid rock whence they were hewn.

There are still people calling themselves Rosicrucians; but the *Jewish Encyclopædia*, speaking of them generally, tells us what is unquestionably true, that

“Several modern Societies have been formed from time to time, some of which are still flourishing in Great Britain, but in no sense are they directly derived from ‘the Brethren of the Rosy Cross’ of the seventeenth century, though keen followers thereof.”

Whether or no these people deserve to be called “followers thereof,” we agree with the same authority in saying that the *Illuminati* of the sixteenth century are not to be distinguished from the Rosicrucians. Three centuries earlier there had been in Spain a Christian philosopher who gained world-wide fame as a Kabbalist. At first he wanted to convert the Jews, but the Kabbalists converted him; and when he set out as a missionary he went to the Mohammedans of North Africa rather than to the Jews.

In the sixteenth century, however, the Inquisition had to deal with some people in the south of Spain, particularly around Seville, who claimed to be *illuminated*. They believed in a Light which is from above, from God; and Menendez Pelayo, in Spain, has traced them to the fifteenth century, although he might have pushed his inquiries further back, to Raymond Lully, in the thirteenth century. The designation *alumbrados* he found as early as 1492, while the ordinary term *iluminados* has been found under date 1498. According to him they derived their teachings from the Gnostics.

The movement is said to have spread from Seville into France in 1623, when the French name *illuminées* was adopted. But this only means that the Spanish type of Rosicrucianism found adepts in France; and then in 1634 Pierre Guerin, the Parish Priest of Saint-George de Roye, joined the Order, and there was a great accession of members. That development soon fizzled out, however, whereas in England Rosicrucianism

gave rise to Freemasonry; it is probable, however, that in France the Order was merged into some other obscure movement of which we know nothing.

Gould tells us that the *Illuminati* of Seville "seem to have derived their ideas from the works of Lully"; and he adds that "they were confounded with the Rosicrucians." He does not try to explain how they came to be "confounded with the Rosicrucians"; but surely it must have been because of a resemblance with the Rosicrucians in respect of either doctrine or practice, or both. And surely there must have been a resemblance if they had any sort of connection with the Kabbalist Raymond Lully.

One thing is perfectly clear: the Rosicrucians made use of Kabbalistic symbols. They went to the East for Light and then brought it to the West; they made everything to go in triads; they had the legend of a Vault under the Temple; they made much of the Volume of the Sacred Law; they gave special honour to the Holy Trinity. All this affords good ground for presumption, although now it may be insufficient to establish a definite connection between the two Orders.

Gould would not subscribe to such a conception, and yet he suggested that the notion of Adam being "the first Freemason" may have come from the Kabbalists, who also claimed Adam as a first adept; and we know that the Rosicrucians likewise held that Adam had been one of them. Indeed, Gould quoted Soane as drawing a parallel between the Brethren of the Rosy Cross and the Freemasons, and saying that the two Societies "derived their Wisdom from Adam, adopted the same myth of building, connected themselves in the same unintelligible way with Solomon's Temple, affecting to be seeking *light from the East*—

in other words, from the Cabbala—and accepted the heathen Pythagoras among their adepts.” Obviously, then, the three Societies had much in common.

The connection of the Order of the Rosy Cross with the Kabbalah is undeniable. Its members were concerned with what a certain writer has termed “the great medley of theosophical Israel under the name of Kabbalism.” We confess that we cannot quite understand their enthusiasm for it; but then in Rosicrucianism nothing is obvious, and we must never take what lies “on the surface” as final. It may be strange that Zoharic doctors should have become Christian *illuminati*; but such was also the fact. As again it was a fact that the Rosicrucian philosophy was couched “in terms which were familiar to learned persons at the period through the claims of Kabbalism.” The first of these claims was that their teachings belonged to the human race as a whole, because they had come down from “Adam after his fall; were transmitted in the hiddenness to Moses and Solomon through Enoch and Abraham; were perpetuated not less secretly through subsequent ages; and were the heritage which C.:R.:C.: offered to his Companions and—by his intermediation—to the elect thereafter at large.”

When we read in 1663 that some of the most prominent Freemasons were taking a course of instruction “under a noted Rosicrucian,” we may understand why Freemasonry is so strongly reminiscent of Kabbalism. Unquestionably much was lost during the period of transition; pure Kabbalism was hard to master for those who had no knowledge of Hebrew; and for that reason when the Christian theosophists began to dabble in it, it underwent a distortion; some things were not at all clear to them.

Henry Adamson tells us that the Rosicrucians of 1638 made use of the "Mason Word"; and that Word is of such a character that it could only have been handed down from Babylon through the Kabbalists. This has been fully discussed in our books on *The Antiquity of the Holy Royal Arch* and *The Genuine Secrets in Freemasonry*.

In the *Monthly Review*, 1798, xxv. 304, we are told that in 1510 Henry Cornelius Agrippa founded two theosophical societies in the University of Paris, and in London, which dealt in the Occult Sciences and had secret "signs of recognition." Most Masonic writers regard this evidence as inconclusive, but it is because they overlook the fact that Agrippa was a follower of Reuchlin, the Christian Kabbalist.

Gould is among the unbelievers, but he has described Fludd as "a follower and defender" of the Rosy Cross, and he has ventured to make the statement that "some of his ideas, such as they were, seem to have been borrowed from the Kabbalists and neo-Platonists." We have no doubt that if Gould had been better informed on the subject of the Kabbalah he would have been still more definite, and would have acknowledged him as a real Kabbalist. Waite has remarked that Gould had only "a passing acquaintance" with that subject.

In 1659 Fludd wrote a book entitled *Philosophia Mosayca*, which was published in London, and in it he shows an intimate knowledge of the writings of Moses, particularly of the Sacred Law, the *Torah*, which was the perennial spring from which the Kabbalists always drank, as it also was the authority to which the early Freemasons were constantly appealing—that is, the Volume of the Sacred Law of both the Craft Mason and the Royal Arch Companion.

Fludd declared that "Moses was a great Rosicrucian"; just as for a Kabbalist Moses was also the chief of his Order; and just as for Dr Anderson in his *Book of Constitutions* he was "our Grand Master Moses."

There is a book entitled *Summum Bonum*, published at Frankfort in 1629, expounding the ideas of the *Fratres Rosæ Crucis*, and attributed to Robert Fludd, where it is said that "The Supreme Good, which is the Truth, consists of Magia, the Cabbala, Alchemy, the Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross, which are concerned with Truth." From this it is evident that "Truth" was in those days, as it is now, one of the "Grand," or fundamental, principles on which the Order was founded; although at present we do not attempt a definition of *Truth*.

