

Concordia Theological Monthly

Continuing

LEHRE UND WEHRE

MAGAZIN FÜR EV.-LUTH. HOMILETIK

THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY-THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY

Vol. X

December, 1939

No. 12

CONTENTS

	Page
The Doctrine of Justification According to Gabriel Biel and Johann von Palz. Theo. Dierks	881
Teaching the Postconfirmation Bible Class. P. E. Kretzmann	889
Antichristian Teaching of Rosicrucianism. J. Theodore Mueller	900
Entwürfe für die von der Synodalkonferenz angenommene Epistelreihe	913
Theological Observer. — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches	928
Book Review. — Literatur	953

Ein Prediger muss nicht allein weiden, also dass er die Schafe unterweise, wie sie rechte Christen sollen sein, sondern auch daneben den Wölfen wehren, dass sie die Schafe nicht angreifen und mit falscher Lehre verföhren und Irrtum einföhren.

Luther.

Es ist kein Ding, das die Leute mehr bei der Kirche behält denn die gute Predigt. — *Apologie*, Art. 24.

If the trumpet give an uncertain sound who shall prepare himself to the battle? — *1 Cor. 14, 8*.

Published for the

Ev. Luth. Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States

CONCORDIA PUBLISHING HOUSE, St. Louis, Mo.



One danger is always rather prominent, namely, that open-forum discussions will not be of equal interest to all participants, a condition which may cause some members of the class to lose interest entirely. The solution in this case is found by fitting the teaching to two or more levels, chiefly by lesson plans carefully arranged. Frequently also there must be a combination of informational and functional methods. All in all, this type of class calls for the most careful preparation.

In the *men's Bible class* the general difficulties will ordinarily be found in the show of diffidence, and possibly even fear, of speaking in public, even when the majority of members attended school at approximately the same time, for the laboring man is inclined to feel abashed in the presence of the professional man and even of the business man and the artisan. Hence we may expect inarticulateness and incoherence on the part of the great majority in attendance. These difficulties suggest the solution, namely, that the leader use the most practical approach consistent with the ultimate doctrinal aim of the discussions. To this end functional methods must be employed which emphasize problems of daily life in their doctrinal setting.

As for the *women's Bible class*, the general difficulties are approximately the same as those in men's classes. Among the specific difficulties are timidity and diffidence on the part of the majority of women in attendance, no matter how glibly they express themselves on other subjects. By way of contrast trouble may sometimes threaten on account of the extrovert tendencies on the part of some of the people in attendance who are more facile in their ability to express themselves. In the majority of cases the solution will be found in the use of functional, cooperative methods, although an occasional lecture on one of the more difficult topics of the course may be thankfully received. Each class will require individual study and a great measure of wisdom in applying the Word of God to the specific field of women's difficulties.

P. E. KRETZMANN



Antichristian Teachings of Rosicrucianism

1

Among the many "cunningly devised fables" (cf. 2 Pet. 1:16) which false prophets are spreading with unholy assiduity to injure the kingdom of Christ, those of modern Rosicrucianism easily rank among the first, both in insidiousness and in perniciousness.

Though perhaps this grossly antichristian movement will never

achieve the popularity of similar cults, it is nevertheless (in its relatively limited sphere) extremely aggressive, and already now some of our pastors have discovered to their great regret that Rosicrucianism has invaded their parishes and wrought no little harm among both older and younger members. It is largely upon the suggestion of brethren in the ministry that in this article we shall point out the most prominent "damnable heresies" (cf. 2 Pet. 2:1) of Rosicrucianism, which in its sinister aspects and results can easily be understood even by the humbler parishioners who are not deeply rooted in the faith, though the more complex features of this philosophy falsely so called may remain unintelligible to them.

