

**An
Open Entrance
to the
Closed Palace
of the King**

**by
An Anonymous Sage and
Lover of Truth**

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THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE

I, being an anonymous adept, a lover of learning, and a philosopher, have decreed 'to write this little treatise of medicinal, chemical, and physical arcana, in the year 1645, after the Birth of Christ, and in the 23rd year of my age, to assist in conducting my straying brethren out of the labyrinth of error, and with the further object of making myself known to other Sages, holding aloft a torch which may be visible far and wide to those who are groping in the darkness of ignorance. The contents of this Book are not fables, but real experiments which I have seen, touched, and handled, as an adept will easily conclude from these lines. I have written more plainly about this Art than any of my predecessors; sometimes I have found myself on the very verge of breaking my vow, and once or twice had to lay down my pen for a season; but I could not resist the inward prompting of God, which impelled me to persevere in the most loving course, who alone knows the heart, and to whom only be glory for ever. Hence, I undoubtedly gather that in this last age of the world, many will become blessed by this arcanum, through what I have thus faithfully written, for I have not willingly left any-thing doubtful to the young beginner. I know many who with me do enjoy this secret, and am persuaded that many more will also rejoice in its possession. Let the holy Will of God perform what it pleases, though I confess myself an unworthy instrument through whom such great things should be effected.

CHAPTER I

Of the need of Sulphur for producing the Elixir

Whoever wishes to possess this secret Golden Fleece, which has virtue to transmute metals into gold, should know that our Stone is nothing but gold digested to the highest degree of purity and subtle fixation to which it can be brought by Nature and the highest effort of Art; and this gold thus perfected is called "our gold," no longer vulgar, and is the ultimate goal of Nature. These words, though they may be surprising to some of my readers, are true, as I, an adept, bear witness; and though overwise persons entertain chimerical dreams, Nature herself is most wonderfully simple. Gold, then, is the one true principle of purification. But our gold is twofold; one kind is mature and fixed, the yellow Latten, and its heart or centre is pure fire, whereby it is kept from destruction, and only purged in the fire. This gold is our male, and it is sexually joined to a more crude white gold -- the female seed: the two together being indissolubly united, constitute our fruitful Hermaphrodite. We are told by the Sages that corporal gold is dead, until it be conjoined with its bride, with whom the coagulating sulphur, which in gold is outwards, must be turned inwards. Hence it follows that the substance which we require is Mercury. Concerning this substance, Geber uses the following words: "Blessed be the Most High God who created Mercury, and made it an all-prevailing substance." And it is true that unless we had Mercury, Alchemists might still boast themselves, but all their boasting would be vain. Hence it is clear that our Mercury is not common mercury; for all common mercury is

a male that is corporal, specific, and dead, while our Mercury is spiritual, female, living, and life-giving. Attend closely to what I say about our Mercury, which is the salt of the wise men. The Alchemist who works without it is like a man who draws a bow without a string. Yet it is found nowhere in a pure state above ground, but has to be extracted by a cunning process out of the substance in which it exists.

CHAPTER II

Of the Component Principles of the Mercury of the Sages

Let those who aim to purify Mercury by means of salts, faeces and other foreign bodies, and by strange chemical processes, understand that though our water is variously composed, it is yet only one thing, formed by the concretion of divers substances of the same essence. The components of our water are fire, the vegetable "Saturnian liquid," and the bond of Mercury. The fire is that of mineral Sulphur, which yet can be called neither mineral nor metallic, but partakes of both characters: it is a chaos or spirit, because our fiery Dragon, that overcomes all things, is yet penetrated by the odour of the Saturnian liquid, its blood growing together with the Saturnian sap into one body which is yet neither a body (since it is all volatile) nor a spirit (since in fire it resembles melted metal). It may thus be very properly described as chaos, or the mother of all metals. From this chaos I can extract everything -- even the Sun and Moon -- without the transmutatory Elixir. It is called our Arsenic, our Air, our Moon, our Magnet, and our Chalybs: these names representing the different stages of its development, even unto the manifestation of the kingly diadem, which is cast out of the menstruum of our harlot. Learn then, who are the friends of Cadmus; who is the serpent that devoured them; what the hollow oak to which Cadmus spitted the serpent. Learn who are the doves of Diana, that overcome the green lion by gentleness: even the Babylonian dragon, which kills everything with its venom. Learn, also, what are the winged shoes of Mercury, and who are those nymphs whom he charms by means of his incantations.

CHAPTER III

Concerning the Chalybs of the Sages

Our Chalybs is the true key of our Art, without which the Torch could in no wise be kindled, and as the true magi have delivered many things concerning it, so among vulgar alchemists there is great contention as to its nature. It is the ore of gold, the purest of all spirits; a secret, infernal, and yet most volatile fire, the wonder of the world, the result of heavenly virtues in the lower world -- for which reason the Almighty has assigned to it a most glorious and rare heavenly conjunction, even that notable sign whose nativity is declared in the East. This star was seen by the wise men of old, and straightway they knew that a Great King was born in the world. When you see its constellation, follow it to the cradle, and there you will behold a beautiful Infant. Remove the impurities, look upon the face of the King's Son; open your treasury, give to him gold, and after his death he will bestow on you his flesh and blood, the highest Medicine in the three monarchies of the earth.

CHAPTER IV

Of the Magnet of the Sages

As steel is attracted towards the magnet, and the magnet turns towards the steel, so also our Magnet attracts our Chalybs. Thus, as Chalybs is the ore of gold, so our Magnet is the true ore of our Chalybs. The hidden centre of our Magnet abounds in Salt, which Salt is the menstruum in the Sphere of the Moon, and can calcine gold. This centre turns towards the Pole with an archetic appetite, in which the virtue of the Chalybs is exalted into degrees. In the Pole is the heart of Mercury, the true fire (in which is the rest of its Master), sailing through this great sea that it may arrive at both the Indies, and direct its course by the aspect of the North Star, which our Magnet will manifest.

CHAPTER V

Of the Chaos of the Sages

Let the student incline his ear to the united verdict of the Sages, who describe this work as analogous to the Creation of the World. In the Beginning God created Heaven and Earth; and the Earth was without form and void, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. These words are sufficient for the student of our Art. The Heaven must be united to the Earth on the couch of friendship, so shall he reign in glory for ever. The Earth is the heavy body, the womb of the minerals, which it cherishes in itself, although it brings to light trees and animals. The Heaven is the place where the great Lights revolve, and through the air transmit their influences to the lower world. But in the beginning all was one confused chaos. Our Chaos is, as it were, a mineral earth (by virtue of its coagulation), and yet also volatile air -- in the centre of which is the Heaven of the Sages, the Astral Centre. which with its light irradiates the earth to its surface. What man is wise enough to evolve out of this world a new King, who shall redeem his brothers from their natural weaknesses, by dying, being lifted on high, and giving his flesh and blood for the life of the world ? I thank Thee, O God, that Thou hast concealed these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes!

CHAPTER VI

Of the Air of the Sages

Our air, like the air of the firmament, divides the waters; and as the waters under the firmament are visible to us mortals, while we are unable to see the waters above the firmament, so in "our work" we see the extracentral mineral waters, but are unable to see those which, though hidden within, nevertheless have a real existence. They exist but do not appear until it please the Artist, as the author of the *New Light* has testified. Our air keeps the extracentral waters from mingling with those at the centre. If through the removal of this impediment, they were enabled to mingle, their union would be indissoluble. Therefore the external vapours and burning sulphur do stiffly adhere to our chaos, and unable to resist its tyranny, the pure flies away from the fire in the form of a dry powder. This then should be your great object. The arid earth must be irrigated, and its pores softened with water of its own kind, then this thief with all the workers of iniquity will be cast out, the water will

be purged of its leprous stain by the addition of true Sulphur, and you will have the Spring whose waters are sacred to the maiden Queen Diana. This thief is armed with all the malignity of arsenic, and is feared and eschewed by the winged youth. Though the Central Water be his Spouse, yet the youth cannot come to her, until Diana with the wings of her doves purges the poisonous air, and opens a passage to the bridal chamber. Then the youth enters easily through the pores, presently shaking the waters above, and stirring up a rude and ruddy cloud. Do thou, O Diana, bring in the water over him, even unto the brightness of the Moon ! So the darkness on the face of the abyss will be dispersed by the spirit moving in the waters. Thus, at the bidding of God, light will appear on the Seventh Day, and then this sophic creating of Mercury shall be completed, from which time, until the revolution of the year, you may wait for the birth of the marvellous Child of the Sun, who will come to deliver his brethren from every stain.

CHAPTER VII

Of the First Operation -- Preparation of Mercury by means of the Flying Eagles

Know, my brother, that the exact preparation of the Eagles of the Sages, is the highest effort of our Art. In this first section of our work, nothing is to be done without hard and persevering toil; though it is quite true that afterwards the substance develops under the influence of gentle heat without any imposition of hands. The Sages tell us that their Eagles must be taken to devour the Lion, and that they gain the victory all the sooner if they are very numerous; also that the number of the work varies between 7 and 9. The Mercury of the Sages is the Bird of Hermes (now called a goose, now a pheasant). But the Eagles are always mentioned in the plural, and number from 3 to 10. Yet this is not to be understood as if there should be so many weights or parts of the water to one of the earth, but the water must be taken so oftentimes acuated or sharpened as there are Eagles numbered. This acuation is made by sublimation. There is, then, one sublimation of the Mercury of the Sages, when one Eagle is mentioned, and the seventh sublimation will so strengthen your Mercury, that the Bath of your King will be ready... Let me tell you now how this part of the work is performed. Take 4 parts of our fiery Dragon, in whose belly is hidden the magic Chalybs, and 9 parts of our Magnet; mingle them by means of a fierce fire, in the form of a mineral water, the foam of which must be taken away. Remove the shell, and take the kernel. Purge what remains once more by means of fire and the Sun, which may be done easily if Saturn shall have seen himself in the mirror of Mars. Then you will obtain our Chameleon, or Chaos, in which all the virtues of our Art are potentially present. This is the infant Hermaphrodite, who, through the bite of a mad dog, has been rendered so fearful of water, that though of a kindred nature, it always eschews and avoids it. But in the grove of Diana are two doves that soothe its rabid madness if applied by the art of the nymph Mercury. Take it and plunge it under water till it perish therein; then the rabid and black dog will appear panting and half suffocated -- drive him down with vigorous blows, and the darkness will be dispelled. Give it wings when the Moon is full, and it will fly away as an Eagle, leaving the doves of Diana dead (though, when first taken they should be living). Repeat this seven times, and your work is done, the gentle coction which follows is child's play and a woman's work.

