

LETTERS
OF
MICHAEL SENDIVOGIUS
TO THE ROSEYCRUSIAN SOCIETY
FOUND
IN AN OLD MANUSCRIPT
BY EBENEZER SIBLY M.D.
1791

Epistle 1.

Greeting to my most honoured Friend and a most worthy Companion of the Society of unknown Philosophers. M.S.

Honoured and renowned Sir, yours and your Patron Briscius, our companions letters have been exceeding welcome to me, and I cannot express the Joy I had to hear that you have certainly and effectually been received into our Society and that there was a design on foot to settle and to enlarge our Society throughout all France, which I have had an ardent desire long before now to bring to pass. Neither can I doubt but that such a project will succeed well; since God hath endowed you with such great Perfections in mind and good manners (as Briscius doth testify it) and I myself am able to judge by your most ingenious letters.

For this purpose then I joyfully do send you (as you have desired me) in Latin the Statutes of our Society, the observation of which let be sacred to you and be it as such recommended to our future Brethren.

Further I liberally do grant and promise you a communication of more Notions than your Patron hath yet imparted to you, concerning as well the theoretical as the practical part of our alchemy.

But then it will be necessary that you yourself labour in it, continually reading, speculating and working also, to make you able to add some things by your own industry and strength to those things such as are already revealed to you. For the rest you will find it a business of not so very high consideration as is talked of. For he that hath the key to the door can easily unlock the same.

And that you may be able to do it the sooner, I shall not be wanting to intimate to you the rocks which may stand in your way and to direct your deviating conceits, as often as you will take occasion to consult me about what you are reading or doing. And I protest to you that I will hide nothing from you except those things which you cannot learn but by ocular demonstrations and manual operations.

For every art hath its own way and manner of operating and above all, ours which cannot be expressed so well in words but that a particular demonstration and an experimental disquisition be also necessary, which for the most part answers but

slowly, the hopes and expectations of philosophers.

I beg of you to take these my admonitions in good part from

Your most ready servant to all your commands,

Michael Sendivogius.

Brussels, 9th February, 1646.

Epistle 2.

Dear Companion,

You desire to know, and truly not without reason, what books among such an infinite number, as well of ancient as modern authors, you should choose to read; for few are faithful and then if there be and which they are that write the truth, and scorn for the most part to contradict themselves, though in the main all of them do aim at one and the same thing, though in an hieroglyphical style, suiting with out Cabal, our art being altogether cabalistic, which art to prostitute to the iniquity of sophisters, or to sacrifice to the lightness of the imprudent is altogether unjust and nefarious.

Let therefore your care be to choose to yourself out of such a multitude of books those that follow, and put by all the rest as being useless and unprofitable: for if you have but got the little fish called Remora (see my Novum Lumen Chymicum, page 59, in the beginning of the parable) which but one of that sort swims in the vast ocean, you need no more fishing, but only to get the Way to dress, boil and spice it.

Among the ancient books then these are the chiefest.

1. Hermes whose books are of very great nay the highest moment, in order to understand well and truly our business.

There are two small treatises of his; one inscribed with a posthumous name given by his commentators viz: *Transitus maris rubri*. The other; *Appulsus ad terram promissam*, both let be recommended to you before any other.

But they are rare to be had and perhaps not to be found in Europe.

I have found them in Constantinople by some Martians where having perused them I copied them for memory's sake.

2. Andernacus Paracelsus whose writings are like a clear day's sun light, but if you can light upon his Codicills which heretofore were called *Psalterium Chymicum* or *Paracelsus his Manual* make much of them. For therein you shall find displayed and clearly manifested all the secrets of our cabal, and of physick demonstrative with the whole knowledge of alchemical doctrine. This book is not so rare as the former. For I have found it at home in the Vatican Library and in several other places amongst my cabalistic brethren of our own nation. However it is not altogether so common that it were to be found everywhere. Therefore I did take a copy of this also for my own use, as I had done with the former.

All them I willingly would impart to you were it not that these did teach the same doctrine which I shall hereafter insinuate to you in the sequel of my letters, and that in

a much clearer method and succintor style than they have done. Besides this his treatise De Tincturis is not to be neglected.

3. Lullius. But amongst all his writings I can only recommend to you these. His Vade mecum, and dialogismum entitled Lignum Vitae. Likewise his Testamentum and Codicillus, yet these two last with the rest of this author's innumerable writings together with those of Geber and Arnoldus de Villa Nova are almost made inexplicable because of a labyrinth of figments and unprofitable receipts so that I myself can scarcely pick out the truth to justify it.

There are other writings collections out of old philosophers books, not altogether unlearned. But there are so many sophistical tricks intermingled and filled up with incubrations of other authors of none or ill repute that it is a hard matter to discern true and good traditions of faithful and approved men from others.

Amongst the writers of the middle age these are good, Bonus Zacharias, Bernhardus Trevisanus, Roger Bacon, and an anonymous which hath collected authentic sentences and is called Rosarium Philosophorum which to me seems to be the sentences of men of an approved integrity and of good doctrine.

Amongst authors of latter age I esteem none faithful besides Faber, a French author, as to his last books published. For his first books are erroneous and lying.

There are some things also orthodox in the author of Physica restituta but it is interwoven with many false precepts and fallacious sentences.

But if you have a desire at they very entrance into this study to have a full knowledge and sincere information in our alchemy they let it suffice our Novum lumen chymicum, with the annexed treatise of Sulphur and the dialogue between Mercury and the Alchemist, for in this book nothing is wanting. But it is necessary that it be read with attention and over and over again. And take notice that in the same book many preposterous things of the ancient philosophers are set down and that several things and in several places are as contradictory one to the other, all which is voluntarily thus insinuated and the reconciliation of all this and the solution of doubts hence arising you shall find in other places of the same book given in express terms though in broken sentences. Pray make use to these cautions and so farewell.

Brussels 24th February, 1646.

Epistle 3.

Dear Companion,

Those sheets of Pagetins which you have sent me handling of all the parts of out art and your doubts about it and by this occasion about our Novum lumen chymicum also I have read over and over with a great deal of attention. These writings, though they are corrupt as to the principal precepts yet they do demonstrate the author to be of great genius: And as to your doubts and questions, the same do argue to proceed from

an ingenium not of common sagacity and acuteness.

But what of this doctrine is to be judged you shall have it in our answer to it with the next letters and according to your desire in a scholastic dogmatical style; with familiar arguments of the chief objections and propositions instanced, the solutions of the propositions together with the examples of our proposition where it shall be needful. Farewell.

Brussels, 10th March, 1646.

Epistle 4.

Dear Companion,

Our last did promise you our Judgment concerning Pagetins doctrine.

We will begin with that true, and touch that also which is false and erroneous, which shall be performed in this and our following letters, which will send as frequently as can be. Pagetins his own doctrine we shall make more plain so far as it is true by adding here and there to it what is required for its explanation and to substitute true ones for its false canons.

Your Pagetins then doth very well divide the whole matter in hand according to the custom and method of all true philosophers, viz, in two chapters.

The first treating of Nature, namely of natural productions of all things and chiefly of minerals.

The second of art, or those effects which accrue to things by art and then of the making of the Lapis Philosophorum, by whose means Gold and Silver is made by art. What he doth teach in the first chapter comes near enough to truth, but the style he used is so concise and contract that it cannot create a sufficient knowledge of Nature's principles so as to obtain a full assent of the reader.

The second chapter of his treatise hath one thing which is very congruous to the best doctrine viz, his judgement concerning the general principles of Lapis Philosophorum, he affirming them to be a sort of Mercurius but different from common Mercury, that is from one that actually is mineral, when the former is not yet in either of the families of inferior mixed bodies, as are mineral, animal or vegetable specified and determined. And again that some sort of Sulphur be far from the common combustible and stinkened Sulphur, yet determined by some specifical form and to be under some genus of the aforementioned mixture: which form that Sulphur may impress and communicate to the said Mercury by way of Fermentation. And that the same Sulphur were rightly constituted Lapis Philosophorum.

All the rest of this book is almost false and to be rejected as you shall see hereafter, Farewell.

Brussels, 15th March, 1646.

Epistle 5.

Follows the examination of the first article of the second chapter of Pagetins. It is most certain and not to be doubted but that Mercurius the true and nearest material principle of metals and minerals, to be a warm and moist humour or vapour as we shall make it good herafter. Ergo, such a Mercurius cannot be gotten and generated in a cold and moist fountain and pure elemental water, as Pagetins will have. But it must be had out of a body and substance which is warm and moist and which is such because of preeminency of congealed air. And such is our matter which you are not ignorant of now.

Hence the error of Pegetins in this point is manifest.

But that he may not want his due praise, I must confess that hitherto I have not read any author that came nearer to the mark than he. For his substance he points at doth in all the general conditions agree with the true and genuine substance that contains the true Mercury and hath also almost all the true signatures and characters described here and there by the philosophers whereby the true Mercury and his offspring is known and discerned.

Let this suffice as to the first article.

Adieu.

Brussels, 20th March, 1646.

Epistle 6.

In the second article he labours to repeat the mysterious manner of extracting and also preparing Mercury out of Lullius misusing his authority and other philosopher's precepts misapplying them and ill brought in more than becomes an ingenious Man: commanding, that by distillatiion, the tenth part of his Magnesia, so first rises, as only useful and as the only true mercurial substance should be reserved; But that the nine other parts which by a continued distillation come forth, as being useless should be rejected, for this purpose that the said tenth part which was reserved should at last be restored again, to its remaining earth after a complete distillation (which earth he ridiculously esteems to be Sulphur and Salt of Mercury) and that by reiterated cohobations, inhumations, digestions, sublimations etc, described by him, all should be reunited again.

But herein he grievously mistakes, for what authors say of the tenth part that contain the spirit and of inhumation in its own earth, is to something else to be referred, than the extraction and preparation of Mercurius as we shall demonstrate it at another time somewhere else.

There is no other rule to be observed for the said extraction and preparation of Mercurius than simply to distil the Magnesia, whereby the spirit with its oil are brought over and elevated even to a siccity of the faeces and into a separation of the

spirit from the oil and which spirit is afterwards oftentimes to be rectified. But hereof we shall treat and inform you more at large in the method of operating.

Farewell.

Brussels, 25th March, 1646.

Epistle 7.

Follows the third and fourth article; the former of which doth assign the Minera of the Sulphur necessary for the philosophical work, and doth do it very well. For there is not other Minera for the said Sulphur than which he intimates namely Gold or Silver.

The fourth article teacheth how to extract the said sulphur out of the entrails of the said Gold or Silver, but very ill. For he prescribes to this work a dissolvant altogether heterogenous to Gold and Silver and therefore violent, viz, a certain Mercurial oil made per deliquium from Quicksilver or common Mercury often sublimed with sal ammoniac.

All which is against Nature's Intention which requires that Gold or Silver should be dissolved in order for the making of the Lapis Philosophorum in a benign water homogeneous. To these metals (I say homogeneous by homogeneity as our Cabala calls it of Principles, not of things principiated as some falsely do suppose it and are in the same error with Pagetins) that is to say the Dissolvement must be of the same nature with that Matter or substance out of which immediately your Gold or Silver was made, that matter being considered in its state of lesser composition it had before it coagulated into Gold or Silver (for there are many subordinate degrees of composition in mixed bodies, as we shall see hereafter.) But it ought not to be of the same Nature with actual material or common Gold or Silver.

And now there is no substance in the whole Nature which can have such a Homogeneity of Principles of Gold and Silver, as our Mercury drawn from our Magnesia in manner as you know. For that Mercury is but a warm and moist vapour not yet determined (as common Mercury is) in any other Family of the lower mixed Bodies, namely mineral, vegetable, or animal, and therefore it is of a more simple degree of composition than common Gold or Silver, or any other mixture can be. For all other things and therefore common Mercury also (which Pagetins makes use of) they are already determined in your said families, and therefore most of them seem to have symbolizing qualities and conditions with Gold and Silver. Yet for all that they are heterogeneous, because they are not only specifically different from Gold and Silver, but have also an opposite nature, being under a different species of the same degree of composition constituted wherein the nature and condition of their heterogeneity conists, so that our Mercury is not the vulgar must be made use of, and for an extractive Dissolvement of the Sulphur of Gold or Silver and this is the grand Error of Pagetins.

Farewell.

Brussels, 30th March, 1646.

Epistle 8.

The fifth article dear companion consels and will persuade us that the philosophical Egg must be made and compounded out of one ounce or there abouts of your Sulphur of Gold or Silver and with your addition of a very little quantity of his Mercury whose spirits he says that by often repeated distillations and cohabitations your said Sulphur doth ingest and drives in and doth afterwards unlock all Humidity.

Thus he disputes against your sight of Nature, to make a monster which he will that your yellow of the Egg or the ferment which is the Sulphur of Gold and Silver should oftentimes throw off or separate the white of the Egg that is the thing to be fermented which is the Mercury and takes away its natural Humidity altogether necessary to a good effect of generation, and yet he will that notwithstanding all this, a philosophical chicken should be hatched or a cabalistic Coagulum should be formed.

How foolish is this notion of Pagetins be in this white. Indeed not to exaggerate since every fool can apprehend it.

Farewell.

Brussels, 5th April, 1646.

Epistle 9.

The sixth article dear companion doth teach and most obstinately doth hold that there are required to your boiling of your Egg four different and continually increasing degrees of fire, which indeed favours an unexperienced philosopher, if as it seems he doth understand it, of actual Fire. Hence I find reason to change my opinion which I had of the author before, namely, that he in his former articles had studiously compiled most [egregious] errors only for [dismulation] sake and on purpose to impose upon your easiness of belief. But now I do find me mistaken, seeing with what eagerness of sincerity of mind he doth maintain such a doctrine and accordingly how he doth rest the sentences of alleged authors; being it is very well known that when the authors command four degrees of fire, that it must be only refered to the virtual central fire of ferment, which fire as it must in succession of time overcome far greater elemental qualities in its Mercury in bulk and geometrical proportion much exceeding him, so it doth proceed by four degrees, till it aquires such a degree of strength as by nature is designed chiefly for the product of those four principle colours. But your external actual fire, as it is but to excite the other internal, so it

ought to be of a continual gentle almost equal degree.
And these are the errors of Pagetins.
Farwell.

Brussels, 4th April, 1646.

Epistle 10.

Having made an end with Pagettins works it follows dear companion that I do explain and declare to you the true Hermetical doctrine.

We shall therefore even as Pagettins hath done reduce the whole to chapters . The first shall treat of Nature. The other of Art. And all shall be treated according to cabalistical principals being the best and truest, infused by God into our first parents and derived to us, not by writing, but by Tradition and Hearing, and as to that proposed method, there can be no better used.

For since Arts business is to perfect Nature and since Art cannot effect this but by immitating Nature's works; it is needful first to know that Nature's works are to be immitated before you can elucidate the manner of imitating. The first chapter then shall be divided into two members. The first shall be a treat of the first Generation or the first creation of things.

The second shall be a treat of the second Genesis or the daily natural production of things created before.

Both are neccessary for a philosopher to know who desires to learn the true principles of things, and truth contains rules. For as art doth incite the Nature, so doth Nature Creation only with this difference; that Creation supposes nothing and Nature supposes principiating principles, viz. the Elements, and Art supposes principles principiated, all of which in order, so that the perfect knowledge of Art doth depend on the knowledge as well of the first as second generation. Let this serve for a short prologue. We will pass to the matter itself.

Farewell.

Brussels, 15th April, 1646.

Epistle 11.

His most certain dear companion and by all philosophers not only Pagans but also and more evidently by all Christian philosophers received for a certain Truth, that God the

great architect of all things did create the whole material world (for this we are now only to speak of and not of your antetype or intellectual world) out of nothing and in Time, yet not so that all your parts of this world thus directly were created, but only your first Matter, and that she hath been produced out of meer nothing, out of which afterwards the most principle bodies and that they by way of separation were produced and out of them were made all kinds of mixed bodies and that by way of composition.

Gods Providence is to be admired and adored, which in your very beginning hath proposed to Nature and Art in this Exemplar viz: that in all things to be produced, or which already produced are to be meliorated the opereration should begin with solution and end with coagulation.

Therefore it is most apparent to every man apprehension, that in your creation of all things, divers middle or subalternate degrees have intervened, by which your first and more single bodies or beings are to become material principles of things more compound, yet not so as those beings which became more compound bodies had directly forms and really distinct from the your former, so that they could not throw off these forms and others should remain, no, not so, but that your last form given to your mixture doth and must contain most eminently your first ones, not to be divorced from them.

But how great such before named degrees might be, this is not yet agreed on among Philosophers.

The common schools do admit but three degrees, viz: Creation of the Matter, Distinction of the Elements, and out of there Conformation of all Mixed Bodies. But the Cabal which from God hath recievied your Light of undoubted Truth, and knows your genuine sense of your [placed] Genesis, and keeps with Her, its true interpretation, she, though she doth admit three divers acts of creation equal to the forsaid acts received in the common schools viz:

1. A Production of Matter out of Nothing which probably is Creation.
2. The Division of the same Matter into single Bodies.
3. The Fabrication of the mixture out of those divers simple Bodies.

Yet in general as to those middle Degrees the Cabala doth teach many more and will have them acknowledged and allow in such Order as presently shall follow.

Farewell.

Brussels, 24th April, 1646.

Epistle 12.

God then dear companion did in your begining create your matter out of nothing, but altogether without any form (as Pseudo-Philosophers do fancy it, very indirectly) but

in the form of a primordial Water, your element or more properly to be called the first Principle. Hence most Part of the Philosophers and not without Reason do hold, but one Element to be, to which they do attribute the primordial Properties, namely Power active and passive. To which they have added three primordial active, viz: Hylem, or the Body; Archoum, or your Soul; and Azoth or a middle between both and as it were a Servant of one and to the Other, which is your universal Spirit. Last of all they have assigned four primordial instruments for all Actions and Passions viz: the four first Qualities. This is the first and fundamental Degree of the first Genesis. Farewell.

