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South Pasadena, Cal.
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Dear Sir and Brother:

Your prompt response to my letter came as a welcome surprise when I returned from a three-day retreat into the dunes at Oceano, about 200 miles north of this place. I hasten to answer because I see that my somewhat hastily written screed led you into a not unnatural misinterpretation of that part of my letter which had to do with Dam-Car. "Blood of the lamb" has for me no religious connotation whatever, at least none that would be of any aid or comfort to theological Christianity. For me, the Lamb is what has come to be called the "Christos," but that is something else again. Perhaps it is not without significance that in some old Hindu representations of Agni that god is shown as a lamb carrying a notched banner, on which is blazoned a swastika. This symbol is the same as the familiar Agnus Dei of the Roman church, and some hint that the G.D. ritual-sources included this knowledge is to be found in the passages dealing with Abiegnus.

It is curious, too, that the letters K and R, or at any rate the sounds now indicated by these letters, begin the name Krishna, compose the Egyptian name for Horus (hieroglyphically "put in Egyptian symbols for Horus here"), are shown again in the Chi-Ro, and are the first two sounds in the name ChVRM, Hiram, according to one spelling -- the one used in the Biblical reference whence the 3rd degree allegory is drawn. The practical point, which is certainly susceptible to verification, is that initiation is in some sense a chemical process, involving subtle changes in the blood-stream of the initiate.

Yoga breathing, for example, has a tendency to raise the carbon monoxide content of the blood, just as does the inhalation of tobacco smoke. Patanjali is careful to tell us that the Siddhis may be brought into manifestation by chemical means, by which he intends to indicate the use of certain drugs. (To be sure the reaction from these drugs makes them unsatisfactory for the purpose of genuine unfoldment; it being, so to say, too high a price to pay for the Siddhis). But it seems to me very clear that all practices leading to this evolution of our latent powers must include the chemical changes I have referred to. Hence Brother C.R. meets the Wise Men in the temple of the Blood of the Lamb-- or, in plain language, one establishes rapport with the Chiefs of the Invisible Order because of subtle physiological changes in one's own body, and particularly in the chemical state of the blood-stream. Yoga practice brings about these changes. So does ceremonial magic. So do some kinds of ascetic practice. So do drugs. But I agree with you that for the right sort of temperament there is no method more suitable than ceremonial magic. And here I am, as you are, dealing with the results of prolonged experiment. The Qabalistic interpretation of C.R. and of Dam-Car is but the recognition of a formula which sums up an experience. The more so because the Temple is in Arabia, which place-name means "desert," or "sterile," and so corresponds exactly to the temporary state of Brahmacharya which is indispensable to success in this kind of practice, as it is, in lesser measure, to success in say, boxing or

foot-racing. But temporary only, observe, hence the Fama says that C.R. bargained with the Arabians for a specific sum. And this, too, after he had obliged to tarry in Damascus ("work") by reason of the feebleness of his body. Notwithstanding which feebleness he gained favor with the Turks by reason of his skill in physic. Consider that the Turks belong to a wave of development in the human organism preceding that to which we belong -- the Mongolian powers of physical recuperation are probably known to you-- and this becomes plain enough. After the transmutation of "Brother P.A.L." at Cyprus (birth-place of Venus, and easternmost island in the Mediterranean Sea) C.R. continues his journey, stops at Damascus, hears of the Wise Men, and then abandons his quest for "the abode of peace" (Jerusalem). As a result of his training at Dam-Car he translates the Liber Mundi into Latin, the language of science. (Compare Boehme's declaration that in his brief first period of illumination the book of nature was opened to him). Then he goes down into Egypt to study plants and animals. Thence to Fez, the intellectual center of that period, where he found the Qabalah mixed with the errors of their religion-- just as the Reception has always been distorted by mere intellectuality.

The whole thing adapts itself perfectly to the actual experience one goes through. But it offers no comfort whatever to Christian orthodoxy, or to Christian heterodoxy, for that matter.

As to the circumstances which led to my rejection of the historic pretensions of the G.D., they are, in brief, as follows:

1. I became a member of Thoth-Hermes Temple (established, I believe, in the late nineties by S.R.M.D., who conferred the honorary degree of 7=4 upon a Mrs. Lockwood, then an associate of W.Q. Judge. She went to Paris to get her contact with S.R.M.D., and Thoth-Hermes languished along as a little group of serious thinkers until Michael Whitty came into it.) My initiation followed the publication of my Tarot articles in THE WORD and AZOTH, in both of which magazines I gave the correct attribution of the major trumps to the Hebrew alphabet. This I had arrived at by what then seemed to me to be independent research, before anything was published about it in the Equinox, or elsewhere. Since then I have found out, of course, that my research was by no means so "independent" as I supposed.

2. A quarrel among the chiefs of Thoth-Hermes led to the withdrawal of Mrs. Lockwood, the then Praemonstrator and her husband, who was Imperator. S.R.M.D. being now dead, V.N.R. appointed Whitty's sister as Imperatrix Howard Underhill (an excellent astrologer) as Cancellarius, and Whitty as Praemonstrator, with myself as Sub-Praemonstrator. This was early in 1918. Whitty's health failed as a direct result of magical practices based on Order formulae, but sadly deficient in adequate protection, and at his death I became Praemonstrator.