CHAPTER VIII

Of the Difficulty and Length of the First Operation

Some Alchemists fancy that the work from beginning to end is a mere idle entertainment; but those who make it so will reap what they have sown -- viz., nothing. We know that next to the Divine Blessing, and the discovery of the proper foundation, nothing is so important as unwearied industry and perseverance in this First Operation. It is no wonder, then, that so many students of this Art are reduced to beggary; they are afraid of work, and look upon our Art as mere sport for their leisure moments. For no labour is more tedious than that which the preparatory part of our enterprise demands. Morienus earnestly entreats the King to consider this fact, and says that many Sages have complained of the tedium of our work. "To render a chaotic mass orderly" says the Poet, "is matter of much time and labour" -- and the noble author of the Hermetical Arcanum describes it as an Herculean task. There are so many impurities clinging to our first substance, and a most powerful intermediate agent is required for the purpose of eliciting from our polluted menstruum the Royal Diadem. But when you have once prepared your Mercury, the most formidable part of your task is accomplished, and you may indulge in that rest which is sweeter than any work, as the Sage says.

CHAPTER IX

On the Superiority of our Mercury over All Metals

Our Mercury is that Serpent which devoured the companions of Cadmus, after having first swallowed Cadmus himself, though he was far stronger than they. Yet Cadmus will one day transfix this Serpent, when he has coagulated it with his Sulphur. Know that this, our Mercury, is a King among metals, and dissolves them by changing their Sulphur into a kindred mercurial substance. The Mercury of one, two, or three eagles bears rule over Saturn, Jupiter, and Venus. The Mercury of from three to seven eagles sways the Moon; that of ten eagles has power over the Sun; our Mercury is nearer than any other unto the first *ens* of metals; it has power to enter metallic bodies, and to manifest their hidden depths.

CHAPTER X

On the sulphur which is in the Mercury of the Sages

It is a marvellous fact that our Mercury contains active sulphur and yet preserves the form and all the properties of Mercury. Hence it is necessary that a form be introduced therein by our preparation, which form is a metallic sulphur. This Sulphur is the inward fire which causes the putrefaction of the composite Sun. This sulphureous fire is the spiritual seed which our Virgin (still remaining immaculate) has conceived. For an uncorrupted virginity admits of a spiritual love, as experience and authority affirm. The two (the passive and the active principle) combined we call our Hermaphrodite. When joined to the Sun, it softens, liquefies, and dissolves it with gentle heat. By means of the same fire it coagulates itself; and by its coagulation produces the Sun. Our pure and homogeneous Mercury, having conceived inward Sulphur (through our Art), coagulates itself under the influence of gentle outward heat, like the cream of milk -- a subtle earth floating on the water. When it is united to the Sun, it is not only not coagulated, but the composite substance becomes

softer day by day; the bodies are almost dissolved; and the spirits begin to be coagulated, with a black colour and a most fetid smell. Hence it appears that this spiritual metallic Sulphur is in truth the *moving principle in our Art*; it is really volatile or unmatured gold, and by proper digestion is changed into that metal. If joined to perfect gold, it is not coagulated, but dissolves the corporal gold, and remains with it, being dissolved, under one form, although before the perfect union death must precede, that so they may be united after death, not simply in a perfect unity, but in a thousand times more than perfect perfection.

CHAPTER XI

Concerning the Discovery of the Perfect Magistry

There are those who think that this Art was first discovered by Solomon, or rather imparted to him by Divine Revelation. But though there is no reason for doubting that so wise and profoundly learned a sovereign was acquainted with our Art, yet we happen to know that he was not the first to acquire the knowledge. It was possessed by Hermes, the Egyptian, and some other Sages before him; and we may suppose that they first sought a simple exaltation of imperfect metals into regal perfection, and that it was at first their endeavour to develop Mercury, which is most like to gold in its weight and properties, into perfect gold. This, however, no degree of ingenuity could effect by any fire, and the truth gradually broke on their minds that an internal heat was required as well as an external one. So they rejected aqua fortis and all corrosive solvents, after long experiments with the same -- also all salts, except that kind which is the first substance of all salts, which dissolves all metals and coagulates Mercury, but not without violence, whence that kind of agent is again separated entire, both in weight and virtue, from the things it is applied to. They saw that the digestion of Mercury was prevented by certain aqueous crudities and earthy dross; and that the *radical* nature of these impurities rendered their elimination impossible, except by the complete inversion of the whole compound. They knew that Mercury would become fixed if it could be freed from their defiling presence -- as it contains fermenting sulphur, which is only hindered by these impurities from coagulating the whole mercurial body. At length they discovered that Mercury, in the bowels of the earth, was intended to become a metal, and that the process of development was only stopped by the impurities with which it had become tainted. They found that that which should be active in the Mercury was passive; and that its infirmity could not be remedied by any means, except the introduction of some kindred principle from without. Such a principle they discovered in metallic sulphur, which stirred up the passive sulphur in the Mercury, and by allying itself with it, expelled the aforesaid impurities. But in seeking to accomplish this practically, they were met by another great difficulty. In order that this sulphur might be effectual in purifying the Mercury, it was indispensable that it should itself be pure. All their efforts to purify it, however, were doomed to failure. At length they bethought them that it might possibly be found somewhere in Nature in a purified condition -- and their search was crowned with success. They sought active sulphur in a pure state, and found it cunningly concealed in the House of the Ram. This sulphur mingled most eagerly with the offspring of Saturn, and the desired effect was speedily produced -- after the malignant venom of the "air" of Mercury had been tempered (as already set forth at some length) by the Doves of Venus. Then life was joined to life by means of the liquid; the dry was moistened; the passive was stirred into action by the active; the dead was revived by the living. The heavens were indeed temporarily clouded over, but after a copious downpour of rain, serenity was restored.

Mercury emerged in a hermaphroditic state. Then they placed it in the fire; in no long time they succeeded in coagulating it, and in its coagulation they found the Sun and the Moon in a most pure state. Then they considered that, before its coagulation, this Mercury was not a metal, since, on being volatilised, it left no residue at the bottom of the distilling vessel; hence they called it unmatured gold and their living (or quick) silver. It also occurred to them that if gold were sown, as it were, in the soil of its own first substance, its excellence would probably be enhanced; and when they placed gold therein, the fixed was volatilised, the hard softened, the coagulated dissolved, to the amazement of Nature herself. For this reason they wedded these two to each other, put them in a still over the fire, and for many days regulated the heat in accordance with the requirements of Nature. Thus the dead was revived, the body decayed, and a glorified spirit rose from the grave; the soul was exalted into the Quintessence -- the Universal Medicine for animals, vegetables, and minerals.

CHAPTER XII

The Generic Method of Making the Perfect Magistery

The greatest secret of our operation is no other than a cohabitation of the nature of one thing above the other, until the most digested virtue be extracted out of the digested body of the crude one. But there are hereto requisite: Firstly, an exact measurement and preparation of the ingredients required; secondly, an exact fulfilment of all external conditions; thirdly a proper regulation of the fire; fourthly, a good knowledge of the natural properties of the substances; and fifthly, patience, in order that the work may not be marred by overgreat haste. Of all these points we will now speak in their proper order.

CHAPTER XIII

Of the Use of Mature Sulphur in the Work of the Elixir

We have spoken of the need of Mercury, and have described its properties more plainly and straightforwardly than has ever been done before. God knows that we do not grudge the knowledge of this Art to our brother men; and we are not afraid that it can ever become the property of any unworthy person. So long as the secret is possessed by a comparatively small number of philosophers, their lot is anything but a bright and happy one; surrounded as we are on every side by the cruel greed and -- the prying suspicion of the multitude, we are doomed, like Cain, to wander over the earth homeless and friendless. Not for us are the soothing influences of domestic happiness; not for us the delightful confidences of friendship. Men who covet our golden secret pursue us from place to place, and fear closes our lips, when love tempts us to open ourselves freely to a brother. Thus we feel prompted at times to burst forth into the desolate exclamation of Cain: "Whoever finds me will slay me." Yet we are not the murderers of our brethren; we are anxious only to do good to our fellow-men. But even our kindness and charitable compassion are rewarded with black ingratitude- ingratitude that cries to heaven for vengeance. It was only a short time ago that, after visiting the plague-stricken haunts of a certain city, and restoring the sick to perfect health by means of my miraculous medicine, I found myself surrounded by a yelling mob, who demanded that