C.:R.:C.: repudiated the Magia practised at Fez in the fifteenth century; and the later Rosicrucians protested that their Magia had nothing to do with the Black Art. So, too, they contended that their Alchemy was of a spiritual sort, and was not concerned with the transmutation of metals. They admitted, however, that their Science had some affinity with the Kabbalah, and about this term there could be no misunderstanding.

In 1629 the Rosy Cross was a comparatively new organisation, but its adepts looked on it as based on a very ancient body of doctrine, and a movement which had been functioning in England from time immemorial. They delved into Alchemy because they followed the Kabbalists, who were also more or less addicted to that art or science, if science it may be called. But we agree with Waite when he says: "Many Kabbalists became Alchemists; a few Alchemists studied the Kabbalah. But it is still a slight and occasional connection which we must be careful not

to exaggerate; there is also very little trace of it prior to the seventeenth century, when writers like Fludd concerned themselves with both subjects" (*Doctrine and Literature of the Kabbalah*).

The principal thing in the *curriculum* of a Rosicrucian was his Theosophy, for he considered that God was the "Supreme Good"—the *Summum Bonum*—as the Companions of the Royal Arch still assert. And this is also the case with the Kabbalists, whose Science was essentially a Theosophy.

In the book we have been speaking of we learn that there was a "House of the Rosy Cross" which was the counterpart of the Temple of King Solomon, and the inmates of this House are men who have been instructed, like Solomon, in the true and divine Magia, the real Kabbalah, and the purest *Chemia*, or Chemistry. Moreover, they held that there always had been men who, having passed through the Gates of this Temple, had been numbered among the Sons of God, had shed their light on their fellow-men, and had illuminated the cloud of darkness which covers earthly things.

Consistently with this, in the book *Lux in Tenebris*, undated, but belonging to the first years of the eighteenth century, an attempt is made to establish the dogma of the Holy Trinity from passages of the Old Testament; it is said to be concealed in the *Shema* (*Deut.* vi. 5), the *Trisagion* (*Isa.* vi. 3), and other texts. Then the writer argues that the three Supernal *Sephiroth*, "Crown, Wisdom, Intelligence," were the names which the Jews of pre-Christian times used in referring to the Triune Divine Essence.

A Rosicrucian Chapter was ruled by Three, and those Three were a reflection of the Triune Essence. This was illustrated by the Three Circles on their

emblematic metal plate, which corresponded to the luminous Triangle on the dome of their Vault directly overhead. The Circles were described as the "Three Governors below"; for they followed the maxim of the Kabbalists, who said: "As it is in all things below, so it is above"; and again: "That which is above as the likeness of that which is below" (*Zohar*, i. 91; ii. 9).

The eminent English theosophist, Ralph Cudworth, shows in his works that he was a true Kabbalist. In his *True Intellectual System of the Universe* (London, 1668) he maintained that behind the idolatries of the ancient pagans there always was the monotheistic conception, and that the intellectual men always worshipped a unique God, whose threefold nature was a "Divine Cabbala," a revelation which had been brought to the world, a knowledge of the Triune Essence, although gradually it had become corrupted, until it nearly vanished. Such a revelation was the Kabbalah, and the Rosicrucians had Christianised it. He could see that in 1668, when he wrote, the Freemasons had only retained the barest *residuum* of it. Cudworth was more familiar with it than most of his contemporaries, having studied the standard Kabbalistic works, and thereby he shows that Kabbalism was still an active intellectual force, although the distinctive teachings of the Kabbalah might have been obscured by its professed cultivators.

Cudworth had Thomas Burnet as a pupil, who excelled in the Speculative Science. He published his *Telluris Theoria Sacra*, in which he dealt with the Mosaic system of creation; and the French *savant* Dr Papus, in his book *Tradition Secrète de l'Occident*, described it as thoroughly devoted to the Kabbalah. He regarded the wisdom of Moses as identical with what we understand

by Kabbalism, but held that the Jewish tradition had been very much debased; and he insisted that the three most essential elements of the Kabbalah were:

(a) The doctrine of the *Sephiroth*.

(b) The teaching about the four worlds, based on the *Mercabah*.

(c) The thirty-two Paths of Wisdom of the *Jetzirah* "through which Moses attained his marvellous science and concealed the same in the Pentateuch," as it has always been held by Kabbalists. Burnet was both a Kabbalist and a critic of Kabbalism, but he remained a Christian, though not an orthodox one. And yet he thought that the Jewish Kabbalists were inconsistent in not accepting Christianity.

In 1615 a Rosicrucian work appeared from the pen of Johann Foulaber, a professor of Mathematics at Ulm, which bore the title of *Mysterium Arithmeticum*, which in the sub-title was expanded into "Arithmetical Mystery, or Kabbalistic and Philosophical Discovery, etc." Its dedication to "the Most Enlightened and Most Laudable Brethren R.:C.:" leaves no room for doubt as to what the purpose of that work was.

Clearly the theosophical tradition of Israel, represented by the name Kabbalah, was "a great intellectual puzzle and wonder at the time"; and it was all the more so in cases where men were disinclined to speculative studies, and had no knowledge of Hebrew.

And yet it had its champions. Fludd, Riccius, Reuchlin, William Postel, Archangelus de Burgo Nuovo, Petrus Galatinus, and many others, had made its philosophy known among Christians. To accomplish this object much of its literature had been translated from the Hebrew into the Latin tongue.

In 1552 the *Sepher Jetzirah* became widely known by being printed in Latin in Paris.

The writers who, like Livabius, were hostile to the Rosy Cross movement imagined all sorts of things and brought all manner of charges against it. They found the Order impenetrable to their prying eyes, and they could not substantiate any of their slanders. There was, however, one point on which they were agreed—that is, that the Order had sprung from the teachings of Paracelsus; and, as Paracelsus was a Christian Kabbalist, this amounts to a ratification of all that we contend for.