Popular Symbolics rightly groups Rosicrucianism among the antichristian "theosophical and pseudometaphysical cults." Just herein, however, lies much of its glamor and appeal. Theosophy is rather popular today, especially in certain circles which have been disastrously influenced by present-day superficial Modernists, since their fatal moral and spiritual bankruptcy and utter inability, in their theological speculations, to rise above the bare facts of naturalism have disgusted not a few. Modernism has failed to satisfy the religious cravings of men, and so in many instances they are now directing themselves for enlightenment to the theosophic, pseudometaphysical inanities which today flood our country. In Rosicrucianism they find mystery together with alluring promises that by studying its tenets they, too, will comprehend the great realities which remain beyond the common ken of mankind. It is true, theosophic theology offers its students for the greater part only a mere jumble of meaningless words, but persistently they study on, hoping steadfastly that in the course of time they may yet vision the metaphysical radiance which their theosophical leaders claim they can see. Rosicrucianism, moreover, is advertising heavily, and in such a way as to mislead professing Christians to believe that, when they approach this mystical *Mumpitz*, they are not turning "to any religion or sect" and therefore need not renounce the particular religion which they profess. When thus "Scribe X. A. W. of San José, California, U. S. A.," advertises the Rosicrucians, the mystic order of the "Amorc" (i. e., "The Ancient Mystical Order of the Rose Cross"), he adds expressly: "The Rosicrucians are *not* a religious organization." Here indeed is an important selling point for Rosicrucian salesmen; for if Rosicrucianism is not a religious organization, then (so church-members may argue) there can be no objection to joining its "truth-seekers" and investigating its claims. In the third place, modern Rosi-

crucianism is no doubt connected with Freemasonry in its higher esoteric ritualism, so that also the hypnotic fascination which Masonry exercises on so many must serve Rosicrucianism in insinuating itself into their favor.

Finally, also, Rosicrucianism is a *health* movement and as such claims as its message and mission "a sane mind, a soft heart, and a sound body." Similar to the Hindu theosophic cults, it is essentially vegetarian in its dietetic prescriptions, promising to its devotees "superlative health." And who today would not like to possess this valuable asset? Also, it claims for its proponents the "power of healing," and "Christian Science," "Sister Aimee," the "Papacy," and other similar delusions have long ago proved the proselyting value of the healing racket. Together with the "charisma" of physical and spiritual healing, historic Rosicrucianism pretends to bestow "enormous potent secrets," "concealed from the eyes of men," "sought for three thousand years," *e. g.*, "an elixir to prolong life," "a strange process to change the composition of metals," "a weird device for communication with distant planets," "the philosopher's stone more precious than the Kohinoor," and so forth. Imagine, for instance, the captivating effect upon a good many moronic, mentally pathological readers of the following advertisement, which (in part) we quote from *Physical Culture*, a widely read Bernarr Macfadden health monthly (cf. June issue, 1937):

"To Roger Bacon, medieval monk and scholar, man of mystery, the eyes of the world are turned. He accomplished feats at which the people of the eleventh century gasped. They begged and implored him to divulge his formulas, to reveal his source of wisdom. To these and their threats his lips were sealed. He knew the wisdom was too powerful, too dangerous, to be in the hands of those who might locally use them.

"For generations his manuscripts were hopeless confusion of strange hieroglyphics and symbols. Then in recent years came their decipherment, and the world learned of many of his great experiments and the source of his tremendous knowledge. He was one of a secret brotherhood which had carefully guarded in code the great knowledge of the ancients.

"Today this great brotherhood, known as the Rosicrucians, still flourishes. It still keeps from the eyes of the curious, as in Bacon's time, the profound truths of nature, which gave man mastery of self and happiness in life. Its keys of universal wisdom are extended to all who are sincere in their desire to unlock the hidden truths of the universe and find freedom, power, and success in such knowledge. A fascinating free book, *The Secret Heritage*, will explain how you may receive these helpful facts. Direct a letter to the address below, asking for it."

