

# MASTER MONOGRAPH

TEMPLE SECTION

ROSICRUCIAN ORDER

AMORC

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# THE CONCURRENCE

## This Week's Consideration of a Famous Opinion



¶ The studies throughout the various Degrees have been concerned with the knowledge of the fundamental laws of the universe. Since man is the microcosm, self-knowledge and self-mastery is of great importance. On this question of self-mastery and its relationship to what is heavenly, Kwang-tse, Chinese philosopher and follower of Lao-tse, wrote in the earlier part of the fourth century B. C.:



*He who knows the Tao is sure to be well acquainted with the principles (that appear in the procedures of things). Acquainted with those principles, he is sure to understand how to regulate his conduct in all varying circumstances. Having that understanding, he will not allow things to injure himself. Fire cannot burn him who is so perfect in virtue, nor water drown him; neither cold nor heat can affect him injuriously; neither bird nor beast can hurt him. This does not mean that he is indifferent to these things; it means that he discriminates between where he may safely rest and where he will be in peril; that he is tranquil equally in calamity and happiness; that he is careful what he avoids and what he approaches;—so that nothing can injure him. Hence it is said 'What is heavenly is internal; what is human is external.' The virtue of man is in what is Heavenly. If you know the operation of what is Heavenly and what is Human, you will have your root in what is Heavenly and your position in virtue.*

—KWANG-TSE, Fourth Century B.C.

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ELEVENTH DEGREE

NUMBER FIFTY

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Beloved Members, Greetings!

We now continue the story of An Adventure Among the Rosicrucians by Dr. Franz Hartmann, beginning at a point where we discontinued last week:

## Chapter II

## THE MONASTERY

"If you could establish theosophical monasteries, where intellectual and spiritual development would go hand in hand, where a new science could be taught, based upon a true knowledge of the fundamental laws of the universe, and where at the same time man would be taught how to obtain a mastery over himself, you would confer the greatest possible benefit upon the world. Such a convent would, however, afford immense advantages for the advancement of intellectual research. The establishment of a number of such places of learning would dot the mental horizon of the world with stars of the first magnitude, from which rays of intellectual light would stream and penetrate the world. Standing upon a far higher plane than the material scientists of our times, a new and far greater field than that offered to the latter would be laid open for investigation and research. Knowing all the different opinions of the highest accepted authorities, and not being bound by an orthodox scientific creed, having at their service all the results of the investigations of the learned, but not being bound to their systems by a belief in their infallibility, they would be at liberty to think freely. Their convents would become centres of intelligence, illuminating the world; and if their power of self-control would grow in equal proportion with the development of their intellect, they would soon be able to enter adeptship."

The Adept had spoken these words with unusual warmth, as if he intended to appeal to my sympathy and to induce me to use my efforts to establish such convents; there was a look of pity in his eyes, as if he exceedingly regretted the state of poor ignorant humanity, with whose Karma he was not permitted to interfere forcibly, according to the established rules of his Order. I, too, regretted my own inability to establish such monasteries, and for once I wished that I was rich, so as to be able to make at least an attempt with one such establishment. But immediately the Emperor saw my thought in my mind, and said:—

"You mistake; it is not the want of money which prevents us to execute this idea; it is the impossibility to find the proper kind of people to inhabit the convent after it is established. Indeed, we would be poor Alchemists if we could not produce gold in any desirable quantity, if some real benefit for humanity could be effected thereby—and of this I shall convince you,



