

circle that all the virgins are counted out first, leaving the men standing alone. This is an indication that these mysteries are connected with the sexual forces but not in the usual physical expression of them.

Cupid then reappears with a golden cup. They all drink from it and dance before forming up in procession again, led by the queen. She carries a small crucifix of pearl, which is imbued with great significance, for it is said that it was "this very day wrought between the young king and his bride." We say no more than to provide the hint that the crucifix is the paramount symbol of vicarious sacrifice and that pearl represents by its appearance a solidification of the life forces. This is sometimes referred to as the "gluten of the white eagle," more familiar to nineteenth-century psychical research in the form of "ectoplasm," or more subtle etheric forms of it.

The Queen is attended by six virgins who bear the symbols from the little altar, referred to now as the "King's jewels." The three kings and three queens follow, with the bride and bridegroom in black, and Cupid bearing the bride's train. They are followed by the rest of the company with Atlas bringing up the rear.

They go to a theater called the House of the Sun and there witness a play in seven acts. This enacts the story of a maiden disinherited and then seduced by a wicked Moorish king. She is rescued by a king's son to be his bride, but falls again perversely and willingly into the evil king's clutches. She is then sadly degraded by him. The young king battles for her again in spite of her defection. Although it appears at first that he is killed, he in fact has the victory and commits his intended bride to the safekeeping of a steward and a chaplain. These two subsequently become insolently wicked in the exercise of their appointed power. They are overthrown by the young king in the last act, who then marries his bride.

All of this is an allegory of Christ and the human soul. Saved once more by the Incarnation of the Christ the soul of humanity is put under the stewardship of the Church, which however betrays its trust in hubris and ambition. It is prophesied that this will be overturned at the final coming of the Christ.

As Dante three hundred years before, in the pageant in the Earthly Paradise, allegorized the institutional Church as betraying its spiritual trust in search of political power, so do the Rosicrucian documents, and plainly demonstrate themselves to be on the side of the Reformation. After the play a banquet is held, for the most part in an awesome silence as if portending some great event. At its end all sign a book, dedicating themselves to the King's service. They then drink a "draught of silence."