Indeed, we cannot ignore this vicious, thoroughly antichristian cult, which denies the Triune God, the deity of Christ, the vicarious atonement of our divine-human Savior, the *sola gratia*, in short,

every specifically Christian doctrine, and yet approaches the world with the lying claim: "The Rosicrucians are *not* a religious organization." As a matter of fact, the cult is a weird combination of extreme blasphemy and mendacious imposition, a soul-destroying lie from beginning to end. Yet in spite of this it claims to be in accord with Christianity and its tenets, yes, even to promote the cause of Christ and His Church.

2

We shall not take time to examine the rather subtle and arbitrary distinctions between the H. S. Lewis* ("Imperator for North America of the Rosicrucian Brotherhood") form of Rosicrucianism and the Max Heindel form. The first claims to be the true Rosicrucianism, as represented by the Rosicrucian International Organization, while the latter more specifically denominates itself the Rosicrucian Fellowship. The first has its headquarters at Rosicrucian Park, San José, Calif., the latter at Mount Ecclesia, Ocean-side, ninety miles south of Los Angeles. The former claims to be an international organization; but also the latter boasts branches throughout the world. In doctrine the two divisions do not differ materially but are practically one in their antichristian rejection of God's Word as set forth in Holy Scripture, in their extravagant theosophic speculations, and in their Munchausenish mystical pretensions. In this article we shall consider, in the main, the tenets of the Rosicrucian Fellowship as these are set forth in Max Heindel's *Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* or *Mystic Christianity* and in numerous monographs, such as *Solving the Riddle of Life and Death*, *Life Here and Hereafter*, etc. Max Heindel died in 1919, but his work has been carried on by his followers at Ocean-side, Calif., who are led by his aggressive widow, Mrs. Augusta Foss Heindel.

Nor shall we try in this article to link up the present-day order of Rosicrucians with the secret society of occult philosophers which according to tradition was organized under this name in Germany in the fifteenth century. In fact, nothing is known of the original society except from its own supposed publications, so that many regard it as altogether mythical. The society was first described in a book which appeared anonymously at Cassel, Germany, 1614 under the title *Allgemeine und General-Reformation der ganzen Welt beneben der Fama Veritatis des loeblichen Ordens des Rosenkreuzes*. The book invited the scholars of Europe to test the pretensions and join the ranks of a secret society, said to have been founded about two hundred years before by a certain Christian Rosenkreuz, who on a pilgrimage through the Orient

* Mr. Lewis died August 3, 1939.

had absorbed all the hidden wisdom of the East. According to the account the society possessed many secret gifts of knowledge, of which gold alchemy was one of the most precious. In character it pretended to be Christian and of the Protestant type, while its chief objective was the gratuitous healing of the sick. Arnold, in his *Kirchen- und Ketzerhistorie*, endeavors to prove that its author was the learned theologian Johann Valentin Andreae (1586—1654) and that the book was originally a sort of elaborate satire composed in the *Stift* of Tuebingen. Be that as it may, branches or imitations of the supposed order sprang up in various places in Europe, its adherents boasting of many potent secrets, including the philosopher's stone, the transmutation of metals (of course, in search of gold), the art of miraculous healing, the prolongation of life, the ability of clairvoyance, the occult science of magic, supernatural power over the elements and elemental spirits, and the like. The marvelous elements in the account of Rosenkreuz and his secret order only served to draw serious attention to the supposed order, so that very soon a large controversial literature sprang up, which centered about the question of the orthodoxy of the supposed mystic order. While some violently condemned the Rosicrucians as heretics in theology and medicine, others, and among them especially R. Fludd, defended them and hoped great things from their activity. Gradually, however, it was recognized that the whole matter was merely a mystification.

Modern Rosicrucianism manifestly imitates its forerunners of the seventeenth century. Yet it is evident that there is no historical connection between the two, though the same charlatanry is found in both. Thus H. S. Lewis, "Imperator of North America of the Rosicrucian Brotherhood," in his book *The Mystical Life of Jesus*, claimed to have access to the true life of Jesus in records which were preserved for centuries in the archives of the Essene and Rosicrucian Brotherhoods. (Cf. *Popular Symbolics*.) In its phantastic pretensions Rosicrucianism is quite similar to certain phases of Mormonism.