if you desire it. But gold is a curse to mankind, and we do not wish to increase the curse from which humanity suffers. Distribute gold among men, and you will only create a craving for more; give them gold, and you will transform them into devils. No; it is not gold that we need; it is men who thirst after wisdom. There are thousands who desire knowledge, but few who desire wisdom. Intellectual development, sagacity, craftiness, cunning, are today mistaken for spiritual development, but this conception is wrong; animal cunning is not intelligence, craftiness is not wisdom, and your most learned men are the last ones who can bear the truth. Even many of your would-be occultists and Rosicrucians have taken up their investigations merely for the purpose of gratifying their idle curiosity, while others desire to pry into the secrets of nature to obtain knowledge which they intend to employ for the attainment of selfish ends. Give us men or women who desire nothing else but the truth, and we will take care of their needs. How much money will it require to lodge a person who cares nothing for comfort? What will it take to furnish the kitchen for those who have no desire for dainties? What libraries will be required for those who can read in the book of nature? What external pictures will please those who wish to avoid a life of the senses and to retire within their own selves? What terrestrial scenery shall be selected for those who live within the paradise of their souls? What company will please those who converse with their own higher self? How can we amuse those who live in the presence of God?"

Here the Adept paused for a moment, and then continued, saying: "Verily, the theosophical monastery of which I dream is even superior to ours. It is located far away from this earth, and yet it can be reached without trouble and without expense. Its monks and nuns have risen above the sphere of self. They have a temple of infinite dimensions, pervaded by the spirit of sanctity, being the common possession of all. There the differentiation of the Universal Soul ceases, and Unification takes place. It is a convent where there exists no difference of sex, of taste, of opinion, and desire; where vice cannot enter; where none are born, or marry, or die, but where they live like the angels; each one constituting the centre of a power for good; each one immersed in an infinite ocean of light; each one able to see all he desires to see, to know all he wants to know, growing in strength and expanding in size, until he embraces the All and is one with it."

For a moment it seemed as if the soul of the Adept had gone and visited that blissful state of Nirvana, a state of which we mortals cannot conceive; but soon the light returned into his eyes, and he smilingly excused himself, saying that he had permitted himself to be carried away by the sublimity of this idea. I ventured to say that probably millions of ages would pass away before mankind would arrive at that state.



"Alas!" he answered, "the conditions which our present state of civilization imposes upon its followers are now such

as to force the vast majority of the latter to employ nearly all their time and energy in an outward direction, instead of employing them for their inward growth. Each man has a certain amount of energy which he may call his own. If he wastes all that energy on the outward plane, either for the attainment of sensual gratification or in intellectual pursuits, he will have nothing left to develop the divine germ in his heart. If he continually concentrates his mind outwardly, there will be no inward concentration of thought, which is absolutely necessary for the attainment of self-knowledge. The laboring classes, the people of commerce, the scientists, doctors, lawyers, and clergymen are all actively engaged in outward affairs, and find little time for the inward concentration of their powers. The majority are continually busy to run after shadows and illusions, which are at best only useful as long as they last, but whose usefulness ceases when the heart ceases to beat. Their time and energy are taken up in procuring what they call the 'necessities of life,' and they excuse themselves by saying that it is their misfortune to be so situated as to be forced to procure them. Nature, however, cares nothing for our excuses; the law of cause and effect is blind and inaccessible to argumentation. A man climbing over a mountain top and falling over a precipice is as much in danger of breaking his neck as if he had jumped down voluntarily; a man who is not able to progress will be left as far behind as one who does not desire to progress. But Nature is not so cruel as she appears to be to the superficial observer. That which man requires for the purpose of living is very little indeed, and can usually easily be obtained; for Nature has amply provided for all of her children; and if they cannot all obtain their proper share, then there must be something seriously wrong, either with them individually or with the social organization as a whole. There is undoubtedly a great deal wrong in our social organization, and our philosophers and politicians are continually trying to remedy it. They will succeed in their task when they succeed in making the laws of the human world harmonize with the laws of Nature, and not before. That event may take place in the far-distant future. We have not the time to wait for it. Let each one attempt to restore harmony in his own individual organism and live according to natural laws, and the harmony of the social organism as a whole will be restored.

