

Ara Foederis Theraphici

Below is a translation into English of an early Rosicrucian piece the *Ara Foederis Theraphici F.X.R. Der Assertion Fraternitatis R.C. consecirt An den Leser. Quisquis de Roseae dubitas Crucis ordine Fratrum...* 1618. This has been ascribed to Johannes Bureus. According to Susanna Akerman the *Ara Foederis* was written by Raphael Eglinus and translated into German by I.S.B.N. (Iulius Sperber). Bureus added some lines at the end and published it in 1616 and then a second time it appeared at Newenstadt in German.

Altar of the Theraphic Brotherhood

Fraternitatis Crucis Roseae

dedicated to the Assertion of the Fraternity of the Rosy Cross

To the Reader,
Whoever has doubts about the Fraternity of the Rosy Cross, let him read this and having read the poem, he will be certain.

ANNO CHRISTI 1617

Written by a Brother of this Fraternity first in Latin, then translated into German and printed by I.S.N.P. & Poet Laureate
Printed at Neuenstadt by Johan Knuber 1618.

To the very Noble, Powerful and Honourable Balthasar von Schkoelen, Senior Master of the Horse of the Elector Prince of Saxony.
To the Honourable, Worshipful and Wise Ambrosius Becker, County Justice and Worshipful Mayor of Schkeunitz.
To the Honourable, Respected and Art loving Michael Stemplin, a Noble Erudite and noted Spagyric Expert.
To my high protectors and Young Lords, my Brother-in-law, and my trusty friends respectively, Luck, Blessing and Success.

Noble and powerful young Lord, kind and beloved Brother-in-law, well known and trusty friend, to you I send greetings first and my service, after that I dedicate and write these presents, which from outward appearance looks a short, little work, yet according to its secret meaning and hidden contents it is a very weighty and far looking work, and of the goodness and truth of my heart.
I trust they will receive and recognise it with a thankful mind and heart, read it with full attention, that they will think further over these matters, and wait with patience until something plainer, rounder, opener and more recognisable—as shall happen shortly, but then in Secret and in confidence—occurs.
Recommending myself to them jointly or severally as theirs for any service
Datum the 16th September Anno 1616.
at your service
Noble, Honourable, Powerful
also Honourable, Worshipful and Wise

Gentlemen.
I.S. N.P.P.C.

ALTAR OF THE THERAPHIC TIE

F. X. R.

Fratri Christiani Rosencreutz

People live in doubt everywhere
If the highly honoured Fraternity
of the Rosy Cross exist in truth
which men declare to be so virtuous
And the Fama is made ridiculous
here and there as if it were a fairy tale.

The Fama I say declares one condition to the whole world.
But whosoever likes to doubt matters clear as the Sun
Is starblind at Middy
No oculist can help him.

Note this, attentive and pious reader,
What I tell you in one word
I am a branch selected
from the Highborn fraternity
I tell you without guile
In Germany our order exists in truth
Right in the heart of the German Lands.
And note it well, well known in foreign parts.

And although there are but few of us
Until now, yet in these days
And quite lately with pleasure
The order has been extended
By ten persons well known for their
Understanding, honour, Art and virtue.

The Order has also at this present time
Been newly and well reconstrued
With many bye laws and statutes
Which give it order, measure and object.

Could you see these, by your oath
You would confess without hesitation
That all and everything has been carefully
Put into new form.

There are many who without pause or rest
Endeavour and tireless try to come to our order,
but by the nature of the thing,
one does not easily reach one's heart's desires.

But many in their own mind
cheat their own selves miserably.
For our custom is of this kind
that we elect those who are known
to us for a long time before,
And who are proved full many a year
who are their own masters and free
Of body not bound to anyone.

Many strict conditions are to be found
Which bind the Fratres of our Order
Which are to be kept without exception
Throughout your whole life.
As a fellow a true friend,
(Such are a thin crop in these days),
may possibly be taken on
So soon as he shows within him
that he is worthy of such friendship,
And is free from guile and tricks.

