

History of the RR et AC

Lecture of the Study Group of the Societas Rosicruciana

Monday, 14th February, 5.30 pm.

Most worthy, supreme M.W. and Fratres,

I think a few preliminary remarks will be useful before coming to the main point of my address this afternoon, which is, as you know, upon Christian Rosenkreutz, the founder of the Society to which we belong.

You must remember that many epochs have passed since man has inhabited this world, and that they are variously spoken of: but if we use the terms Lemurian, Atlantian, post-Atlantian, Egyptian, Persian and Indian and finally, the Christian Eras, the terms will suit our purpose.

Now in each of these epochs, a definite advance has been made in the knowledge and wisdom of mankind, and there have been certain advanced souls living in each epoch whose knowledge has far transcended that of their compeers, and who have after death formed distinct groups upon – let us say – the aura of the earth, or in other words, upon the Spirit plane contiguous to the earth.

These groups still persist, and a noteworthy point concerning them is this – that they are able upon the spiritual plane to follow the progress of civilisation, even up to the present time. Technically, individuals of this nature possess what we might term Etheric or Astral bodies.

We are all constantly surrounded by the residue of the Etheric bodies of the dead (to our weal or woe) and powerful influences are transmitted from Etheric bodies to the most advanced individuals amongst us.

Now Christian Rosenkreutz was one of these beings, and he is able function well, whether incarnated or non-incarnated, and what follows tries to explain some of his power.

In the restricted sense, the Rosicrucian movement had its rise in the thirteenth century, and for a hundred years or so the spiritual stream of wisdom appeared to receive marked impetus to manifest itself in a new way. This happened quite recently within the continental Theosophical movement.

In 1788, there appeared a book written by Henricus Matadamus Theosophus which was “The Secret Signs of Rosenkreutz”. You have a copy of this book in your library. This book indicated in a certain limited sense the Rosicrucian work which had taken place during the previous century. A hundred years later, certain Rosicrucian knowledge was given out through the medium of H.P.B. in “Isis Unveiled”. In that book there is much wisdom although we must distinguish between the first and later editions.

For the origin of the newer Rosicrucian teaching, we must go back to the thirteenth century. At that time certain a nadir in spiritual life was reached. The generality of mankind had, to a great extent, lost all touch with the spiritual world, and it was at this time that a very spiritual group of men met together at a place – the name of which I am not allowed definitely to state – but it was in the South of Europe. Twelve men met together, who in themselves contained the sum of the whole spiritual knowledge of their time. Seven of them represented the seven traditions of the seven holy species; the other five represented the five sub-races of Culture Epochs since Atlantis. These twelve had thus

between them all the Atlantian and post-Atlantian wisdom. One of them had all the current knowledge of his time, while the others, by direct indication or introspection, drew upon the memories of the earlier incarnations.

Now these twelve sought to initiate a new development, but they found that they could not make a synthesis of the knowledge they then collectively possessed. They felt, therefore, that it was necessary to add a thirteenth member to their number, and seeking about, they found a youth who was being educated in a monastery. By heredity he was a mystic. He had lived upon the earth at the time of the Crucifixion, and had prepared himself by further pious and tested lives for the mission to which he was called by the twelve in the thirteenth century. This man, as we shall see, was the person who called himself Christian Rosenkreutz. His life name I know, and the place of his birth, but I am pledged not to reveal it.

He was a delicate young man, but readily consented to the training which was proposed to him by the twelve, and it reacted upon him, not only mentally, but physically. Entirely sheltered from all outside influences, he grew up in the midst of a college founded by the twelve.

Now these twelve were possessed or imbued by the idea that the Christianity of that period was only a distorted image. They were filled with the greatness of Christianity, yet they were forced at time to appear to be inimical to it as then practised. Their great aim was to procure a synthesis of all religions, not merely as a fraction, but also as a result of practical spiritual life; and they wished to elucidate, if possible, that Christianity was the culmination of all the various religious systems which had preceded it.

Now, to obtain this synthesis the education of this young man was directed. He was taught the knowledge possessed by all the twelve, and, during his training, his physical strength gradually faded, whilst his spiritual power increased in an extraordinary way. At last a point was reached when almost all communication with outward life ceased, and the young man finally rejected all nourishment and lay as one in a state of catalepsy or suspended animation. Then occurred one of those unique events which can only result when the macrocosmic forces work together, and the time is ripe for such an occurrence. The physical body of the young man became almost perfectly transparent and for many days lay as one dead. Around him the twelve assembled together at definite intervals of time, and it seemed as if all their wisdom streamed from them to him in short formulae – they appeared as concentrated prayers. The result was that a great change occurred in the young man's soul, but at the same time his body was vitalised in such a mystical manner that one can hardly describe it: and the twelve were then able to realise that he had now gone through a like experience to that which St Paul went through on the road to Damascus. Then, as several weeks passed by, the young man gradually revived, was able to again to take nourishment, and, later on, all the knowledge he had received from the twelve he was able to give out in a concentrated form. The revelation that he gave them was called by these twelve the true Christianity, the Synthesis of all Religions.