Modern Rosicrucianism has produced a voluminous literature, especially the Rosicrucian Fellowship, through its energetic leader Max Heindel, whose *Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*, *Rosicrucian Philosophy*, *Rosicrucian Mysteries*, *Freemasonry and Catholicism*, *Astro-Diagnosis*, *a Guide to Healing*, *Teachings of an Initiate*, etc., are standard text-books of Rosicrucianism. The Fellowship publishes the *Rosicrucian Magazine* (*The International Mystic Monthly*), a monthly magazine of mystic light devoted to philosophy, occultism, mystic Masonry, astrology, and healing. It also disseminates its absurdities through a "correspondence course in the Rosicrucian philosophy and astrology."

3

The inimical attitude of Rosicrucianism toward Christianity is obvious already from the idolatrous veneration which its proponents show for Christian Rosenkreuz, whom also modern Rosicrucians regard as the founder and father of their sect. Of Christian Rosenkreuz (altogether a mythical figure) Max Heindel writes in his *Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*: "In the thirteenth century a high spiritual teacher, having the symbolical name Christian Rosenkreuz, . . . appeared in Europe to commence that work. He founded the mysterious Order of Rosicrucians with the object of throwing occult light upon the misunderstood Christian religion and to explain the mystery of Life and Being from the Scientific Standpoint in harmony with religion. His birth as Christian Rosenkreuz (according to Rosicrucian belief Rosenkreuz was only the reincarnation of a great, divine Ego or Spirit) marked the beginning of a new epoch in spiritual life of the Western World. That particular Ego has also been in continuous physical existence ever since in one or another of the European countries. His very name is an embodiment of the manner and the means by which the present-day man is transformed into the Divine Superman." (*Cosmo-Conception*, p. 578 ff.) Rosicrucians thus believe that through pure striving, the exercise of love, and numerous rebirths they may attain to *godhood*. In fact, according to their claims Christian Rosenkreuz was essentially united with the Holy Spirit (who is the "Race God"), so that "he spoke all languages, and all to whom he spoke believed that he belonged to the same nation as they." (*Cosmo-Conception*, p. 433.) As an "initiate of high degree" Rosenkreuz is today "an active and potent factor in all the affairs of the West and as such inspired the now mutilated works of Bacon as well as the writings of Jacob Boehme, Goethe, Wagner, and of other great men." "All undaunted spirits who refuse to be fettered by either orthodox science or orthodox religion, who fling away the husks and penetrate to the spiritual kernel, regardless of vilification or of flattery, draw their inspiration from the same fountain as did and does the great Spirit which animated Christian Rosenkreuz." (*Cosmo-Conception*, p. 518 ff.) Rosicrucians thus deify Christian Rosenkreuz as a divine teacher, the inspired author of their "spiritual" religion by virtue of the divine Ego that dwells in him. From the very outset therefore Rosicrucianism repudiates the Bible as the sole source and norm of faith and life and venerates Christian Rosenkreuz as its master and lord, just as Islam reveres Mohammed, Christian Science Mrs. Eddy, Mormonism Joseph Smith, etc. Nor must this surprise us, for it belongs in the same class as these perverse antichristian isms, all of which are outside the pale of Christendom. As a matter

of fact, Rosicrucians claim that the Ego of Rosenkreuz was incarnate already as a "highly developed being" when Jesus of Nazareth was born (*Cosmo-Conception*, p. 379), so that Rosenkreuz, in the form of his preexistent spirit, was before Jesus Christ, whom Scripture declares to be God's eternal Son.