Waite, at the end of his history of *The Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross*, takes what is substantially our view of the transition; for, after saying that Kabbalism is “a luminous, if indeed inchoate, Theosophy,” he makes an admission the implications of which are very far reaching. He says:

“I know of few literatures which radiate such startling lights of speculation. They are reflected there and here into the doctrine of the Rosy Cross. Now there came a time in the fourteenth century, and from this date onward when Zoharic literature fell into the hands of Christian scholars. . . . I have shown how it appealed to them and how it was used by them as an independent and unexpected demonstration of Christian root-doctrine grown up in Jewry itself during the exile of those terrible centuries when persecution followed persecution, after the fall of Jerusalem. *It came about in this manner that the Kabbalah was Christianised.* Once more the point is that a traditional teaching was taken over, was informed with another meaning, adapted to another purpose, and in this sense transmuted. . . . The Theosophy of the Rosy Cross is not a rabbinical Theosophy in what

may be called a rabbinical sense, as any doctor in Jewry and any scholar in *Midrashim* would be quick to recognise; and yet the purest of those Zoharic lights to which I have referred are woven into the veil of symbolism, because they happen to serve its purpose and help to perform its work. For the Order is a path of symbolism, as it was indeed from the beginning, and it remembers how long ago the Golden and Rosy Cross made appeal in its Ritual procedure to the Sephirotic scheme of Kabbalism."

Another estimate of Kabbalism by the same writer is also most illuminating. He says: "Zoharic Kabbalism is Theosophy *ab origine symboli*, and the outward body of Theosophy is plastic and transforms easily. . . . And so also with the matter of the Rosy Cross. The elements comprised therein were already in the course of transformation: *Magia* into *Higher Magia*, the metamorphosis of Alchemy into the conversion of souls." Let the reader mark well that "the outward body" of the Kabbalistic Theosophy "is plastic and transforms easily," although the author did not quite grasp the real effects of this.

We are grateful for these admissions; indeed, conscious of the developments which actually took place, he goes still further, adding: "It seems to have stood for these new births more or less from the beginning. Kabbalism was incompetent therein, but long after Mirandola and Reuchlin had begun their work upon it." The only fault we find with this is that the cart is put before the horse; for Kabbalism is represented as an element "incorporated" into the Rosy Cross; he fails to see that Kabbalism is much more than an accidental feature of the Rosy Cross. In the Rosy Cross we have Kabbalism under a new name, in a new dress, transformed.

The writings of Mirandola and Reuchlin did help to shape the movement, but it would be wrong to describe either man as a founder of the Order. In 1603, as we shall see, the Rosy Cross existed in England, but there is not the slightest evidence of any connection with the movement of that name a few years later in Germany; although, on the other hand, we believe that there were in existence several autonomous Rosicrucian Societies in various parts of Europe.

CHAPTER VI

LOOKING FORWARD, THE ROSICRUCIANS WERE FREEMASONS

WE have seen how in the past the Rosicrucians had evolved their Science from the Kabbalah, being in fact the successors of the old Kabbalistic fraternity; and now, looking forward to later times, we shall find that the Rosicrucians became "Freemasons." In previous works we have adduced proofs of this, and here we shall add an outline of the process by which the transformation was arrived at. Professor Büleh, De Quincey, John Parker, Soane, Woodford, Albert Pike, Higgins, Sloane, Vaughan, Mrs Henry Pott, and a host of other writers on Freemasonry have held this view and have asserted that Freemasonry was but an *alias* for Rosicrucianism.

Wigston, too, quotes a number of German philosophers and writers "who each and all held up Freemasonry as a branch of their own Rosicrucian Kabbalah" (*The Columbus of Literature*, p. 203, Chicago, 1892). But we have no need to go to Germany for evidence; there is plenty in England to satisfy every honest inquirer.

Many Masonic students have been incredulous as to our derivation because they could not imagine how we were to cross the *pons asinorum* of the Rosicrucian Order. There is a mythical history which has deterred many from taking literally what is said of the origin of the Rosy Cross; of course, if it be true,

it is inconceivable how that Order could have been the bridge connecting Freemasonry with Kabbalism. And yet the conception has been forcing itself on all the scholars who have gone into the subject, and, what is more, all the evidence goes in its favour.

Elias Ashmole, who in 1646 called himself "a Freemason," was also "a Rosicrucian." The same may be said of Robert Fludd, Sir Christopher Wren, Pordage, and many others.

De Quincey, in the *London Magazine*, January 1824, entered a *caveat* against this view by saying: "Rosicrucianism is not Freemasonry. The *exoterici*, at whose head Bacon stood, who afterwards composed the Royal Society of London, were the antagonistic party of the Theosophists, Cabalists, and Alchemists, at the head of whom stood Fludd, and from whom Freemasonry took its rise."

Any Mason reading this will naturally be mystified, for the statement is confused and obscure. The Royal Society was certainly not founded by Bacon, for it only came into existence thirty-five years after his death. It would be just as true to say that it was founded by the Rosicrucian Order or by the Freemasons—the "Invisible Society"—for its Charter was obtained by Sir Robert Moray, who was well known as a "Freemason" but who apparently was never called a "Rosicrucian."

Exoterici was a term used by De Quincey to distinguish those Rosicrucians who cultivated the exoteric element—that is to say, the natural, historical, or outward part of Rosicrucianism, what was comprehensible to ordinary men—and who minimised the esoteric element, the inward, ideal, or spiritual part. According to his view, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, in the days of Inigo Jones and Bacon,

there must have been two distinct types of Rosicrucianism, with the consequent conflict of ideas: the one stood for the pure Theosophy of Israel in its Christian dress; the other diluted and debased it. This is substantially true, but De Quincey erred, because he linked Freemasonry to the Rosicrucianism of Fludd. If we are to distinguish between the two, we would rather say that Freemasonry is the type of Rosicrucianism favoured by the *Exoterici*, Inigo Jones, and Bacon. The other type was the Order of the Holy Cross.

It remains to be proved, however, that Fludd was antagonistic to Bacon and his fellow Rosicrucians. Bacon was practically a positivist, whereas Fludd was altogether an idealist; but although the two men pursued two different types of Freemasonry, it does not follow that they were enemies. Elias Ashmole was known as a Freemason, but yet he was a Rosicrucian too; and from this we may infer that there was harmony between the Rosicrucians and the Freemasons, as there was between the Rosy Cross and the Holy Cross, in spite of occasional disagreements.

Fludd was indeed a Theosophist, a Kabbalist, and an Alchemist, but he was not the founder of anything. And as we saw, Rosicrucianism was something absolutely distinct from Alchemy, although some of the Rosicrucians were Alchemists.

Spedding, in his *Life of Bacon*, brackets together "the Fraternity of the Rosicrucians" and "the lower Orders of Freemasonry"; or, in other words, the genuine illuminated Speculative Freemasons and the Craft Masons who make their appearance from the middle of the seventeenth century.

Mrs Pott has put it in a nutshell thus: "Originally one and the same, alike in aims, alike in symbolic

language, with similar traditions, tracing back to similar origins, some, at least, of the members supposed to have constituted the Rosicrucian Society actually were, we find, members of the Freemasons' 'Lodge.'" Mrs Pott, although a woman, had a better insight into our history than thousands of present-day Masons.