3. V.N.R., supposedly 7=4 in fact, then began to display extraordinary misunderstanding of the American situation. She encouraged a Frater in Chicago to initiate anybody possessed of \$10 (by mail), and soon the country was flooded with Neophytes who had never seen the inside of a Temple. She also muddled a situation which arose in Thoth-Hermes so badly that certain of us who were heart and soul devoted to the welfare of the Order, and had then no doubts as to its authenticity, became convinced that she, at least, was no representative of the Secret Chiefs, nor possessed even the lesser clairvoyance which should have enabled her to straighten out the situation.

4. Then, for the first time, I began to examine the evidences we had as to the claims of the G.D. Brodie-Innes made solemn asseverations that he had verified them, but offered nothing in the way of evidence. And just at this juncture I began to examine the rituals and knowledge-lectures, etc. that were supposed to be in the direct line of historical descent from the original Foundation. I found nothing that was not in print prior to the establishment of the G.D., except certain negligible contributions to the Flying Rolls, and the material on the Tattvas.

But the Tattva instruction was so evidently pirated without the slightest acknowledgement from Rama Prasad's Nature's Finer Forces that Brodie-Innes himself recognized the necessity of a revision of the text. The rituals had two "high spots," as we say in America. The first was the Neophyte ceremony, the second the Vault ceremony. The others were, as A.C. has remarked, turgidly written parades of the occult information possessed by S.R.M.D., and written in a style so peculiarly his own that nobody could mistake it.

5. The magical ceremonials, aside from the pseudo-Egyptian interpretation of the two rituals just mentioned, revolved largely around Dee's and Kelly's tablets. Now, I am far from denying that one gets results of a kind by the use of these tablets. Nor would I go so far as to say that the Enochian language is to be disregarded by any student of magic. On the other hand, it is not beyond the power of man to invent a coherent language. I did that very thing as a boy. On a grander scale we have Volapuk, Esperanto, and Id o. To say nothing of the language of Mars, which you may find in that interesting volume "From India to the Planet Mars," by Flournoy.

My criticism of this part of the G.D. work is: (First) that it emanated so largely from Kelly; (Second) That the tablets are part of a rigmarole by which Kelly persuaded Dee that they two were to be the puppet-masters of a new European political order which should supercede the kingdoms then reigning; (Third) That the same angel who dictated the Tablets also required that Kelly and Dee should have all things in common, including their wives; (Fourth) That the whole project came to the same ignominious end that is to be expected of human undertakings based upon the promises of spirits; (Fifth) That there is no good reason to suppose that Kelly and Dee, or their enterprise, to say nothing of their magic, correspond to anything Rosicrucian; (Sixth, and most important) That I have personal knowledge of more than twenty-five instances where the performance of magical operations based on Order formulae led to serious disintegrations of mind or body. From this last I have been preserved by the fact that my elevation to the Office of Praemonstrator came just before my advancement to the office of Hierophant, so that I never performed the Hierophant's part of the rituals. And these investigations I have just mentioned came to pass just before I had completed preparations for the actual use of the formulas available to the 5 = 6 Grade. Perhaps the most conspicuous example of the unfortunate consequences of the use of these formulas is A.C. himself; but there are plenty of others that I know personally whose personal shipwreck has been just as complete, even though their smaller tonnage, so to say, makes the loss seem less deplorable than the disintegration of that great genius whom I admire and love just as much as you do, though my personal contact with him has been of the slightest. Judging from your Treed of Life, you will be ready to break several lances with me on this last criticism. Let me say again, then, that I do not question at all the magical efficacy of some of the formulas. S.R.M.D. knew a lot about magic (more than he did about Qabalah, it seems to me), but there was a twist in his make-up that made him

a most dangerous guide, as many have found to their cost. The whole Enochian procedure is indubitably potent. So are some of the practices of Obeah, to which I have given long study, ever since I spent my childhood winters in the British West Indies.

So, too, are mescal buttons, and hashish, and opium, and even Scotch whiskey. But even as the Chinese in Lamb's essay had to learn sooner or later that it is not necessary to burn down a house to roast a pig, so, I fear, will those who rely on G.D. formulas for magic learn to their cost, perhaps too late, that there is far more to magic than getting results.

6. It is perfectly true that the Vault ritual "does something" to those who are ready for it when they receive it. It did to me, and to several others of my acquaintance. I believe that the potency of this ritual and the effectiveness of the Neophyte initiation are explicable on the theory that S.R.M.D. came into possession of certain rituals that probably emanated from the circle of which Kenneth Mackenzie and Eliphas Levi were members. It is part of my definitely verified knowledge that the Tarot material in the G.D. is a partial representation of work done by Mackenzie, and left in Mss. At his death. But all this has nothing whatever to do with the G.D.'s explicit claim that it has warrants from the "original Rosicrucian Order" established by an actual person whose mystical name was Christian Rosenkreutz. That there is an Invisible Rosicrucian Order I am perfectly sure. That it inspired the Fama and Confessio I fully believe. That there have been societies working on the R.C. pattern, which is that of the Tree of Life, I also doubt not at all.