I should give to them my Elixir of the Sages; and it was only by changing my dress and my name, by shaving off my beard and putting on a wig, that I was enabled to save my life, and escape from the hands of those wicked men. And even when our lives are not threatened, it is not pleasant to find ourselves, wherever we go, the central objects of human greed... I know of several persons who were found strangled in their beds, simply because they were suspected of possessing this secret,

though, in reality, they knew no more about it than their murderers; it was enough for some desperate ruffians, that a mere whisper of suspicion had been breathed against their victims. Men are so eager to have this Medicine that your very caution will arouse their suspicions, and endanger your safety. Again, if you desire to sell any large quantity of your gold and silver, you will be unable to do so without imminent risk of discovery. The very fact that anyone has a great mass of bullion for sale would in most places excite suspicion. This feeling will be strengthened when people test the quality of our gold; for it is much finer and purer than any of the gold which is brought from Barbary, or from the Guinea Coast; and our silver is better even than that which is conveyed home by the Spanish silver fleet. If, in order to baffle discovery, you mix these precious metals with alloy, you render yourself liable, in England and- Holland at least, to capital punishment; for in those countries no one is permitted to tamper with the precious metals except the officers of the mint, and the licensed goldsmiths. I remember once going, in the disguise of a foreign merchant to a goldsmith's shop, and offering him 600 pounds worth of our pure silver for sale. He subjected it to the usual tests, and then said: "This silver is artificially prepared." When I asked him why he thought so, his answer was: "I am not a novice in my profession, and know very well the exact quality of the silver which is brought from the different mines." When I heard these words I took myself away with great secrecy and dispatch, leaving the silver in the hands of the goldsmith. On this account, and by reason of the many and great difficulties which beset us, the possessors of this Stone, on every side, we do elect to remain hidden, and will communicate the Art to those who are worthily covetous of our secrets, and then mark what public good will befall. Without Sulphur, our Mercury would never be properly coagulated for our supernatural work; it is the male substance, while Mercury may be called the female; and all Sages say that no tincture can be made without its latten, which latten is gold, without any double speaking. Wise men, notwithstanding, can find this substance even on the dunghill; but the ignorant are unable to discern it even in gold. The tincture of gold is concealed in the gold of the Sages, which is the most highly matured of bodies; but as a raw material it exists only in our Mercury; and it (gold) receives from Mercury the multiplication of its seed, but in virtue rather than in weight. The Sages say that common gold is dead, while their's is living; and common gold is dead in the same sense in which a grain of wheat is dead, while it is surrounded by dry air; and comes to life, swells, softens, and germinates only when it is put into moist earth. In this sense gold, too, is dead, so long as it is surrounded by the corporeal husk, always allowing, of course, for the great difference between a vegetable grain and metallic gold. *Our* grain is quickened in *water* only; and as wheat, while it remains in the barn is called grain, and is not destined to be quickened, because it is to be used for bread making -- but changes its name, when it is sown in the field, and is then called seedcorn; so our gold, while it is in the form of rings, plate, and coins, is called common gold, because in that state it is likely to remain unchanged to the end of the world; but *potentially* it is even then the gold of the Sages, because if sown in its own proper element, it would in a few days become the Chaos of the Sages. Hence the Sages bid you revive the dead (i.e., the gold which already appeared doomed to a living death) and mortify the living, i.e., the Mercury which, imparting life to the gold, is itself deprived of the vital principle. Their gold is taken in a dead, their water in a living, state, and by their composition and brief coction, the dead gold revives and the living Mercury

dies, i.e., the spirit is coagulated, the body is dissolved, and thus both putrefy together, until all the members of the compound are torn into atoms. The mystery of our Art, which we conceal with so great care, is the preparation of the Mercury, which above ground is not to be found made ready to our hand. But when it is prepared, it is "our water" in which gold is dissolved, whereby the latent life of the gold is set free, and receives the life of the dissolving Mercury, which is to gold what good earth is to the grain of wheat. When the gold has putrefied in the Mercury, there arises out of the decomposition of death a new body, of the same essence, but of a glorified substance. Here you have the whole of our Philosophy in a nutshell. There is no secret about it, except the preparation of

Mercury, its mingling with the gold in the right proportions, and the regulation of the fire in accordance with its requirements. Gold by itself does not fear the fire; hence the great point is, to temper the heat to the capacity of the Mercury. If the Mercury is not properly prepared, the gold remains common gold, being joined with an improper agent; it continues unchanged, and no degree of heat will help it to put off its corporeal nature. Without our Mercury the seed (i.e., gold) cannot be sown; and if gold is not sown in its proper element, it cannot be quickened any more than the corn which the West Indians keep underground, in air-tight stone jars, can germinate. I know that some self-constituted "Sages" will take exception to this teaching, and say that common gold and running Mercury are not the substance of our Stone. But one question will suffice to silence their objections: Have they ever actually prepared our Tincture? I have prepared it more than once, and daily have it in my power; hence I may perhaps be permitted to speak as one having authority. Go on babbling about your rain water collected in May, your Salts, your sperm which is more potent than the foul fiend himself, ye self-styled philosophers; rail at me, if you like; all you say is conclusively refuted by this one fact -- you cannot make the Stone. When I say that gold and Mercury are the only substances of our Stone I know what I am writing about; and the Searcher of all hearts knows also that I say true. The time has arrived when we may speak more freely about this Art. For Elias the artist is at hand, and glorious things are already spoken of the City of God. I possess wealth sufficient to buy the whole world -- but as yet I may not use it on account of the craft and cruelty of wicked men. It is not from jealousy that I conceal as much as I do: God knows that I am weary of this lonely, wandering life, shut out from the bonds of friendship, and almost from the face of God. I do not worship the golden calf, before which our Israelites bow low to the ground; let it be ground to powder like the brazen serpent. I hope that in a few years gold (not as given by God, but as abused by man) will be so common that those who are now so mad after it, shall contemotuously spurn aside this bulwark of Antichrist. Then will tie day of our deliverance be at hand when the streets of the new Jerusalem are paved with gold, and its gates are made of great diamonds. The day is at hand when, by means of this my Book, gold will have become as common as dirt; when we Sages shall find rest for the soles of our feet, and render fervent thanks to God. My heart conceives unspeakable things, and is enlarged for the good of the Israel of God. These words I utter forth with a herald's clarion tones. My Book is the precursor of Elias, designed to prepare the Royal way of the Master; and would to God that by its means all men might become adepts in our Art -- for then gold, the great idol of mankind, would lose its value, and we should prize it only for its scientific teaching. Virtue would be loved for its own sake. I am familiar with many possessors of this Art who regard silence as the great point of honour. But I have been enabled by God to take a different view of the matter; and I firmly believe that I can best serve the Israel of God, and put my talent out at usury, by making this secret knowledge the common property of the whole world. Hence I have not conferred with flesh and blood, nor attempted to obtain the consent of my Brother Sages. If the matter succeeds according to my desire and prayer, they will all rejoice that I have published this Book.

CHAPTER XIV

Of the Circumstantial and Accidental Requisites of our Art

We have weeded out all vulgar errors concerning our Art, and have shewn that gold and Mercury are the only substances required. We have shewn that this gold is to be understood, not metaphorically, but in a truly philosophical sense. We have also declared our Mercury to be true quicksilver, without any ambiguity of acceptation. The latter, we have told you, must be made by art, and be a key to the former. We have made everything as clear as noonday; and our teaching is based, not on hearsay, or

on the writings of others, but on our own personal and oft repeated experience. The things we faithfully declare are what we have both seen and known. We have made and do possess the Stone - - the great Elixir. Moreover, we do not grudge you this knowledge, but wish you to attain it out of this Book. We have spoken out more plainly than any of our predecessors; and our Receipt, apart from the fact that we have not called things by their proper names, is perfectly trustworthy. It remains for us to give you some practical tests by which the goodness or unsuitableness of your Mercury may be known. and some directions for amending its defects. When you have living Mercury and gold, there remains to be accomplished, first, the purging of the Mercury and the gold, then their espousal, and finally the regulation of the fire.

CHAPTER XV

Of the Incidental Purging of Mercury and Gold

Perfect gold is found in the bowels of the earth in little pieces, or in sand. If you can meet with this unmixed gold, it is pure enough; if not, purge it with antimony or royal cement, or boil it with aqua fortis, the gold being first granulated. Then smelt it, remove the impure sediment, and it is ready.

But Mercury needs inward and essential purging. which radical cleansing is brought about by the addition of true Sulphur, little by little, according to the number of the Eagles. Then it also needs an incidental purgation for the purpose of removing from its surface the impurities which have, by the essential purgation, been ejected from the centre. This process is not absolutely necessary, but it is useful, as it accelerates the work. Therefore, take your Mercury, which you have purified with a suitable number of Eagles, sublime it three times with common salt and iron filings, and wash it with vinegar and a moderate quantity of salts of ammonia, then dry and distil in a glass retort, over a gradually increasing fire, until the whole of the Mercury has ascended. Repeat this four times, then boil the Mercury in spirits of vinegar for an hour, stirring it constantly. Then pour off the vinegar, and wash off its acidity by a plentiful effusion of spring water. Dry the Mercury, and its splendour will be wonderful. You may wash it with wine, or vinegar and salt, and so spare the sublimation; but then distil it at least four times without addition, after you have perfected all the eagles, or washings, washing the chalybeat retort every time with ashes and water; then boil it in distilled vinegar for half a day, stirring it strongly at times. Pour off the blackish vinegar, add new, then wash with warm water. This process is designed to purge away the internal impurities from the surface. These impurities you may perceive if, on mixing Mercury with purest gold, you place the amalgam on a white sheet of paper. The sooty blackness which is then seen on the paper is purged away by this

process.

CHAPTER XVI

Of the Amalgam of Mercury and Gold, and of their respective Proportions

When you have done all this, take one part of pure and laminated gold, or fine gold filings, and two parts of Mercury; put them in a heated (marble) jar, i.e., heaved with boiling water, being taken out of which it dries quickly, and holds the heat a long time. Grind with an ivory, or glass, or stone, or iron, or boxwood pestle (the iron pestle is not so good; I use a pestle of crystal): pound them, I say, as small as the painters grind their colours; then add water so as to make the mass as consistent as half melted butter. The mixture should be fixable and soft, and permit itself to be moulded into little globules -- like moderately soft butter; it should be of such a consistency as to yield to the gentlest touch. Moreover, it should be of the same temperature throughout, and one part should not be more liquid than another. The mixture will be more or less soft, according to the proportion of Mercury which it contains; but it must be capable of forming into those little globules, and the

Mercury should not be more lively at the bottom than at the top. If the amalgam be left undisturbed, it will at once harden; you must therefore judge of the merits of the mixture, while you are stirring it; if it fulfils the above conditions, it is good. Then take spirit of vinegar, and dissolve in it a third part of salt of ammonia, put the amalgam into this liquid, let the whole boil for a quarter-of-an-hour in a long necked glass vessel; then take the mixture out of the glass vessel, pour off the liquid, heat the mortar, and pound the amalgam (as above) vigorously, and wash away all blackness with hot water. Put it again into the liquid, let it boil up once more in the glass vessel, pound it as before, and wash it. Repeat this process until the blackness is entirely purged out. The amalgam will then be as brilliant and white as the purest silver. Once more regulate the temperature of the amalgam according to the rules given above; your labour will be richly rewarded. If the amalgam be not quite soft enough, add a little Mercury. Then boil it in pure water, and free it from all saltiness and acidity. Pour off the water, and dry the amalgam. Make quite sure that it is thoroughly dried, by waving it to and fro on the point of a knife over a sheet of white paper.