Thus can we understand the saying of Henry Adamson, of Perth, in 1638, that the "Brethren of the Rosy Cross" possessed the "Mason Word," which was always the most convincing proof of a man being a Freemason. It apparently was the most characteristic feature of the Rosicrucian.

In his *Concise History* (p. 73) Gould dismissed very unceremoniously the contention that Freemasonry was related to the Rosy Cross, and yet he could endorse the notion of Benedictus Figulus, that in the fourteenth century there was an association of physicists and alchemists which about 1607 had been merged into the Rosicrucian Order; adding that according to his authority there existed also another secret society, apparently related to this, which had been in existence for over two thousand years. These "two thousand years" bring us back to the time of the Rebuilding of the Temple under Z., J., and H. And therefore the report implies that there was some society or degree which preserved the Kabbalistic tradition embodied in the Royal Arch. This in "the fourteenth century"!

Nevertheless we are inclined to agree with Waite when he observes: "Gould had no axe to grind and was incapable of inventing evidence, but he had only a passing acquaintance with Rosicrucian history and took the word of others." We question whether the Rosicrucians ever recognised Alchemy as part of their

system of learning. All we can find is that they believed in "a spiritual Alchemy."

Two arguments have been used to get over the only conclusion possible:

(a) Hughan suggested the ridiculous idea that the Rosicrucians had never existed as an organised Society. This fallacy has already been disposed of in our book *English Freemasonry in its Period of Transition*.

(b) Gould in his *History* argued that such a derivation of Freemasonry was impossible, because the Rosicrucians "are not known to have practised themselves any mystic or symbolical ceremonies which they could have passed to the Freemasons." Strangely enough, the answer to this has been given by the Secretary of the Q.C. Lodge in *Freemasonry before the Existence of the Grand Lodges*, who considers him to be quite wrong, pointing out that there is scarcely a single Masonic symbol which the Rosicrucians did not bring into requisition; indeed they "passed on" practically everything which we have now in use, although we have improved on them by adopting the Jewish, rather than the Christian, version of the symbols.

Yet again, curiously enough, Bro. Vibert is among the unbelievers, for, speaking of the derivation of Freemasonry from the Rosy Cross, he wrote: "This theory falls to the ground when the true history of the Rosicrucians is examined." But what could he mean by "the true history"? Where is it? By whom was it written? He does not enlighten us, but we suspect that what was in his mind is something altogether fabulous. The present volume is intended to show that what is known of Rosicrucianism bears out our thesis as to its substantial identity with Freemasonry.

One observation of Waite is worth pondering over: "There is yet a certain natural statement, not alone in the fact that each Institution administered an oath to the Candidate, but that they had something to impart which they could communicate only in secret to those who would keep it secretly." It was, he says, because of this resemblance that the time came when the Rosy Cross "put up its banner beside the manifold standards of Masonry," and then passed under the ægis of "Masonry," all Craft Masons becoming eligible for admission into the Rosy Cross.

And speaking of the development which brought about the rise of Craft Masonry at the beginning of the eighteenth century, he says: "There had never been a Grand Lodge previously, and if there is very full evidence of an Annual Assembly as a rule in the Old Charges, there is neither practice nor statute to quote as regards the more frequent meetings." This would seem to mean that "the more frequent meetings" were independent of the Annual Assembly; but in our work, *English Freemasonry in its Period of Transition*, we have shown that from at least 1663 the General Assembly gave the occasion for the Speculative Freemasons to assemble, and then they regulated the affairs of the "private assemblies," of which there were quite a number. These "private assemblies" used to perform the ceremony of "Acceptation," but were required to report their doings to the Annual Assembly.

Whatever we may think of the Masons of 1717, we are ready to admit that the creation of a "Grand Lodge" was an inestimable blessing to those who were to practise our Speculative Science in the future; and it probably saved the Speculative Science from extinction in other parts of the British Isles,

It has been said that in Ireland there was no Masonry before 1717, but the writer who made this statement forgot the episode which everybody has heard of, the so-called "initiation" of Mrs Aldworth, which took place in Ireland in 1713, certainly before the setting up of the Grand Lodge of London. Besides, as stated in the Transactions of the *Quatuor Coronati* Lodge, recent investigations have proved that in 1688 Speculative Freemasonry was known and practised in Dublin. And here we should note that in those days "initiation" did not mean what it means now.

In 1717 there were Freemasons in Ireland as in nearly every county of England, and in Scotland, and we may assume that the "Revival" of 1717 in London brought some stimulus to the moribund Lodges in many places.

We have to lament, however, that the premier Grand Lodge refused to have anything to do with the fuller scheme of Initiation that obtained in the past, and that it discarded the most "genuine" thing in Freemasonry, the Mastership, which thereafter was to be known as the Royal Arch.

Undoubtedly there were then a number of Lodges, even in London itself, which would have nothing to do with this emasculated Freemasonry; they were as old as any of the constituent Lodges, and definitely refused to acknowledge the new combination. The dissenting Masons, usually called "the Antients," can be traced back to 1726, nine years after the foundation of the Grand Lodge of London. And we know that the old Freemasonry was working in England under the name of "Chapters" in 1725; not that it had been set up in that year as a new thing, but it was functioning regularly as an old Institution. It was not until 1813 that things were rectified by the Act

of Union, when the "genuine secrets" were explicitly acknowledged as "pure ancient Masonry."

From about the middle of the seventeenth century there had been Craft Masons who, under the influence of their trade, had accustomed themselves to moralise on the building operations, the tools and the stones they handled. But this was a new fashion, a mere accretion, quite foreign to the old Speculative Science. And their ceremonies were taken over by the Speculatives as preliminary stages to the Mastership. This gave rise to the Apprentice and Fellow "Degrees."

Someone has said: "It is certain that six years after the foundation of the Grand Lodge there was a great movement in Ritual, a very important movement." The object was to secure a fuller Ritual, for it was generally felt that the few ceremonies adopted in 1717 were quite inadequate; they had been taken over from the older Freemasons, the successors of the Rosicrucians, but they represented the barest essentials of the *acceptation*, or reception, of Candidates, while those of the Mastership were omitted.