Listen, I will at this time
Make round and clear yet another thing.
A castle it is, a Castle fine
Wherein the fraternal crown
great in honour, rich in wonders
has its lodging wonderfully.
Which our father did erect
And entrust to our fraternity
and left it to them, as is known,
Sancti Spiriti it has been called.
But the length of time through many year
Have however altered this name.
In our documents, however, it remains
The same as can be read therein.

In this cloister we live, I tell thee
Dressed all alike,
Yet are we not bound down
to the yoke of the Pope of Rome
As in former times we were
Enveloped with that ill treatment.

Together with our well cared for acres
We are surrounded by a green forest,
A noble river quite clean
Runs gently through our domain.
Not far from us there exists
A fine and farefamed City,
Where we procure what we require
At any time that we desire.

In this place we live, believe me,
in the enjoyment of freedom.
The neighbours generally, round about
Don't know who ever we can be,

Many poor people daily and for ever
Knock at our door desiring relief
which we then send amply relieved away again.
Whoever is troubled with disease
and those whom evil fevers plague,
All seek their refuge with us
Those are helped quickly and at once

Wherefore the whole neighbourhood
Is affected with loving kindness to us
Loves and honours us, wishes us all good things
And if a service can be rendered us
it is done with joyous heart and willingly.

What more then can we now desire
There is no man who intends or dares
to hurt us in our bodies or goods;
What more should we therefore desire
That we would like better.

I nearly had told the place
Where our order is concealed,
But to tell that name now
I have serious objections to.

In order that we have knowledge
And news of all things in the order
So that everything shall be free
And unconcealed from any of us,
We travel through all lands
Unknown, now here, now there.

This is now my third voyage
Which I have completed with zeal,
Therefore have I rested a day finally in Hagenau.
Because the rain without ceasing
Has delayed me and the weather is wet
Which has prevented me as aforesaid
So that I could not get away.

Scarcely shall I complete within the space of a year
my voyage which is prescribed to me,
And how many countries and people do remain
Which I have to visit yet
In a little time and without vexation.

In the meantime it is not forgotten
And is often done by me
That I salute the order secretly
By means of letters
And communicate to them truthfully
Many secret things frequently
What I discover on my travels,
That they know very soon.

And although we travel out and home
Through foreign lands generally
There is no host ever lived on earth
Who received vexation and trouble
One single time through us.
We treat them well
Pay for meat and meal and lodgings
and what in such a case is fair and customary,
Give them addition rich gifts;
Wherefore as good friends
We never are a burden to anybody.

The elder brethren of this order
Have come to this agreement
That the younger brethren henceforward
Shall allow themselves to be used for this purpose
But that their knapsacks are filled
With rich and ample provender,
Until they have in proper manner
Deserved for troubles suffered and true diligence
Their rest in the future.
And have deservedly earned
That for the rest of their lives
They may live in peace without troubles.

We are anxiously desirous
To study much more
And daily to know much more
Is our desire, wish and object
If we find anything that is good anywhere
Then we do it from that time
Note it, and make note of it.

Therefore nothing can happen
In Germany at any time
But we see it at once with our eyes.
If any new books come out
The Bookguide brings it to us at once,
who is properly met for reward appointed to this office
We treat honourably
Manyfold Arts diligently
With science, knowledge, art and handycraft
We spend the rest of our time.

So that we may never be idle
And stand in anybody's light
We exercise ourselves at all times
In the foreign languages of many lands.
In Polish, Welsh, Spanish
We all know how to talk
In Italian and free Gallic
And also in others whatsoever they may be (we can converse)
There is no language throughout all lands
Unknown to our Order.

Nature is assiduously examined
Experience is highly valued
What anyone in the fraternity
Has newly, through his brain power,
Discovered and studied
He submits quickly to the Fratres
Who examine these matters at once
And amply weigh and value them.