CHAPTER XVII

Concerning the Size, Form, Material, and Mode of Securing the Vessel

Let your glass distilling vessel be round or oval; large enough to hold neither more nor much less than an ounce of distilled water in the body thereof. Let the height of the vessel's neck be about one palm, hand-breath, or span, and let the glass be clear and thick (the thicker the better, so long as it is clear and clean, and permits you to distinguish what is going on within) -- but the thickness should be uniform. The substance which will go into this vessel consists of 1/2 oz. of gold, and one oz. of mercury; and if you have to add 1/3 oz. of mercury, the whole compound will still be less than 2 oz. The glass should be strong in order to prevent the vapours which arise from our embryo bursting the vessel. Let the mouth of the vessel be very carefully and effectually secured by means of a thick layer of sealing-wax. The utensils and the materials required are not then very expensive -- and if you use my thick distilling-vessel you will avoid loss by breakage. The other instruments that are requisite are

not dear. I know that many will take exception to this statement; they will say that the pursuit of our Art is a matter of all but ruinous expense. But my answer consists in a simple question: What is the object of our Art? Is it not to make the Philosopher's Stone -- to find the liquid in which gold melts like ice in tepid water? And do those good people who are so eager in their search after "Mercury of the Sun," and "Mercury of the Moon," and who pay so high a price for their materials, ever succeed in this object? They cannot answer this question in the affirmative. One florin will buy enough of the substance of our water to quicken two pounds of mercury, and make it the true Mercury of the Sages. But, of course, glass vessels, coals, earthen vessels, a furnace, iron vessels, and other instruments, cannot be bought for nothing. Without a perfect body, our ore, viz., gold, there can be no Tincture, and our Stone is at first vile, immature, and volatile, but when complete it is perfect, precious, and fixed. These two aspects of our Stone are the body, gold, and the spirit, or quicksilver.

CHAPTER XVIII

Of the Furnace or Athanor of the Sages

I have spoken about Mercury, Sulphur, the vessel, their treatment, etc. etc.; and, of course, all these things are to be understood with a grain of salt. You must understand that in the preceding chapters I have spoken metaphorically; if you take my words in a literal sense, you will reap no harvest except your outlay. For instance, when I name the principal substances Mercury and gold -- I do not mean common gold in the state in which it is sold at the goldsmiths -- but it must be prepared by means of our Art You *may* find our gold in common gold and silver, but it is easier to make the Stone than to get its first substance out of common gold. "Our gold" is the Chaos whose soul has not been taken away by fire. The soul of common gold has retired before the fiery tyranny of Vulcan into the inmost citadel. If you seek our gold in a substance intermediate between perfection and imperfection, you will find it: but otherwise, you must unbar the gates of common gold by the first preparatory process (ch. xv.), by which the charm of its body is broken, and the husband enabled to do his work. If you choose the former course, you shall use only gentle heat; in the latter case, you will require a fierce fire. But here you will be hopelessly lost in a labyrinth, if you do not know your way out of it. But whether you choose our gold, or common gold, you will in either case need an even and continual fire. If you take our gold, you will finish the work a few months sooner, and the Elixir will be ten times more precious than that prepared from common gold. If you work with "our gold," you will be assisted in its calcination, putrefaction, and dealbation by its gentle inward (natural) heat. But in the case of common gold, this heat has to be applied externally by foreign substances, so as to render it fit for union with the Virgin's Milk. In neither case, however, can anything be effected without the aid of fire. It was not, then, in vain that Hermes counts fire next to the Sun and Moon as the governor of the work. But this is to be understood of the truly secret furnace, which a vulgar eye never saw. There is also another furnace, which is called our common furnace, made of potter's earth, or of iron and brass plates, well compacted with clay. This furnace we call Athanor, and the shape which I like best is that of a tower with a "nest" at the top. The "tower" should be about three feet high, and nine fingers wide within the plates. A little above the ground, let there be a little opening of about three or four fingers wide, for removing the cinders; over that, there should be a fire-place built with stones. Above this, we place the furnace itself, which should be such as to exclude all draughts and currents of air. The coals are put in from above, and the aperture should then be carefully closed. But it is not necessary that your furnace should exactly correspond to the

description which I have given so long as it fulfils the following conditions: firstly, it must be free from draughts; secondly, it must enable you to vary the temperature, without removing your vessel; thirdly, you must be able to keep up in it a fire for ten or twelve hours, without looking to it. Then the door of our Art will be opened to you; and when you have prepared the Stone, you may procure a small portable stove, for the purpose of multiplying it.

CHAPTER XIX

Of the Progress of the Work during the First Forty Days

When you have prepared our gold and Mercury in the manner described, put it into our vessel, and subject it to the action of our fire; within 40 days you will see the whole substance converted into atoms, without any visible motion, or perceptible heat (except that it is just warm). If you do not yet rightly know the meaning of "our gold," take one part of common gold (well purified), and three parts of *our* Mercury (thoroughly purged), put them together as directed (cap. xvi), place them over the fire, and there keep them at the boiling point, till they sweat, and their sweat circulates. At the end of 90 days you will find that the Mercury has separated and reunited all the elements of the common gold. Boil the mixture 50 days longer, and you will discover that our Mercury has changed the common gold into "our gold," which is the Medicine of the first order. It is already our Sulphur, but it has not yet the power of tinging. This method has been followed by many Sages, but it is exceedingly slow and tedious, and is only for the rich of the earth. Moreover, when you have got this Sulphur do not think that you possess the Stone, but only its true Matter, which you may seek in an imperfect thing, and find it within a week, by our easy yet rare way, reserved of God for His poor, contemned, and abject saints. Hereof I have now determined to write much, although in the beginning of this Book I decreed to bury it in silence. This is the one great sophism of all adepts; some speak of this common gold and silver, and say the truth, and others say that we cannot use it, and they too, say the truth. But in the presence of God I will call all our adepts to account, and charge them with jealous surliness. I, too, had determined to tread the same path, but God's hand confounded my scheme. I say then, that both ways are true, and come to the same thing in the end - but there is a vast difference at the beginning. Our whole Art consists in the right preparation of our Mercury and our gold. Our Mercury is our way, and without it nothing is effected. Our gold is not common gold, but it may be found in it; and if you operate on our Mercury with common gold (regulating the fire in the right way), you will after 150 days have our gold, since our gold is obtained from our Mercury. Hence if common gold have all its atoms thoroughly severed by means of our Mercury, and then reunited by the same agency, the whole mixture will, under the influence of fire, become our gold. But, if, without this preparatory purging, you were to use common gold with our Mercury for the purpose of preparing the Stone, you would be sadly mistaken; and this is the great Labyrinth in which most beginners go astray, because the Sages in writing of these ways as two ways, purposely obscure the fact that they are only one way (though of course the one is more direct than the other). The gold of the Sages may then be prepared out of our common gold and our Mercury, from which there may afterwards be obtained by repeated liquefactions, Sulphur and Quicksilver which is incombustible, and tinges all things else. In this sense, our Stone is to be found in all metals and minerals, since our gold may be got from them all -- but most easily, of course, from gold and silver. Some have found it in tin, some in lead, but most of those who have pursued the more tedious method, have found it in gold. Of course, if our gold be prepared in the way I have

described, out of common gold (in the course of 150 days), instead of being found ready made, it will not be so effectual, and the preparation of the Stone will take 1 1/2 years instead of 7 months. I know both ways, and prefer the shorter one; but I have described the longer one as well in order that I may not draw down upon myself the scathing wrath of the "Sages." The great difficulty which discourages all beginners is not of Nature's making: the Sages have created it by speaking of the longer operation when they mean the shorter one, and *vice versa*. If you choose common gold, you should espouse it to Venus (copper), lay them together on the bridal bed, and, on bringing a fierce fire to bear on them, you will see an emblem of the Great Work in the following succession of colours: black, the peacock's tail, white, orange, and red. Then repeat the same operation with Mercury (called Virgin's Milk), using the "fire of the Bath of Dew," and (towards the end) sand mixed with ashes. The substance will first turn a much deeper black, and then a completer white and red. Hence if you know our Art, extract our gold from our Mercury (this is the shorter way), and thus perform the whole operation with one substance (viz., Mercury); if you can do this, you will have attained to the perfection of philosophy. In this method, there is no superfluous trouble: the whole work, from beginning to end, is based upon one broad foundation -- whereas if you take common gold, you must operate on two substances, and *both* will have to be purified by an elaborate process. If you diligently consider what I have said, you have in your hand a means of unravelling all the apparent contradictions of the Sages. They speak of three operations: the first, by which the inward natural heat expels all cold through the aid of external fire, the second, wherein gold is purged with our Mercury, through the mediation of Venus, and under the influence of a fierce fire; the third, in which common gold is mixed with our Mercury, and the ferment of Sulphur added. But if you will receive my advice, you will not be put out by any wilful obscurity on the part of the Sages. Our sulphur you should indeed strive to discover; and if God enlightens you, you will find it in our Mercury. Before the living God I swear that my teaching is true. If you operate on Mercury and pure common gold, you may find "our gold" in 7 to 9 months, and "our silver" in 5 months. But when you have these, you have not yet prepared our Stone: *that* glorious sight will not gladden your eyes until you have been at work for a year-and-a-half. By that time you may obtain the elixir by subjecting the substance to very gentle continuous heat.