In the new Masonry the Craft element was everything; there was no Master grade; the members were made *Apprentices* or *Fellows* only. Another distinctive feature was that whereas in Scotland and in the South of England in the old days the three officers of a Lodge were called either *Wardens* or *Masters*, in the Grand Lodge of London the President became first the "General," afterwards the "Grand" Master of Masons. In the North of England the officers were styled *Harodim*, which is the Hebrew for "Rulers." They were the "Ancients of the Order" mentioned by Dr Plot in 1686. A *Master's Part* was devised, but it consisted of the introductory part of the Second or Sacred Lodge—that is, of what preceded

the installation of King Solomon in the ancient Ritual. These differences in phraseology make it difficult to grasp many things or to get an intelligent idea of the complexion of the old Freemasonry.

Waite has said that "there was no borrowing" by Freemasons from Rosicrucians, "since neither had aught to lend." This, however, is demonstrably wrong. Gould said as much, but Bro. Vibert has shown him to have been in error. As a matter of fact, we have the testimony of a contemporary, A. Z., in the *London Daily Journal*, 1730, who distinctly says that the Craft Masons had "borrowed a few ceremonies" from the Rosicrucians; they were a new type of Masons, and before 1723 those *few Ceremonies* were their sole Ritual.

The writer here alluded to did not reveal his identity, but evidently he was himself a Rosicrucian; for otherwise how could he know that they had borrowed from the Rosicrucian Ritual? Indeed, we believe that the two initials, A. Z., under which he screened himself, were meant for *A. Zerubbabal*, who was one of the Prime Officers he has mentioned as Rulers of the Rosicrucian Chapter. We have consulted a clerical directory with the names of about 30,000 clergy, and not one of them has a surname beginning with the letter Z. From this, therefore, we infer that the letter Z could not be the initial of an English patronymic; that it must have stood for the name of some character in Hebrew history in which the Z is found frequently.

In France, from the year 1754, the Masons utilised the elements of the German Order and formed the *Rose Croix of Heredom*, which is really the same word we find in England spelled *Harodim* and *Highbrodiam*. Now, curiously enough, the Grand Lodge of London

once sent an envoy to Paris, who was to try and restore the balance among Masons; there was so much confusion due to the many Degrees, and he was just the man to re-establish harmony. What happened is that the representative of the Craft Masons became one of the ancient *Harodim*, for in 1782, being in Paris, General Rainsford identified himself with the French *Rose Croix*, and on at least one occasion made use of its cypher; that was when he referred to the English Society of "the R.: Cru.: ⚡."

Bro. Rainsford seems to have been a real Masonic student, who went into other Degrees in the spirit of an explorer. In a letter written at Harwich in October 1782 he mentions having come across certain Hebrew MSS. relating to the Rosicrucian Order, and he says of that Order, "which exists at present under another name with the same forms." He evidently referred to England, for in France they had substantially the same name. It could not, of course, refer to the "*Soc. Ros.*," the *Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia*, for this organisation was first projected in 1865, and only started on its career in 1866 through the efforts of Robert Wontworth Little, a clerk of the Freemasons' Hall.

But why should the MSS. have been in Hebrew unless the Rosicrucian Order was an offshoot of the Kabbalistic fraternity? Even if Bro. Rainsford was romancing, this would prove that he was of opinion that the Rosicrucian Order had had a Jewish origin.

Here we ought to go into the statement. There seems to have been an English Society in 1782 which did not make use of the name "Rosy Cross," but was nevertheless the identical thing; it then went "under another name." What could that name be? As we see things, it could only be "the Royal Arch," and we

shall give our reasons for saying so. In 1782 the Rosy Cross had changed its name, but it worked "with the same forms." Now, there is an historic document, the By-Laws of a Royal Arch Chapter reorganised in 1765, which begins thus: "We, the Companions of the E.G. and R.C., commonly called the Royal Arch, etc." What does it mean? "E.G." is simply an abbreviation of *Excellent Grands*, the Antients of the Order; "R.C." signifies Rosy Cross, "the Prime Officers" mentioned by A. Z. These two classes of people, then, had combined in organising a Chapter of what was "commonly called the Royal Arch." This is confirmed by what *Chambers's Cyclopædia* of 1728 said: "There are certain Freemasons who have all the characteristics of Rosicrucians." Not all the "Freemasons" were like the Rosicrucians, but there were "certain Freemasons" who were very much like them; these could not be the Craft Masons of 1717, who scarcely had any Ritual, at least at the beginning, but the old Freemasons. The Craft Masons split because some of them desired to follow them, and therefore those opposed to the new movement were described as "the Antients." They were attracted by the Freemasonry of ancient times, which was practically what was known as Rosicrucianism, and could not be induced to support the Grand Lodge of London.

The Chapter of 1765 was not quite regular—that is, was not approved by the Grand Lodge of London, which had definitely banned the Royal Arch—but its members were all keen Masons, placing Freemasonry above mere vested interests. They belonged some to the Atholl Grand Lodge, some to the London Grand Lodge. This goes a long way to show that the old Freemasonry was Rosicrucianism, and that the Royal

Arch is largely a survival of it. Gould and others imagined the Royal Arch to be a late Degree, but, as we have shown elsewhere, there is tangible evidence that it existed and was functioning as a regular institution in 1725. On the other hand, it is evident that the name *Rosicrucians* continued to be used in 1730 for an international Society. By then it must have lost much of its old prestige; and we presume that the old alchemical extravagances had been eliminated. The London Royal Arch Chapter revived in 1765 (*we do not know the date of its foundation*) was practically its *coup de grâce*, its finishing stroke, in England; for we have seen that our Royal Arch was the lineal successor of the Rosy Cross, after which the original institution became defunct.

From about the middle of the seventeenth century there were Craft Masons who, under the influence of the operative trade, used to moralise on their tools and material exactly as we do. But this practice was a novelty which was presumably due to the adoption of the Apprentice Degree. The first outline of a ceremony for the reception of Apprentices is that of "Mr William Harige, Surveyor, of Harwich"; he "invented" it. The practice, however, was foreign to the old Speculative Science, and probably there were not many Lodges that allowed it at the time. Still, at the end of the said century the Harodim of Swalwell actually organised a Lodge of such a character. It came under the ægis of the Grand Lodge of London in 1735, when it was found that that Grand Lodge did not only favour the practice, but made its Masonry to consist of practically the two Degrees, Apprentices and Fellows.

When the Grand Lodge of 1717 came into existence, the Ritual of the past, which according to Aubrey

was "very formal," that is, very elaborate, had fallen into disuse, and for some time it was ignored; but six years later, in 1723, there was a reaction, and then the Craft Masons were induced to adopt a fuller Ritual, though it was still limited to the ceremonies of the Second or Sacred Lodge. Such ceremonies as now came to be practised were taken over from the older Freemasonry—that is, from what used to be called Rosicrucianism; but even then these ceremonies reduced themselves to the barest essentials of the *Making* and *Passing* of Masons. They tried to revive the Master grade by introducing the *Master's Part*, but it is generally recognised that this was a hybrid ceremony and an entirely newfangled thing, although historically it led to what we know as the Third Degree.