The young man died at an apparently early age. The twelve then occupied themselves with the task of depicting in symbolic hieroglyphs (because in this was only could it be done) the revelation which had been given them by the young man. It was in this way that the symbolic figures were produced which appear in the work of Henricus Matadamus Theosophus and which were practically given out by H.P.B.

This occult process must be so imagined that the results of the initiation of the thirteenth century are stored up in his Etheric Nucleus within the world's spiritual atmosphere. This Nucleus continued to act upon the twelve, inspiring them just as it also inspired their subsequent students so that from them the Rosicrucian occult tradition could be propagated. But this nucleus worked on still further, for it subsequently penetrated or obsessed the Etheric Body of the young man when he again

incarnated about the middle of the 14th century – on 14th September 1378. This time he lived for over 100 years. He was brought up in the circle of the pupils and followers of the twelve, but was not so isolated from the world as he had been in his previous incarnation. In his twenty-eighth year, he received a remarkable impulse which compelled him to travel and he went with a friend to Cyprus; his friend died there but he went on to Egypt and then to Mount Carmel, where he lived for a time and at length arrived at Damascus, at which place there again occurred to him an experience similar to that which St Paul underwent. All the powers of that wonderful Etheric Body which had remained intact, and which streamed out from him to the spiritual world, induced in him a desire to re-live once more the already experienced revelation. Exoterically it is to this personality, born in the 14th century to whom we really point as the genuine Christian Rosenkreutz, but esoterically, we can speak of Christian Rosenkreutz as existing from the 13th century. It is the pupils of this Christian Rosenkreutz of the 14th century who are the real Rosicrucians.

I may mention here that I am pledged not to reveal the name or real person who called himself Christian Rosenkreutz, nor the place in which he was born, but I may say that, in 1914, I was on my way to his birth-place and also to see the vault in which he is buried, which still exists, although it is not in the place in which it is described as being, in any published account.

Christian Rosenkreutz, after leaving his home, journeyed throughout the whole world, as then known, and it was easy for him in the course of his seven years' pilgrimage to acquire the total knowledge of that period. After this pilgrimage was completed, he adopted the most advanced pupils and followers of the Twelve as his pupils. It was in this way that the Rosicrucian work began.

Owing to influences which emanate from the Etheric Body of Christian Rosenkreutz, a perfectly new view of the world could be initiated. The Maya of the material world could now be investigated. The Macrocosmos is just as much an Etheric Body as is the individual and continuous transition takes place the course of finer substances. If we direct our gaze to the boundary of the physical and Etheric substance, we become aware of a third substance which is contained in every other substance or that every other physical substance may be considered a modification of this one. It is the essence of all.

The object of the Rosicrucians was to perceive this substance clairvoyantly and the power to attain such vision they considered to be an exceptional development of the moral potency of the soul. This substance has been really discovered and investigated by the Rosicrucians.

They have found it, not only in the Macrocosm, but also in mankind. In the Macrocosm, they perceived it as a garment of the Macrocosm and in mankind, they saw it in the interchanged working between Thought and Will.

Will, they comprehended in the Macrocosm as Thunder and lightning, Thought as the Rainbow, or the Golden Dawn, and the power of this harmony between willing and thinking in their own souls, they sought from the Etheric Body of Christian Rosenkreutz.

It was determined that all discoveries they made should remain secret for a hundred years and that it was only after a hundred years had been spent in working at the subject that it became permissible to speak of it in any adequate manner.

In consequence of this Rosicrucian work, the Etheric Body of C.R.C. became increasingly powerful. Those who were absorbed in true theosophical study permitted themselves to be overshadowed by this Etheric Body which can act upon them whether C.R.C. is incarnate or disincarnate.

In the 18th century, C.R.C. was again incarnated in the body of Comte St Germain, only be it remembered, several other people were called by this name, so that everything which was said here and there about St Germain must not be considered to apply to the real C.R.C.

It was from out of this Etheric Body that there flowed the inspiration of H.P.B which was partly given out in "Isis Unveiled".