Brussels, 29th April, 1646.

Epistle 13.

Secondly dear companion God hath separated and divided this primordial water in four Parts, or Regions by a mystick, as it were Distillation, which Parts are called Elements though to speak properly they are not Elements, but rather Parts of the foresaid Element; yet because they have a small different Affection from the former primordial Element, according to which Affection every divided Part hath his more intensive Quality above the others more [remiss] symbolical Qualities joined, therefore are they still called Elements, being stilled Elements elementated none of which suffers any thing from the others joined to him in her Radix or Offspring viz: as to that State and Condition in which they were created first.

But when once the man having sinned came to be troubled and to mourn your Habit and first State of all things made for his use and subjected to him, began to be corrupted and went from day to day to be more corrupted as I have taught in my Treatise de Sulphur.

But your Archeus residing in everyone's Center is called the elementary Element. The property of these Elements by God so constituted are chiefly that they should be in a continual Conflict amongst themselves because of their disymbolical Qualities and incompatability of their contrariety, for this end their own substance from whence by means of your symbolical and agreeing qualities, other Substances should spring forth of a middle sort fitted for the second Genesis, which partly do retain the nature of the Elements, partly that of your mixtum as it shall appear hereafter.

Wherefore the said Elements are called your principiating Principles of Things.

But into these Principles no mixtum can possibly be resolved except by God's Power, because, as is said before the last form cannot be drawn back, that it should be become such a one as the Form was of your first single compounding Elements and on the contrary neither can they at once at least not altogether coalesce into one compound or mixture, because of the Repugnancy of the said contrary Qualities, which without a

Medium cannot be brought to an agreement, to abide together; [eve] said, All, for some of them viz: such whose domineering Qualities do not strive together may be physically united in one natural Compound namely in principiated Principles. And this is the second Degree of Creation. Farewell.

Brussels, 3rd May, 1646.

Epistle 14.

Thirdly God hath exalted a fifth Essence (as the call it) of the said Elements that is to say God hath as it were by a mystical Rectification separated the purer Parts of them out of which he hath made the Heavens and Stars, not by way of Composition or (to say properly) coagulation which for the most Part founds a Union, but by way of concretion or condensation. For the Heavens are made out of the most purified Part of the Elemental Water, but the other Stars out of the most purified Part of the Air, the others out of the purified Part of the Fire, others lastly out of the most subtle and smooth Parts of the Earth.

This Doctrine is demonstrated by the sole natural Light. For there is no man so void of Sense, but that he can judge, seeing the Moon to be opaque and not lucid of itself, but to borrow her Light from the Sun, that she needs must be earthy. For the Earth is only opaque, so contrary the Sun to be fiery, because splendid and lucid of itself. For it is alone the Fire that shines of itself and give Light and heat to other Bodies, for the Light is a Property flowing from its Essence and is always [concomitant] to it, though it doth not always appear, because of the Interposition of other dark and opaque Bodies and Substances. Hence it is that Fire often is signified by the Name and Light and contrary Light by the name of Fire. So in Genesis when the Creation of the Fire is expressed by the name of Light, and by the like Reasoning it may be concluded that many pale Stars are aerial and like unto transparent Bodies that receive their Light from the Sun like unto Glass or rather as if air do, which if it were not so the Stars could not impart their influences now hot, because of the Predomination of hot Planets now Cold, by the Accession of cold Stars to this lower Region, neither could they cause such divers Mutations in subjected Bodies while those Qualities which belong to the Elements do only proceed from the Elements and are communicated wheresoever they are met with; see here of our Harmony committed to the case of Briscius to see it printed.

The affections of the coelestial Stars and Orbs are that they incessantly do move according to their proper Motions and so continue to the End of the World equally in respect to themselves, but unequally with respect to other Stars, at least the most part

of them moving; and that for this Purpose that according to their various configurations they should also send forth various Irradiations and have various Influences into the lower Bodies and to concur as universal and upper causes to all natural Motions and Actions, as also Generations and conceptions as well universal or primordial as particular (of which we shall treat presently) and lastly to all Mutations and Alterations of Time and Weather, Durations, Commensurations and of many such other effects. And with this the Solution and Separation of the first Matter, is absolved.

Follows the Composition, or so to speak properly, the Coagulation of things, that is the Union as hath been said before of several different Parts. And this shall be our next matter to be treated of. In the mean time.

Farewell.

Brussels, 9th May, 1646.

Epistle 15.

Fourthly then God hath united and brought together Conflavis, the principiated Principles, or the upper mixture which are Bodies of a middle Substance, between the Elements, and the lower mixture. And these are; First Sulphur a substance made out of Fire and Air cojoined and coagulated by a Heat common to both.

2. A compound out of Air and Water by the help of Moistness symbolizing with both.e

3. Mercury made out of Water and Earth, by the agent of Cold proper to both.

The chief Properties of these Principles are divided in common and singular.

The common are to be the highest principiated Principles and to be the medium to join the Extremes in the mixture, viz: that by their means and intervention, the disagreeing Qualities of the Elements (which otherwise are incompatable) might agree in each Family's mixture. For it seems that the symbolizing Qualities in any mixed Bodies might be able to reconcile contrary and repugnant Qualities; yet according to God's Laws given to Nature it was inconvenient that contraries should stand together and be suddenly conjoined without some previous Leauge of Friendship made in the intrinsecal parts of the mixtum.

And to this that such a Diversity of Temperaments and such various complexions and constitutions could not have been any other but this way effected; at least not in things of a firm constitution and of long Duration. The singular Properties we will explain in the next.

Farewell.

Brussels, 15th May, 1646.

Epistle 16.

The particular or singular Properties of the aforesaid divers Principles are chiefly to be considered.

1. The chiefest of Sulur are these. To be the Seat of natural Heat. To receive immediately hot and fiery Impressions and influences of the coelestial Bodies and to impart them to the other parts of the Body it resides in; to contain the Scent and Tincture of all things, and to receive also the actions of Scent and Tincture of all other mixtures.

2. Of Salt are these to be the Radix of Coagulation and Coagulability in all things. For it doth incorporate, coagulate, or consolidate all other Principles: To open the Pores of other Bodies being applied with a Due Quantity of Mercurius whose Salts moving in which the Compass and Connection of the homogeneal Parts doth consist the on the other Hand receiving more powerful actions of other Salts, they might yeild to the Dissolution of the Parts of its own Body; To preserve and keep the Taste of tasteful things and to communicate it to other Bodies, and also to receive reciprocally it's communication from others.

And truly any Part of an animal that wants its salt must needs [to] lose both taste and feeling. For it is the Salt which purges and is purged in all Motions of our appetites, lastly to receive moist and hot influences.

3. Of Mercurius are these. To be the seat of radical Moisture, to keep and to nourish it in all things. To give everywhere all cold and Moist impressions and again to suffer the actions of agents of like quality, viz: cold and moist and to distribute to the same amongst the other parts of its body wherever he lies hid. To dissolve Salt and to help it in order to the solution of all other solid Bodies. These are the particular Properties of the principiated Principles of the highest Ranks. Hereafter we will come to other things.

Farewell.

Brussels, 21st May, 1646.

Epistle 17.

Fifthly dear companion God hath framed out of the three said, two other principiated Principles, of secondary mixture; viz: Nature's Sperm and the monstruia of the World, which do retain as well as the Properties of the former Principles as their first Names mainly Sulphur and Mercury. For Sulphur is called Sperma and Mercurius menstruum. But besides the forenamed Properties these have also got new ones, to wit from their own new Temperament. For Sulphur which before was naturally hot because of its innate Heat is now above that become coagulative the fixative being

mixed with Salt. And from hence it is called by the Philosophers living Sulphur. And Mercury which before cold is now become hot and moist and better digested by the accession of congealed air which he hath received from the Salt. Hence he is also called living Mercury. The Properties which do follow the form substantial of these are likewise common and singular or particular.

The common are; to be mixture subalternate viz: of the second or middle Ranks.

The singular are first of Sulphur.

To contain itself the seeds as well primordial as secondary (of which hereafter) yet not all at once or confusedly everywhere, but distinct and determinate Ones according to the nature and condition of Places, in which as in Nature's Kidneys and spermatic vessels they receive their last Digestion and Determination and hereby are multiplied. Therefore it is called the sperma natura, the Sulphur vivium may introduce the seed into a proper Matrix and there let it lye to this Purpose that there they might fulfil their Office for Generation (whence the Radix of masculine Faculty is attributed to him) That from elsewhere it might attract the mercurial spirit out of the menstruum. And from thence it hath the name of Magnes Chalybs and such like.

2. Of Mercurius. That he in an eminent Manner do contain the forsaid Mercury which is more digested and nearest disposed to receive the Actions and Fermentations of the seeds, i.e.: that he may be converted and coagulated according to their Intention or Inclination and lastly that he with food and like food be transmuted into the substance of all Nourishing Things. From whence he hath the Name and Title of menstruum mundi.

Farewell.

Brussels, 6th June, 1646.

Epistle 18.

Sixthly out of these two dear companion God hath made one Principle which likewise retains the name of Mercurius and though in him be joined and physically imitted without Distinction as well as the forenamed two principles as Mercurius himself yet because the signatures of Mercurius do more abound in him and also appear to the Senses viz; the waterish Humidity, and the fine and subtil Earth being thoroughly mixed with the Water it is rather called Mercurius than either Salt or Sulphur. Yet according to the Diversity of Degrees of its natural Digestion which he undergoes he changes names, signs, and even Nature, and gets the property of Salt. And at another Time when he comes nearer to living Sulphur digestion, it assumes also to himself the name, Essence, and Faculty of Sulphur. But so long as it remains in the State and Temperament of Mercury it is only called Mercurius. Therefore He hath the Name of Proteus and that is of Hermaphroditical partaking of masculine and femminine Nature

and many such other Nick names he hath given him by Philosophers.

Its Properties are these:

1. That it is the last Principiated Principle, viz: the nearest Matter out of which as well in the first as second Genesis all mixtures are made and multiplied, with the joined Action of the Seeds, as well primordial as particular that by Way of Fermentation of divers Nature according to his various Disposition as also various Intention of the deed in manner as shall be said by and by.

2. That out of his common Substance it may give nourishment and Augmentation or Increase, to all things that are conceived and produced. Hence it is also called the Mother and womb of all things, by the Philosophers, who have given him besides divers other Names according to the Diversity of Functions which he performs, as well active as passive: But his chief Name by which we shall call him hereafter shall be spiritis universalis, because that though he hath a Body and most efficacious Soul, yet because his Body is most subtle and almost wholly spiritual he is rather to be called by the name of Spirit than by that of Corpus or Body. And because that his Soul also, or Archæus doth not appear to the Senses he is rather to be called Spirit than Anima or Soul. Now all of these Principles principiated, though they are of greater composition than the principiating Principles or the Elements, yet they are ranged amongst the single Bodies. For Truly their condition is like to that of the Elements, viz: That no Corpus mixture can be resolved again into them, so as that they may be brought to their former singleness which the had before they came under a specific form of a mixture to be determined in whatsoever Family it be, so that the substantial Form of the said mixture they could not put off and lay aside whatever Pseudo-Chymists may argue against it. The Confirmation of which Doctrine they themselves do daily evidence in contradiction to their Opinion when they testify and hold that the medicinal Faculties rising from their Principles viz: only Sulphur, Salt and Mercury do remain and really exit in the same species as they had in their Bodies mixed from whence they came without any Difference, only that (as they think they had a more intense Degree there than here which Identity of Faculty it is impossible they should have if they did not keep the substantial Form of the mixture. For those Faculties are inseperable accidents which always remaining in and with the said Bodies, do clearly evince that there must also remain the same, their Form substantial. And truly if the said principles could be reduced back again to their primitive singleness the last form substantial must then be reduced to Nothing or by simplification the form must remain in suspence and subsist without any subject which naturally is impossible.

Neither is against my Doctrine that no Generation can happen without the Distraction of the form: For in mixtures the Generation of One is but the Corruption of another Form, being that in the same Instant that the old form is destroyed, a new one is introduced, either of the same or of an higher Degree of Composition as the former of the mixture, was, but next of a more single and lesser Degree of Composition as it had before, so that the Subject of the former form should suffer Damage, and could be

said, that it had wanted one moment, its component Degree for a Mixture and that it had been reduced back again to a more single complete form substantial, which condition is necessary for the supposed annihilation of Forms, which we do contradict.

We say a complete Form for there are some Forms substantial incomplete, as for example the rational Soul which being separated from its Subject and Matter loses a Degree of the State of its Composition.

But though an absolute Separation of those said Principles cannot be given, yet it cannot be denied, but that in some sort one improperly so called can be given. For daily Experiments of Distillation do evidence such Separation in which substances in some Manner in Singleness answering that of the said Principles are deprehended and in the same Number, but in a retrograde Order, Yea it is necessary it should be so. For otherwise we should in vain search for the Sulphur of Gold and Silver the necessary Ferment for the Lapis Philosophorum.

Farewell.

Brussels, 6th June, 1646.

Epistle 19.

Seventh and lastly dear companion God hath made out of the said last Principle as the nearest and immediate Matter all those innumerable Mixtures, so many as there are in the World in all three Families animal, vegetable, and mineral with their infinite Species appertaining to each Family and in the following manner.

Namely out of a Portion of the said universal Spirit being digested unto a Sulphureal Temper. He hath made all those innumerable Seeds, of all Families, Genera and Species according to his inexhaustible Treasure of Ideas, as well in the Air as in the Water and Earth, out of which Seeds (but not all; for that he hath left many empty) and with the said universal Spirit only Mercurally digested He hath formed Individuals divers in Sex, viz: masculine and feminine, committing to the one secondary and particular Seed for the Multiplication of the Species and to the other the menstruum and [Aglen] the proper material Principle for generation of its Species. And lastly he hath given to those Individuum amongst almost infinite Properties this principle one also that they could multiply their species in the said Man and Woman which that it may clearer be demonstrated you are to know.

That multiplication of Species is by God constituted to be either primary or secondary of which in the next.

Farewell.

Brussels, 9th June, 1646.

Epistle 20.

The primary of primitive Multiplication dear companion is that same which happens by the Power and action of the aforesaid primordial Seeds.

The secondary is which happens by the Power and actions of particular Seeds of some of the precedent particular Individuals of which chiefly this present Discourse doth touch.

Both have their common Terms or Intentions.

The first Term is, when only Seed and menstruum are multiplied i.e., when the foresaid universal Spirit is by the Seed assimilated and converted into its own Nature or by the menstruum into another menstruum like him. The second Term is, when the Species is multiplied i.e., when the universal Spirit is fermented and converted not as before into Seed or Menstruum, but into and Individuum of some Species according to the Inclination and Radix of particular or primordial Seed and by these two Terms Generation is perfected.

The Third is, when the produced Individuum is perfectly nourished and augmented, according to the Condition of his Nature not by the Action of the Seed but by odour of Form substantial, which Term doth not concern Generation.

Those three Terms are performed by the Man in the Wife but divers ways. For the first of the Third or last Term are done disjunctly and not reciprocally or by concurrence. Therefore properly to speak they cannot be said to happen in the Man and Woman, that is, by concurrent Action of the Man and Wife. For their functions are either common or private.

Common are, that they go together and copulating.

Private are and first the Mans.

That he contain in him the Sperma.

The Woman, that She contain the Menstruum and receive from the Man the Sperma or Seed, giving to it its due Menstruum as well for Conception of a new Individuum as for its Nutrition.

Both Ways of multiplication with the three Terms and Intentions do become and belong to all the three foresaid Families of the Mixture (notwithstanding the gainsaying of common Philosophy) but not in the same Manner. For the primary Multiplication belongs properly to Minerals according to which their daily Multiplication underground doth proceed. It belongs also to Vegetables being that many of them are daily this way produced though not so very many neither so

frequently nor so easily as happens to Minerals, especially if we do speak of perfect Vegetables and not Excrements. Bust lastly the same becomes least the Animals, because that seldom and almost none of the Animals ae at any Time brought forth in this Manner of Production at least no the perfect Ones.

And therefore the secondary Multiplication doth most properly belong to the animals; but yet that it is frequently amongst the vegetables though not so frequent as amongst the Animals. But to Minerals it happens seldom, yea never without the assistance of Art, neither do these Ways of Multiplication equally and in the same circumstances belong to all three Families because there is great Difference between them, because of the Diversity of their Faculties which my next Epistle shall notify.

Farewell.

Brussels, 15th June, 1646.

Epistle 21.

The first great Difference is in Diversity of Sex, man and wife, in the said Families. For in the Family of Animals since God hath given them (atleast to the perfect Ones) a locomotive Faculty by Virtue of which they can come together and discharge their Office; God hath been willing to give to each Species peculiar Men and Women of the same Species. But to the Vegetables and Minerals, because the Species of these Families do want that same locomotive Faculty, so that they cannot come per se together and copulate. God hath given them one common Wife every where meeting them and equally fit for both Families and therefore she is like to nome of these Families, according to the Species but only according the Genus which to both Families is the nearest above them (proxime superius) namely the subalternate in respect of a Mixture. And this Wife or common Harlot is our Spiritus Universalis. Therefore as many primordial Seeds there are in every Region of the Elements and as many individua there are in the said two Families as many Men there are, but there is but one Woman common to all.