CHAPTER VII

THE ROSY CROSS IN ENGLAND

WAITE'S history of *The Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross* is mostly concerned with Germany, and although there is a chapter devoted to English Rosicrucianism, it only consists of a study on the life and work of Robert Fludd, about whom he has much to say that is really interesting. Unfortunately, he labours under the misconception that the man was not a real Rosicrucian. Indeed, his scepticism in that respect goes so far that he declares: "It is to be questioned whether there was any Rosicrucianism at all in these Islands during the first quarter of the seventeenth century beyond that which was centred in the person of Robert Fludd." This bold negation may have been provoked by the extreme dogmatism of Dr Wynn Westcott, who, *inter alia*, described that wonderful man as "the first and chief of English Rosicrucians." It is curious how one-sided and cocksure some men can be!

If Fludd was the first Rosicrucian, Bacon cannot have been one. And yet Clifford Harrison, who went most scrupulously into the life of that eminent man, has made this categorical statement: "There is every good reason to suppose that the founder of Inductive Philosophy was a Rosicrucian" (*Notes on the Margin*, London, 1897).

Fludd was a man of wide experience. After "years of travelling beyond the seas," where he must have

met with many of the philosophers and teachers of the period, he returned to England in 1604 and became known as a Theosophist, which then practically connoted a Kabbalist. After this, however, Waite blunders, for he says: "At which date (1604) neither Westcott nor another (*any other?*) can bring forward any proof that the Fraternity was in existence."

We shall bring forward the proof which he says does not exist; but naturally we are perfectly convinced that if Waite had known that such proof was available, he would have refrained from giving expression to so absolute a denial, and, needless to say, he would also have taken a different attitude in discussing the origin of the Order. As it is, all that he will admit is that Fludd "was the first expositor and defender of Rosicrucianism, as put forth in Germany"; a sentiment which does not greatly differ from what Westcott had already said.

But can anyone seriously maintain that Fludd could be the "expositor and defender" of a philosophical, or theosophical, Brotherhood and yet remain a stranger, an outsider? Refusing to acknowledge the fact of Fludd's affiliation, he was confronted with some difficulties, and therefore he wobbled. Thus it was that he wrote: "If there be any call to say so, I am quite certain that he did not found the Order of the Rosy Cross, but he may have belonged to something at work under that name, perhaps in 1617, and perhaps later. . . . If he was ever connected with the Brotherhood as a member, either he found it holy or sought to hallow it." He has to confess that Fludd was not a founder, adding that he is "certain" that whatever his position in it, he was not the founder of it; he did not belong to the Rosy Cross, but *may* have belonged to "something" called

the Rosy Cross. This may have been in 1617, or it may have been "later." Perhaps, however, after all, he was a member. Where is the logic of all this? But we are thankful for one admission: Fludd was an honest man. "His personal sanctity is reflected into his works, and it is correct to call him a notable Christian theosophist."

In speaking, as Waite does, of "something at work under that name"—*Rosy Cross*, which was not the genuine German product—he practically allows that there was an English imitation which went by the same or some similar name; and we must take note of what we are told, that if this duplicate of the Rosy Cross was a good thing, it would have been perfectly consistent with his Christian character to have joined it. We have no doubt that although he was a devout Christian he was unsectarian.

The most important statement of all is that, "Like all those who preceded him, Fludd construed the tradition in the light of the Christian revelation." So that after all this first Rosicrucian had had predecessors, and all those predecessors interpreted the Rosicrucian tradition "in the light of the Christian revelation." Then he finds that Fludd himself confesses that he adheres to the Rosy Cross because it affords the basis on which to build up a true system of philosophy, and he appends a footnote with an afterthought: "If Fludd spoke from within the circle, we should understand his meaning better." This surely amounts to an abandonment of his guns, for it is like saying that the words will bear no other construction but that Fludd really "spoke from within the circle."

We must make an observation on another point. Waite felt sure that Fludd had imbibed Rosicrucian

ideas on the Continent. But if it be so, it must have been before 1604, when, after many wanderings, he returned to England. Wherefore he is described as "a novice *in absentia*, far away from the seat of authority"; implying that the Order in England was a German movement, which we do not admit, for it would mean that the English Rosicrucians were merely the tools of the German wirepullers. In this there is a begging of the question; for it has yet to be decided where was the cradle of Rosicrucianism, and whether it was anything different from that Kabbalistic philosophy which became so popular in the fifteenth century all over Europe.

Several writers have fallen into the error of thinking that the German Rosicrucian invasion of 1614 was the beginning of the Order in England. They had not heard that on 6th January 1604 the Queen held a Masque Ball at the Whitehall, and that Inigo Jones, having been asked to design the costumes for the gentlemen, drew among other sketches one over which he himself scribbled the words "A Rosicrus."

This is something which cannot be gainsaid. But let us look at the date: Twelfth Night, 6th January 1604. It implies that Inigo Jones had been drawing his designs at the latest in December 1603. And therefore it justifies the inference that at the end of 1603 there were in England gentlemen who belonged to the Order of the Rosy Cross. Here, then, we have decisive evidence that the Order was in existence in England and that it was functioning normally eleven years before the publication of the *Fama Fraternitatis*. Moreover, we have to consider that Inigo Jones was not reporting the birth of a new Order, but that he was merely making a casual reference to a secret Society the name of which was known but which

was very mysterious, although some of the highly placed people who attended the Court Ball may have been members of it.

This is the first documentary reference we can find to the Rosy Cross in England. Bro. Vibert was much influenced by the opinion of Hughan, who said that the Rosicrucians could only be traced back to 1610, and that then they were only a few scattered individuals.

But we only have examined half the evidence before us. The descriptive part of the Masque Ball was entrusted to Ben Jonson, who of course executed his work in collaboration with the eminent architect (see Ben Jonson's *Works*, vol. vii. ch. vii., 1573-1637). Inigo Jones drew the character, but now Ben Jonson tells us that "A Rosicrus" might be called *Merefool*, because he represents a man who foolishly thought that he could become a member of the mysterious Order by his own sweet will, by just wishing it. Ben Jonson adds that he has "vowed himself into that airy Order." He uses the word *airy* in the sense of *impalpable, undiscoverable*; and it was indeed so.