Imperceptibly, also, has it inspired Lessing in his "Development of the Human Race". In consequence of the rising flood of materialism, it as has, of recent years, been very difficult to inspire the Rosicrucian tradition. Much of it could only be given out in very fragmentary streams. Wiedmann, in 1851, was able to solve the problem of the immortal soul in the sense of reincarnation. His volume was crowned by the Academy. About 1850, Drasbach wrote "The Idea of Re-Incarnation from the Psychological Standpoint". Even during the 19th century the Rosicrucian tradition has continued to work.

The termination of the small Kali-Yuga at the end of the 19th century permits a great revival of the true theosophical or Rosicrucian life. On this account, it is easier to-day for influences to penetrate the spiritual spheres. Great revelations may now be called forth from the Etheric Body of C.R.C. which has now become so extremely powerful to those who give themselves up its influences. Up to the present time, the esoteric Rosicrucian preparation has been necessary for them. It is further, the mission of the 20th century to enable the Etheric Body to become so mighty that it will be able to work exoterically. Those who are enabled to be absorbed in it may experience the same initiation which St Paul had on the road to Damascus. It is the work of the Rosicrucians to render possible the second coming of Christ on the Etheric plane. The number of those who will be capable of doing this will be repeatedly greater and greater.

ROSICRUCIAN WORK

The first act of this work, begun in the 13th century, continuing today, and which will continue to all eternity, was naturally that which we have been able to relate concerning the Initiation of C.R.C.

After C.R.C. was re-incarnated, in the 14th century, his work was chiefly that of instructing the pupils of the Twelve. These Twelve were really the only personas who learned to know and appreciate him. Indeed, he was not generally recognised at all, and apart from the Twelve, and a small group of students, on one knew of his existence. It was, as a matter of fact, similar to the condition of things to-day, but his Etheric Body and its powers function in ever widening circles and, at the present time, there exists a very considerable number of people on the point of being drawn into the influence of the powers of his Etheric Body.

Those whom C.R.C. selects as his pupils are chosen by him for that purpose in a remarkable way. The point to be considered is this: - when anyone is chosen, his aspiration will very likely be started by the hearing of a voice and therefore persons who hear such a voice should carefully reflect upon their past life and pay special attention to one or two startling events which may have occurred. What happens is briefly this: a certain person during his life arrives at a definite parting of the ways or, in other words arrives at a Karmic crisis. For instance, a man may think he took some definite action on a given occasion and thereby escaped death. It might, for example, happen that he were within a few steps of a hidden precipice and he hears a voice saying: "Stop at once!", halts and, by so doing, escapes death. Now that person may be under the impression that it was a physical voice that struck his ear. Thousands of cases of this kind may occur. It is something external, but the most important part is the spiritual call. To this interior or intuition call, the chosen person must respond, and, as a result, of it, must undertake some study which, up to that time, he has paid no

heed to, such as the study of theosophy or the like – anything which bears a definite relation to spiritual life.

The external experience is then something which the chosen pupil undergoes later. The voice came from the spiritual world and when the pupil is ripe to ascertain that it is not indeed a physical personality which has instilled an influence into his life, he recognises and becomes convinced that a spiritual world exists, from out of which the voice has addressed him.

Such events may occur once or many times. The influence that is produced upon the mind of the pupil is that he is impelled to say to himself “my former life was but labour in vain, it is true grace that a further span has been allotted to me, without this warning I must have died.”

The event may have occurred years before my dealings with theosophy have commenced, but when such study is begun, the recognition of the definite events becomes evident. It is only necessary that the past life be sufficiently examined. This is the indication and the call to the higher students of the Rosicrucians.

The Difference between the Instruction of Rosicrucian Students in former times and at present.

In ancient times, Rosicrucians were generally instructed in natural philosophy and nowadays it is rather in spiritual philosophy, therefore in ancient times the processes of Nature and especially the science of Alchemy were constantly spoken of and discussed, and in so far as these processes were to be found external to the world, the science was called Astrology.

In the present day, we chiefly occupy ourselves with a consideration of spiritual things: we discuss, for instance, the great post-Atlantian Epochs and we can, from this consideration of Nature begin to understand the invention (or development) of the human soul.

Rosicrucians of the Middle Ages investigated Nature in processes, that is to say those natural processes as they could be seen in geological formations and so forth. We will briefly consider three of these natural processes.

First, then, let us consider the formation of Salt (precipitation). Everything in nature which separates itself off is precipitated from a solution, the Rosicrucians in the Middle Ages termed Salt. In their chemical investigations, their perception of it was completely different from ours. Their idea of such processes must have acted like a prayer if they wished to understand the impression produced in their minds of souls. They endeavoured further to make it clear what must happen in their own souls when this process of Salt or precipitation should occur. They considered that human nature must be continually secreting itself through activity and the passions. They considered that our life was, in fact, a continual process of dying when we gave ourselves up to the passions. Now the protection against this dying is the development of pure thoughts.