We have in these times many things
Which were invented by the Ancients
Which we admit and experiment with
And readily allow them to pass
Which if rightly looked at
Are hardly to be comprehended by human mind.
At times also the inclination takes hold of me,
When I can hardly help being idle,
Idleness being a bad councillor
So that I write Poetry,
And in this enjoyment kill my time.,

Amongst us we maintain certainly
The due regulations without murmuring
Our spirits inward and outwardly learn
In peace and flame of love,
One mind, one soul, one sense, one heart,
One will, one opinion, one pain
Are dwelling in us,
Unity is our delight and most beautiful ornament.

Nobody knows anything but that forthwith
The others know equally well
Just as nobody owns anything particularly himself
It is one heart, one sense, one council.

Our worthy overseer
Then calls us together
At certain hours and orders freely
One after the other regularly
To refer in *Mediem* (to practically try)
What he has learnt in studying.
As soon as that happens
We do not all omit
To consider the matter
Now to argue *pro et contra*
And what then is found correct
Is entered at once into the Protocol (*Minute Book*)
What is found false, as false is rejected.

Thus do we always proceed
There everybody begins to tell
What he in all his days
Has heard, read, meditated
All is truly referred.
Then for love of our posterity

All this is immediately also
Entered with care into a Book.

What then pleases the Order
The president (praesul) when it suits
Knows how to use place, measure and time
And sets a task now one or another
That he do something and experiment (laborier)
According as his known information (according to his ability)
And qualification for the art
Whom the Brethren altogether
Counsel in many ways
By (word of) mouth, with (helping) hand and good counsel
With assistance, science, and actual help (physical assistance)
A library there stands
With many thousand beautiful books.

No single trouble sorrowfull
Is to be thought of in this world
Which in the least could
Trouble us anymore, nothing can be found
That we should go short of here on earth
God has given us plentifully
With abundance what we lack
No shortcomings are to be felt.
On little do we live
Well satisfied with some thing.
Our bodies we cure
According to nature properly.
Therefore our health is good indeed
And we live many a long year,
Which creeps softly along like a tender rivulet
Runs equally away on its course.

If it is required and necessity demands
That we require money or goods
For honours sake or necessity requires
Then it is splendidly everywhere
No dearth of Riches is here
Of Power, pomp or reasonable adornment
God give that every fellow
Who hankers after temporary riches
Knew thus to arrange matters
in this world without guile or trick
to do likewise when much honour
would ensue to the fear of God
And vice and shame would not
be so plentiful in our fatherland.

God be praised,
innocently we have to be blamed by evil tongues about many things
by false hearts who charge us
With things which never came into our minds.

What we began for the sake of the truth,

That is explained in evil
Therefore what we are charged with in evil
We do not repay in evil
But suffer patiently
In our heart and peacefully

He who accuses us of magic lately and without fear,
and quite openly incriminated us
and branded us with disgrace,
That very pious man
Does not himself know with whom he has to do.
Truly he is in error absolutely
And knows nothing at all about us.

But this I don't at all deny
But grant it readily with all my heart
That we naturally in many things
Bring many a miracle into effect
About which many an ignorant man
May easily give many a thought
As in chemistry many indeed proceed
Without measure or object
No day ever elapses
Which does not see something in his fire (in his crucible)
If he thinks that all this is done
And not without the Devil's help,
O God he is deceived
And is in eternal error.
For it is our care always that we together in common
promulgate the honour of God
Throughout the world in every place
Serve God purely with hand and mouth
Out of pureness of soul from the bottom of our hearts
Full of the fear of God is our life
Whom we to honour it is our duty
To our neighbour our services are
Openly ready now and evermore
What more do you want dear Christian (brother)

Know that our College is an academy
full of learning of God's word,
what more do you want
The time will yet arrive
That it shall be hidden from no one
In all this world what the power of God
Has conceived by means of an order
Amongst all people in every land.

The value of our order is recognised
Be it about high and weighty matters
Which will call many to wonder greatly
Whereof the stiffnecked world
Shall be horror struck—as often declared,
Out of our work it can be seen
What benefit we have intended.

We are not lazy bellies
Who are only trained to eat and drink
We are no useless world plague
Who lay themselves out for idleness
But all our leisure is full of labour here and there
Which labour serves to benefit
The common weal for all his good
And serves to your praise
Lord Jesus Christ my saviour.