The second Difference consists in the Diversity of Offices of both Sexes which indeed is great in the said Families chiefly as to the common Function of Copulation. For the animals do copulate spontaneously by the impulse of Archeus without any other Artificial Industry, natural appetite being given them for that Purpose prompting them and most vigorously moving them to it. And therefore God hath given as well Men as Women suitable Industruments for Copulation and Generation. But the Vegetables though they seem in some Manner to do the like, when they permit the Seed of their ripe Fruits to fall into their everywhere, meeting Wife yet they do require Arts

assistance to act well and surely.

The Minerals though in Respect of the primary Multiplication, they copulate without Arts Ministry, yea in Respect of the Second Multiplication (which chiefly concerns us at this Time) there is absolute necessity that the Hand and Managment of the Artist intervene. And therfore neither the said Minerals nor Vegetables have given them proper Instruments for Copulation or Generation. But the Woman hath from her Matrix Water and Earth for her Belly or Alexcum. There is also some difference in their particular Functions. But because its Knowledge makes nothing to our Purpose we will pass it by for Brevity's Sake and I shall pursue the Rest.

Farewell.

Brussels 21st June, 1646.

Epistle 22.

The third Difference is to be referred to the Disposition of the Universal Spirit and its Preparation which must go before Multiplication.

What concerns the primary Multiplication and its Terms there is no difficulty at all in. For there is not any other of the universal Spirit here required in order to the Effect of the three Terms besides the Degrees of its digestion mentioned before: because that in this Way of Multiplication it is common to all of the three Families, that in case the universal Spirit hath acquired a Sulphureous Digestion while he is assimilated with them and is turned into Seed. But if he remains in the Mercurial Degree that then a species is out of him multiplied, i.e., he is fermented and converted into a specific Individuum, according to the Quality and primordial Character of the seeds.

But as to the Effect of the secondary Multiplication and in Terms, the Preparation of the said universal Spirit is very discrepant in the said Families.

For in Animals, to have the Effect of the three Terms it requires another Digestion than the precedent Ones, viz: and Animal Digestion, which is done in the Bowels of the Animal. Therefore god hath laid upon them the necessity of Respiration by help of which the said universal Spirit is drawn and carried into the [Pridcordia]of the said Animal from the aereal Region where he abounds and there he is digested and recieves the odor of Form substantial. Afterwards a Portion of it is mixed with the animals Seeds and transmuted into it, for to have the Effect of the First Term. But to have the Effect of the second Term, it is mixed in the Bowels of the woman with her menstrual Humour into which it is also transmuted.

Lastly to obtain the Effect of the third Term it is mixed with the Aliments which he dissolves, and himself is in and with them transmuted and converted into Chylus then into Blood and at last into the very substance of the Animal. For the same Manner in the family of vegetables he requires a vegetable Digestion for the Effects of either

Term, which Digestion is absolved in the Heart of the vegetable. Therefore God hath Created a Magnesiam in all Plants which vulgarly is called Medulla or the Heart which doth draw to himself out of the Earth the said universal Spirit where he always abounds being plentifully driven into it through the Pores of the Earth by the Daily and great Agitations of wind and Weather.

But in the minerals it requires other specific Preparation than an artificial Purgation and Separation of its magnesia for to gain the Effect of the first Term, but as to the second and third Term, he requires a precedent metallic Digestion.

Farewell.

Brussels, 26th June, 1646.

Epistle 23.

The fourth Difference consists in the Effect of the third Term which doth vary in the said Families. For in animals and vegetables, if it be referred to the first Act it doth augment the Quantity by Extrapolosition; because that the seed, as also the Blood and other such like Substances (which are rather Instruments of vital actions than Parts of the vivent or at least they are parts disparate) do not take their Increase as Cause of the Vivent.

But if it be referred to the second then the Quantity and Bulk is augmented by an inward Assumption and the intrinsic Quality or virtue is raised and more intensly. In Minerals if it be referred to the first Term is doth also augment the Quantity and Bulk by Extrapolosition and yet the intrinsical Virtue is increased withal. But if it is referred to the Second it doth not augment the Quantity but rather diminishes, but the Quantity of intrinsic Virtue it doth exalt and extole. As to the Difference in Respect of the finish of Formation in the said Families the same is very great.

For in animals and Vegetables for the Effect of either Multiplication, the first and last Term are perfected by a single assimilation; because that which is fermented, acquires all the conditions and Parts of the fermenting Form, namely that of the Seed or of the Menstruum.

But the second Term doth not end in a simple assimilation because in this Term the fermented Thing acquires some other Condition, besides the form of the thing fermenting, viz; that of the Seed. For it cannot be said, that the seed of Man (and so in other Things) be the Man.

But in the Minerals either Term is perfected in the simple assimilations, because the Ferment viz: the Seed hath actual formal Condition which it doth impress in the thing fermented; for this Reason because that all homogeneous Substances (such almost all the minerals and chiefly the Metals are) do retain all the Parts of the whole with its Nature however that Form diversity affected by accident in the first two Terms of

their Multiplication, by Reason of a Diversity of Disposition of Mercury in the said Terms which they have to them assimilated.

And so much of the first Genesis where you have seen the physical Tria in one and unity in Trinity, Fecundity in Two; in the Triangle a Quadrangle; a center in the Circumference, and the Circumference in the Center. The Quadrature of the Circuli, The Septinarium taken from a Triangle and Quadrangle; a Decas from the Septinarium and the Triangle and such other Emblems of our Cabala and to explain more largely, and to teach, how to apply it is needless now. Follows the Second Genesis.

Farewell.

Brussels, 30th June, 1646.

Epistle 24.

To all things then created having their Properties and being placed in their Order and proper Regions, God hath given an universal Law, which by its proper name we call naturating Nature, and is, that nothing at any time should remain idle and without Work, but that all things perpetually should move and be moved, drive and be driven on, act and be acted according to the Intention and Inclination of the substantial Form by which the motions and [Visissitudes] of actions and Passions, causations and Affections; the upper most Bodies acting them that are in the middle Region and these the inferior Bodies which are the Mixture of the three Families; But these the Species subjected to each Family and the Individua also of each Species, and that these Motions be in themselves in manner proper to each of them, for this Purpose that thence in the mixtum Genius a perpetual and never failing new Production of things the World might be procured and also a Multiplication of what is produced and reparation of what is decayed or extinct.

This is that Degree of eternal authority on Purpose that the Integrity of this World and of things equally complete should not before its due Time by a succedaneous Decrease and Ruin be diminished and destroyed.

And besides this general Order God hath given another to each Species for its Conservation and Multiplication which we call Nature naturated, by whose Help and Assistance these Inferior things do not only hold a correspondence with the Superiors and subalternate causes as to their Actions, but they contribute also to them and with them by their own strength according to the Faculty of their own Condition. But the Governor of naturated Nature is Archeus. And thus by the universal manifest Causes viz: the Heavens and Stars the Elements do daily produce and multiply Salt, Sulphur, and Mercury these again the Spirit universal doth again produce partly mestrua and seeds, partly Individua of each Family which lastly multiplys their Species except those of Minerals which cannot effect this without Arts Assisitance.

This is a short Exposition of the second Genesis.
Farewell.

Brussels, 3 July, 1646.

Epistle 25.

Before we handle of the Rules of our Art and its Precepts we must permit some things of its Intentions and Power according to the foresaid Principles.

The intention then of our Artist in General is to perfect Nature, i.e. its natural Productions; this being the Office of Art; and this she effects two ways.

1. With helping Nature, either in order that Nature may obtain its ordinary End and Purpose of specifical Perfection, in those Things she daily Produces, in what Manner soever she is used to do it and by which End she necessarily attains its Hypothesis, that is by a certain and not a defective Law, by itself without any other assistance, in case she were not hindered by some accident, or the other, or in her Work disturbed. So for example a Chicken may, and is sometimes produced out of a Hen's Egg being kept continuously warm, and so it happens with many such other things that when Nature for some Reason could not Art hath perfected.

Or lastly that Art do hasten Nature's Production before the usual ordinary Term of time. By such cunning artifice the comming forth of many Things is often accelerated. But this though it may be an ingenious Intention of Art, yet it cannot reach some metallic Work, being it doth not suit so well with the inferior mixture of the mineral, as it doth with the two other families.

2. In exalting Nature's Works already perfected, according to its ordinary Course and Degree of specifical Perfection, to a higher One. And this she doth effect in two ways. I. Without changing of the Species, only by exalting the intrinsical Virtue of it. For God hath given to each being, besides the ordinary specifical, extraordinary and almost infinite Degrees of Perfection, cheifly in the vegetable and mineral Family which notwithstanding Nature by herself without Arts help cannot attain to, as hath been often said in the first Chapter.

As for example when Dough is raised by the action of the Ferment and is perfected by the Baker. Or when that Wine Stock out of a barren Ground is transplanted into a fertile Soil. For then by an internal addition and Increase the wins Stock and its Branches Properties and Degrees of Virtue are augmented.

And this manner of Increase doth before the rest chiefly belong to the mineral Family, and if the first said Term of mineral Multiplication of the Seed and cannot be done otherwise.

But take care that you do not take the Unition and Contradiction of dispersed Virtue for exaltation of Virtue specific and Power, by which for example the Spirit of Wine (and so it is to be understood of other things) being by distillation once freed from the

adhering great quantity of Tartar and Phlegm in which the said Spirit was dispersed he seems to become much powerful and strengthened in inward Virtue; though not withstanding all this nothing is really added to its formal degrees of Strength but only that the dispersed Particles of the Spirit become more united and compressed because of the separation of heterogeneous Excrements which laid confused with the Spirit not substantially united but only in the body of the Wine together placed. By which separation that Spirit indeed attains sooner and easier the Term of his operation and action acting upon passive Subjects, but for all that he therewith gets no higher Degree of his specific Virtue, by which he could do anything above the degrees of his innate Virtue and Power ordinary, or that he could multiply his species. The Ignorance of which hath almost decieved all Pilosophers when they worry themselves with infinite Operations in Metals and other Minerals (whose case is the same with the [unrecognizable symbol]) in vain presuming to exalt therewith their Virtues so as to produce Extrordinary Effects and to give them the Power of multiplying their Species. However it is not to be denied but that such a seperating operation be very useful and necessary to the philosophical Work as means to obtain the End. For the Artists Industry must not end in that Operation or Seperation if he wishes to obtain the Effects and Intention of the Lapis Philosophorum.

Neither is the accidental alteration of sensible qualities to be taken for the said augmentation of Virtue. Because that by the Addition of Heterogeneous Things of divers sorts, the Face is only changed not Nature or the Activity and state Form substantial. In which thing there lies a most gross Error, or rather a Deception of Sophists.

2. With the changing of the lowest Species into Superious and that also in twofold Manner.

I. By Help and Benefit of the Universal agent, a certain Sort of mineral multiplied according to the first Term of Multiplication and so exalted in his Virtue that it be able to transmute many species yea all of them such are subalternate and to assimilate them according to Proportion of greater inequality in infinitum so that the least Part of the Agent may in a moment convert and transmute an immense Portion of each subjected species, which Effect belongs only to the Lapis Philosophorum and it is the last Term of the foresaid Minerals Multiplication.

II. By Virtue of a particular agent whose activity is effectual upon One or few species subjected converting them in Manner as is aforesaid and to be said more amply hereafter which effect is of single Transmutation.

Now from what hath been said, the Division of Chrysopoei doth depend namely to be universal or particular. The universal Chrysopoeia is occupied in the Preparation of the said universal agent, or the Multiplication of the seeds of Gold and Silver its application and use.

The particular tends only to the Preparation of particular agents and what concerns their use also and application. According to which division this chapter like the former shall have likewise two members.

Farewell.

Brussels, 10 July, 1646.

Epistle 26.

The object of Chrysopoaei is the above mentioned universal Agent, how to make and to prepare the same, whose Essence is necessary to be known before its confection. This Definition then is thus.

The Agent which the Philosopher makes use of for universal Transmutation of the Metals is Gold or Silver multiplied not according to their quantity but to their seeds and that by their intrinsical Virtue or activity of their Form substantial; greatly exalted nature working and Art ministring; whose one and the least Part because of its exuberant Tincture or Seed wherewith it is endowed is able to give substantially the form of Gold and Silver to a great Quantity of all Kind of Metals, and to assimilate the same in a most quick manner.

This Definition is regular though long, for it hath its nearest Genus namely of Nature of Gold and of Silver Then it hath its nearest differences viz: the Multiplication of their Seeds and Virtue, not their Quantity, (by which it is distinguished from Gold and Silver vulgar being considered in their ordinary States of mineral Constitution as also from them and all other things besides be they animal, mineral or vegetable, multiplicable or being multiplied according to quantity only) and lastly the transmutation Virtue of the greatest quantity above his own of any Metal whatsoever (by which is distinguished from particular transmutative agents) and that in little lesser quality, above his own but for the most part equal or lesser Quantity.

That Gold or Silver be the Genus of the Lapis Philosophorum or of the forsaid universal agent is manifest from thence because it is required, that the Lapis should transmute the simplest metals into Gold or Silver therefore to effect this it is necessarily required that the natural and true form of Gold and Silver should be in him: For nothing can give and communicate to another what it hath not himself.

Neither is it to Purpose to say, that from the Doctrine of the first chapter it may be concluded the Lapis to be the Seed of Gold or Silver and therefore that it cannot be Gold or Silver in Substance. For we have already in the same place by anticipation answered to what is now objected viz: That all the Parts of Bodies homogeneous, are of the same Nature and Condition their whole is. Therefore the Seed of Gold must need be Gold Formally. Likewise as any other Vitriol drawn out of any Kind of Metals, being their Seed or Sperma, doth not differ from the very metals, but only by

some accidents namely by [dissmutation, dimmutation] only of some accidental but no essential Qualities as for example of [fusibility] and Ductibility as also of exaltation of Qualities essential but chiefly of its activity.

However it is disjunctively said that the Lapis Philosophorum be Gold or Silver. For there is a twofold Stone one for Gold and the other for Silver though the same agent which is fitted and prepared for Gold making can serve also for making Silver as we have taught somewhere else, yet in case the Artist intends Gold, then he shall take Gold to work upon, by Reason that the Stone made may impress a Goldish form if he aims at Silver he shall choose for his subject Silver that the Stone may communicate the Silver any Form and this according to the Axioma, that nothing can give what it not hath himself.

Neither is against us, that there are some causes that produce quite different Effects from their Nature and therefore Gold not to be absolutely a necessary Ingredient for to make Salt (or rather Gold) which can be inferred also as to Silver.

But take Notice that this hath only Place as to universal and equivocal causes which are destinat for divers Effects; such Causes are the Heavens and Stars. But Causes which are particular and universal and which by Necessity produce such Effects as are of like Nature with them and do act by the Powers of specific Seed, as it is in our Work, there the Business goes otherwise. But that the said Stone must be of Gold and Silver though not simple but being multiplied according to their Seeds of intrinsical Virtue of their form substantial, it is concluded from hence; Because if it did not by a most intense Degree of Virtue overcome the Faculty of other Metals it could not equally assimilate to himself (i.e. transmute them even alike) all and of divers Kind of Degree of perfect Metals, and such a Quantity which far exceeds his own. For every Assimitation or Transmutation happens in the Proportion of a greater Inequality, according to Aristotle and more according to Truth. But vulgar and simple Gold or Silvers Quality and Virtue do not answer in that Proportion in Respect of other imperfect Metals, since their Resistance, at least for the most Part doth by many Degrees exceed the Activity of vulgar Gold or Silver.

If you do object, that Gold or Silver and chiefly Gold do and are able to transmute at least some of the inferior Metals because their Activity overcomes the Resistancy of those some Inferior Metals (which indeed cannot be denied) I do answer with Distinction, that if you speak of a particular Transmutation it is to be granted. For it is not incongruous to admit such a Transmutation And truly the Conversion of Food in the Substance of the Thing fed in the Vegetable and animal Family is nothing else than such a Transmutation. Neither is in this Case the Condition and Priviledge of Minerals others. But it is still a particular Transmutation, neither doth it happen by way of proper Generation, i.e. by strength of the Seed, or that it should be occupied about greatest Quantities of the Things to be transmuted. But if the meaning be of an universal Transmutation. I absolutely deny the Assertion. The Reason is, because this shall want what in the said universal Transmutation is required, viz: These three

things in Respect of this Agent which also can be gathered from the definition above, viz:

1. That it must be able to transmute all Metals indifferently with equal Right and Power, though not in all equal Weight.
2. That the least of the Agent, be able to transmute an immense Quantity of any Metal.
3. That it must finish its Action of Transmutation in few Hours yea Minutes and that by a simple Application or Projection.

All which chiefly, the disproportion of the Quantity do lessen the Proportion of greater Quality, that can be in the vulgar Gold in respect of any Metal inferior, and on the other Hand do extoll the Resistancy of the said inferior Metals. For the Disproportion of Quantity hath this Effect (though it be not per se an active Quantity) that it augments or diminishes the activity or Resistancy of Quality active and passive, by so many Degrees as there is of Excess or Defect of the Same above, or to the true and just Measure and that some, not intrinsically by the Intention or Remission of Qualities but extrinsically by multiplication and Destruction of Parts, though in Things otherwise alike as to weight Number and Measure, another's Activity or Resistancy might overcome the other Resistancy or Activity. For no man hath said yet that one Ounce of that Iron; (hot for example to eight Degrees) can as quickly and efficaciously make hot, one Hundred Ounces of Water though but cold to six Degrees as it will do ten ounces of Water, and contrary that ten ounces of the said Water can do as strongly resist an hundreded ounces of the said hot Iron as a hundreded or a Thousand ounces of water would do.

Farewell.

Brussels. 16th July, 1646.

Epistle 27.