CHAPTER XX

Of the Appearance of Blackness in the Work of the Sun and Moon

If you operate on gold and silver, for the purpose of finding our Sulphur, let your substance first become like a thin paste, or boiling water, or liquid pitch; for the operation of our gold and Mercury is prefigured by that which happens in the preparation of common gold with our Mercury. Take your substance and place it in the furnace, regulate the fire properly for the space of twenty days, in which time you will observe various colours, and about the end of the fourth week, if the fire be continuous, you will see a most amiable greenness, which will last for about ten days. Then rejoice, for in a short time it will be as a black coal, and your whole compound shall be reduced to atoms. The operation is a resolution of the fixed into the not fixed that both afterwards, being conjoined, may make one matter, partly spiritual and partly corporal. Once more, I assure you, the regulation of the fire is the only thing that I have hidden from you. Given the proper-regimen, take the Stone, govern it as you know how, and then these wonderful phenomena will follow: The fire will at once dissolve the Mercury and the Sulphur like wax; the Sulphur will be burnt, and change its colours from

day to day; the Mercury will prove incombustible, and only be gradually tinged (and purified, without being infected) with the colours of the Sulphur. Let the heaven stoop to the earth, till the latter has conceived heavenly seed. When you see the substances mingle in your distilling vessel, and assume the appearance of clotted and burnt blood, be sure that the female has received the seed of the male. About seventeen days afterwards your substance will begin to wear a yellow, thick, misty, or foamy appearance. At this time, you must take care not to let the embryo escape from your vessel; for it will give out a greenish, yellow, black, and bluish vapour and strive to burst the vessel. If you allow these vapours (which are continuous when the Embryo is formed) to escape, your work will be hopelessly marred. Nor should you allow any of the odour to make its way through any little hole or outlet; for the evaporation would considerably weaken the strength of the Stone. Hence the true Sage seals up the mouth of his vessel most carefully. Let me advise you, moreover, not to neglect your fire, or move or open the vessel, or slacken the process of decoction, until you find that the quantity of the liquid begins to diminish; if this happens after thirty days, rejoice, and know that you are on the right road. Then be doubly careful, and you will, at the end of another fortnight, find that the earth has become quite dry and of a deep black. This is the death of the compound; the winds have ceased, and there is a great calm. This is that great simultaneous eclipse of the Sun and Moon, when the Sea also has disappeared. Our Chaos is then ready, from which, at the bidding of God, all the wonders of the world may successively emerge.

CHAPTER XXI

Of the Caution required to avoid Burning the Flowers

The burning of the flowers is fatal, yet soon committed: it is chiefly to be guarded against after the lapse of the third week. In the beginning there is so much moisture that if the fire be too fierce it will dry up the liquid too quickly, and you will prematurely obtain a dry red powder, from which the principle of life has flown; if the fire be not strong enough the substance will not be properly matured. Too powerful a fire prevents the true union of the substances. True union only takes place in water. Bodies collide, but do not unite; only liquids (and spirits) can truly mingle their substance. Hence our homogeneous metallic water must be allowed to do its work properly, and should not be dried up, until this perfect mutual absorption has taken place in a natural manner. Premature drying only destroys the germ of life, strikes the active principle on the head as with a hammer, and renders it passive. A red powder is indeed produced, but long before the time: for redness should be preceded by blackness. It is true that, in the beginning of our work, when heaven is wedded to earth, and earth conceives the fire of nature, a red colour does appear. But the substance is then sufficiently moist; and the redness soon gives way to a green colour, which in its turn gradually yields to blackness. Do not be in a hurry; let your fire be just powerful enough, but not too powerful; steer a straight course between Scylla and Charybdis: you will behold in your vessel a variety of colours and grotesque transformations -- until the substance settles down into a powder of intense blackness. This should happen within the first fifty days. If it does not, either your Mercury, or the regulation of your fire, or the composition of your substance is at fault -- if, indeed, you have not moved or shaken your glass vessel.

CHAPTER XXII

Of the Regimen of Saturn

All the Sages who have written on our Art, have spoken of the work and regimen of Saturn; and their remarks have led many to choose common lead as the substance of the Stone. But you should know that our Saturn, or lead, is a much nobler substance than gold. It is the living earth in which the soul of gold is joined to Mercury, that they may bring forth Adam and his wife Eve. Wherefore, since the highest has so lowered itself as to become the lowest, we may expect that its blood may be the means of redeeming all its brethren. The Tomb in which our King is buried, is that which we call Saturn, and it is the key of the work of transmutation; happy is he who can salute this planet, and call it by its right name. It is a boon which is obtained by the blessing of God alone; it is not of him that willeth, or of him that runneth; but God bestoweth it on whom He will.

CHAPTER XXIII

Of the different Regimens of this Work

Let me assure you that in our whole work there is nothing hidden but the regimen, of which it was truly said by the Sage that whoever knows it perfectly will be honoured by princes and potentates. I tell you plainly that if this one point were clearly set forth, our Art would become mere women's work and child's play: there would be nothing in it but a simple process of "cooking." Hence it has always been most carefully concealed by the Sages. But I have determined to write in a more sympathetic and kindly spirit: know then that our regimen throughout consists in coction and digestion, but that it implies a good many other processes, which those jealous Sages have made to appear different by describing them under different names. But we intend to speak more openly in regard to this subject.

CHAPTER XXIV

Of the First Regimen, which is that of Mercury

This first regimen has been studiously kept secret by all the Sages. They have spoken of the second regimen, or that of Saturn, as if it were the first, and have thus left the student without guidance in those operations which precede the appearance of that intense blackness. Count Bernard, of Trevisa, says, in his Parable, that When the King has come to the Fountain, he takes off the golden garment, gives it to Saturn, and enters the bath alone, afterwards receiving from Saturn a robe of black silk. But he does not tell us how long it takes to put off that golden robe; and thus, like all his brethren, leaves the poor beginner to grope in the dark during 40 or 50 days. From the point where the stage of blackness is reached to the end of the work their directions are more full and intelligible. It is in regard to these first 40 days that the student requires additional light. This period represents the regimen of Mercury (of the Sages), which is alone active during the whole time, the *other* substance being temporarily dead. You should not suffer yourself to be deluded into the belief that when your matters are joined, namely, our Sun and Mercury, the "setting of the Sun" can be brought about in a few days. We ourselves waited a tedious time before a reconciliation was made between the fire and the water. As a matter of fact, the Sages have called the substance,

throughout this first period, Rebis, or Two-thing: to shew that the union is not effected till the operation is complete. You should know, then, that though our Mercury consumes the Sun, yet a year after you shall separate them, unless they are connected together by a suitable degree of fire. It is not able to do anything at all without *fire*. We must not suppose that when our gold is placed in our Mercury it is swallowed up by it in the twinkling of an eye. This conception rests on a misunderstanding of Count Bernard's teaching about the King's plunge in the fountain. But the solution of gold is a more difficult matter than these gentry appear to have any idea of. It requires the highest skill so to regulate the fire in the first stage of the work as to solve the bodies without injuring the tincture. Attend to my teaching therefore. Take the body which I have shewed you, put it into the water of our sea, and bring to bear on the compound the proper degree of heat, till dews and mists begin to ascend, and the moisture is diminished night and day without intermission. Know that at first the two do not affect each other at all, and that only in course of time the body absorbs some of the water, and thus causes each to partake of the other's nature. Only part of the water is sublimed; the rest gradually penetrates the pores of the body, which are thereby more and more softened, till the soul of the gold is enabled gently to pass out. Through the mediation of the soul the body is reconciled and united to the spirit, and their union is signalized by the appearance of the black colour. The whole operation lasts about 40-50 days, and is called the Regimen of Mercury, because the body is passive throughout, and the spirit, or Mercury, brings about all the changes of colour, which begin to appear about the 20th day, and gradually intensify till all be at last completed in black of the deepest dye, which the both day will manifest.

CHAPTER XXV

The Regimen of the Second Part, which is that of Saturn

The Regimen of Mercury, the operation whereof despoils the King of his golden garments, is followed by the Regimen of Saturn. When the Lion dies the Crow is born. The substance has now become of a uniform colour, namely, as black as pitch, and neither vapours, or winds, or any other signs of life are seen; the whole is dry as dust, with the exception of some pitch-like substance, which now and then bubbles up; all presents an image of eternal death. Nevertheless, it is a sight which gladdens the heart of the Sage. For the black colour which is seen is bright and brilliant; and if you behold something like a thin paste bubbling up here and there, you may rejoice. For it is the work of the quickening spirit, which will soon restore the dead bodies to life. The regulation of the fire is a matter of great importance at this juncture; if you make it too fierce, and thus cause sublimation at this stage, everything will be irrecoverably spoilt. Be content, therefore, to remain, as it were, in prison for forty days and nights, even as was the good Trevisan, and employ only gentle heat. Let your delicate substance remain at the bottom, which is the womb of conception, in the sure hope that after the time appointed by the Creator for this Operation, the spirit will arise in a glorified state, and glorify its body -- that it will ascend and be gently circulated from the centre to the heavens, then descend to the centre from the heavens, and take to itself the power of things above and things below.

CHAPTER XXVI

Of the Regimen of Jupiter

Black Saturn is succeeded by Jupiter, who exhibits divers colours. For after the putrefaction and conception, which has taken place at the bottom of the vessel, there is once more a change of colours and a circulating sublimation. This *Reign* or Regimen, lasts only three weeks. During this period you see all conceivable colours concerning which no definite account can be given. The "showers" that fall will become more numerous as the close of this reign approaches, and its termination is signalized by the appearance of a snowy white streaky deposit on the sides of the vessel. Rejoice, then, for you have successfully accomplished the regimen of Jupiter. What you must be particularly careful about in this operation, is to prevent the young ones of the Crow from going back to the nest when they have once left it; secondly, to let your earth get neither too dry by an immoderate sublimation of the moisture, nor yet to swamp and smother it with the moisture. These ends will be attained by the proper regulation of the outward heat.