The Rosicrucians of the Middle Ages knew perfectly well that if they gave way to their passions in once incarnation, they would enter into the next incarnation with a predisposition to disease and vice versa. The process of overcoming all the passions, the process of destruction through spirituality they called technically the Microcosmic Salt Formation or Precipitation. Looked at in this way, it is easy for us to comprehend how the processes of Nature may become a prayer. When the medieval Rosicrucians saw the formation of Salt in their laboratories, they said to themselves: - “Godly spiritual forces have for thousands of years worked in Nature exactly as pure thoughts work in us and we pry behind the Illusions of Nature to the thoughts of the Great Spirits.”

“If we permit ourselves to be stimulated by Nature, we make ourselves resemble the Macrocosm; if we regard this process only as an external one, we cut ourselves off from the Great Spirits”. It was thus that the minds of true alchemists were impressed.

The medieval Rosicrucians named anything which could dissolve anything else, Quicksilver or Mercury and they asked themselves what property of soul acts in the same way as Nature acts through Mercury. They recognised that Mercury in the soul represented all forms of love. They differentiated between the lower and the higher forms of love which exist. They said to themselves:- “the Love of God has indeed worked externally just as love works in us.”

We will now refer to Combustion:-

The medieval Rosicrucians sought for a corresponding wider process and they found it in intense devotion to Godhead. They named anything which could be consumed in flames Sulphur. They saw in the development of Life the process of a magical, universal sublimation, just like the process of the combustion of Sulphur. They said to themselves:- “All this is the work of the Great Spirits who raise all things to higher spirits. Now lower spirits sacrifice to higher spirits.” So said they, as they watched the process of sublimation and when they proved the activity of the process, they within themselves:- “We do what the Great Spirits do when they sacrifice to those of higher rank”, and they felt themselves permeated with the necessity of making such sacrificial offering. They gave themselves up, with religious enthusiasm to the formation of salt solution and the processes of sublimation and considered themselves, when at this work, bound thereby to the macrocosmic powers.

When they witnessed the process of the formation of salt they felt within themselves pure thoughts arise. When conducting the process of precipitation or solution, they felt themselves stimulated to love, and, at the process of sublimation, they felt themselves compelled to the service of sacrifice. If one looked clairvoyantly at the change which took place in the Aura of the operator during these processes one would notice how the Aura, which at the beginning, on account of sin was of mixed colours, gradually becomes of pure colour. First, it became the colour of copper, then it took on a silver hue, finally it became like glistening gold and the alchemists then said to themselves, when this change had taken place, that they had transmitted the Aura of subjective silver to subjective gold.

Further, it followed that a man thoroughly penetrated with purity, love and devotion, produced by these alchemical processes, attained, as a result, a certain measure of clairvoyance. The medieval Rosicrucians could pierce with their glances the manner in which the spiritual existence was permitted to come into being, even to vanish behind the illusion of things, and therefore he was also able to see that large powers of functioning of the soul were capable of development and which were quite natural.

The law of ascent and descent became clear to them, and they were able to express the science, acquired in this manner in symbolic hieroglyphs.

It was in this way that the Rosicrucian alchemists worked, from the fourteenth to the eighteenth century. Of this work we do not find, so to speak, anything printed. What has been written concerning alchemy refers to what the alchemists did for spiritual advantage, for, as the false alchemist set himself the task of forming substances, the true alchemist was really concerned with the interior experiences induced through the formation of matter.

It was for this reason that a strict law with those alchemists that the material substances produced by means of alchemical processes could only be parted with, as gifts, the only exception being that they were permitted to use a little of the gold produced for bare necessities, but not for luxuries.

The modern man can hardly comprehend that the medieval Rosicrucian could experience within his laboratory the whole drama of the soul, for instance, in the production of antimony. Those experiments must necessarily precede our labours in order that we to-day, may work at spiritual science in the sense of the Rosicrucian tradition. What the medieval Rosicrucians had experienced through a sanctified natural philosophy in the ideas of sacrifice, joy and sorrow, prepared and set the conceptions of natural processes upon which all our mentality of to-day is based. How do we find these hidden forces? Through spiritual science and meditation. Later on, all investigations of Nature will again become a service of sacrifice and it will become possible to view the spiritual matter behind the veil, but in order to do this mankind must penetrate and fully comprehend the spiritual sciences.