"The great bulk of those things which are said to be the necessities of life are only artificially created necessities. Millions of people lived and attained old age long before many of the things which our modern civilization considers as being absolutely necessary had been discovered or invented. The term 'necessity' has a relative meaning; and to a king a dozen palaces, to a nobleman a carriage with four, may appear as much a necessity as to a beggar a bottle of whiskey, or to a fashionable man a new swallow-tail coat. To get rid at once of all such fancied necessities and the trouble which is imposed upon us to attain them, the shortest and surest way is to rise above such necessities and to consider



them not to be necessary at all. Then a great amount of our energy would become free, and might be employed for the acquisition of that which is really necessary, because it is eternal and permanent, while that which serves merely temporal purposes ends in time.

"There are thousands of people engaged in prying into the details of the constitution of external objects to learn the chemical and physiological processes going on therein, without manifesting the least curiosity to know their own constitution and the processes going on within their own organization; although it would seem that a knowledge of the latter is far more important than an investigation of the former. Science says that she wants to know the laws of Nature in all their minute ramifications, and yet she pays no attention whatever to the universal and fundamental law from which all these ramifications spring; and thus she resembles an insect crawling over a fallen leaf and imagining thereby to learn the qualities of the tree. It is surely the prerogative of intellectual man to investigate intellectually all the departments of nature; but the investigation of external things is only of secondary importance to the attainment of knowledge of our own interior powers. All primary powers act from within; effects are secondary to causes. He who considers the knowledge of external things to be more important than the knowledge of self, possesses very little wisdom indeed."

"These doctrines," I said, "will never be accepted by our schoolmen; they look upon the very term 'Theosophy' with contempt; they believe that a knowledge of external things is the only knowledge attainable, and the only one worth having, and this illusive knowledge they call exact science."

"I pity them for their imperfections," answered the Adept; "nevertheless their views are justifiable from their own standpoint. If they object to the term 'Theosophy' it is because they do not know what the term means; and as it has often been misapplied, they have formed a misconception about it. We can know nothing except what we know theosophically; because theosophical knowledge is the result of feeling, seeing, and understanding a thing. Their sense of seeing and feeling does not penetrate below the external surface of things, and they therefore know theosophically merely the outward appearance, and the internal causes are left to speculations which are often erroneous. The higher sense, by which the Adept is able to penetrate with his consciousness into the interior of things and identify himself for the time being with the object of his observation, share its sensations, to feel as if he were that object, to see the workings of the interior causes, and consequently be able to understand them, is unknown to the scientists of our present civilization."



As the Adept finished this sentence, a sound as if produced by the tinkling of small silver bells was heard in the

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air above our heads. I looked up, but nothing was to be seen from which that sound could have proceeded.

"This is the signal," said the Adept, "that the members of our order are assembled in the Refectory. Let us go to join their company. Some refreshment will undoubtedly be welcome to you."

(to be continued)

Fraternally,

YOUR CLASS MASTER



## Summary of This Monograph



Below is a summary of the important principles of this monograph. It contains the essential statements which you should not forget. After you have carefully read the complete monograph, try to recall as many as you can of the important points you read. Then read this summary and see if you have forgotten any. Also refer to this summary during the ensuing week to refresh your memory.

- ¶ The Emperor, at the ancient monastery, continues his discussion of the ideal monastery, or convent:
- ¶ In it would be taught the mastery of self as well as true knowledge of the fundamental laws of the universe, unhampered by orthodox teachings. This convent would be peopled by men and women who would be desirous of nothing but truth; their external, material needs would be few. Its nuns and monks would have risen above the sphere of self. Here there would be unification of the Universal Soul.
- ¶ Our present state of civilization demands time and energy expended in outward direction, leaving little to develop the divine germ in the heart. Inward concentration is necessary to the attainment of self-knowledge. The law of cause and effect is inaccessible to argumentation.
- ¶ If each one were to restore harmony in his own organism, that is, live according to natural laws, the harmony of the social organism as a whole would be restored.
- ¶ The investigation of external things is of secondary importance to the attainment of knowledge of our own interior powers. All primary powers act from within; effects are secondary to causes.
- ¶ We can know nothing except that which we know theosophically.