True it is and I cannot deny
That many a false book is in print
As if our society had published the same
Which never came from us
Nor would we dare to issue it.

A pious honest good man
Can soon distinguish about these
Who rightly considers our Reputation (Famam)
And carefully bears in mind its sense

To say nothing about many an impudent clown
Calls himself our Brother
Whereas the unfortunate fool
Widely differs from our Society

Such a deceiver a short while ago
Has been found out at Nuremberg
Who, amongst the common people
Disseminated very many lies
Until by reason of the truth
he was in a very few hours convicted
That he was a scoundrel and annant thief
Who did nothing but brought misery on land and people
Therefore on the gallows as he deserved
His body became the food for the rooks.

In Augsburg also in the same way
A landlouper was found out in flagrenti delictu
And his back well paid for this
And the broom on his back he carried
Out of the town as a reward
And both his ears were cut off the head
Of the wicked clown as a reward.

It serves them right all these fellows
Who want to brag about the joint of meat
Who have not tasted the Broth
Such pay is proper for such tricks.

Here it is well also to bear in mind,
Unfairly we are often thought of,
That we do not make ourselves known
And call ourselves after our first father,

But his name clearly do not discover publicly,
Indeed those altogether do us an injustice in this case
Who say freely and without concealment
That our name be only a dream.

You godless bumblebees do not err
Your hive troubles us little
Leave our Beehive undisturbed
If you cannot please yourselves otherwise
For your iniquity will be brought to light
By us in a very short time

Therefore do not lightly believe
What lyingly is painted to you
Without you like to be made a fool of
And deceived by false appearances
And tell me this without wicked guile
That in our days the world throughout
Is dressed in the feathers of Lady Fraud
Deceit, falsehood and wicked tricks reign now
and every instant we find many Landswindlers.

Everybody pretends to know about us
And lies and swindles without measure or number
And all is ever invention alone

People hunt us very assiduously
And many a question arises about it.
The Jesuitical wicked crowd
Invent many a hundred secret things
That they may soon and above all
Require to know of a surety
Where we might dwell
Day and night they enquire about us.

In order to avoid their jaws
And look well after our affairs
And that our order does not become the prey
Of these unmannerly wolves
We have always to be careful
And not make ourselves too public.

O holy and powerful God
Save us from this wicked lot
Cast down their godless impudence
Keep our order in your protection
If so be that you are pleased at this time with all our works,
Turn away, turn away all our enemies
Who have become wickedly wrath
That they in no wise on us may
Satisfy their great hatred

Protect the pious, Lord Jesus Christ
Who art the refuge of us all
For it is our wish all together

To be known publicly
To the world and the globe of the earth
As God the best of witnesses knows

Oh that this in a short while may happen,
How great would be our delight
But if without end or finish
Yet many obstacles be found
We think the best counsel to be
To keep as we are for a little while longer
But in such a way that meanwhile
We certainly make many more friends

Therefore we appeal to many a learned man in our writings
With letters and by our own hands
Although our names are not known,
That is known to many a philosopher
Many a chemist, many a Doctor
Many a Reverend, many a worthy man
Knows the sound of our trumpet.

Were I to let you know all
And mention their names
O Eternal God, what a book
would this indeed become
Go now and doubt more
Whether in untruth and dishonour
Our free Brotherhood
Really be in the nature of things

You must not make silly remarks
The work itself will convince you
What this noble brotherhood has
Of might, of vitality, of power

But - where have I finally got to?
I have almost gone too far
Therefore that I do not go beyond
My object or say too much
Or more than is permitted to me
I will finish for this time
And lay away my pen

Go be with you, and fare thee well

And now I beg kind permission
What I have communicated to you this time
If you do that and we get knowledge of you
You will soon receive more.

B.M.I. of the Fratres R.C. the least
He wrote this during his third journey at Hagenau
in which place he lay several days quietly, stopped by the rain.
Done the 22 September Anno 1616.