CHAPTER XXVII

Of the Regimen of the Moon

When the Reign of Jupiter comes to an end (towards the close of the fourth month) you will see the sign of the waxing moon (Crescent), and know that the whole Reign of Jupiter was devoted to the purification of the Laton. The mundifying spirit is very pure and brilliant, but the body that has to be cleansed is intensely black. While it passes from blackness to whiteness, a great variety of colours are observed; nor is it at once perfectly white; at first it is simply white -- afterwards it is of a dazzling, snowy splendour. Under this Reign the whole mass presents the appearance of liquid quicksilver. This is called the sealing of the mother in the belly of the infant whom she bears; and its intermediate colours are more white than black, just as in the Reign of Jupiter they were more black than white. The Reign of the Moon lasts just three weeks; but before its close, the substance exhibits a great variety of forms; it will become liquid, and again coagulate a hundred times a day; sometimes it will present the appearance of fishes' eyes, and then again of tiny silver trees, with twigs and leaves. Whenever you look at it you will have cause for astonishment, particularly when you see it all divided into beautiful but very minute grains of silver, like the rays of the Sun. This is the White Tincture, glorious to behold, but nothing in respect of what it may become.

CHAPTER XXVIII

Of the Regimen of Venus

The substance, if left in the same vessel, will once more become volatile and (though already perfect in its way) will undergo another change. But if you take it out of the vessel, and after allowing it to cool, put it into another, you will not be able to make anything of it. In this Reign you should also give careful attention to your fire. For the perfect Stone is fusible and if the fire be too powerful the substance will become glazed, and unsusceptible of any further change. This "vitrification" of the substance may happen at any time from the middle of the Reign of the Moon to the tenth day of the Reign of Venus, and should be carefully guarded against. The heat should be gentle so as to melt the

compound very slowly and gradually; it will then raise bubbles, and receive a spirit that will rise upward, carrying the Stone with it, and imparting to it new colours, especially a copper-green colour, which endures for some time, and does not quite disappear till the twentieth day; the next change is to blue and livid, and at the close of this Reign the colour is a pale purple. DO not irritate the spirit too much -- it is more corporeal than before, and if you sublime it to the top of the vessel, it will hardly return. The same caution should be observed in the Reign of the Moon, when the substance begins to thicken. The law is one of mildness, and not of violence, lest everything should rise to the top of the vessel, and be consumed or vitrified to the ruin of the whole work. When you see the green colour, know that the substance now contains the germ of its highest life. DO not turn the greenness into blackness by immoderate heat. This Reign is maintained for forty days.

CHAPTER XXIX

Of the Regimen of Mars

When the Regimen of Venus is over, and therein has appeared the philosophical tree, with all its branches and leaves, the Reign of Mars begins with a light yellow, or dirty brown colour, but at last exhibits the transitory hues of the Rainbow, and the Peacock's Tail. At this stage the compound is drier, and often shews like a hyacinth with a tinge of gold. The mother being now sealed in her infant's belly, swells and is purified, but because of the present great purity of the compound, no putridness can have place in this regimen, but Some obscure colours are chief actors, while some middle colours come and go, and they are pleasant to look on. Our Virgin Earth is now undergoing the last degree of its cultivation, and is getting ready to receive and mature the fruit of the Sun. Hence you should Weep up a moderate temperature; then there will be seen, about the thirtieth day of this Reign, an orange colour, which, within two weeks from its first appearance, will tinge the whole substance with its own hue.

CHAPTER XXX

Of the Regimen of the Sun

As you are now approaching the end of the work, the substance receives a golden tinge, and the Virgin's Milk which you give your substance to drink has assumed a deep orange colour. Pray to God to keep you from haste and impatience at this stage of the work; consider that you have now waited for seven months, and that it would be foolish to let one hour rob you of the fruits of all your labour. Therefore be more and more careful the nearer you approach perfection. Then you will first observe an orange-coloured sweat breaking out on the body; next there will be vapour of an orange hue. Soon the body below becomes tinged with violet and a darkish purple. At the end of fourteen or fifteen days, the substance will be, for the most part, humid and ponderous, and yet the wind still bears it in its womb. Towards the 26th day of the Reign it will begin to get dry, and to become liquid and solid in turn (about a hundred times a day); then it becomes granulated; then again it is welded together into one mass, and so it goes on changing for about a fortnight At length, however, an unexpectedly glorious light will burst from your substance, and the end will arrive three days afterwards. The substance will be granulated, like atoms of gold (or motes in the Sun), and turn a

deep red -a red the intensity of which makes it seem black like very pure blood in a clotted state.
This is the Great Wonder of Wonders, which has not its like on earth.

CHAPTER XXXI

Of the Fermentation of the Stone

I forgot to warn you in the last chapter to be on your guard against the danger of vitrification; too fierce a fire would render your substance insoluble and prevent its granulation. You now possess the incombustible red Sulphur which can no longer be affected in any way by fire. In order to obtain the Elixir from this Sulphur by reiterate solution and coagulation, take three parts of purest gold, and one part of this fiery Sulphur. Melt the gold in a clean crucible, and then cast your Sulphur into it (protecting it well from the smoke of the coals) Make them liquid together, when you will obtain a beautiful mass of a deep red, though hardly transparent. This you should permit to cool, and pound into a small powder. Of this powder take one part, and two parts of our Mercury; mix them well, and put them in a glass vessel, well sealed. They should be exposed to gentle heat for two months. This is the true fermentation, which may be repeated if needful.

CHAPTER XXXII

The Imbibition of the Stone

Many authors take fermentation in this work for the invisible external agent, which they call ferment; by its virtue the fugitive and subtle spirits, without laying on of hands, are of their own accord thickened, and our before-mentioned fermentation they call cibation with bread and milk. But I follow my own judgment There is another operation, called Imbibition of the Stone, by which its quantity rather than its quality is increased. It is this: Add to three parts of your perfect Sulphur (either white or red) one part of water, and after six or seven days' coction the water will become thick like the Sulphur Add again as much water as you did before; and when this is dried up, with a convenient fire, add three distinct times so much water as shall be equal to one-third of the original quantity of Sulphur. Then add (for the 7th imbibition) five parts of water (the parts being equal to the original parts of the Sulphur). Seal up the vessel; subject it to gentle coction, and let the compound pass through all the different Reigns of the original Substance, which will be accomplished in a month. Then you have the true Stone of the third order, one part of which will perfectly tinge 1,000 parts of any other metal.

CHAPTER XXXIII

The Multiplication of the Stone

Take the perfect Stone; add one part of it to three or four parts of purified Mercury of our first work, subject it to gentle coction for seven days (the vessel being carefully sealed up), and let it pass through all the Reigns, which it will do very quickly and smoothly. The tinging power of the substance will thus be exalted a thousandfold; and if you go through the whole process a second

time (which you can do with ease in three days) the Medicine will be much more precious still. This you may repeat as often as you like; the third time the substance will run through all the Reigns in a day, the fourth time in a single hour, and so on -- and the improvement in its quality will be most marvellous. Then kneel down and render thanks to God for this precious treasure.

CHAPTER XXXIV

Of Projection

Take four parts of your perfect Stone, either red or white (of both for the Medicine): melt them in a clean crucible. Take one part of this pulverisable mixture to ten parts of purified Mercury; heat the Mercury till it begins to crackle, then throw in your mixture, which will pierce it in the twinkling of an eye; increase your fire till it be melted, and you will have a Medicine of an inferior order. Take one part of this, and add it to a large quantity of well purged and melted metal, which will thereby be transmuted into the purest silver or gold (according as you have taken white or red Sulphur). Note that it is better to use a gradual projection, for otherwise there may be a notable loss of the Medicine. The better the metals are purged and refined, the quicker and more complete will the transmutation be.

CHAPTER XXXV

Of the Manifold uses of this Art

He that has once found this Art, can have nothing else in all the world to wish for, than that he may be allowed to serve his God in peace and safety. He will not care for pomp or dazzling outward show. But if he lived a thousand years, and daily entertained a million people, he could never come to want, since he has at hand the means of indefinitely multiplying the Stone both in weight and virtue, and thus of changing all imperfect metals in the world into gold. In the second place, he has it in his power to make stones and diamonds far more precious than any that are naturally procured. In the third place, he has an Universal Medicine, with which he can cure every conceivable disease, and, indeed, as to the quantity of his Medicine, he might heal all sick people in the world. Now to the King Eternal, Immortal, and sole Almighty, be everlasting praise for these His unspeakable gifts and invaluable treasures. I exhort all that possess this Treasure, to use it to the praise of God, and the good of their neighbours, in order that they may not at the last day be eternally doomed for their ingratitude to their Creator.

To God Alone be the Glory

THE MARROW of ALCHEMY

**Being an Experimental Treatise Discovering the secret and most hidden mystery of the
Philoshopers Elixer**

The Second Part

Containing Three Books, Elucidating the Pratique of the Art in which
The Artist so plainly disclosed, as never any before did, for the benefit of young Practitioners, and
the convincing those who are in Errors Labyrinth.

By Eirenaeus Philoponos Philalethes

London, 1655

THE FIRST BOOK

Alchemy, which by some is called the Golden Art, we have, in the former part, both proved, and by examples taught, that it is no fable as many have deemed, but a real Science; which now in this Second Part we shall in due order unfold the practice thereof, whereby may be obtained great store of silver and gold. And for a ground of what we intended, consider well, and with good judgment weigh the reason of our Work, otherwise you may spend your time and cost in vain, and reap nothing but toil and loss, as many have done.

Wherefore, the Stone you seek, we have said, and do still affirm is only gold, brought to the highest perfection possible; which although it be a most firm and compact body, yet by the direction of Art, and the operation of Nature, it may be made a tingeing and never fading Spirit; which Nature alone could never have effected, because gold has no power to move itself to such a degree of perfection, but it would for ever remain in its own proper constancy.