Having thus explained the Essence of the Lapis Philosophorum it follows that we briefly consider its causes. For though it seems that by the said Definition the Terms might easily be adjusted, yet for all that, yet there remains greater obscurity about them than perhaps is though of therefore needs to be explained and cleared. And because that any Work presupposes a Workman, it is fit to begin with the efficient Cause.

This then is twofold viz: The Principal and the ministering Cause. The Principal is Nature itself, without which nothing can be produced, so as to have natural Condition and Faculties. For artificial inactives properly are not Productions of natural Order. The ministering Cause is Art Which cannot justly be said to produce, but only to help Nature in his Production of natural Things above the Terms of its ordinary Power as is said before. But how Art doth effect this you shall learn by the next Epistle.

Farewell.

Brussels, 21 July, 1646.

Epistle 28.

Next in order is Cause final. For every Agent Acts for some End or other. But since nothing can act for certain End or Purpose, except that End or Scope be Known to the Agent it belongs to us first to treat of that Scope.

The same then is twofold, viz: The nearest and the remote or last, The nearest scope then is the very before said first Term of mineral Production namely the Preparation of that universal Transutative Agent, or (which is all one) the multiplication of the Seed of Gold or Silver.

The remote Scope or Finis is the Transmutation itself in which the last Term of the said Multiplication is concerned. Next to the Final is the exemplary Cause. For since Art hath not those Ways and Manners which are proper to Nature to prompt natural Production, but such as are alien from Nature it is convenient to know them first, before we lay Hand to the Work.

Natures Manner of Working is indeed the Exemplar to be imitated, in pursuance to purchase the said multiplication. It needs therefore to be considered and to be repeated what is said in the first Chapter; How Nature doth Work, viz: by solution and Coagulation. But she doth not dissolve by action of Fire to wit actual and violent (for hereby things are rather destroyed than loosened, or dissolved, and sterility thereby is induced.) but by action of Mercurial Water and the Impression and strength of Nature Salt. That is to say by means and help of our living Mercury which by means of his incorporated Salt doth penetrate the Saline Parts of Bodies, and doth by dissipating the Parts divide the Compagies or Connection of its physical Parts.

But the same Nature doth also coagulate again the same living Mercury by the help of the said Seed or Sulphur of the Body Gold dissolved, not again by the action of elemmental common Fire and corrosive; but the central which exists in the most inward centers of the Sulphur which is excited to action by external Heats, either of the Sun or Stars or Five elemental.

Thus much of the final and exemplary Causes.

Farewell.

Brussels, 27th July, 1646.

Epistle 29.

Follows the material Cause.

For as soon as the Artist hath considered the [Ideam] and Exemplar of this intended Work he takes Matter in hand out of which Work is to be made according to his exemplary Model.

Now it is sufficiently verified that Gold or Silver be the Materia Lapis being they have been justly assigned for a Genus of it and for the subject which should receive its viz: Lapis form. But if the said Gold or Silver be the total and adequate Matter of the Lapis or only partial this is not enough discussed. We do therefore here assert and affirm that Gold and Silver are not the total and adequate matter, but only partial because as is said before, the Confection of the Lapis is the first Term of mineral Multiplication which consists and ends in the assimilation of a certain Thing with the Seed of Gold or Silver.

Therefore some things are to be admitted besides Gold or Silver for partial Matter of the Lapis. But that same thing cannot be anything else than our Silver besides our universal Spirit drawn out of our Magnesia. For the matter by which the Seed of Gold or Silver is multiplied and Gold or Silver Generated, must need be homogeneous to Gold and Silver. For out of heterogeneous Things a homogeneous Being cannot be brought forth. And such must be Gold multiplied. For from a Man and a Dog comes forth neither Man nor Dog, or a Plant or Stone from a Plant and Stone.

And if you do object that we ourselves have somewhere else allowed a particular homogeneous Transformation namely that of the Food of any living Thing or Animal when it is converted into the substance of another different animal or vegetable; which something may happen in Minerals.

We answer, that such a Transmutation be not properly a Generation or Multiplication, because it is not effected by Virtue and Action of the Seed, but by the third Term or by a Completion of Multiplication of a thing generated already, as this Completion is explained before being it is done by the Power of our Form substantial as well in Minerals and vegetables as Animals.

But you may say further insisting and urging that we brood to come forth from animals of divers sort. So a Mule comes from a Horse and Ass and so many other Things. I answer that such broods degenerate not being of the same Species with Parents and Generants, and therefore the Species is not multiplied in this case.

Perhaps you will instance yet further saying; granted that the second matter must be homogeneous to Gold or Silver yet it doth not follow that therefore our Mercury must only be taken for that second Matter, for there are other things which are equally nay more homogeneous than the said Mercury and truly nothing is more homogeneous to Gold or Silver than Gold and Silver itself and their Parts or Principles.

But the Answer and Solution of this objection is very easy and ready from what in the Discussion of Pagetins Work namely that there are two sorts of Homogeneity. The one in Respect of Principles, by which two things do agree and have the same Identity of Nature with the Matter out of which the thing immediately is made and hath a radical aptitude to receive also one Time or the other the same Form. Thus for

example the seed of a Dog is homogeneous with the Dog himself, because it hath the same Nature with that Seed this Dog was made of and hath also a radical Aptness to receive one Time ore the Other, the Form of a Dog. And this is the Homogeneity which must be in our second Matter in respect of our first Matter which is Gold or Silver and which is no where else to be found but in our Mercury.

The second sort of Homogeneity is in things considered as principiated by which one Thing with another doth agree in Respect to the Form and all its natural Conditions. Thus Gold is homogeneous to Gold. And this sort of homogeneity is not required in our second Matter of the Lapis nay it is rather contrary to the Intention of the Lapis because that then the Ferment and the Thing fermentable should have the same formal Degree and so should not formally be distinguished, which here is necessary. For if the Fermentable Thing should and must acquire some form which it had not done before. But you will instance say: This is true, being taken of Gold or Silver totally in its integral Substance but not of their seperated Principles.

But what is true and holds in the whole, doth also hold in its Parts viz: in the Principles seperated as well as in the principiated Thing destroyed in a manner. Because the said Principles cannot be so seperated as that they could receive the former simplicity and could fully throw of [off] the Form of the principiated Being. Therefore the things could be simplified again (which we deny) yet the Inconvieniency would come to all one thing. And it would make nothing against us, for they should likewise receive and have the same Respect (rationem) of Homogeneity of Principles, as we do require and exact. Besides this these Principles in what manner so ever separated that they should be again restored to the same former Individual at least specifical Body which according to nature is impossible. For then there should be a Regress from Privation to Habit. Neither hath any Man yet said that the physical Parts of any thing or substance being once seperated could to the same substance be restored again, and in the same Number and Species could be reunited, except in the sole Man whose Form is not of the Genus of Material Forms. Farewell.

Brussels, 9th August, 1646.

Epistle 30.

The last is the cause instrumental. For cause fromal is sufficiently expressed in the very definition and its Explication. This instrumental Cause then is like to the efficient Cause twofold also, being that Nature as well as Art have their own Instruments.

Nature's are two:

1. Water which serves for Solution. But this Water is no elemental Water but it is

specifically the same Mercurius which was assigned for the partial Matter of the Lapis Rebis yet with all this Difference, That when it is proposed as a dissolvent it ought to be robbed of all its unctuosity and terrestreity (which do withstand the Efficacy of the volatile Salt in which the Solute Faculty doth reside) and that by divers Rectifications: so that the same Water freely flowing and passing through the Pores of Gold or Silver it may mix itself with the Salt or Vitriol of the same Gold or Silver and by means of his own joined homogeneous humidity with Gold or Silver it may be able to separate and dissolve them with his homogeneous Parts in manner as Water dissolves Ice.

But when it is taken for the partial Matter of Lapis then it needs not so many Rectifications, for Rebis the second Instrument of Nature is a twofold Sort of Fire. The first sort is the central Fire or the [primigeneal] Heat moving the Powers of the Ferments and everywhere digesting and coagulating the Mercury which central Fire advances himself to four degrees of Heat according as his active Quality overcomes the other Qualities of the Matter. And these Four degrees are demonstrated by as many Principle colours namely Black, Green, White, Red. The second sort of Fire is the actual external Fire which doth excite the former Fire central, and as to preparatory operations, requires divers Degrees, but as to the main Work and Regimen of Coagulation but only one continual degree; so that which is said by some Authors concerning the four Degrees of Fire in the Works of the Lapis and its ordering shall and must be understood of the central Fire.[Note in the Margin: For the preparation several degrees of fire, but for coagulation but one continual degree.]

These Instruments are called natural, because the Art doth not properly use, but only disposes them for Nature's use and Works.

We will treat therefore next of the artificial Instruments.

Farewell.

Brussels, 20th August, 1646.

Epistle 31.

Arts instruments are several Vessels and a small Furnace with other Appertenances and are also of a twofold Order.

Of the first are, such as do serve for the preparatory Operations and they are of two classes again.

Of the first class are which belong to the Preparation of the dissolvent and they are again of three sorts.

1. A body or Bocia wherein our Magnesia is to be distilled, to draw out of her the living Mercury.
2. A receiver to the Bocia, and these serve also for Rectification.
Of the second sort is a small Furnace for distilling in ashes, or in fine sand.
Of the third are which help the distillation of the matter, such as are Cotton or Brimstone (pumex) which check the rising of our Magnesia caused by its Flatulency.
The Instruments of the second class are such as are necessary for the preparation and Trituration of Gold and Silver. And they are also of three sorts.

1. Vessels as Crucible, long necked Bodies, Bolt heads, cleansing Sachets.
2. A calcining Furnace one with an open Fire.
3. Such as serve for calcining and Trituration of Gold and Silver by fire potential, such as are the corrosive waters where Mercury or Antimony. For it is all one which of these Things in this case the Artis makes use of provided a perfect Powder be made of Gold or Silver and that the Calces by divers washing and Reverberations afterwards be very well purged and cleaned from the saltish Impressions which Calcination and [Exkoration], is altogether most necessary. For otherwise our living Mercury cannot unlock the Prisons of the Salt, or of Vitriol the Seed of Gold and Silver.
[Note in the Margin: Mind, looks like the rectified Water and calks of Gold.]

Farewell.

Brussels, 8th August, 1646.

Epistle 32.

The Instruments of the second principle order are those which do perfect the conception or coagulation of the Lapis Philosophorum. They are of threefold conditions also.

1. A glass made into the shape of an Egg in which both substances or Matter of the Lapis is to be put viz. the living Mercury and the Vitriol of Gold and Silver in their due Proportion as shall be described hereafter, where it is to be observed that the third Part only of the Egg is to be filled and then the mouth be very well hermetically sealed if you please stopped. [Notes in the Margin: "Third full only." and "Both only two things."]

Of the second condition are an earthen vessel in which the philosophical Egg is to be buried, laying about it fine ashes about the Breadth of a Thumb and a three foot in which the vessel may hang. [A tripod-like drawing containing the glass mentioned above is sketched in the left-hand margin.]

Of the third condition are, the Furnace or Athanor, with all its Appurtenances. For it is all alike what kind of Furnace you do provide so you can but give a very moderate continual and equal heat about the Egg.

Farewell.

Brussels, 13th August, 1646.

Epistle 33.

Having explained the Causes and the Application of them the manner of working succeeds which contains two Parts.

1. Is the number of Operations and the Explanation.

2. The Praxis.

Now with all of these Operations could orderly be collected out of our two last Epistles, yet because some things might be thought to have been omitted about circumstances we shall minutely discuss them. Two actions (as is said before in the exemplary Cause) are principle, solution and coagulation. But these admit many other intervening middle actions viz: some preparatory Ones which are subordinate (or in order to obtain the principle ones) as means to gain proposed End, Finish, or Scope. And they are of twofold categories or Ranks. Of the first and which are prescribed in order to make the solution are of threefold condition.

1. Is the preparation of the Dissolvent, that is, the Distillation of our Magnesia and rectification of what is distilled. [Note in the Margin: Mind this.] We do only make Mention of Distillation and Rectification because that pernicious Caprice of Separating, the Principles of Things principiated which some false Chymists do command, is altogether useless. I mean the separation of the Sulphur from the Mercury on purpose to reunite them afterwards again. For to the Effect or Works of Solution of Gold or Silver the volatile Salt only as to the Mercurial Part is necessary. But if the fixed Salt and the Sulphur of the same Magnesia do withstand the solution, the Sulphur because of its unctuosity and the salt because of its fixity, so far as it, that they can be here useful, that as is said, they rather hinder this work.

2. The Purgation and Calcination of Gold and Silver. The Instruments of which Operation you have seen above and are necessarily to be used, because that the subtilized Gold or Silver therewith brought to Powder may so much easier yield to a physical Solution and their Vitriol the Seed or Sperma be loosened. [Note in the Margin: "Gold, Mind."]

3. The Application of the Dissolvent to the prepared and to it disposed Gold or Silver and their ten times repeated [Cortus], so that through eleven Degrees you may have eleven grana or Seed of Gold or Silver. [Note in the Margin: Attend to this.] Of the second Catagoria are such as dispose and order of Coction and coagulation and are of twofold Condition.

1. Those which require the Artist's Hand namely for composition of our philosophical Egg and that in Proportion ten to one viz: ten Parts of Mercurial liquor (which represents the White of an Egg) to one Part of Gold if your work be intended for Gold, or four parts of Mercury to one part of the Seed of Silver either which Seed takes place or represents the Yellow of the Egg, which proportion you ought always to keep for therein consists Nature's Weight, Number and Measure. Then this Egg requires to be put into the Furnace and then according for the Coction the ordering of the actual Fire is required. [Note in the Margin: Mind this.]

2. Those which of themselves naturally or by Force of Nature happen in the Egg so disposed without the Hand of the Artist and are physical corruption, mixtion, Contriturations (contritio) sublimation, Inceration, Imbibition, and many such acts described by authors, which being understood and worse interpreted by young Beginners, referring them artificial Industry and Operations hath brought them into a Labyrinth of inextricable Errors

The last of such Nature's Work is Fixation, which is the Lapis's Perfection and is done in Ten Months or thereabouts.

It follows that we speak of Multiplication.

Farewell.

Brussels, 20th August, 1646.

[On the bottom of pages 66 and 67 of the original Ms the following notes appear:
Page 66: "Look at 72 tho on the same quite different to this leaf. 10 of our Rectifur Water to 1 of prepared Gold."
Page 67: "Philadelphia say until you can distinguish between preparatory Labors and those in the Egg you will always remain in Error. This is really the truth."]

Epistle 34.

[Note in upper margin above Epistle 34 reads: Multiplication of the first powder.]
Having made an End with the Composition of the Lapis, there remains its Multiplication in infinitum which is effected by the same way and with the same operations the Lapis was made; only that instead of dissolved Gold or Silver, you lay in only so much of the Lapis as you laid in before of the said Gold or Silver for the first Confection of the Lapis. But as to the Mercurius no other is to be used and to be put to it than which I have made mention of before. But its Quantity in the multiplication of the Lapis is managed two ways and proportionated. [Note in the margin reads: So much of the other powder, fixed, 1 part and 10 parts of Water.]
For first you may take only ten parts of Mercurius to one Part of the perfected Lapis and then the Work is ended, ten times sooner than in the first Confection of the Lapis

viz: in 30 or 40 days. And if this Lapis be once more multiplied, then with the same Proportion of Ingredients the work is ended, ten times sooner than it was in the first Multiplication, viz: in 3 or 4 days, and hereby you may understand what is said of the work, to be a work of three days. [Note in the margin reads: Mind 3 days work what.] But secondly the same Quantity of Mercurius is augmented tenfold also, namely that you take in the making of the Lapis or in the first Multiplication only ten parts of Mercury. But in the second Multiplication of this kind that you take an hundred parts of Mercury, and if you do repeat it the third time that you take a thousand parts and so forwards but though then the perfection of the work will require so long a Time as did the first making of the Lapis.

However multiply it which way you will you do always augment the Lapis in tenfold Proportion, not only as to its Bulk, but also as to his Virtue and Efficacy, so that after the first Multiplication each Part of the Lapis which only increased ten Times more in every Part of the Seed of the first Gold or Silver is now increased Ten times in every Part of the single Lapis made and a hundred Times in every Part of the said seed of Gold or Silver. But after the second Multiplication it surpasses these of the Seed a thousand, but those of the Lapis a hundred Times and so it goes forward.

The Reason of all this is because that when Nature works in One and the same subject for a substantial Production adds always ten Degrees of Perfection to the foregoing Effect or Product, being that she produces a new diverse species, if she goes about only to meliorate the same which we could prove by many natural instances and Examples. But that we know that you yourself by yourself can attain to its knowledge by your own Speculation. It remains that we speak of the use of the Lapis.
Farewell.

Brussels, 26th August, 1646.

Epistle 35.

The use of the Lapis is this, that he must be degraded i.e. must be lessened in his Power of Virtue with many Imbibitions of the foresaid, or with Mercury vulgar, till he hath acquired a just Temperament and Proportion of Strength fitted for a Medicine either for animals or Metals chiefly if the Lapis be multiplied. Otherwise since he hath an overpowering Heat and Dryness, he would destroy the natural Heat of the animal and dry up the radical Moistness of anything, instead that he should give succour to a diseased Animal. And as to inferior Metals, it would convert them into Powder, like unto himself and into an irresoluble Form instead of transmuting them into most perfect Gold or Silver.

Farewell.

Brussels, 1st September, 1646.

Epistle 36.

Now follows the Practice. [Note in the margin reads: Practice, mind this much.] Take therefore of our choicest Magnesia of a whitish Colour and a tart Taste (subacidule) [q.u.] Throw it into a glass Bocia of sufficient largeness, so that only the third Part be filled. Then lay upon the Materia so much Cotton and place little sticks athwart the glass amongst it that the whole Materia therewith be covered, or which is better make bullets out of the whole Matter and wrap them in Cotton; Throw them into the Bocia and having adjusted to it, as is usual a receiver very large and very well adjusted, distill it in fine sand and gentle Fire. First uses a most limpid or clear Spirit. Secondly a blackish Oil. And when nothing more distilled leave off and let all cool by itself.