As Rosicrucianism dethrones Christ, so it also casts aside the Holy Bible as the clear, inerrant Word of God and the sole source and rule of faith. At this point Heindel misrepresents all historical facts so grossly as to render himself more than ridiculous in the judgment of all educated readers. Of the translators of the King James Version he says that only three of them were Hebrew scholars and that two of them died before the Psalms had been translated into English, so that "*the chances of getting a correct translation were very small indeed.*" (*Cosmo-Conception*, p. 318.) Again, according to Max Heindel, Luther did not translate the Bible from the original Hebrew text but from the Latin, and most of the versions used in Continental Europe today are simply translations of Luther's version, so that "*the old mistakes are still there.*" (*Ibid.*) Moreover, the original writers of the Bible did not "intend to give out the truth in such a plain form that he who ran might read." (P. 319.) The secrets of the Torah, for instance, were not to be understood by all, and in the New Testament Paul's methods were in harmony with this; for he gave "milk" to the "babes" in the faith and reserved the "meat" for the "strong." (P. 320.) Max Heindel, of course, applies this in the sense of "Rosicrucian meat." Hence the Bible was not rightly understood and correctly expounded as to its deeper meaning until Rosicrucianism began to unfold its mystic sense to the world and thus divulged to men its true scope and teachings.

4

In what way, then, does Rosicrucianism interpret Scripture? A few examples will demonstrate the utter madness of Rosicrucian Bible exposition. Thus the first statement in Genesis: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," means in its mystic, Rosicrucian interpretation: "Out of the everlasting essence (of space) the twofold energy formed the double heaven." (P. 321.) The author of *Cosmo-Conception* here argues as follows: That the writer had in mind a mystic sense of his words when he wrote them is obvious from the fact that he *omitted the vowel points*, which proves that he had not meant to write an "open" book of God but a book which was composed solely for the initiated. (P. 322.) Such supreme nonsense of course requires no refutation.

On the Hebrew noun *Elohim* the writer of *Cosmo-Conception*

says: "In the first chapter of Genesis these Hierarchies [He substitutes for God a number of divine forces, which he styles "Hierarchies"] are called 'Elohim.' The name signifies a host of dual or double-sexed Beings. The first part of the word is 'Eloh,' which is a feminine noun, the letter h indicating the gender. If a single feminine Being were meant, the word 'Eloh' would have been used. The feminine plural is 'oth'; hence, if the intention had been to indicate a number of gods of the feminine gender, the correct word to use would have been 'Elooth.' Instead of either of these forms, however, we find the masculine plural ending 'im' added to the feminine noun 'Eloh,' indicating a host of male-female, double-sexed Beings, expressions of the dual, positive-negative, created energy." (P. 325.) Certainly the sheerest folly!

According to the Rosicrucian Fellowship interpretation of the Bible heaven and earth were not created in six days, but the *hexaemeron* in Genesis suggests so many "periods" which the "dual, positive-negative creative energy" called into being, such as the "sun period," the "moon period," the "earth period," the "Polarian Epoch," the "Hyperborean Epoch," the "Lemurian Epoch," the "Atlantean Epoch," and the "Aryan Epoch," which corresponds to the seventh day of creation. (P. 327 ff.)

Rosicrucianism does not recognize the author of Genesis as a *monotheist*. "He knew better than to think of God as simply a superior man, using the sky for a throne and the earth for a footstool." (P. 333.) Jehovah was simply one of the Elohim, the Leader of the Angels, who were the humanity of the "moon period," and the Regent of our Moon. As the Regent of the Moon, Jehovah had to build concrete bodies, or forms, by means of the hardening, crystallizing moon forces. Therefore He is the giver of children, and the angels are His messengers in this work (p. 334), while the archangel Michael is nothing else than the "Race-spirit of the Jews."

In his "exposition" of the Hebrew word *nephesh* (*living soul*) the author of *Cosmo-Conception* has this to say: "The life breath (*nephesh*) is the same in man and beast. The animals are but our 'younger brothers,' and though they are not so finely organized, they will eventually reach a state as high as our own, and we shall then have ascended still higher." (P. 345.) "The work done by Jehovah was to build dense, hard bone substance into the soft bodies already existing. Previous to this time, *i. e.*, during the Polarian and Hyperborean Epochs, neither animal nor man had bones." (P. 346.)

