

This copy of the
FAMA FRATERNITATIS
has been extracted from the 1887 printing of
The Real History of the Rosicrucians by Arthur Edward Waite
for the study and contemplation of the Members of
The Order of the Rose and Cross

Frater Semper Paratus Semper Fidelis

CHAPTER III.

THE FAMA FRATERNITATIS OF THE MERITORIOUS ORDER OF THE ROSY CROSS, ADDRESSED TO THE LEARNED IN GENERAL, AND THE GOVERNORS OF EUROPE.

THE original edition of the "Universal Reformation" contained the manifesto bearing the above title, but which the notary Haselmeyer declares to have existed in manuscript as early as the year 1610, as would also appear from a passage in the Cassel edition of 1614, the earliest which I have been able to trace. It was reprinted with the "Confessio Fraternitatis" and the "Allgemeine Reformation der Ganzen Welt" at Franckfurt-on-the-Mayne in 1615. A Dutch translation was also published in this year, and by 1617 there had been four Franckfurt editions, the last omitting the "Universal Reformation," which, though it received an elaborate alchemical elucidation by Brothoff,¹ seems gradually to have dropped out of notice. "Other editions," says Buhle, "followed in the years immediately succeeding, but these it is unnecessary to notice. In the title-page of the third Franckfurt edition stands--First printed at Cassel in the year 1616. But the four first words apply to the original edition, the four last to this."²

*Fama Fraternitatis;
or, a Discovery of the Fraternity of the most Laudable Order of the Rosy Cross.*

Seeing the only wise and merciful God in these latter days hath poured out so richly His mercy and goodness to mankind, whereby we do attain more and more to the perfect knowledge of His Son Jesus Christ and of Nature, that justly we may boast of the happy time wherein there is not only discovered unto us the half part of the world, which was heretofore unknown and hidden, but He hath also made manifest unto us many wonderful and never-heretofore seen works and creatures of Nature, and, moreover, hath raised men, indued with great wisdom, which might partly renew and reduce all arts (in this our spotted and imperfect age) to perfection, so that finally man might thereby understand his own nobleness and worth, and why he is called Microcosmos, and how far his knowledge extendeth in Nature.

Although the rude world herewith will be but little pleased, but rather smile and scoff thereat; also the pride and covetousness of the learned is so great, it will not suffer them to agree together; but were they united, they might, out of all those things which in this our age God doth so richly bestow on us, collect *Librum Naturæ*, or, a Perfect Method of all Arts. But such is their opposition that they still keep, and are loth to leave, the old course, esteeming Porphyry, Aristotle, and Galen, yea, and that which hath but a meer show of learning, more than the clear and manifested Light and Truth. Those, if they were now living, with much joy would leave their erroneous doctrines; but here is too great weakness for such a great work. And although in Theologie, Physic, and the Mathematic, the truth doth oppose it itself, nevertheless, the old Enemy, by his subtilty and craft, doth shew himself in hindering every good purpose by his instruments and contentious wavering people.

To such an intention of a general reformation, the most godly and highly-illuminated Father, our Brother, C. R. C., a German, the chief and original of our Fraternity, hath much and long time laboured, who, by reason of his poverty (although descended of noble parents), in the fifth year of his age was placed in a cloyster, where he had learned indifferently the Greek and Latin tongues, and (upon his earnest desire and request), being yet in his growing years, was associated to a Brother, P. A. L., who had determined to go to the Holy Land. Although this Brothers dyed in Ciprus, and so never came to Jerusalem, yet our Brother C. R. C. did not return, but shipped himself over, and went to Damasco, minding from thence to go to Jerusalem. But by reason of the feebleness of his body he remained still there, and by his skill in physic he obtained much favour with the Turks, and in the meantime he became acquainted with the Wise Men of Damcar in Arabia, and beheld what great wonders they wrought, and how Nature was discovered unto them.

Hereby was that high and noble spirit of Brother C. R. C. so stired up, that Jerusalem was not so much now in his mind as Damasco;³ also he could not bridle his desires any longer, but made a bargain with the Arabians that they should carry him for a certain sum of money to Damcar.