Then Secondly take the Liquor distilled and rectify it in clear new vessels three or four times that the blackish Oil may be separated. And if you see that with the last rectified Spirit should ascend a yellow or red Oil then filter the spirits that the oil may remain in the filter.

Third. Divide your rectified Spirit in two equal Parts. One Part you shall keep for the confection and composition of the Egg. The other Part you shall again rectify so long till no Feces at all remain more and the Liquor is become very sharp (acerrimus) like the sharpest Spirit of Wine to a common Oil of Vitriol.

This is the Preparation of Mercury.[Note in the margin reads: Preparation of Gold.] Forthly. Take the purified Gold or Silver [Z1] and amalgamate it with Mercury vulgar washed and purified [Z viii] then mix the amalgam with common Sulphur [Z iv] or more if you please in a Mortar then let this mixture burn and deflagrate in a crucible in an open Fire of Charcoals, so that there remain a pure Calx which wash every often with common distilled Water and afterwards reverberate it 12 Hours.

This is the Preparation of Gold if you have a better, use that; For herein doth not consist the Mystery of our Art. But the Preparation of Silver is no other than a common Calcination and afterwards Purgation of the Calx described and taught by many authors everywhere, so that it is needless to teach here.

Fifthly. Put your Calx in a long necked Phial and pour upon it your sour or burning Mercury [q.s.] viz: Four or Five fingers height and put your Phial closed or stint up with an Arthenorium in Ashes for to circulate twenty four hours in continual heat of the first degree, which Time being past, distill two parts of the Liquor and presently cohobate it again, i.e. throw it back again upon the remaining third Part and repeat this operation eleven times and towards the end separate the Dissolutions by inclination from the Calx which remain and could not be dissolved. And afterwards separate also by Distillation the disolvent Liquor from the dissolved Metal to the consistancy of

reddish and [triadish] Honey if it hath been Gold and blueish if it hath been Silver.
[Notes in the margin read: Mind operation of Gold. Gold couple 11 times the Chalby
Conceive. Quick Gold of Philosophers.]

This is now the Quick Gold or Quick Silver of Philosophers and the Seed of Gold,
Silver.

But the signs that you have well proceeded in your operations are these. If the Liqour
in the first circulation gets a Gold yellow Colour and in the following circulations a
Redness by Degrees doth succeed. Then if the Peacock's Tail, or the Rainbow doth
appear upon the Superficies of the Liqour; But the argument or sign of a radical
Solution, is, when it cannot return again into a metallic Body. For this is the Propriety
of Vitriol which is extracted out of Metals and such is our dissolved Gold or
Silver.[Note on the bottom margin of the page reads: This differs from 66 there 10
hour, 2 of living Mercury and the preparation of Gold quite different.]

Sixthly. Take of the said Gold or Silver one part, of the living Mercury which you had
reserved two parts, if you design for Gold, or four parts if you design for Silver. Both
put apart in its Glass Egg provided; so that two Parts of it remain empty, and sigil the
Mouth hermetically.

This is the Confection of the Philosophical Egg.

Seventhly, and lastly have an earthen Vessel ready, or a little Pot, fill it with Ashes,
bury the Egg in it, so that the Ashes surmount the Matter the Breadth of a finger and
hang this earthen Vessel in a three Footmade [Tripod] on purpose for it, and so let it
stand and hang in the midst of any little Furnace, of what convenient Figure so ever,
be it an Athanor with the [same] or another Furnace where you can give a very gentle
equal Heat and which may encompass the Matter to the very End of the Work, which
is the perfect fixation ending in an obscure Redness, after that the three other principle
Colours have in their order appeared, these intervening Changes and their
discoloured Mutations if the Lapis be for Silver.

But what that gentle Degree of Heat must be sole Experience will teach you because it
cannot be described. And he that hath made it once, may notwithstanding therein fail.
Yet the Signs of its due Degree are the appearing of those four said Colours, at every
three Months end, and of those intervening colours, at the end of every Quadragesima
or 42 days or there about, till to the darkish Redness which is the Term of perpetual
fixation. Of the Practice of Multiplication I need add Nothing. For you can gather that
from what hath been said already, neither hath she a diverse Method from the Practice
of the Lapis.

But we will add some things as to the use of the Practice and that in the following
Epistle.

Farewell.

Brussels, 7th September, [year not included, presumably 1646.]

Epistle 37.

The use of the Practice of this.

1. As to Medicine to Animals. Dissolve 1 grain of the single Lapis in 100 grain of that Mercury wherewith the Lapis is made or in any other Liqour or specific vehicle for the present condition of the disease and the Temperament of the patient giving a due Portion of such liquours with the one grain of Lapis dissolved.

But if the lapis hath been once multiplied then one grain of it must be dissolved in a thousand grains of such convenient Liqour, if twice multiplied in ten thousand Grains of Liqour and so forwards.

2. As to the transmutation of the Metals. Take one Part of the single Lapis and two Parts of the said our, not of common Mercury or the once multiplied Lapis one part, and ten Parts of the same Mercury, or lastly one part of twice multiplied Lapis and a thousand parts of the said Mercury and set them to dry, first in a gentle Fire, then stronger and stronger till it gets the consistane of a stone. And such Imbibitions and [Desiecations] repeat till one Part of the Lapis converts ten Parts of Mercury common, twenty of Lead, 30 of Tin, 50 of Copper, and lastly 100 of Silver into perfect Gold. But half of the Part or thereabouts of the said proportion of those metals if the Lapis before Silver.

But if you should want a sufficient Quantity of the forsaid Mercury then you can degrade the Lapis with Mercury vulgar also in a manner following.

Project one Part of this single or multiplied Lapis upon ten Parts of Mercury vulgar heated and you shall have a powder of the same Nature with the Lapis, but a lesser Virtue and Effiacy. All this Powder project again upon two Parts of the same Mercury vulgar and if then the Powder grows moisted dry it by the Fire and it will remain a Powder, which lastly you can advance, project upon the foresaid Metals keeping the same proportion.

This is now the Universal and most exact Theory and Practice of the Lapis.

It remains that we make an access to the particular Chrysopoeia.

Farewell.

Brussels, 10th September, 1646.

Epistle 38.

The particular Chrysopoeia tends, and aims (as I said before) at a particular conversion of every Metal imperfect into perfect Gold or Silver and that either in the whole or only in part. According to which Division, this Member shall be divided again into two Sections.

The first shall be of Transmutation of imperfect Metals as to their whole Quantity or

Bulk.

The second as to some Part of it.

The Transmutation of the whole Quantity is twofold.

1. It is effected by a Proportion of the Particular Transmutative agent of much greater Inequality in Respect of the Metal which is to be Transmuted, so the one Part of the Agent is able to convert many Parts of imperfect Metals into Gold or Silver according to its Ferment viz: Silver in Gold if you have for the ferment Gold and Gold in Silver, if you administer for a coagulum Silver. For in this work the specific Ferment must be applied just as it was in the confection of the Lapis and in the same manner namely the Gold or Silver dissolved in our Mercury. But the Difference is in the fermentable subject. Form in the confection of the Lapis our Mercury is taken and used as the thing fermentable, Because of Intention is not to make immediately Metal, But only the Seeds of Metals. But there the Matter which is to be fermented, is some Metal wherewith the Confection of a Metal is intended immediately. But as to the Metal it matters not of what Kind is taken for the thing fermentable, if it doth but symbolize with the Ferment, in the principal Qualities, though the Pondus will vary, because that all their connection and perfection is not equal, neither is the Virtue of its Ferment equal. Therefore according to the Nature of the ferment and the thing fermental, diversity of doses will be required, the rule of which I have not observed. For possessing greater Things I have such Trifles neglected.

But the manner of Preparation of the fermentable Metal consists in its Reduction into Vitriol, as the ferment is himself and like unto the agent namely our Mercury on purpose that like the dissolved Agent doth more efficaciously and sooner operate than if it was not dissolved so might the dissolved Patient better and easier receive the actions of the Agent. [Note in the margin reads: Good Observation.]

The regimen here of the Fire is not of the continual Degree, but of divers according as the colours do change For no Conflagration or precipitated sudden [Exsiccation] of the thing fermentable is here to be feared as it was in the Confection of the Lapis.

2. The Transmutation of the whole happens through Proportion of greater Inequality of the Transmutative Agent, with the imperfect Metal so that one Part of the Agent, can transmute but an equal Weight, or Part of the imperfect Metal, which

Transmutation is rather effected upon common, or some other metallick Mercury than upon solid Metals. Neither needs this Transmutation, any dissolving Operations of the thing fermentable as the former did, but the Solution and Preparation of the Ferment here, always is necessary, for reason, that the activity of Form substantial, being otherwise hindered and now freed of its Fetters and Obstacles may act with the more Efficacy. If you do not do this seldom or never shall happen any due transformation. But concerning the Transmutation as only to some Part of the Metal. This properly is not Transformation because it transmutes nothing substantially and he is twofold. The first is done by Extraction of perfect Metal out of the bowels of an imperfect Metal, namely Gold out of Silver, Iron, and Copper, but Silver out of Lead and Tin. For in

the first three Metals, there is a great Deal of good Gold perfectly by Nature, elaborated and true and good in all its conditions and in the last there lies much Silver. For in the Mines of any Metal, there are many Ferments also of other Metals as the Seed of Gold in Silver, Iron and Copper Mines, and which Seeds when they meet Mercury they do determine him into Gold or Silver, according to their Nature. But because in the same Mine, there is a greater quantity of the ferment of imperfect metals which being confused with the ferment of perfect Metals, which Nature could not Separate except Art had intervened therefore it happened that thus the perfect Metal remained confined to the Substance of imperfect Metal. But the way to extract such perfect Metal, I have not for the present at hand though I have experimented it more than once.

One chief thing in this Business is to be taken Notice of, namely that this Operation is to be done by [repetensing] agents as are Tartar, Quick Lime, Sal Amoniac and such the like biting Salts for what corrodes the volatile Parts of the repercussing or repelling Agents, do depress and keep down the fix resisting Parts, so that by the separating Waters, or the Test, the fix Parts being united do no more yeild, which before being dispersed in more loose Quantities were forced to yield to be carried along with other volatile Parts, so that there is a reality in this Business, but little Profit when you come to complete and compare the Expences with that little quantity of good fix Metal which you have extracted.

Moreover is to be noted, that the perfect Metal thus extracted, comes forth of itself in its natural colour and splendor; Gold colour if it be Gold; Silver Colour if it be Silver, because that the Tinctures of Metals are of a fix and therefore unchangeable Condition or (which is all one) because the colours are inseperable Properties to the essence of fixed Metals.

But the second particular and improper Transmutation is effected by Condensation, or (as they call it) by fixation of Metals. And this in Reality and Truth, is but a sophistick Mutation or Change, though some Metals thus prepared do nevertheless sustain several Probations and Examina.

To this there are two ways.

The first is by Abstraction which is made with some metallick excrements or rather Recrements and some Mineral Salts by way of Cementation.

And it is not to be valued what is objected commonly, viz: that the spirits of volatile Metals cannot give a fixed form, which they have not. For such metallic Matters do first send forth and insinuate their spirits, into the Pores of the Metal which is to be condensed and fixed by means of their salts, and that with the first degrees of Cementation Fire where at least by means of the same salt, (whose Property is to be vitrified and to dispose to vitrification) the calcinated Metals (and such are the said Metalic Recrements) by the action of external Fire, are vitrified and that at the end of the Cementation, from whence those cemented Metals, become fixeable, and not so metallic, which is an undoubted sign of vitrification or mixture of Glass. In which

state, it is of no wonder at all, if such cemented Metals do sustain corrosive waters. The second way is Exsiccation, which again is practiced in two ways. The first by amalgamating the Metals which are to be condensed or exsiccated with Mercury or Antimony, and then by burning of the amalgam. Here the Humidity of any Metal is mixed with the humidity of Antimony or Mercury, and both fly away as soon as they feel the burning Fire. The Second is Corrosion with Salts corrosive and Metals of a dry Constitution being mixed with such as Iron is and any other dry minerals. But Metals thus condensed commonly do want a just Tincture, for Reason above alledg'd. For bring that a metallic fix Tincture, is an essential Condition of a fixed Metal, certainly it cannot be found in a Metal not really, truly and Naturally fix. However I do not deny, but that by Art, there can be given in some manner, a fix Tincture especially as to Gold provided you add to your Work true upright Gold. I mean to the metals already condensed and then when they are, in the melting, united together, that you have put to it again a great quantity of [subifying] Metals, and thus be corroded again. For in this Mixture, (as it is said before) there, what is real is joined to true Gold. And therefore the Tincture is augmented, namely by addition of Parts tinging. However such Tincture is weak always. But for White, there cannot be so given a fix Tincture. Farewell.

Brussels, 17th September, 1646.

Epistle 39.

Our last Epistle hath thoroughly sifted all things that belong to particular Chrysopoeia or the Art of Gold making short and plain. There wants only (wherewith I shall conclude the whole Tractation of metals) the way to try the metallic works, its order and Examination of what is good or bad.

Be it known then; Two Metals to be the only perfect Gold and Silver yet to have obtained a Degree of Fixation.

And the Conditions of either Perfection are three; Solidity Weight and Tincture. The signs then and Examination of the Reality of these conditions is twofold; common or private to either.

Common Examinations to both Gold as well as Silver are the Eye, Ignition, Candefaction, Extension; the Needle, or Knife, Fusion and the Cement.

The Eye doth judge the Title of the Tincture by the Touchstone, The Ignition if she makes a black spot upon the metal tried, such as covers the whole [Superficies], it argues a false Mixture.

The Extension, if it cannot be made readily, or if the metal while it is worked and extended, cracks, it argues a mixture of heterogeneous things, Salts or friable Metals

as Tin. The Needle, or Penknife, if it finds the Metal to hard and that it will not easily yield to the Iron it argues also a Mixture of other Minerals.

The Fusion or Melting if it be very easily done, it argues a great Quantity of admixed imperfect Metals: For thus Ferrumen is made. If the Metal be harder to be Melted than ordinary it argues a great gathering of vitrified Minerals in the Metal. If this Tincture and Substance thereby is lessened it argues a sophistical Work.

The Test if it lessens the Tincture, or Substance bears the same sign of altered or adulterated Metal.

The private signss concern Gold or Silver apart.

The Trials of Gold are Regal Cementation; separation by corrosive waters; the trial with Antimony solution in Lapis Armenius, and the Reduction to a body after Solution.

By the regal Cementation true Gold is known, if no notable Loss after several repeated Cementations, is found.

Through Separation and Inquartation, defective Gold is known, if a part which should be fixed, Gold will dissolve with Silver, or though it be not dissolved if some things is separated in manner of Gold and some things of Grey colour also lies above the Gold, or lastly if the whole Part, not dissolved is grey and not of black colour, neither receives by [nealing] the Yellowness again, such as is due to Gold, and if the Calces being reduced into a body shall sustain the corrosive Water, upon a Touchstone.

Lapis Armenius Purgation evidences faulty Gold, if after its evaporation the Gold doth lose of its Substance and Colour.

Solution, of the Gold is very hard to be dissolved, and it is to be advised that Aqua Regis which dissolves Silver and not Gold, as soon as it is made regal, should dissolve Gold and not Silver. Hence if the Solution proves difficult in Aqua Regis it is argument of unchanged Silver, or vitrified Bodies to be mixed with it.

Lastly, if the dissolvin waters being loaded with the dissolved Calces, and yet do not turn yellow, it is malum Omen, an Ill omen; and if the Calces cannot be reduced into a body, or the greatest part of them doth vitrify, it is a sign of a mixture of heterogeneous Minerals and Salts, moreover if the Tincture thereby is diminished.

The private or particular Trials and Examinations of Silver besides the Test are following these.

The solution of the Calces; separation from corrosive Water by copper Plates, and lastly their Reduction into a body. If the dissolving Waters loaden with the Calces, have no blue, [coruleous] Colour, or if the Silver be too quick dissolved it is faulty.

In the separation of the Calces from the dissolving waters by copper plates, if the Calces do not stick to the plates the Silver is Sophisticated; for true Silver doth not do that.

These said Trials, solution of the Calces, Separation and Reduction into a body are the surest before all others of Gold as well as Silver. And yet they are ignorantly neglected of Tryers and Examinators, not making as the should true use of.

The order to be held in the Trial follows and is threefold.

Right, Retrograde, and Oblique.

The Right Order follows successive the [phases] above described, in the Trials, as well as common and equivocal as private and universal.

All which is that the Metal doth legitimately sustain, there is no doubt, but it hath its physical Reality viz: That it is all its natural always approved conditions commendable. But if the contrary, that it falters in one or the other Trial, then know that such comes to pass, either in the first and second trials, or in the last univocal Ones.

In the first and middle ones, viz: common and equivocal, it argues altogether the work be sophisticated and by no means to be approved; But if the fault be but found by the last Trials, it is a sign of some Fixation, and the work is fit for mechanical things. Yet this Reason is not so very certain neither, it be then that the Metal have sustained, that same Trial and in the same Order 3 or 4 times over and over again.

For as I have said, the vitrified Bodies mixed with the Metal can defend themselves against the first Times Trial which if it be repeated, it makes those substances and vitrified Bodies to vanish away, so that the metallic substance comes to its natural State again; But if the Metal doth not return to it again, then that Fixation as is said, is good and sufficient for Workmanship, though it be not a true and natural Fixation and Perfection and therefore cannot be useful for medicinal Affairs and other natural and proper Offices required from essential Gold or Silver.