But that the G.D., which V.N.R., before here death, was accustomed to call "my order," is in the authorized line of descent from such a society established in any period around the 1400's or 1500's I most seriously doubt. After all, a tree is known by its fruits. Also by its roots.

And one of the tap-roots of the G.D. historical claim is the cipher manuscript from which the rituals were composed. Waite, in his big book on the Order, published a photograph of a page of that Ms. It is fairly easy to decipher, and it contains the anachronism pointed out in his comment. It refers to the "Egyptian Funerary Ritual" when the fact is that the Book of the Dead is not only not that, but was not known at all by that title at the period when the cipher was supposed to be written.

"Evidence of continuity which is practically incontrovertible" I have, and on the grounds you mention. But the continuity is of a stream of inner relationship. Even when one enters an organization built on false pretense, he must encounter some truth. And those who have been in the Vault have made their contact with the True and Invisible Order, not because of the historical claims of S.R.M.D. with reference to the G.D., but because there are actually true formulas among the hotch-potch of good and bad and indifferent which one finds in the "esoteric" literature of the G.D. Even that ridiculous Rosicrucian impostor, Spencer Lewis, who heads the A.M.O.R.C., cannot avoid getting some good stuff into his lessons, and I have known two or three persons who actually made their first contact with the real thing through his Order. What I object to in the G.D. is the subtle mixture of really poisonous material with so much that is of value. And to get rid of the poison has been my principal undertaking form more than ten years.

The consequence has been that I have been obliged, as you suspect, to formulate the rituals anew. But there is no pretense to the sort of historical continuity that is offered by Lewis, or Plummer, or Clymer, or the G.D., or any other "true Rosicrucian Order." Neither is there any blind reliance upon invisible Chiefs in the astral plane or other "higher worlds." But one who addresses himself to the work does find that, as in the Fama, one who tarries in Damascus long enough to master the infirmities of his body does hear of the Wise Men at Dam-Car. An in due course he makes his first-hand contact with those Wise Men, has his eyes opened, and makes his own personal translation from the book M. After which he follows out, step by step, the course marked in the Fama, reproducing in his own experience the incidents of that allegory.

As to Fohat, that was a "feeler." I share your feeling about H.P.B. as a Cabalist, and your anathema against Skinner is the voicing of my own thought. Nevertheless, if there is anything Tibetan called "Fohat" (which I sometimes doubt, as I doubt everything from H.P.B.) It is too much like Shakti not to belong to Teth and Key 8.

And of course Shakti has her place in Binah. Yet precisely that, it seems to me, makes Shakti belong also in the 19th path. For if there be one thing that Qabalah seems to reiterate, it is this: "Never forget, you who aspire to the Reception, that all the various categories are but aspects of the One Thing, seen from different points of view. The whole Tree is in any Sephirah. Equally is the whole Tree present in any single path.

Poor Frater Achad! He tried to interest me in the "purple papers," and did so to the extent that I traced them to one source in Washington, D.C., although that, naturally, was only a relay-station, and the persons active in it knew almost nothing of their actual superiors. I have a notion as to what is really behind the scenes, for this is not the only; thing of the sort I have encountered. The idea seems always to keep the member so busy with non-essentials and with reading that he does little or no work. Just crams himself with words, or busies himself with distributing papers -- for which service in extracting generous contributions from the indiscriminating he receives as recompense a high-sounding Sanskrit title!

One of my occasional correspondents writes me that he has been in touch with you-Sidney French, of New York City. He is really trying to learn something, and do something with what he learns. I am glad to hear that you are in communication.

As to my books, there are only three -- An Introduction to the Study of the Tarot, which is a reprint of twelve papers published in AZOTH (and a dreadfully inadequate performance); An Analysis of the Tarot (based on Waite's Keys, and pretty bad); and The True and Invisible Rosicrucian Order. The last is now out-of-print. It was done on the mimeograph, and then bound in a small edition. I intend getting out a large edition in the near future, done, probably, in the same way. Most of my work is in the form of correspondence lessons, and most of the lessons are subscribed to by persons whom I encounter by the peculiar American device of giving public lectures and then forming private classes. It is one of the most loathsome of the products of American civilization, and I am so thoroughly fed up with it that I am now beginning to experiment with another method of getting in touch with students who will really work.

As this method will involve the rearrangement of the whole curriculum, all of this revolving around the Tarot and the Tree of Life, it seems unlikely that I shall get a real Tarot book written for some time to come. Our problems in this country are peculiar, and have to be met in the way that solves them, irrespective of personal preference for more stately ways of procedure. But I'm having a good time doing the only thing that seems to be worth doing. And though one has to blow away a lot of chaff, there do remain some grains of real wheat in the persons of determined workers who sooner or later "make the grade."

Your Brother in L.V.X.,

Perseverantia
(signature)

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