Evidently Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones wanted everybody to understand that aspirants to membership could not join the Order at will; it was difficult to find, and, when found, they had to be proposed and formally adopted by the Brethren. *Merefool*, the hypothetical man who had "vowed himself into the Order," was not recognised by anybody, and therefore he was made to ask: "What mean the Brethren of the Rosy Cross so to desert their votary?" Obviously the Rosicrucians were a closed corporation, and so secret that they came to be known as "the Invisible Society"; and therefore a man who "vowed himself into the Order" deserved to be called a "mere fool."

We presume that both Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones were Rosicrucians, and the fact that this character was included in the Masque Ball, a Court function, implies that King James I. was also in the know. It has always been a tradition of the "Freemasons" that both Inigo Jones and King James were "Freemasons" (*see* Cunningham's *Life*), or, as they used to say formerly, Rosicrucians; and only so can we conceive of the King's Architect introducing that character into the Ball.

Fludd graduated as a physician in 1605, and we are assured that it was not until after his studies, and after the German Rosicrucian pamphlets began to appear, that he devoted himself to Rosicrucianism; which would mean fourteen years later, or about 1617. And yet his great work, *The Compendious Apology for the Fraternity of the Rosy Cross*, which has been described as "the first work ever penned in England on the Order of the Rosy Cross," was put forth in 1616. We submit that this was not the work of a novice, but of a Rosicrucian after many years of close study of the subject, and after considerable experience as a member of the Brotherhood.

Waite has raised the subject of its authenticity; but although he lived for many years after its publication, until 1637, no one as far as we know has ever questioned its being the work of Fludd, and his authorship is abundantly confirmed in his own *Tractatus Meus Apologeticus*. This must be considered final on the point at issue, although Waite will not accept it as conclusive evidence of his being a member of the Order. What, then, will suffice to prove this? His contention is that, even if he was the spokesman of the Order, and wrote the book as such, he need not have been affiliated to it, which is preposterous.

Fludd himself has told us that he was drawn to the Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross because it had the revelation of a hitherto unknown basis for all true philosophical thinking, and because it had the "Supreme Medicine" which the world needed.

W. F. C. Wigston has expressed the view that the *Tractatus Meus* of 1616 gives evidence of the reconstruction, or remodelling, of the Rosy Cross in England. He is the author of four volumes on the Order, and may be supposed to have given considerable thought to the subject; but Waite speaks disparagingly of him. Such rivalries among authors need not trouble anyone. At the time England was awakening, and there was an eager desire for knowledge; most certainly the German type of Rosicrucianism did not satisfy many people. Waite himself speaks of it as being in a dying state by 1629.

We believe that the publication of the *Fama* in 1614 marked a new departure, and that the Rosicrucianism of 1616 was not the Rosicrucianism of 1603, when Inigo Jones referred to it. The one was German, the other was English. And with the clash of ideas changes were bound to come; it was thus that the evolution of the Order came about. Let us observe, for one thing, that Inigo Jones made some innovations in 1607 when he organised his Society in connection with his New Style Masons, which was in effect a duplication of the Acception. He then produced the Old Charge which bears his name, which is far more artistic and more accurate than all previous Old Charges, as has been shown in our book *English Freemasonry in the Period of Transition*. He did not call his Society a Freemasons' Lodge; but neither was the Acception so described; the name "Freemason" came later. Anyhow, it was the action of

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Inigo Jones that led to what we now term "Craft Masonry." He excluded everything in the nature of Alchemy and Magia with which he was not in sympathy; and indeed it was these things that later on brought the Rosy Cross into disrepute.

As already explained, the word *Acception* is only the rendering of the Hebrew term *Kabbalah* into Old English.

The design of the "Rosicrus" is an indication of the liberalising tendency of the age generally and of Inigo Jones personally. Indeed it would seem that in England there was a section of Rosicrucians who were freer and more ingenuous, more open-hearted, than those militating under the German Order. The German Rosicrucians themselves in 1614 were prepared to extend their boundaries by admitting all the learned of Europe. But Inigo Jones went further than they; he was a progressive man, and claimed such latitude as would enable him to impart the Science to his friends, the New Style Masons. He therefore formed a Society in imitation of the Acception for the benefit of the stone artists. The Rosicrucians used to say, as the *Kabbalists* did, that they were "Builders" erecting a spiritual Temple to the honour and glory of God; and Inigo Jones emphasised this idea by bringing into the Fraternity the men who had given new dignity to the Mason Craft. They claimed Hiram Abif as their prototype, and for the first time now the name of that worthy appeared on the Old Charge of Inigo Jones. That was to be the starting-point of the process whereby Rosicrucianism was popularised, ultimately producing "Craft Masonry."

Archdeacon Charles Craven wrote a most helpful monograph on *Doctor Robert Fludd*, and in it his writings are described as treating "of life, death, and

resurrection; the *macrocosmus*, or greater world; the world in little, or microcosm; Mosaical cosmogony, the universal medicine, above all, the claims put forward by the Rosicrucian Brotherhood and the recognition due to these"; in other words, the whole Rosicrucian system of learning, all that the Rosicrucians had taken over from the Kabbalists. And yet Waite wants us to suspend judgment as to whether Fludd was a Rosicrucian!

The curious fact is that Waite himself is even more outspoken, and more persuasive, than the Archdeacon, for he says: "The theosophical tradition of Israel as represented by the word *Kabbalism* was a great intellectual puzzle and wonder of that time; and Fludd was one of its students so far at least as its literature had passed into the Latin tongue. . . . Like all those who preceded him, Fludd construed the tradition in the light of the Christian revelation." In other words, Fludd was one of those men who Christianised the Kabbalah, who adapted it to the Christian mind, the result of which was Rosicrucianism.

We are assured that Fludd "did not found the Order of the Rosy Cross." With this we agree; but he was an ardent Rosicrucian, and we hold that this was before 1616. Later on he was claimed for a "Freemason," as all Rosicrucians have been claimed for Freemasons, because all Rosicrucians were practically Freemasons. He lived in Coleman Street, only a few yards from the Masons' Hall, where the Acception had its home; and we believe that he is the person referred to when the records of that Lodge mention *The Book of Constitutions* "which Fludd gave."