The retrograde Order, which is shorter, begins from the last universal Trial, viz: from the solution, collection of the Calces and their Reduction into a body, which if it succeeds legitimately, then there needs no further trial. For these Trials alone legitimate a Reality, manifesting the essential Properties of the Metal. But if it doth not succeed, go on in the retrograde Trials, of which if but one doth fail it is an ill Omen. But if all do answer according to your wish it is an argument of sufficient Fixation, as it is said for [fabrile] Works especially if after such retrograde Trials, the right Order also hath been followed, and that hath well succeeded.

The oblique Order, begins with the middle Trials and it goes on either straight forwards, to the very last Trial, or in retrograde Order from the last to the first. If after all such Trials, there be a happy comming out, tis well; but if after the retrograde Way the Trial succeeds indifferently, the Probation is uncertain. For many sophistical Works do sustain all probations and trials made, in contrary and preposterous Order, which will not suffer the right Order and Trials made according to the natural Series. Farewell.

Brussels, 22nd September, 1646.

Epistle 40.

For these forsaid Probations and Trials we have thought fit to add some caution for Fear you should one Time or other be deceived and by ovserving perhaps in the Antimonial Trial a diminution of the Substance of Gold, to condemn that as not good. For in the said Antimonial Trial (as it is commonly made) the best and the purest Gold may suffer a Detriment, not that it flies with the Antimonial Mercury but because it doth mix it self in the Trial, which the Recrements, in which there remains a small Portion of Gold and that through the too accurate Industry of the Examinator and not without great Labour and weariness of the Body. For this comes to pass according to the common Way, when by great violent labour, and long agitation of great bellows, the whole quantity of trial substance is dissipated and thus the Gold which is to be purified, is by this Operation driven into divers crucibles and also lose by the way. But do so, mix with the fitted Antimonial Powder, the eigth Part of the crude Tartar and then go on in your Way and you shall lose nothing or vey little of your Gold and your Labour will be so much less. For the Tartar throws down the whole quantity of Gold to the Bottom of the crucible so that nothing can remain in it but the Antimonial Feces.

And now what besides this I have said might belong to the Methods of Trials, viz: in what manner they are performed, such Things you shall find in common Books, which herein do give you good Directions, but if anything could be wanting you must converse with expert Ethnicks. For such things are better learned by experimental Habits than by Precepts.

Neither doth Philosophy's shortness concern herself with such little Artifices, or unusual Commerce engaged in greater Business should allow it. And herewith is finished the accurate and true compendious Doctrine of the Whole-hermetical Dosciente, I promised you by means whereof you can when you please lay hand yourself on the Wolrk.

And if by Chance in the Work itself, though done according to the Rule given above, in the Practice all things should not presently succeed according to your With the Senses, do not leave therefore your Work, but rather have a Recourse to our theoretical Epistles, in which we have explained both creations, and endeavor by that, what is explained there and orderly described to explain that, what in the Practice seems to you intricate and obscure, remembering that Proposition which there we have laid down for an undoubted Axiom, viz: that Art imitates Nature and yet perfects the same, and that as many Acts be in the One as the Other few excepted such as we

have there noticed and rehearsed. And again those acts, if you cannot distinguish, read over and over again the very Text of mosaical Exposition of the Creation of the inferior World, namely the Fabrick attentively considering each Day's Operation of the primordial Week. For with the number, Order and Manner also, is admirably well thought of all our philosophical operations and practice that by the dictate of the Holy Ghost and himself in a s true Exemplar given to all true Philosophers, nothing therein being left out or preposterously or confusedly written.

This Council I have given you for a Conclusion, provoking all others, which as to this matter can be given.

Farewell.

Brussels, 1st October, 1646.

Epistle 41.

Our intention was, that having given you in these Epistles such an easy and clear Method as possibly could be given, of the true Principles, as well as the alchymical Theory, as its Practice, you might now apply yourself to the reading of Authors and do endeavor to explain and to apply their writings and sentiments to these our Principles being they do not at all differ from theirs; except perhaps in some Expressions and Cunnings of communicating of our Hypothesis. But since you are as you say so deeply engaged, as well in public as private affairs, and since this study requires a mind free from all cares, [Note in the margin reads: True.] we will not think much to give you according to your Desire such short and perspicuous Rules for conferring and confronting the Doctrine of our Epistles, with the best of the best Authors, as with the Sense and meaning of our Nouvum Lumen Chymicum, also and we have thought fit to [unrecognizable word] advise you also of some things without which Knowledge there cannot be a natural and Genuine Interpretation of me and authors though the some may be right, true and conformable to the Intention of the wise. First then it is to be taken Notice of, that all and so many Authors are faithful, though they have written and lived in divers ages, yet they have all with One and the same Contrivance and Artifice, as if conspired, endeavoured that while they would leave to Posterity the Monuments of Alchymical Truth which they really had found themselves by their work, they have performed it in such a Manner that those which were thereinto born and by God destinated to get this sacred Knowledge, and excited by the Testimony of those Brethren, might upon those grounds first ask that some knowledge from God, with zealous Prayer (For without his special Grace and Assistance the same cannot be acquired, neither being acquired can be exercised, of

Men though otherwise witty and ready, as well in speculation aas Operation) and hope to attain to it. But those which being unworthy of so precious and not less pernicious Art coming into wicked hands, or which by God were destinated to other Affairs, might by their enigmatical writings and Difficulty of Labour be terrified there with and averted from their intended Purpose.

Therefore the ancient Writers have purposely many things left out, and left them to be said by their followers and to be added. Yet so as not you repeat again what had been said already by their Predecessors.

Besides this they have everywhere invented Fables and thrown many stones in the way, as if by those singular Ways, they had proposed to themselves All, but One and the Same Object and End viz: to hide the Mysteries. And thus they all have used the same general ways to effect it which I now shall reduce to three heads and declare hereafter.

Farewell.

Brussels, 1st October, 1646.

Epistle 42.

The first way is that to cause greater Obscurity. They have in several Places in their Writings divided One thing in itself, and have not only distributed the same one Thing in several Parts, but have also thrown in the Way with it exquisite Appositions, nay (that I may say so) formal Contradictions, so that what One Place doth affirm, the other denies. However they do not altogether suppress to find out the way, to reconcile it and to distinguish their meaning, yet nevertheless it is all sounded in a vast and profound sea of confusion.

The second way is that in One Place and the same Context they do make Expression of two or more different things or if they do of them handle seperately in divers Places and contexts, they do confound them and make it as one thing, expressing it with almost the same words in appearance the same thing signifying and that especially when they come to touch the Preparation of our Mercury or also the Mastery and its Fermentation or specific Determination, to a Metalline Nature. For those things though they be altogether different, yet they make them so alike the joined Propositions, which seem to have a joined Sense have altogether for seperated Intentions, only cohering because of the affinity, analogimus, or Onionymia of matter. The third way is that they study to propose things in a preposterous order, especially when they come to treat of the Subject and Disposition of their Operations. For things being treated of in right Order, though in an obscure style may at length be found out, by sharp wits, remaining only hid to Fools. Therefore they thought it congrous to their Design, now to begin in their writings from the End, now from the Beginning, now to

leave off the lastly to invert all.

These things are of us like to the other Authors, religiously and with great Industry observed in our Nouvum Lumen Chymicum, with its depending Treatises, the Dialogues namely of Sulphur and Mercury, some operations we have contracted under generical Acceptions of Terms, for Fear of Interception, which however we have largely here explicated in our theoretical Epistles.

Neither is there any Thing left out, or that I should have dealt preposterously or deceitfully. And therefore if you will fully apprehend, as well our, as the meaning meaning of other authors, according to the Doctrine of our Epistles and desire to be able to explain rightly the obscure Places and so to avoid [Rocks] and to reconcile contrary Doctrines and lastly to be able to distinguish what is confusedest, then it becomes you to have deeply infixed in your mind the most necessary foresaid Distinction, hitherto never so openly expressed and perhaps never hereafter so perspicuously set forth viz: the Distinction between the universal and the two partial Lapides, or the Exaltation of the Philosophical Mercurius or the Magestry, and then its mineral Fermentation or Specification. For this Distinction is the Key to the temple of philosophical wisdom and is also the mystery of our Art. Besides this you must remember to infer, confer and refer Places to Places, subjects to subjects and sentences to sentences.

Farewell.

Brussels, 8th December, 1646.

Epistle 43.

After the general advice how to read and understand authors, it will be usefull to come to a particular Explanation and conciliation not of all and every single Place and Expositions about the last Part of Chrysopeia (of such chiefly you do not consult us) but only of the chiefest Places to which all other Places and seeming contradictions can be referred, as well in our as in other Authors writings here and there occurring. All seeming Contradictions then in all Authors and also in our Writings do concern either the things signified by certain words or Terms, or the Term itself signifying the Thing. Those which concern the Thing can be reffered in general to two Heads namely, to the Matter, and to the manner of handling the Operation.

The first Head is to be divided again into two Articles suitable to the two last Doubts where it was questioned [Quotaxtes] the Matter of the Lapis be and what she is. What concerns the first Article where it is asked of the Matter of the Lapis be of various sort, there are some that obstinately do hold and affirm and that under an obligation of a sacred Oath that there is but one Thing for the Lapis or if there be more than one, that they are ought to be considered as a mixtum and in ye constitution of a

mixtum and those Parts are three viz: Salt, Sulphur, and Mercury making up but one physical Totum one thing by itself in any mixed Body and not many. The ground of which sentence seems is taken from what somewhere else I with divers other Authors have delivered in our writings viz: that one only Thing be sufficient for to make the Lapis.

However there may two Things be used but they must be of one Radix and that [unrecognizable symbol] for Brevity's sake which abreviation some think to be a new invention above the experience of the ancients and not necessary for the confection of the Lapis.

Others contrary do admit two divers substances and partial Matters for the Lapis which the Philosophers under the name of Sulphur-vive and living Mercury and with divers other two membered nomenclatures do decypher as when they call it living Gold, living Silver, Man and Wife, Gabricius and Bera, and such like, which Diversity of Names, sounds as if there were also comprehended diversity of Nature's together with a difference of affections, and that it were distinct Supposita and consequently that there was involved Plurality of things consisting in two numbers. To which Number modern Philosophers add a third Substance and name, viz: Salt.

Others lastly are not contended with the number neither but will have seven Substances for the Materia viz: of seven Metals. For say they the Lapis is to be an universal Agens. But the universal Nature is such that it is made up by all its subjected species. Add to this that we ourselves seem to favour this opinion, when we have in our Nouvum Lumen Chymicum expressed some things like to it in our Discourse of the Seven Planets and Harmony of Metals.

To this Opinion comes near that which to the Lapis requires three substances or three divers things, instead of seven Metals, to which may be added that the Lapis being befriended with the three Families with the three Families of the lower mixture conserve them herein equally being he serves for their Production, Conservation, and Reparation always.[Note in the margin reads: Their species Individuum.]

All which seems could not be if the Lapis were and must not be composed of things of a threefold Purpose of Nature.

These Things are opposed against the first article all which the following Epistles shall elucidate.

Farewell.

Brussels, 4th October, 1646.

Epistle 44.

Both sentences of the precedent Epistles are true, but you must take them in the proper sense and under certain limitation or distinction.

The first is true in Respect of the primordial Production viz: the Fermentation of our living Mercury and his conversion into the Seed of primordial Nature by action of Primordial Seed, in Manners, the ways largely exposed which Production may happen not only in the Bowels of the Earth but also in artifical Vessels. Neither is there unto necessarily required anything else besides the foresaid Spiritus Universalis or our living Mercury. For it cannot happen otherwise but that this our mercurius through so many assertions, descertions, by which he is agitated and moved driven by the Archeus from the lowest to the uppermost Parts of this Sublunary World and contrary, but that by so many as it were Distillations, Rectifications, and Sublimations the being thus prepared hath also by his magnetical Virtue attracted out of most profound lurking holes of primordial Seeds, many seeds of Gold and Silver, by means of which he can be assimilated and consequently can be made mineral and Metallick.

For the Lapis metallicus is nothing else than the multiplied Seed of Gold or Silver or the Mercury specified and assimilated into the Seed of Gold or Silver.

But this is in the Earth effected in a very long Time partly because of the Debility of the Archeus, partly because of the weakness of the fermentative Faculty of primordial Seeds.

But if we have Respect unto the Production which belongs to Art and to which is done by Virtue of Particular Seeds and with far more Efficacy and Celerity than the former, then I say in that Respect this first Opinion is altogether false, because that the particular Seeds of Gold or Silver necessarily must be had from Gold or Silver vulgar and are not to be applied to the said Mercury as we have proved abundantly elsewhere.

Therefore we must for the confection of the Lapis admit two Things, namely Sperma, or the Vitriol of Gold which contains the particular Seed of Gold and our Spirit Universal which is to be assimilated and converted into particular Seed of Gold, or if you please, of Silver, namely to make up the Lapis metallicus, or a metallick specification and that according to the first Intention and Term of Multiplication elsewhere explained.

However, take notice that these two things notwithstanding are but of one Radix and are not to be looked upon as incomplete Substances which Respect have all natural Parts of physical mixture in Respect of their physical Whole one by itself (as those men ridiculously hold and defend, which affirm that all of the Plurality of things here to be defended, must consist in the Separation of Mercury, Sulphur and Salt from one complete Substance, viz: Gold or Silver. For this State of Habit (Habitus) signifies and argues a State of a divided and maimed Body, but not of divers Things of one Radix, but they are to be taken as compleat Substances, distinct and not depending one upon the other, yet agreeing according to the homogeneity of Principles therefore explained, which Homogeneity doth include an identity and unity of offspring or Radix of both Substances, but not an Unity, or Identity of the Trunk or Stipes. And this Distinction is very well to be noted and observed. For there is a very vast

Difference between the Unity or identity of the Radix (as for example the Tree and the fruit of the Tree, which have their own complete Beings, distinct and altogether different, are said to be of the same Root and offspring that is of the same as well active as passive seminal and constitutive Principles of the Species.) And the identity of the whole Trunk or Stipes. For the Bark and Heart of any Tree having their distinct Being from the Tree, but an incomplete one, are said to be Parts by themselves, of one and the same Body.

All which that it may be no longer obscure to you I will more plainly explain, for the sake of the alleged Sentences.

The first Sentence, then can be understood either of the first Lapis, or Magistry or of second, that is, its Specification. If it be understood of the Magistry the sentence is not True.

1. Because that thereunto is required, nothing else but our Universal Spirit. For here this Magistry is nothing else than a due Coition or Coagulation of the sole substance of the said universal Spirit according to the three divers degrees of his Temperation, viz: Mercurial, Sulphurous, and Saline; In which Saltishness, the Exaltation of the universal Mercurius and the Perfection of the magistry is terminated by Imitation of natural coction of the same Mercurius done in the Bowels of the Earth, before he is specified through primordial Seeds.

But if the said Sentence be understood of the specification or the Specific Magistry's Determination to the Nature of Gold or Silver it must be two ways distinguished. For if the Meaning be of that Specification which (though seldom and in a very long Time) doth happen without any intrinsical Accession by the Power of the primordial Seeds, viz: whereof the said universal spirit, hath in himself but a very small Quantity which doth constitute his hermaphroditical Nature so that the very Seeds take Place of the masculine Seeds and the substance of the Spirit that of the feminine: Or if we aim at that same specification which happens by extrinsical Accession and copulation of Seeds, either primordial in the Bowels of the Earth or particular in an artificial vessel, then in that same sense the said sentence is False.

For the specifying Seed and the Matter specifically are really two distinct substances, yea two complete but homogeneous substances by homogeneity of principiating Principles and therefore one and the same Radix which is all one with true Philosophers.

But perhaps you will argue thus; All mixed Bodies though of diverse Species and Nature are according to this sort of Homogeneity of Principles, homogeneous. For according to our aforesaid Doctrine all Matters subjected to any of those mixed Bodies Form is homogeneous with the universal Spirit and therefore they are also one of the Same Radix: so that any of these bodies can be taken for all Sorts of Multiplication to be the proper Matter which if it doth hold in things which are of divers Species and Number, certainly it will hold in natural Parts of a mixture, as it is a mixture viz: in Mercury, Sulphur, and Salt, because that these have the same natural

Principles, with the whole.

And certainly this Objection doth mighty pinch and leave it without it's due Resolve anywhere in Authors to be found directly expressed. Take it then here I pray you.

And to answer to this objection decisively it is to be observed that there are three conditions required according to the Philosophers before anything can be called homogeneous with another by Homogeneity of Principles.

Of the first condition is that both Substances have a compete Being so that one towards the other must not bear the Relation of being Part of the Whole.

The second is that One of these complete substances being considered as a Mixture, be more simple than the other and be but one degree higher in the sense of mixture which we have given in our theoretical Epistles.

The third is that the simpler substance be equally indifferent to all Forms and be naturally capable and apt to receive a new and another above his own Form, another Thing, which is of greater Composition.

Further it is to be noticed, that the Word Radix be equivocal and is taken three ways:

1. Properly for a material Principle of all things, not for that chymerical Materia prima without any Form as the false schools do hold, but for our universal Spirit not yet contracted to a certain Species, of any lower mixture and having the Propriety of a complete Substance or if you rather will it is to be taken for principiated Principles. Yet more simple such as gradually ascending you can reckon till you come to the most simple Elements or to the very primordial chaotic Water.

2. Improperly by the Analog: to the precedent Acceptation for the principle Part of any living Thing which first receives the Nourishment and afterwards doth distribute to its Parts, collectively or distributively.