He, therefore, that would attain this Essence, must by Art turn his gold into dust, and make it resolve into a mineral water, which circulate with a good fire until the moisture being dried up it becomes fixed; this must then be often imbibed and re-congealed, thereby, as it were, sealing up the infant in its mother's womb, which feed so long until it obtains strength sufficient to overcome all its sturdy opposites: then being fermented, it must so long abide the doom of iterated blackness until the Natures rot and die, which then be sure to revify, sublimate, and exalt, and again make it return to the earth, where you should let it stand in heat so long until its blackness is turned into the purest white; the King being then placed upon his Royal Seal, will shine like the sparkling flame, and the hidden stone which we call our sulphur. This you should multiply so long until it is made into the spiritual elixir; which then like the judge at the Day of Doom, condemned to fire all earthliness adhering to the pure substance in imperfect metals.

Wherefore, if our Subject is gold, then must we find a proper agent to unlock it, which if you know how to seek in its own kind, you need not employ much cost to prepare it; which appeared a vile matter to sight, being much defiled by its filthy outside: of this few authors speak, and those that do, obscure this key as much as they can; but I, kind reader, shall show such candour, as greater no man ever yet did devise; yet be assured this is not a work to be attained by one of dull genius, nor for him that despairs labour, for idleness is an absolute bar to this Art; but if you are of a quiet mind, and be industrious, then attend to what I shall now declare, and I will speak firstly of the history of that which lies hid in this our fiery Agent.

The substance which we first take in hand, is a mineral similar to Mercury, which a crude sulphur does bake in the Earth; and is called Saturn's Child, which indeed appears vile to sight, but is glorious within; it is sable coloured, with argent veins appearing intermixed in the body, whose sparkling line stains the connate sulphur; it is wholly volatile and unfixed, yet taken in this native crudity, it purged all the superfluity of Sol; it is of a venomous nature, and abused by many in a medicinal way; if its elements by Art are loosened, the inside appears very resplendent, which then flow in the fire like a metal, although there is nothing of a metallic kind more brittle.

This is our Dragon, which the God of war assaulted with armour of the stoutest steel, but all in vain, because a newly seen Star did show, that when Cadmus first did feel this force, he could not withstand so great a might, but from his body it did his Soul divide: oh mighty force! Which when the Sages beheld, they were amazed, and named this their Green Lion, whose fury with charms they hoped at length to tame. Wherefore, letting him prey on the associates of Cadmus, they found that by his might he overcame them, and the fray being over, behold a morning Star was seen to appear from out of the Earth, and the carcasses being removed, there instantly appeared a running Spring, whereat they said the Beast did drink, until this belly burst; but strange it seemed to them, that as soon and this Dragon came near the Spring the Waters, as though afraid, did straightway retire, nor could Vulcan's help at all avail, to reconcile them; then appeared Diana's Doves in bright shining attire, with whose silver wings the air was calmed, wherein the infolded Dragon lost his sting; then the Waters like a flood did straight away return, and swallowed up the Beast, whose colour turned as black as coal, and this our Dragon caused the fountain to stink with a most foetid smell, wherein he died, and it proved to him a grave: but through the aid of Vulcan this Dragon did again revive, and received from heaven a Soul, whereby both were reconciled, who before were enemies, whose souls being now united, they leave their bodies, and become the nymphs true bath, and our Green Lion; whereof the like was never seen before.

But not to hold you any longer in suspense, I shall now plainly unfold the meaning of theses allegories, and untie those knots, whose obscure sense may much perplex the reader.

Wherefore now observe, that our Son of Saturn, must be united to a metalline, and mercurial form, because it is Argent-Vive alone, which is the agent our work requires, but common argent-vive availed nothing to our Stone, being dead, yet it is inclined to be actuated by the salt of Nature, and true Sulphur, which is its only mate. This salt is found in Saturn's off-spring, being pure within, and hath power to penetrate to the centre do metals, abounding with such qualities as fits it to enter the body of Sol, which it divided into elements, and after dissolution abided therewith. The Sulphur you must seek in the house of Aries, this is the magic fire of the wise, to heat the Kings bath, (which you may prepare in a weeks time) this fire lies straightly concealed, which you may unlock in an hour's time, and afterward wash it with a silver shower.

It seemed strange indeed, that a metal so stout and fixed as to withstand the thundering blast of Vulcan, which will not relent in any heat, nor mix in flux with any metal, yet by our Art, it will in this piercing mineral liquor be made retrograde. This kingly work the Almighty hat sealed, to teach the prudent that the Royal Infant is here born, whom straightway they diligently seek and by the Star are guided to him; but fools search for our secrets in sordid things, out of kind, and thereby bring themselves to ruin.

This substance is of a stellate nature, and wholly spiritual, being totally inclined to fly from the fire; the reason is because the soul of each is a magnet to each other, and this we call the urine of old Saturn. This is our steel, our true hermaphrodite, our Moon, so named for its brightness: this is our unripe gold, which to sight is a brittle body, but is tamed by Vulcan, the soul of which if thou can'ts mix with Mercury, no secret shall be hid from you.

I need not cite authors, for I have seen, and with my hands have wrought this mystery, and by constantly adhering to the council of Nature, have been directed to render the most solid body soft, and have the gross body a tingeing fixed Earth, which will never fade. Nor do I say this alone, for many more attested the same, whose knots I here untie: Artephius hath named it, but he doth not disclose the other secret, because he saith it ought to be sought for of God, unless it be taught by a wise Master.

This is the riddle, which has so much perplexed the students of this Art: hence Zeumon in Turba p.18, Ars Aurif: Vol. 2, said: Our Stone is vile, and yet it is conjoined with the most precious, the vile cast out in the high-way, and on Dunghills, and in found in filthy places, which is the matter we must take for the true ground of our Art; none can live without it, and it is applied to sordid uses, all which denoted it to be Mars only to whom all this betided; in ships he floated upon the ocean, and without him cannot any ship or house be built, nor any merchandize be well carried on; by him we plough our land, reap our corn, dress, boil, and cut our meat, and with him are horses shooed; with many other uses too tedious here to enumerate, and yet it doth often lie in a contemplative manner upon the Earth, in old stub nails. Which are scarce worth the finding, whereby it may be esteemed vile.

Moreover Aries is know to the house of stout Mars, in which all artists charge you to begin in your work, and what can be said more plainly? Surely there can be none so ignorant as not to believe that a hidden meaning is concealed in these words, which hitherto was never better explained. Belus in Turba, p.27, Ars Aurif: Vol. 2, commanded to join the fighter with him that desired not to fight; wherfore to Mars the God of War, he assigned Saturn in union, who delighted in peace, whose kingdom I need not relate, being so well know to all.

Behold the second figure which is placed in the Philosophers Irne Rosary, p. 212, Ars Aurif, Vol. 2, where the King and Queen in royal robes held between them our true Lunary, bearing eight flowers, yet without a root; and between them is a bird; under their feet are the Sun and Moon, the King held in this hand a flower, the Queen another, and the bird held a third in his beak, having also a Star upon her tail, which signified our great secret; for the winged bird denoted Mercury joined with the Starry Earth, until both become volatile and flying.

Hence it appears the ancient Sages chose rather to instruct the eye by figures, than the ear by words; nevertheless some of their discourses are so plain, that almost any fool may gather the meaning couched in them: to which purpose, being myself a son of Art, I have in the Cabala Sapientum clearly explained the same, whereto I remit the studious reader; and shall now proceed in my intended course to show how to obtain this Water, which so few find, where by we draw out the most secret seed of Sol, wherfore with all diligence learn to obtain this Water, for it is the ground of our Quintessence.

Know then that all metals have but one matter, which is nothing else but Mercury; which as a ground first gave an entrance to a possibility of transmutation; and hence we conclude that our

most secret Water has the same matter as that of vulgar Mercury. And if crude Mercury, and all the five imperfect metals, may be turned into gold, (which by reason of their crudity will burn away in the fire), the reason whereof, as the Wise men teach, is because that all metals do partake of Mercury and are therefore alike transmutable: and if our Mercury, which we call our living Water, be other than unripe gold, then whatever metal shall by Art be converted into gold, must hold such a nature, as may by Art be made our Argent-Vive.

So then if lead, tin or copper, were resolved into a real Mercury, then might Art cause those Waters for it appear so changed in from, that any of them might be framed into our Philosophic Mercury. But why do we need this, since nature hath produced a Water object ready to each artists hand, on which a form may by Art be induced, which may easily command our secrets? Therefore consider what it is that Mercury wanted of being our most secret Menstruum; for we grant, that both are Metalline, and of weight and colour alike, and also that each are fluid and volatile in the fire; but we seek for a Sulphur in ours, which that of mine lacked, and this Sulphur purifies the matter, making it fiery, and yet it remained a Water. For Water is the womb, which wanting heat, is wholly useless for true generation, nor will our body be reduced to sweat, and send forth his Seed, but in a station of a circulating fire, commixed by Art with a Mercury partaking of Sulphur.

This Sulphur must be of a magnetic force, or virtue, and therefore must be true gold, although unripe, and also of one source both as the matter and form, with only this difference, that as the other is fixed, thus must be volatile and flying, having power to open and loosen the former. And there is only one body in the Earth, which is so nearly allied to Mercury, as is fit to prepare it for our secret stone, and to hide the solid body in its womb, this as I said before is the off-spring of Saturn.

Well known to all the magi, and which I have shonen.

And although some of the metals may be fixed with Argent-vive, yet do they not enter each other otherwise than as to sight, but by heat may easily be driven from each other, for you will find that they never penetrate the centre, nor will any of them be altered for the better. The reason is, because the Sulphur which lies in the perfect metals, is sealed up, as it were, or else in the others does partake of earthly faeces, and crudities, which Mercury abhors, nor will it be united unto them, although to sight they may seem to be mixed. If you separate those faeces you shall obtain fluid Mercury, and a crude Sulphur, which by congealation have hardened the humidity, and you shall also find an aluminous Salt, but all these are of too remote a kind from gold.

But the mineral we so much esteem, except its crude dregs, (which are all separable), contained a purer Mercury, which shall restore dead Bodies to life, that they like all other things may thereby be enabled to generate their own kind. But it contained in itself no Sulphur, save only it is congealed by a burning sulphur, being brittle, and black with shining veins; this Sulphur is nothing metalline, but if rightly separated according to Art, dregs being removed, there appears a nut in fashion like to a metal (which my be powdered to dust) wherein is shut, like a tender soul, which in a small fire arises as smoke, similar to Argent-vive, slightly congealed, which the fire does evaporate.