In the same connection the writer interprets the creation of Eve out of a rib of Adam. According to the Rosicrucian interpretation God took from the first man, who originally was bisexual,

the female side or sex, thus attaching the two sexes to distinct individuals (p. 347), so that from then on there was a "man" and a "woman."

The *fall of man*, according to the Rosicrucian interpretation, consisted in this, that the "lucifers" (who belonged to the humanity of the moon period, but were stragglers also of the angel world) taught Eve the use of her body, so that together with Adam she could create beings in her likeness and thus, like Jehovah, become immortal, she continuing her existence after death in her descendants. (P. 360 ff.)

When Rosicrucians thus interpret the Bible according to its "deeper sense," they not only abrogate and reject *in toto* all the teachings of orthodox Christianity but also substitute in their place unspeakable nonsense.

5

Other Rosicrucian tenets are just as blasphemous and nonsensical as are those that pertain to the creation and the fall of man. In the following we shall mention only a few. According to Rosicrucians, Jesus must be distinguished from Christ, since Jesus belonged to our humanity and as such lived in different circumstances and embodiments, while Christ had but one embodiment. (P. 378.) His father (let us not forget that according to Rosicrucianism He had a father) was a high "Initiate," virgin in sexual practise, yet capable of performing the act of fecundity as a *sacrament* without personal passion or desire. (P. 378.) "Thus Jesus, a pure, beautiful, lovely spirit, was born into a pure, passionless body." Nevertheless, before He was born, Christian Rosenkreuz already existed as a highly evolved being. (P. 378 ff.) Jesus, who in time became the Christ, spoke to the multitudes in parables "because He wished to explain afterwards to His disciples the deeper meaning contained therein." With regard to His private teachings He imposed absolute secrecy upon His disciples, so that His real doctrines were not known to the world until Rosicrucianism (*i. e.*, Christian Rosenkreuz) expounded them to the world. (P. 320 and others.) Christ's death on Calvary was necessary for His "vicarious atonement" (Rosicrucians, of course, do not understand this in the sense in which true Christianity does) gives earnest souls the strength to strive and, in spite of repeated failures, to bring the lower, human nature under subjection. The "great sacrifice" on Calvary is the beacon of hope for every earnest soul who is striving to achieve the impossible — "to attain, in one short life, to the perfection demanded by the Christian religion." (P. 373.) Note that Rosicrucianism thus teaches as a fundamental tenet *salvation by good works*.

With regard to the Holy Trinity the Rosicrucian Fellowship

makes this confession: "The 'Father' is the highest 'Initiate' among the humanity of the Saturn period. The ordinary humanity of that period are now the 'lords of mind.' The Son (Christ) is the highest 'Initiate' of the sun period. The ordinary humanity of that period are now the archangels. The 'Holy Spirit' (Jehovah) is the highest 'Initiate' of the moon period. The ordinary humanity of that period are now the angels." (P. 376.) Further details on the Rosicrucian conception of the Trinity are given in *Cosmo-Conception*, but an adequate discussion of these blasphemies would demand too much space, and, besides, no satisfactory end would be achieved, since on this score Rosicrucianism loses itself in a maze of inconceivable extravagances.

After death man's soul passes into the "desire world," where it is purged of the baser desires and the weaknesses and vices which hinder its progress are corrected. He suffers in the identical way in which he made others suffer in his bodily life. Of course, if a person in this physical world has repented of his wrongs and has amended, "such repentance, reform, and restitution have purged him of those special vices and evil acts, so that there will be no need of further suffering after death. (P. 107.) Note again: salvation by works!