3. Yet more improperly; for the Trunk or Stipes of anything and that in Respect of the Parts hewn from it or separated, that is, for a total Supposition or any complete Substance in Respect of its complete substantial Parts.

This being agreed to the answers and solution of the former Objection will be easy.

For all mixtures of the three Families of each Species being compaired amongst themselves, have indeed the first conditions viz: to be complete substances, but they do want all the other.

For they are in the Scale of the mixture, of the same Degree of the last Genesis. That is, they are individuals under each species of One, or other Genus of the three Families. And therefore as we have said before, though they amongst themselves, can be transmuted, one into another, by Virtue of Odour of substantial Form, yet with all they cannot acquire a new Form, superior in degree. But Salt, Sulphur and Mercurius if (which however we do deny) they could be separated from any Mixture, they could not be complete substances having always the Relation as Parts to the Whole.

The above said mixtures then are not adverse to the Species of the same Radix, which as they have amongst them being they are not homogeneous by homogeneity of

Principle, since the necessary thereunto belonging conditions are wanting, and so neither are Salt, Sulphur and Mercury homogeneous for the self same Reason, yet they are of the same Trunk, which the Philosophers as yet have not minded.

The second Sentence how far she is true and by what Distinction is more than Evident by the Elucidation of the foregoing.

Lastly the third Sentence if it be referred to the passive Power of our universal Spirit, viz: to a disposition to receive all forms and the very nearest which he hath, this, theirs, or any of theirs, then this Sentence is most true but if the same be referred to the Effects it is false. But the argument whereupon the said Sentence is grounded, in respect of to materials is traded or taken from metaphysic and mental composition and applied to physical Productions. Neither is our Meaning that when we speak of the seven metals analogically being taken for the seven Planets from whom they have these their cabalistical names, or contrary speaking of Planets and meaning thereby the Metals, that those seven Planets or Metals substantially do enter the Matter of the Lapis. But only that we would therewith express that all the Virtues of those Planets and Influences are agreeing and highly exalted in the universal Spirit. Sometimes we do signify therewith the divers Degrees of the Contemperative successfully intervening in the Coction of the philosophical Egg (manifesting itself by the Colours) and answering in Order the Qualities and Temperaments as well of the seven Metals and the seven Planets.

Farewell.

Brussels, 20th October, 1646.

Epistle 45.

The second Article is concerned about the Qualities of the Matter and is according to the Division of the precedent Article, divided into two Sections, distributing the whole Matter of the Lapis into particular Matters.

In the first Section is treated of the Doubts made to the first Matter, namely active and assimilating Matter.

In the second is treated of the Oppositions refferring to the second Matter, namely the passive Matter, or which is to be assimilated.

Either of these Sections is subdivided again into two Particles. Of which the first shall consider the Essence and Nature of the Matter. The second its properties. Concerning then the Nature and essence of *materia prima* some do say that it is common Gold or Silver. I mean simple and vulgar Gold, as it brought out of the mines and no other Substance. And truly many a Passage in Philosophical books seem to confirm this position.

Others grant the same to be something else besides common Gold or Silver, yea it to

be of their Nature and only Virtually so, or having some affinity or analogy with their that is to say whose Nature is partly the same with Gold and Silver, partly different, such as is Antimony, Vitriol, Sulphur common or any other inferior Metal, which is proved by the authority of many Writers. Others lastly inclining to a middle opinion say that not analogical neither virtual Gold or Silver, be the materia Lapis but true mineral and genuine Gold or Silver yet under some artificial Form given by a physical Preparation but not common and in this Respect it is called living Gold or Silver not common neither vulgar but under the form of Mercury or Salt or Sulphur drawn out of Gold or Silver or any other Subject or both the former. And truly neither of them which hold this Proposition want any plausible Arguments to confirm it, nay as it were decrees of the Wise, which the next Epistle shall declare.

Farewell.

Brussels, 25th Obctober, 1646.

Epistle 46.

The first and the last Sentence are true. For as we have somewhere else proved, that the Ferment or *prima Materia Lapis* can be nothing else than the Vitriol (which is the *Sperma*) of Gold or Silver but the particular Seeds of Gold and Silver are truly and physically Gold and Silver, though now considered under some other Form and artificial Preparation not common, yet friendly to their Nature. In which Preparation Gold and Silver is dissolved with the like natured Dissolvent as in Ice in Water which is the Nature with Ice. In which sense the Gold or Silver are said to be reduced to their Principles: that is to say to be resolved into water and into the same Water from whence they had their Beginning, by means of which Water they being dissolved their Vitriol or *Sperma* is drawn out and cannot again be brought into a metallick Body till after the confiction of the Lapis by Perfection.

It is therefore true what other sentence maintains: and therefore have no need of any other Distinction or Exposition of any Decrees of the Author about this Matter. For in this said sentence all do proclaim the naked Truth without Veil.

But the second Sentence is absolutely false, if it be understood of the *prima Materia*, namely of the Ferment notwithstanding the Authorities which commonly are alledged for it, all which Testimony are to be understood of the second Matter, namely our Universal Spirit, or our living Mercurius, which because of his Homogeneity of Principle which it hath with Gold and Silver it is not unaptly called Gold or Silver being so virtually and analogally. And though the Philosophers here do not express fully their meaning which they have of the second matter, yet for that Reason our Solution cannot be reprehended; because as I have remarked heretofore such is the council and artifice of all Philosophers, that they divide and distribute the Truth, in

several disjoined and here and there dispersed Propositions. And truly such Speeches of the analogical Matter, scarce one doth utter but that he hath also somewhere else let fall and or given more express and scarce obscure Prescriptions and Descriptions of the Gold mineral, the first Matter.

Farewell.

Brussels, 1st December, 1646.

Epistle 47.

About the Properties of the first Matter there are amongst the Authors, scarce any or but small Dissentions and therefore those whatever they may be can easily be reconciled by the Doctrine of our precedent Epistle.

Therefore we will go presently to the second Matter, about this then there are no small Oppositions. For some will have that the same be vulgar Mercury. To which assertion now adays almost the whole Troop of pretended Philosophers give their consent being supported by probable arguments, and the short sentences and apophthegms of the Wise.

Others prove the vulgar not to be it, but a metallic One, or of the same substance out of which came forth the prima Materia of Gold or Silver or which is drawn out of any other metallic substance as Lead, Iron, etc.

Other less scrupulous do affirm that the Mercurial Part of anything, be it mineral, vegetable or animal and that either collectively or distributively may with equal Right serve for the second Matter, being that it is said that the Mercurius of the Philosophers be in all places and in all things. Lastly because the philosophical Fathers do describe the second Matter, that she be vile, known of all Men everywhere to be found, of common use to all Men and before the Eyes of all Men; and there are which give their Suffrage, for Excrements, Filth and Dirt not well smelling for the most Part.

All these Oppositions we shall reconcile. And to do this I must in this Place reveal a Secret, which hitherto above all Things hath been kept secret by the Philosophers.

And that is that the Philosophers have considered and described three Things about the second Matter.

1. The second Matter itself viz: That substance which is the true second Matter of the Lapis and that is our spiritus universalis or our living Mercury.
2. The Substance in which the same spirit lodged; namely that Corpus out of which this second Matter was drawn, that is to say a certain Sort of true and natural Earth not differing from the elemental Earth essentially but only accidentally in Respect of its great Subtilization and natural Purification, which is effected by the Archeus. And this commonly is called magnesia.
3. And lastly, the manner now that this second Matter doth exist in this Earth namely,

not as a substantial Part of the whole, or a Portion of a physical Body by itself in which it exists; but like a thing contained in another Vessel, or in an extraneous Continent, or like an accidental Part, by accident joined to make up the whole. That is to say a Corpus made up only of Parts complete aggregated, or brought together in the compound, each in his proper Being and only locally in the same whole joined and confused, such is the Water, wherewith the sponge is filled. It is not certainly a substantial Part of the Sponge but is only and every way confused in the Sponge. Which nature of the subject of this second Matter and its Manner of Existency is verified by this: that (and it is worthy to take notice of) after the separation, the Caput Mortum hath a deep black colour, and a consummate Insipidity, and natural Siccity of Earth, and that no Salts remain in it, which is a sign, it is not to be a mixture out of the three Families: For there is no Mixture, but it leaves leaves in the Caput Mortum Salt after a distillatory Separation.

The Ignorance or Incogitancy of the Secret hath caused chimerus and Phantasms in Philosophers Brains confounding these three things and conceiving that the Descriptions given and referring to all these Three do belong only to one and the same Thing, and on the otherside the Knowledge of this Arcanum its consideration and Application are able to clear all, though never so pregnant or foolish Oppositions and to demonstrate the Truth in its splendor as will appear in the next.

Farewell.

Brussels, 7th December, 1646.

Epistle 48.

The Arcanum of the precedent Epistle being exposed the Oppositions against the second Matter are easily cleared.

The first sentence then must be distinguished two ways.

1. By distinguishing the Term, or the word common. For if we speak of the very substance of the second Matter, namely that of our universal Spirit, and this word is taken improperly, signifying vulgar, and this the second Matter to be a vulgar Thing and Not something rare; than the sentence is altogether false.

But if the same word is taken in its proper and natural sense, as it signifies a Habit and Relation to many Things, and thus referred to the very substance of the Second Matter then this sentence is most true. For our Mercurius or universal Spirit is common and a common Principle of all Things, neither can be given any mixture of the three Families to which it hath not this Relation to other Things, as to be to them a necessary Principle.

But if the foresaid Term of common be taken and understood of the Subject wherein

the Second Matter lodges of the Manner of his Inexistence in the same, let the Word be taken properly or improperly without controversy that Proposition is false.

For Mercury vulgar hath not precisely that Nature and essence of Earth which the said Subject must have: Neither hath common Mercury anything in itself which is not an essential Part of it. For the Mercury, Sulphur and Salt of his (if there be any such Things in him) have lost in him their complete Being and their own Totality, which they had before in themselves, neither can they be restored to that again which we have sufficiently proved somewhere else viz; where we did treat of [Actro] simplification (as Bread cannot be bought again to Corn) the Reason of which is the same as is that concerning the Restitution of Parts of a physical Compound, to its former Totality and completion of his Being. The second Way of distinguishing the same said sentence is by distinguishing the passive Power and the act of which Distinction we have made use above in precedent Articles in another Matter.

For if you speak of the very Substance of the second Matter and the Term or Word be understood of Mercury vulgar [positive] that is to say, for a Matter which hath Dispositions not far remote to receive the Forms and acts of vulgar Mercury then that sentence is true.

And this manner of expounding is not unusual, for in this sense, corn is called the Food of Men, though immediately the Man doth not feed upon the raw Corn as it is yet in the Herb, but upon Bread which is made of the Seed of the same in Relation to the subject or the Body out of which our Mercury is drawn and of the manner of its Existancy in it, then the Sentence can neither be taken for true and veritable for the same Reasons we have alledged above.

Farewell.

Brussels, 12th December, 1646.

Epistle 49.

The second Opinion being understood either of the second Matter herself, or of her Subject or of the Manner of the Inexistence in it, the same is certainly false.

But the Authority upon which it is grounded must be understood, not of the second, but of the first Materia Lapis which is the Vitriol of Gold and Silver which Vitriol indeed really is the metallic Mercury but in the state of metallic Coction, hence it cannot be brought back again to its former and primogeneal Simplicity as we have often said this.

And this Manner of speaking is not unusual neither. For wheaten Bread is called wheat and it is really Wheat but under a new Form and Coction, from which Form it cannot be recalled again to serve for the same Effect and Purpose as it could have done and been useful before it was made into Bread. For being once made so, let it

afterwards be altered, changed and prepared, as you will yet it can never be restored again to its former habit of wheat or Meal, out of which the Bread was made in such a Manner, that out of the same such like Bread all together could be made again, as was the former. But if wheat not yet fully made into Bread but only into a Paste and being in a fermentation can other Wheat not yet fermented but only with the other impasted bring to the same Fermentation also.

The very same Thing happens in Metals for the same Reason and Cause though some Things in another Manner as to the Act of Fermentation.

The third Opinion which holds that any mixed Bodies Mercurial Part may be our second Matter is most notoriously false, either if you refer it to the main substance of our second Matter or to its Subject or the Manner of its Existency in it.

But the Reason of such an Opinion is to be considered and distinguished.

For as to the Place it is granted that our Mercurius or universal Spirit exists everywhere, because he is joined with all the Elements and chiefly with the Air not only filling all spaces of the World hindering everywhere vacuity, but also penetrating all other Elements and all other Bodies, taking Possession of their Pores.

And this is so far that it contradicts us not but rather, that it, by an inexpugnable Argument doth confirm our Doctrine. For this Condition and as it were Immensity can ascertain to nothing else in the world besides our Mercurius or universal Spirit.

But as to its proper and substantial Inexistency in all and every one mixed Body, that is in a manner of a part substantial, it is again to be distinguished.

For if the meaning be that of Mercurius be in all things actuated and contracted unto a new Degree of Composition or of Form substantial above that Degree he had before, then it is granted; But then in such a state he cannot profit at all, or be useful, as to the making of the Lapis neither can it be subjected for the second Matter, as we have proved sufficiently except you would have it back simplified, which is impossible and against Nature, as we have already demonstrated. But that the same Mercury should be in all those singular Things in the Degrees of that Simplicity and Power which is Necessary for this Purpose, that he may be used as the second Matter to the Lapis that is absolutely false and contradictory to itself. For the Part would then be greater than its whole, and though the Authors might seem in express words, such to insinuate, yet their Meaning is not to be taken according to the Latter in the foresaid sentence. For they will by no means teach that the second Matter of the Lapis, thus diversified in all things should be taken for it out of all things, but that the same thing which is in all things actuated, and by it all things are coagulated should be searched for and found in that state which it had before it was actuated by every Mixture, such as is daily actuated and coagulated to produce new Mixtures and that by action as well of primordial as particular Seeds.

Farewell.

Brussels, 18th December, 1646.

Epistle 50.

These are not a few Oppositions about the Proprieties and Qualities of the second Matter, them that follow its Essence.

For some do say, that the Matter be of a liquid consistency, not altogether solid, neither fluid.

Others will have it [diaphanous].

Others opacous.

Others of colestial Colours.

Others White.

Others as to the Taste will have it tart and so as to the Scent also.

Others to be pleasant and sweet.

Others will have its Constitution moist.

Others dry.

Others grant a goldish or internal red Tincture.

Others deny the same.

Others do choose it old, others new and fresh.

All those different opinions are easily reconciled according to what hath been said before.

For if the Question be about the main substance of the second Matter she is fluid and liquid. [Note in the margin reads: 2 matter fluid and liquid.]

When she first begins to be condensed and grows thickish she is diaphanous and of a colestial but not a blue colour, only pellucid and afterwards appearing with intermixed infinite colour, like unto a rainbow.

She is moist in summo Gradu because she abounds of congealed Air. Hence you understand the sayings that she doth not modify the hands namely, as long as it remains in its Density or Coagulation.

It hath an internal exuberant Tincture which it shews within a few days, after being separated from its Subject viz: a citrine Colour like unto dissolved Gold. But this [Retrograde] comes to be exalted and then it becomes high red and many other colors intervening.

The effect must be choosen to wit that Mecurial substance or universal Spirit which by any natural Distillations and Cohobations hath changed it's cold and moist into hot and moist Qualities. In which state it is no where to be found, but in our subject which being once separated he becomes very bitter an infallible sign of his quality. But if the Question be of the subject of our second Matter then as ascertain to her the contrary Quality and Propriety. For the said subject is condensed and thickish, opaque and of a hardish solidity, sweet and of an agreeable smell and of extreme Dryness. For it is

really and essentially Earth and the new or fresh is to be chosen. [Not in the margin reads: 2 matter here, thick, opaque and Solid.] For this Matter in Process of Time easily loses its universal Spirit. There are some more pregnant or contrary Qualities attributed to our famed Matter by Authors, but they shall find a more compendious Place to be treated of amongst the Terms where the descriptions are explained. Farewell.

Brussels, 22nd December, 1646.

Epistle 51.

Follows now the second Chapter, concerning the modus agendi or manner of working, about which there are also many oppositions and are to be referred either to the useful or useless Parts of the Matter, or to the Direction of the Work for to attain the End wished for.

Of which Matter though we have given sufficient Distinctions in our Epistles, yet they are here to be repeated again with some other expressions, Order and more plainly.

Now about the useful Parts, some contend that only the Mercurial Part of our Matter is beneficial.

Others only Sulphuric.

Others also Saline.

Others lastly will have them both together, but being first separated from their Body or Substance and afterwards reunited again into the same Body and total substance, the Phlegm only and Caput Mortum being taken away.

Now to reconcile these contradictions, we must know that there are two sorts of Parts, belonging to a complete corporeal Substance or Physical Totum (such as our Matter must be) and those Parts are distinguished in natural and excrementitious Parts.

The excrementitious are threefold.

1. Phlegma or rather the Mercurial Aquosity which in the first Production of it hath abounded and exceeded Nature's Weight or a due Proportion as to the strength of primordial or particular Seeds, which superfluous Portion and that because of Nature's Weakness that it is the expelling Faculty of Seeds or because of Archeus Weakness that moves the Seeds remains confused with the rest yet but locally not as a substantial Part of the Mixture, but as an Alien and accidentally aggregated and congested into it, till at last the Archeus could expell them.

2. The Caput Mortum that is a superfluous Portion of terrestrial Corporeity which likewise Nature could not expell or because it is restrained on purpose for consecration of the Mixture, as to be the Cortex.

3. A Sort of Saltness or Oilyness growing together of Both namely the Phlegma and

Caput Mortum, and hath the face of a stinkled and poisonous Oil or malignant Sulphur.