It is lamentable that there should be Masonic *literati* romancing so much about Fludd; we have been told that he actually "was the Father of

Speculative Masonry, and that it was he and no other who founded the Lodge of Acceptation." But it is still more lamentable that so many should write about the Rosy Cross who cannot yet grasp the plain, elementary fact that "Freemasons" is only another name for *Rosicrucians*. As a matter of fact, in Fludd's time there were as yet no Freemasons—that is, the name had not yet been adopted. The Acceptation, though it was a Freemasons' Lodge, one which the eminent Freemason Elias Ashmole attended, was never explicitly described in that way. In 1616 Fludd brought out his book on the Rosy Cross; but there are records of the Acceptation that go back to 1620, and it is as clear as noonday that at that date it was functioning regularly, being by no means a new thing; in the opinion of Gould, Conder, and others it was much older. How, then, could Fludd have been the founder of Freemasonry?

Waite must have felt that the English Rosicrucians deserved a little more consideration, and therefore, after dealing with Fludd, he wrote the chapter entitled *The Awakening in England*, wherein a place of honour is given to Elias Ashmole as a member of the Rosicrucian Brotherhood, said to have been *established* in England in the middle of the seventeenth century, or, as he puts it, "about or before 1646." There is nothing to corroborate this "establishment" idea, but he was impressed by his tracts as "a reflection of Rosicrucian doctrine." Anyhow, he feels "that it is perhaps possible to presume his membership tentatively, as also in such a case that he did not stand alone."

If he stood alone, we should have to believe in spontaneous generation. Indeed, the eminent German scholar E. E. Eckert actually held that the Rosy Cross had been founded by Elias Ashmole, so that

Fludd was an isolated prodigy; and that virtuoso is supposed to have copied in 1646 the general plan of the German Order. If Eckert has nothing better to teach than this, it is preposterous to go to Germany for light on the subject; for we have already seen that in England the Rosy Cross was at work as early as 1603, more than forty years before Ashmole became a Rosicrucian.

Rayon is still more venturesome, affirming that Ashmole "transformed Operative into Speculative Masonry for ulterior reasons cherished by the Hermetic Order." But if the men who constituted the Warrington Lodge were "Speculatives"—and of this there seems to be no doubt—they could only have made Ashmole one of their number; while in no case can we conceive of the child becoming the father of that Speculative Circle. The strange thing is that anyone should represent Speculative Freemasonry as founded to serve the purposes of a "Hermetic Order" which has disappeared without leaving any trace behind. Why could not such men accept Ashmole's own testimony about himself when he says: "I was made a Freemason"?

If what these writers say were true, it would mean that *Merefool* had come to real life, that a man had "vowed himself into the Order." And it is absurd for anyone to correct Ashmole's *Diary*, where he definitely gives a day in 1646 as the day when he became a "Freemason," and to substitute that date by writing "about or before 1646."

The world has produced many wise men, but as yet none of them has succeeded in finding the culprit who founded Freemasonry. Does not this give ground for presumption that their efforts have been mis-directed?

Dr Gerard Encausse, better known as Dr Papus, who was instrumental in reviving the French Rose Croix Degree in 1885, was quite convinced that "Freemasonry was established in England by the Fraternity of the Rosy Cross, and still carries for those who can read the outward and inward marks, characteristic signs and seals of its occult origin." This is substantially correct; but Waite is loth to accept the fact, and will only allow "a bare possibility" that the German scholar Eckert *may* be right, and that Ashmole may have been the founder of Freemasonry.

Such men have erred, because they did not give sufficient attention to the chronological data. The Rosy Cross was metamorphosed into Freemasonry, but this must have been towards the middle of the seventeenth century; and we submit the following reasons:—

(a) Ashmole himself, in the selfsame year mentioned by these writers, has told us that he was made a Freemason—that is to say, a Speculative.

(b) Rylands made an exhaustive analysis of the records of the Warrington Lodge, and has ascertained that the members who composed that Lodge were without exception Speculative Freemasons.

(c) The word "Freemason" was then a figure of speech, a veiled allusion to the Temple those men were *building*, which was a spiritual one. It was then a cryptic name, not current in that sense, so that anyone prying into the *Diary* would not have understood what it meant.

(d) The real meaning of *Freemason* in the *Diary* was *Rosicrucian*. The Freemasons were Rosicrucians. The Rosicrucians appear in English history before the "Freemasons." The Rosy Cross was at work in England long before the German Order came this way.

CHAPTER VIII

FAMA FRATERNITATIS

FROM a remote period it had always been the policy of the Kabbalists to work in secrecy, to hide from the popular world, so as to be an invisible fraternity. And the Rosicrucians did the same, for they professed to follow the maxim: "Learn to know all, but keep thyself unknown." De Quincey, struck with this peculiar feature, tried to explain it by an equally remarkable saying of his: "To be hidden amidst crowds is sublime; to come down hidden amongst the crowds from distant generations is doubly sublime." See *Works* (Secret Societies), vi. 235, Groombridge.

At length, however, in the first years of the sixteenth century the German Rosicrucians felt that the time had arrived to liberalise the movement, to expand, to broaden the basis of the Society. And they declared that it was God's will that they should do so. In order to give effect to their idea, therefore, they now put forth a Manifesto which bore as its title *Fama Fraternitatis*, inviting all the learned men of Europe who approved of the ideal of the Rosy Cross to join the Society. They would still work in secret, but henceforth everyone with the requisite intellectual capacity and Christian character would be eligible for membership. Those who were not considered worthy, however, would not receive an answer to their application.

As stated before, Adam Haselmayer had seen and read a copy of the *Fama* as early as 1610, while he resided in the Tyrol. His *Responsio* was printed with practically every edition of the work, which suggests that it went forth with his blessing. The first edition of which we have any knowledge is in Latin, and is dated 1614. From Haselmayer's statement we infer that the date of composition is some years before its appearance.

The *Fama* professed to emanate from the "Most Laudable Order of the Rosy Cross," which was apparently a German product, and its publication harmonises with at least one circumstance. It was by disposition of C.:R.:C.:., we are told, that his tomb was to be kept secret for the space of 120 years. He had died in 1484; therefore on the supposition of his being an historical character, the 120 years bring us down to 1604. Now, the *Fama* refers to the Tomb of C.:R.:C.:. and asserts that it had been discovered in the said year. But we believe that this literal interpretation of the 120 years is a mistake.

Apparently there was a ceremony in the course of which the Candidate had to "die" in a figurative way; and to assure him that this would be kept absolutely private, the Brethren used to say that the Grave would be kept secret for 120 years. If this be taken literally, it meant that when the Grave was found the Candidate would be quite forgotten. Now, however, following the hypothesis of the legend, the German Rosicrucians claimed to have found the Tomb of their Founder C.:R.:C.:.

We need not discuss this alleged discovery. All that we have to note is that now, in 1604 or soon after, the German Rosicrucians conceived the idea of a forward movement which would be something like