When, after a long time, the purgatorial existence is over, the purified rises into the "first heaven." Here the results of the purgatorial suffering are incorporated in a new "desire body," so that the person is all the more urged to do good and shun evil. Happiness in heaven depends on the joy which the person has given others and the valuation he placed upon what others did for him. (P. 114.) The first heaven is a place of unspeakable joy, without a single drop of bitterness. Here also are the infants and children who lead a particularly beautiful life. (P. 117.) Here is the place of real progression for all who have been studious, artistic, altruistic (p. 118), the student and the philosopher having instant access to all the libraries of the world. (*Sic!*) . . . After some time the person enters into the second heaven, the region of "concrete thought," or the "great silence," where he dwells for centuries. Life in the second heaven is exceedingly active. Man here learns the forces of the "heaven world," to use them in a later form upon earth. But directly life in the second heaven is a preparation for that in the third heaven (p. 121 ff.); for after he has assimilated all the fruits of his life and learned by work on the bodies of others (?) how to build a suitable body through which to express himself anew in the physical world, he passes into the third heaven, where by the ineffable harmony of this higher world he is strengthened for the "next dip into matter." (P. 129 ff.)

But why should the happy person in the highest, or third,

heaven be reborn? Why must he return to this limited and miserable earth existence? Are we not tired of this dreary, weary earth life? In the first place (so our Rosicrucian guide informs us), because the purpose of life is not happiness but *experience* together with the *development of will*. Hence, "so long as we have not learned all there is to learn in this world, we must come back to it." "Man must return many times to earth before he can hope to master all the knowledge of the world of sense." In the second place, if there were no return to earth, what would be the use of living? "On earth there are many who need those very things and such humanitarian and altruistic qualities." Therefore the "Great Law" (or God, or Nature), which works for good, "brings man back to work again in the world for the benefit of himself and others together with his acquired treasures, instead of letting them go to waste in a heaven where no one needs them." (P. 130 ff.)

But how does this "dip in matter" take place? In heaven the spirit, of course, is naked; but the returning Ego incorporates in itself the quintessence of its former vital bodies and, in addition to this, by reason of "epigenesis" (*i. e.*, by the exercise of the free will in forming something new), gives form to a dense body, which as a matrix, or mold, is then placed in the womb of the future mother, where it unites with one of the spermatozoa of the father. Thus the spirit, or Ego, is reborn to start a new cycle of evolutionary development, first through this physical, or material, earth, then through purgatory, through the first heaven, where it receives a new "desire body," through the second heaven, where it gathers materials for a new mind, through the third heaven, where the desire of experience and soul growth draws the Ego to a new rebirth on earth.

6

That the Rosicrucian Fellowship teaches nothing else than Hindu theosophy (with its metaphysical transmigration of souls from body to body, to the end that at last it may be absorbed by the divine Infinite) in a modified Western form is obvious. In *Cosmo-Conception* this is clearly stated as follows: "The theory of rebirth teaches that each soul is an *integral part of God*" (note the pantheistic implication!), "enfolding all divine possibilities as the seed enfolds the plant; that by means of repeated existences in an earthly body of gradually improving quality the latent possibilities are slowly developed into dynamic powers; that none are lost by this process but that *all mankind will ultimately attain the goal of perfection and reunion with God.*" (P. 148.) This theosophic theory Rosicrucianism asserts, on the one hand, over against the materialist theory of popular atheism and, on the other hand, over

against the theological theory of orthodox Christianity, which it rejects as "inadequate, untrue, and unreasonable" (pp. 150, 151).

Rosicrucian philosophy is therefore a pantheistic and evolutionistic form of unbelief. Its watchword "onward, upward, forever" indicates its evolutionistic trend. "Evolution is the history of progression of the Spirit in time." And just this is what Rosicrucianism teaches as its central doctrine. Amid all the wearying nonsense of its endless verbiage this is its cardinal teaching: The spirit of man, by endless striving and self-improvement through countless cycles of births and rebirths, attains to perfection and thus to essential union with God. From beginning to end it is therefore diametrically opposed to the Christian religion, which it denies in its entirety, as in every individual doctrine. Rosicrucianism recognizes no Holy Trinity in the sense of the Christian religion, no deity of Christ, the Son of God, who became incarnate to be our Redeemer, no vicarious atonement, no salvation by faith in Christ's blood, no heaven and hell in the sense of Scripture. It uses practically all these terms but only to misuse them in other basically heathen designations.