But these excrementitious Parts do not exist universally in all Mixed Bodies. For the mixture of the first Classis have them not, described somewhere else, I mean the principiating Principles; and so our universal Spirit being considered by himself. The Reason of it, because that their material Principles are most simple and pure, which of themselves obey and follow the Motions of their Architect and Mover of Archeus, so that nothing in the first Mixture either exceeds or is deficient. For the Archeus easily can drive out what could exceed in the Matter and contrary, can take to him again what is wanting; But in the mixed Bodies of the second Classis that is in the three Families there it happens otherwise. For their material Principles are of greater composition and heavier to be moved and that more efficaciously resisting the actions and Motions of the same Archeus. From thence comes ill Temperament in the Mixture namely either in Excess, or Defect in one or the other Quality. Therefore what Moistness so ever be in the said Principles all is Mercurial and useful, yea, necessary for any Production for in this Aquosity resides the Root of Fermentability and of corporifiable Faculty. [Note in the margin reads: Mind this, page 131.]

And the infima mixture do admit likewise such excrementitious Parts, though not all, neither do all of mixture equally, or always; in some there are Faces without Phlegma as in imperfect Gold in a Diamond. Hence it is that sometimes our Dissolvent doth dissolve the entire substance of Gold though this happens but rarely. But that is not our concern here. For it is needless to enquire for such pure Gold, because our Spirit doth dissolve nothing and is incorporated with Nothing but what is pure in the Metal. For this solution happens not by the Power of extraneous corrosive Salts, but by common, of homogeneous Things by Homogeneity of Principles wherefore Heterogeneous Things will not be dissolved neither united. [Note in the margin reads: Mind.]

Natural Parts of the Matter are twofold, necessary Ones and contigent.

The necessary Ones are they which essentially do concur to constitute the necessary or physical [Totum], and separation of which necessarily must destroy the mixtum neither being once separated, can be composed or brought together again as to make up the same numerical and specifical Body, as we have proved some where else, and have exemplifies it. But these essential Parts are Matter and Form, with their pre-ordinate or subordinate [connatural] and eminently comprehended Parts social, or comparts, such as to all the Degrees of the Form, are them which the Scholastics call essential which do conditionate the form substantial, as for Example in each Animal, there is Animality, Capacity, Substantiality and so on until the highest Degree of transcendental Entity.

But as to the principiated Principles of our Matter the same are contracted and determined into a certain species of the Mixtum, which are called Salt, Sulphur, and Mercurius, and properly are Parts of the Mixtum as we have insinuated somewhere

else.

The contingent Parts are them which being separated do diminish the substance of the Mixtum but do not destroy it, and are again of twofold Order, namely homogeneous and heterogeneous. But here you must understand Homogeneity in the vulgar Sense of Schools. The homogeneous or simply quantitative Parts are these whose Essence is the same with the Totum and whose separation doth only diminish the Quantity of the substance, as fo Example are some Ounces taken out of a Pound of Gold.

The heterogeneous or Integrals (which makes up the whole, are such Substances which are of different Nature, Rationis) as well in Respect of themselves as their Totum, whose total Separation doth destroy the total Substance which never by any Means can be repaired or restored again. An Abstraction of some of those Parts doth break the Totum in Pieces, but doth not altogether destroy it.

All three kinds of Parts do (though not equally) belong to all mixta, as well as the infima of the three Families as to those of the middle and also upper Region, namely to principiated Principles not yet contracted to a certain Species. I said not equally for in some doth exist a greater Quantity of Sulphur which therefore have given them the Name of Sulphur by the Philosophers and that in a large Signification, for the Denomination is always taken from the major Part. Hence Gold in our Books is for the most Part called Sulphur and is frequently by that Appellation of Sulphur signified. In others abounds Mercury, and them have the Nomenclature of Mercury. [Note in the margin reads: Mind this, Gold called Sulphur in the Books.]

In others exceeds Salt and they are so called.

However in solid things and them which are very well concocted Salt and Sulphur are all One and the same thing, or at least they are joined so closely that they scarce or not at all can be separated. Hence the Ancients (and so neither I in my Novum Lumen Chymicum) seldom or never speak of the principle of Salt.

But when things are reduced into Vitriol, then indeed becomes them the Name and Faculty of Salt, yet then also because of the Diversity of Effects they have, now they are called Salts now Sulphurs.

Farewell.

Brussels, 26th December, 1646.

Epistle 52.

In foresaid Oppositions the Authors Aim either at the Substance itself, of both partial Matters, viz: the Vitriol of Gold and our universal Spirit: or at the Subject in which either Matter is comprehended and is drawn out viz: the simple Mineral Gold and our Magnesia. If the Business concerns the Substance itself, then we must consider either the excrementitious or the natural Parts. If we regard the excrementitious, there are

none to be drawn of, because none are here excrementitious, the One being of perfect Contemporation viz: the Vitriol of Gold, and the other of perfect Simplicity viz: our universal Spirit.

But if we regard the natural Parts, their Separation is not to be attempted, because you cannot do it, without the Destruction of the Mixtum. And though it were possible otherwise to be done, yet that Operation would signify nothing to the purpose and be superfluous. For as it is said and proved, it is against Nature, that such Parts can be brought again together to make up the same numerical or specifical Body.

But if we regard either Subject and make Reflections upon either Parts excrementitious, then there is somethings indeed to be taken from them, namely from the Gold, the Terrestreity or the superfluous Earth, which in the Production of it was confusedly mixt with its Substance: and from the Magnesia also, in whose generation, the universal Spirit meets such Earth as a Receiver and Conservator, or as a vessel for the same, his Reception to the Use of Philosophers knowing which Earth, because it is not, neither can be a natural Part, of the said universal Spirit, it can in that Respect be called its Excrement.

But if you would Reflect on the natural Parts, then in vain (as is said before) their separation is attempted.

Now after the Disquisition and Election of the useful Parts the Direction and Regimen of the Work by Art doth follow to obtain the wished End, where the signs, viz: the changes or Diversity of Colours happen.

In which Business, as in the rest, the Authors do seem vehemently to be in opposition one to the Other.

Some, they will have but one Regimen.

Others three.

Others four, viz: Solution, Ablution, Reduction, Fixation.

Others require but one continual Fire.

Others use several Degrees of Fire and manner of Heat.

Others will have but one Vessel.

Others many.

Others make divers Distillations, Imbibitions.

Others will have but one Coction.

Others assign but two Colours principle White and Red.

Others three, Black, White and Red.

Others four, Black, Green, White and Red with divers intervening Colours.

Others will have the first colour to be Red, others the same to be Black.

All of these Differences we easily could reconcile and verify everyone according to foregoing Discourses and upon the account only of diversity of Respects being had, by these Men, but that we should not be too [prolix], more than becomes our epistolar Brevity, and besides that the Expositions and Explanations here unto serving are obvious and to be found almost in all philosophical Books, let it suffice then to

delineate to you the course of the whole Practice out of the first Chapter of Genesis, which for a Directory I have given already.

Contemplate then, how the said Text of the first Chapter of Genesis having but touched in few proenual Lines the general Parts of the corporeal World, namely Heaven and Earth, doth also teach, how that the Beginning, Parts, Preparations for the Mageistry are herein occupied and busy; that out of the Chaos (not the primordial which only belong to the Creation and the Creator, but of the second, but as to us the first natural Chaos, that is our water, or universal Spirit which is involved in Darkness and tenebrious Confusion in our Magnesia upon which doth hover the azothic Spirit the created and corporeal Image of the uncreated Spirit) Heaven be made and also the philosophical Earth, which is empty and vacuous, congeinating or growing together like Time and in a quell and Salt in the Sea, which Earth at last is to be impregnated and made fertile with Seed by action of the Azotic Spirit artificially mix'd by help of external Fire. Further though the same Holy Spirit descending from generals to specials doth admirably teach the number, order and manner of all and each Arts Operations comprehended in the Number, Order and Quantity of Works done in the creation Work and first let the Light be divided from Darkness which are upon the Face of the Philosophical Deep; and that the Day should be separated from Night, for this Purpose that afterwards Darkness and Light should follow one the other alternately in all succeeding Operations. For in the whole Work Light and Darkness have interchangeably their turn.

2. How in the firmament is made in the midst of the waters and waters are divided from waters, namely those which are under the Firmament from these which are above it that is the thick from the Subtil; and that those should be gathered into one Place that the dry Land might appear.

3. How the said Earth should bud and bring forth green Herbs making Seeds after its Kind, viz: not seeds now for the three Families (for that doth not now concern us) but that proper Seed of the same three Families wherewith this Earth was to be sown and so made fruitful which frequent Irrigations of Homogeneous Dew.

4. How two great Luminaries were to be made the lesser viz: the Elixir to the White, and the greater viz: the Elixir to the Red and they should shine in the philosophical Heavens and illuminate the Earth, be it metallic, vegetable, or animal: and that they should be for Signs, Days, and Seasons, and Years, i.e. may they work such Temperaments Perfection as that there may come out, the external Signs and Marks according to the Diversity of Seasons and Age. And lastly let them make an Incompatibility suiting to the Capacity of a corporeal substance or Mobile.

5. How the said Elixirs are to be multiplied by the same water (out of which they grew at first together, or did coagulate and that they should be multiplied as well in virtue as bulk, by operations in the same Order; and with the same Regimen they had before when they were made fermented and specified, by the specific Seeds of each Family of the inferior Mixta according to each Family's Nature.

6. Let the said multiplied Elixirs within animal Bodies be converted to comfort them, by skillful exhibitions, the vegetable propagated by conjunction and union of their Salts and lastly the Metals and Minerals be transmuted by projection of Sulphurous Copulation.

And so much of the Matter and the modus agendis.

In the following Epistle we will treat of the terms.

Farewell.

Brussels, 31st December, 1646.

Epistle 53.

All what belongs to the Terms is reduced to two Heads.

The first handles of Terms compound.

The second of the single Ones.

The compound Terms, are Descriptions whereby the Philosophers do indicate as well the Matter as the modus agendi but chiefly to demonstrate the Matter which are reducible to two Articles.

The first of these which concern the first Matter.

The second which the second Matter concerns.

The Descriptions belonging to the first Matter are divided in univocal and analogical. Analogical are by which the Gold is described in that State and Condition as it serves and is subjected to philosophical Operations and as it is in *materia prima* Lapis and hath given him several Names taken from divers Bodies, which partly have the like Nature with Gold, partly are of nature different.

Thus the living Sulphur of Gold is called Vitriolum in which sense you must understand that famous saying of Vitriol, *visitabis interiora terra, rectificando, invenies occultum lapidem, veram Medicinam.* [Note in the margin reads: Here is the proper description of Vitriol (symbol of Vitriol) so often spoken by the Philosophers.] And truly our dissolved Gold or the solar Earth is a metallic Vitriol, by some analogy and Proportion agreeing with all kind of Vitriols. Of which sort of Descriptions there are innumerable in Authors, framed now by the similitude of Causes, now because of some Identity of some Proprieties, now because of Conformity of Effects and Actions; now because of some equality in Accidents.

The Authors call both Substances Gold. Item Coagulum, the Ferment, the yellow of the Egg, philosophical Man and Univocal Descriptions are which describe Gold by Name, or by such Qualities and Attributes which are proper to him, and principally belong to him and which do declare it whole Essence and only and precisely the same, such are obvious in our and all other philosophers books. [Note in the margin reads: Acting the part of the Mate.] The Meaning of such Descriptions is easily found out,

neither need such here to be referred.

Farewell.

Brussels, 7th January, 1647.

Epistle 54.

The second Article of the Descriptions of the second Matter is subdivided into three Particles.

The first contains the Descriptions belonging [to] the Matter itself.

The second considers the Descriptions of the Subject, in which the Matter lodges and from whence the same must be had.

The third hath Descriptions which are common to both viz: the Substance of the Matter and to its subject.

The Descriptions of the first Particle are as the former Ones, univocal or Analogical. Analogical are many and are, per se, well enough understood to be such being taken Notice of: if the same larger or more contract there should be described the nature of our Matter, some of such Descriptions are referred to the Traction of simple Terms, which we leave here out for Brevity's sake. Univocal also are various, such e.g. is that which doth affirm, that our Matter be every where; that she exists in every corporeal Being; that she is before all Men's eyes openly, yet cannot be seen; that she is vile and always to be found upon the very Dunhill, yet is to be esteemed for the hidden Food of Life.

All which how they should be understood and how they belong only to the universal Spirit, hath been sufficiently insinuated in the precedent Epistles.

The Descriptions of the second Particle are likewise analogical or universal.

Analogical are by which the subject of materia Secunda is called Talem, terrafoliata, mel, Ros Mercury Philosophorum minera, Forea and many such others.

Universal are very rare and in two Volumes we do find but 3 or 4 which are so clear and perspicuous that clearer ones cannot be given though it might not appear so at first. The first is by which it is asserted, that the Name of our Subject in all the Parts of the known world, and most Languages as well now in use, as absolute hath the same sound, or very little Difference. For at least the first syllable is everywhere alike to sound also in Effect of the Letter.

The other is by which it is said, that the Name of my Subject is absolved with these letters and five characters. For the Name really as well in Latin as Greek and Hebrew Toungue, is written only with their Letters of divers species, and with two of the same species with the Two of the precedent Ones.

The third is which says that the subject is prefigurated only with one mystical character unto which five letters can be referred, expressing the Word, be it, that

either the Character Totaly be divided and distributed into parts which are like unto the said Characters or be made up and compounded out of the partial Characters that are like to those five foresaid you can verify these Descriptions according to your Pleasure, since you know the true Name.

But the Quality of the Subject and the Liquor drawn from it ought rather to be considered, that the Opinion which in this Affair we have given you might be confirmed in you and laid deep in your Head. [Note in the margin reads: Read Epistle 51 attentively.]

The third Particle could give you many such like Descriptions, as the others were, mix'd Ones and completing both viz: the Substance of the Matter, and in it's subject, by which many Philosophers do testify, that their Matter be neither vegetable, animal or Mineral, neither that it is drawn out of vegetables, animals or minerals; or that they should come from them. But this Discourse would exceed the Term of an Epistle. Add to this that our Counsel and Intention is not to scrape together all kind of Descriptions and to take Pains to refer them to their proper Places but only that we might give Lights to distinguish them of the Descriptions of the manner of proceeding, we add nothing though our Division might require it, because we have hereof sufficiently treated in the latter Part of the Chapter and in that of the modus agendi.

Farewell.

Brussels, 12th January, 1647.

Epistle 55.

There remains now to treat of the simple Terms.

The whole Ambiguity then of simple Terms concerns Homonymy with divers other Things and Operations, that is in the various application of the same Word unto divers Things.

Or it concerns Polyonymy of the same Thing diversely affected and considered.

According to Homonymia, Spirit universal before he is received into our Magnesia which we call its Subject hath the Nature of Mercurius Philosophorum, not absolutely but only by analogy and Proportion which it hath with the Planet Mercurius as far namely as the same Planet being joined to all an every one of the rest of the Planets takes upon him their Qualities and Nature. Even so doth our Mercurius with inferior Planets namely the Metals and all other mixt Bodies which cannot be said of the vulgar Mercurius that he can do so. Which Mercury though he can join himself to the Metals by amalgamations, yet he cannot take on him their Qualities by any Kind of Artifice at least not so far as concerns the Multiplication of the Seeds. [Note in the

margin reads: Mind common Mercury.]

In like manner the same our Spirit, is called by the same name of Mercury while he yet resides in the Magnesia; [Note in the margin reads: Take notice.] Item as soon as he is drawn out of the same, or when reviving in the Philosophical Egg after corruption, he is intimately incorporated and infused into Gold and identified with the same. But what at present and how affected should be understood since that Term is so various in many Passages, that you can judge when you consider, what Part of our Art you have before you, theoretical or Practical and accordingly you must pass your Judgement. The same thing happens to Gold which is called a Ferment as well in the Philosophical Egg as in the State of the perfect Lapis and likewise in the act of Projection.

According to the Polyonymia the foresaid Mercurius is according to the Diversity of his State he is in, and according to its operations now called Antimony, namely then when he in the foresaid Solution doth purge the Gold and maked it more subtil, in a manner as common Antimony doth do it, in common Way though this our Purgation is much nobler and powerfull.

Then he is called Lead and that in the philosophical Egg according to the Degree of the metallic Form, he hath assumed or rather according to the symbolical Temperament which he hath now with Lead.

Then he is called the Wife, because it receives the Seed of the Gold. [Note in the margin reads: Mind this much.] Then Magnesia from Magic, because he draws to him the specific Seed of Gold like as with a magnetical Virtue. Then Chalybus, because like the Magnet doth draw the Steel, so the said Gold Seed doth draw the said Mercury.

Item it hath the Name of Sulphur, Salt and Ferment namely in the confection of the Magistry, or in its Multiplication. And at divers other Times and in divers other Operations. He is called Sulphur namely when it changes its cold temper in its central Fire and Heat takes Dominion. It is called also Salt when the Dyness of the Fire and Earth do stave and stand in Balance with Humidity, one subject to the others Victory and when the Substance is come to such a Consistency that without any Detriment the same can be dissolved in Water or Fire, but in a serene Air can be hardened, like Earth or Salt.

Lastly the said Spirit is called Ferment, in that State when he himself being coagulated, can also coagulate another Substance and make the same like himself and this as well in the confection of the magistry as in the multiplication of the same. The same is with the Gold which after it is dissolved, is by Proportion called Vitriol

and in the Corruption of it is called the Ravens Head.

Let this suffice for you, and do not desire more, except that when perhaps God and Time and your Business will give you leave to lay hand on the Work, I as I have done now might lead you; that you may prosperously finish it, and that notwithstanding you many Invocations.

Farewell.

Brussels, 18th January, 1647.