

**THE AMERICAN ROSAE CRUCIS
NEW YORK, NEW YORK
OCTOBER 1916
(pages 22-24)**

Some Books NOT Recommended.

The Imperator Reviews a Few Books.

It is the prerogative of every critic of art, drama and literature either to approve or disapprove, agree or disagree; it is his or her duty to express an honest opinion and—to state facts, when possible, in support of the opinion.

Some books reviewed have been approved, endorsed, recommended, in this magazine. Two were recommended in the last issue, and the recommendations have been appreciated by a great number—a host in fact—of our members and readers.

Now two books are to be criticized and condemned. May the same wide and sincere attention be paid to this expression of opinion.

Many books come to the office of the Imperator in the course of a month which fall under very close scrutiny. All are turned over to the Supreme Lodge Library for all to read, like and duplicate for their own private libraries if they wish. It is not the province nor the wish of the Imperator to forbid the reading of any book. Thus, some books pass by without comment.

To be able to judge every book—even those on the varied subjects within the domain of our Order—is a task and requires such ability that not even the highest authority on Rosaecrucianism would claim to exercise. But what every Rosaecrucian can do, and should do, is to condemn pretence and fraud commercialized; and when books come under such classification, it is our duty to warn others.

The foregoing is inspired by a careful study and examination of what seems to be a rather recent book (published without date) on the title page of which we read:

“The book of the GOETIA or the Lesser Key of Solomon the King. From numerous manuscripts in Hebrew, Latin, French and English. BY THE ORDER OF THE SECRET CHIEF OF THE ROSI-CRUCIAN ORDER. The best, simplest, most intelligible and most effective treatise extant on CEREMONIAL MAGIC. This book is

very much easier to operate than the so-called 'greater' Key of Solomon. Now for the first time made accessible to English Adepts and students of the mysteries."

Naturally the title attracts attention. That is why it has so long a description and tale. The Bible, greatest selling book of all, is dignified with a short title. It needs no alluring promises of revelations to make its title appeal to seekers for truth. But this book is to attract the credulous seeker who believes and is always ready to demonstrate that belief, that the great secrets of God, nature and man are to be purchased for a few cents in book form.

As a matter of fact this book, so far as misleading, false, deceptive title and inane, absurd and preposterous contents are concerned, should be classed with those other two obsequious monuments of fraudulent literature, namely, "Morgan's Exposé of Freemasonry," and "The Sixth and Seventh Book of Moses," both of which nobody takes seriously before they are read but the purchaser, and after they are read, but by the seller who smilingly pockets the excellent profits.

For brazen misrepresentation no claim can hardly equal that of "By the Order of the Secret Chief of the Rosicrucian Order." It sounds alluring to the uninitiated, but let it be known now that there is no "Secret" head or "Chief" of the Rosicrucian Order. Nor would any executive or officer of the Rosicrucian or Rosaecrucian Order think of publishing SUCH a book or using such a title.

As far as any Rosaecrucian matter is revealed, contained or even hinted at in the book, the closest scrutiny fails to make any revelation at all—ah, yes, except that in two or three of the 150 or more ridiculous scrolls and puzzle-pictures called "symbols" and "diagrams" there appears the Rosaecrucian symbol of the inverted triangle, seemingly put there merely by accident by the "artist" to fill blank spaces.

The author not only assumes the alluring dignity of "Secret Chief," etc., but appropriately hides his identity under various catches, but leaves several means open for the inquirer to get in touch with him through the always mysterious "Editor" of the book, in case the inquirer proves gullible enough to wish to spend more money and "get in touch" with the Rosicrucian Order.

But, in the popular phrase of the day, one could safely say: "Come out into the light, Mr. Aleister Crowley—we recognize you and your black brotherhood." Crowley, whose reputation in English circles, French and German Rosaecrucian Lodges, and

Egyptian records is not enviable, admits having written some parts of the book, by discreet footnotes. But a careful comparison of the language and the illustrations in this book with those in the London publication Called "The Equinox" (bearing the design of the Rose and Cross), which are accorded certain space on our Library shelf, show that the same master hand was concerned with the writing, editing and illustrating of this book. For while the illustrations have the same frenzied, puzzle-diagrammatic scrolls and are meaningless, the language is just as unprintable in good literature and just as degrading as in those London publications which forever prevented Crowley from joining or having anything to do with the A.M.O.R.C. anywhere in the world.

No true Rosaecrucian, no seeker for truth, no clean, moral minded person will read or encourage the sale of such a book.

[. . .]

But why do otherwise sensible and rational people buy books which claim to be the "Rites," the "Mysteries" or the "Secrets" of a long established, well guarded, secret organization? Perhaps only men like Crowley, Jennings and Clymer, with their well-filled coffers can tell—but they will not!