Nevertheless Rosicrucianism boasts that it is fundamentally Christian; in fact, it claims that it is the only true religion, which Christ taught His disciples in His intimate fellowship with them and which, when it was lost to the world, was restored to men in the name Rosicrucian Brotherhood by Christian Rosenkreuz. In *Life Here and Hereafter*, according to the Rosicrucian Philosophy, we read: "The Rosicrucian Fellowship is a movement for the dissemination of a definite, logical, and sequential teaching concerning the origin, evolution, and future development of the world and man, showing both the spiritual and scientific aspects. This scientific teaching is only given that man may believe in the spiritual laws and start to live the life of true fellowship. The Philosophy is entirely Christian, striving to make religion a living factor in the land and to lead to Christ those who *cannot find Him by faith alone.*" (Italics our own.)

That is the bait which Rosicrucianism uses to deceive the unwary! This bait it endeavors to make more attractive by numerous quotations from Scripture, which, however, are all interpreted in a Rosicrucian (evolutionistic, pantheistic, theosophic) sense. Here is an interesting sample taken from *Solving the Riddle of Life and Death*: "But no matter what we have done in this life or in the past, there is still a chance to liquidate some or all of our debts, here and now, by repentance, reform, and restitution (doctrine of good works). This was made possible by Christ Jesus, who came to save those who were lost and who has said, 'Come unto Me, all ye that are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'"

In conclusion the Rosicrucian writer declares in this last quoted popular treatise of his "philosophy": "There is only one method of happiness and true spiritual growth, and that is to live an intelligent-religious life, purify and spiritualize the mind by constant thoughts of love, prayer, and kindness and by unselfish service to all mankind." Such is the pernicious Rosicrucian craftiness displayed throughout its teachings. God's Word is quoted only to misinterpret or to deny it, as here, where first Christ's precious Gospel invitation, or free grace, is set before the reader, and then the grossest form of work-righteousness is held out as man's only way to attain to eternal happiness. Rosicrucianism recognizes no damning character of sin and therefore also no divine Savior from sin. Man becomes his own efficient savior by constantly striving after perfection in this world and the world cycles to come.

Somewhat naively the Rosicrucian Fellowship advertises itself in *Cosmo-Conception* as follows: "In order to promulgate this teaching, the Rosicrucian Fellowship has been formed, and any one who is not a *Hypnotist, professional Medium, Clairvoyant, Palmist, or Astrologer* may enroll as a *Preliminary Course Student* by writing to the General Secretary. There is no fee for *Initiation*, or dues. Money cannot buy our teaching; advancement depends on merit. After completing the *Preliminary Course*, one is put on the *Regular Student* list for a period of two years, after which, if he has become so imbued with the verity of the Rosicrucian teachings that he is prepared to sever his connection with all other occult or religious orders—the *Christian Church and Fraternal Orders are excepted*,—he may assume the *Obligation* which admits him to the degree of *Probationer*. We do not mean to insinuate by the foregoing clause that all other schools of occultism are of no account,—far from it; for many roads lead to Rome,—but we shall attain with much less effort if we follow *one* of them rather than if we zigzag from path to path." (P. 530.) There is an important element of shrewdness in the provision that members of Christian churches or of fraternal orders need not sever their former connections to become Rosicrucianists but that all proponents of other occult isms are *personae non gratae*. To the Christian, Rosicrucianism supposedly offers an advanced form of Christianity (as formerly Gnosticism did), while to lodge-members it promises initiation in yet higher mysteries than even Freemasonry promises to teach in its highest degrees.

When St. James speaks of a wisdom that is "earthly, sensual, devilish," Jas. 3:15, he has furnished the proper designations by which theosophic, pantheistic, and evolutionistic Rosicrucianism, a modern religious hoax, may fitly be characterized.

J. THEODORE MUELLER