This gives penetration unto our Water, and enables it to enter to the centre of bodies, which it wholly inverted, and reduced them into their first true matter; and this wanted to be joined unto a true Sulphur, which is to be found in the house of Aries. By this mineral only through the artist's skill, and the help of Vulcan, is Mars retrograded into a mineral; as by many has often been assayed: this is our true Venus, the spouse of lame Vulcan, who is beloved of Mars.

First then cause Mars to embrace this mineral, so shall both cast away their earthiness, and in short space the metalline substance shall shine like the heavens, and for a sign of your success, you shall surely find a seal of a stellate king imprinted thereon. This is the royal stamp, the mark which the Almighty sets upon this strange subject; this is the heavenly fire, whereof a spark being once kindled, caused such a change in the bodies, that the blackness is made to shine like a sparkling gem, wherewith as a diadem our young king crowned. To this add Venus in a due proportion, whose beauty is admired by Mars, and she is known to have great love and desire to be joined unto him, when she to motion is soon inclined, as being allied to gold, Mars, and bright Diana, with whom she conciliated love, and true union.

But Vulcan growing jealous, it grieved the limping cuckold to feel his head adorned with horns, and therefore hoping to destroy this compact. He spreaded his net over them and catching his spouse and Mars in the act, showed the entrapped lovers wrapt therein.

Nevertheless, let not this be esteemed merely as a Fable; but first observe how Cadmus is by our fierce beast devoured, whom Cadmus afterwards having stoutly pierced, deserved a champion's name, for this Serpent (by might overpowered) he with his deadly spear transfixed against an oak, whom before every one did fear. Observe also the Star, which really is Solar, as may be proved, for gold united intimately with Saturn's child, whose faeces being purged out, all that is perfect subsided to the bottom, which after fusion, being poured forth, when cold, it shows a Star, even as doth Mars. But Venus gives a Metalline Substance, which of itself alone is contemptible, but being united which Mars, as if infolded in a net, it appeared fine to behold, which the sharp sighted mysterious poets have in a hidden disguise described, although clearly enough to the Wise.

Wherefore the soul of Saturn, and Mars, are by our Art with the help of Vulcan very closely mixed, but both alike are volatile, whose parts are not divisible, until the soul of Mars becomes fixed, which then left Saturn, and is then in trial found to be must perfect gold, and of a most pure and true tincture. But this mediation must be attained by Venus, or else could no skill of man sever them, no not even though they might be reduced to dust; yet being conjoined, they will be reduced only by the association of Venus, whereof Diana makes of them a separation.

Some in order to prepare their Water, use the Doves of Diana, which is a most tedious labour, that even for an artist to hit it once right, he may twice unfortunately miss: but the other way, (which is the most secret), we recommended to all that mean to be true artists.

Wherefore let the most subtle vapour of the Water be so long and so often circulated, until the souls of each (leaving their grosser matter) unite, and fly together aloft; where you must be sure not to let them abide so long until they be congealed, for then your work would prove erroneous.

Therefore take of the Son of old Saturn two parts, and Cadmus one part, these purity so long by the aid of Vulcan, until (being freed from their faeces) the Metalline part be pure; which must be done in four reiterations, whose perfect operations the Star shall teach you.

Make Aeneis equal to her lover, purging them artfully, until the net of Vulcan enclose them both, which then let them be well wet with the water, and continued in heat and moisture until they become perforate, and the Souls of both be glorified. This is the heavenly Dew, which must be fed so often and long as nature required, at least three times, or until seven, thus leading them through

waves and flames as reason shall direct, but beware that thou put not the tender nature to flight by the force of too great a fire.

Know also for certain that the Mercury, where with we begin the work, must be liquid and white, but be careful not to dry up the moisture to a powder by too great a fire, so as to look red, for thereby thy female sperm would be corrupted, and you would miss your desired issue: neither endeavour to turn the Argent-vive into a clear transparent gum, oil, or unguent, for so the proportion being lost, you can not attain unto a true dissolution; but must then be obliged to adjourn your work as forlorn, to another time, because you have proceeded contrary to, the rules of Art.

Only seek therefore to augment a spirit which common Argent-Vive lacked, then sublime the gross unto the firmament, and separate the dregs by Art; which being reiterated seven times, then espouse it unto gold, until they be perfectly combined with each other.

Thus by Art, and Nature's help, is the true Maiden prepared, which being severed from faeces, becomes a heavenly off-spring, which has made soft the solid body of Sol, and being severed into atoms turned black, rotted and putrefied, which does afterward revive again and becomes volatile.

But should I here disclose all the secrets contained in the fabric of this our Water, I should be disdained of all true artists, for they are communicated to these alone whom God shall deign to teach, while others must be suffered to wander in a mist of errors labyrinth. But he that with pains and prayers shall studiously search after this hidden secret, not being stirred up with covetous desires, but seek for knowledge with a candid mind, shall surely attain this mystery, whereof not anyone ever wrote so plainly.

There are some who by Art can prepare a wonderful Liquor (Alkahest?), which the Adept have named the Fire of Hell, whose virtues are so strange and powerful, as (by its force) to resolve all concretes into their primeval Matter, or Water; this in a gentle dissolved Argent-Vive so thoroughly, that like to crystal drops it may be poured out, without any thing settling to the bottom of the containing vessel, nor is its virtue thereby in the least impaired; for being distilled often, it leaves the Argent-Vive behind, which you shall find appear like unto a fixed salt, in smell resembling musk, or aroma, and to taste like honey for sweetness, which can be pulverized like to rust, and which no fire can destroy: this on the test with Saturn is found in fixity equal pure Luna.

This being cohabited five or six times with the said Water (with previous digestion) will appear like an Oil, and shortly after distils like to a Spirit, which by adjunction of a small subject, it by and by separated into two distinct substances, which done, they are then collected apart, the one being an Oil or Tincture, soluble in Liquor; the other (if suffered to boil) is by Art reducible into Mercury, which Argent-Vive is a subject of great wonder, the like whereof is not to be found under heaven.

This can neither by salts or strong water be corroded into a precipitate, nor can it by frequent circulation in the fire be ought, so altered as to sublime, or be turned into a dry powder, neither can it be fixed, but it will for ever remain volatile. The great Elixir, it cannot transmute, but doth dissolve and destroy it; its strangeness is such, as makes all artists amazed, which no power or skill can change or annoy: and by the forenamed way, the like way be produced of all Metalline bodies.

Yet this in our Art avails nothing, for we seek to multiply the Sulphur which is Solar Hematine, whose tayl is Lunar; these are the only planets of our earthy sky which we esteem, rejecting the others and all other arts. For if Gold, which by nature is made pure and perfect, might by this our secret fire of Water be made to retrograde into Mercury and Sulphur, which is entire in substance, and which before would not be severed by the force of fire, but did firmly abide the same; who sees not that such Mercury is remote from our work? For we seek to increase a Tincture; and it is Sulphur only, which like a coat enclosed the Mercury, and is agreeable to the Metalline nature, without which the Water cannot claim the name of a metal.

This Sulphur appeared more or less in every Metalline thing, in some a certain dross coquinates the pure substance, whereby it is destroyed in the fire, for whatever is gross and foul is therein burnt and consumed. But of metals Sol and Luna are by a pure Sulphur so closely shut up, as enables them to endure the greatest force of Vulcan, nor can any Art of man divide their Sulphur from its Water; except by the a forenamed patent liquor, whose virtue is so powerful as to reduce even the Sun and Moon from their fixed state, to become volatile: nor that alone, but also our admired Fire can do the same to gold, and that in a direct and kindly way caused it to become retrograde, yet doth not divide the Sulphur from its centre, but being clothed in a Mercurial attire, they both abide mixed together in a Golden Water.

But the said strange Liquor, in dissolving destroyed the Metalline homogeneity, which by separating them caused a disagreement and disunion, that neither of them can enjoy the other, and therefore the central Mercury being parted from the tinted Liquor subsided below; so that the Hematine, which before in gold had the Pondus of a Metal, is now so altered, as to become lighter than Argent-Vive, appearing to sight like an Oil, or rather unctuous Salt, and is a noble medicine for the sick.

Hence it appears, that by how much any Metalline substance is dissolved in this humidity, by so much is it changed from a Metalline nature, whose Sulphur, by the force of this Liquor, may (although unwillingly) at least be brought unto an elemental Water; such power hat this Liquor on any matter.

To this the Philosophers agree, who all conclude our Mercury to be but one, which moistened nothing but what is homogenously to metals, and is the mother of our Stone, of which secret if yet you are ignorant, you are then a first person to keep council; whereof none ever yet has write more plainly.

The End of the First Book.

THE SECOND BOOK

The Secret of our fiery Mercury, so much concealed by all the Ancients, I have already largely disclosed, whereby a discerning Eye shall find therein much depth or Art revealed; And shall no proceed to discover the practice, which therefore be sure to consider well with good judgement, ere, you pass it over.

Take then our Mercury (which is our moon,) and espouse it to the Terrestrial Sun, (thus Man and Wife are joined,) to them add the reviving Spirit, which done you shall soon espy a noble Game, because you have rightly attended the noble Laws of Nature. But to be more particular, take of the Red Man one part, and of his White Wife three parts, which mix together, (this is a good proportion,)

to which add of the Water four parts; this mixture is called our Lead, which will be moved to notion in a gentle which you must increase until it sweat. Otherwise, if you please, let this Pondus be observed, take of the Sun one part, and of the Moon two, to which add of the Water four parts, which maketh up the perfect number: and will prove to the a joyful rest, and the bond of Love.

Whereas Laton appeareth red, yet he availeth nothing to our work until he be whitened, in whose center lurketh a hidden Spirit, which appeareth not until it be joined with our Mercury, and this Mercury is a tender Body, the Spouse of Sol, to whom it kindly cleaveth.

This is thy Work begun with a Trinity, whereof the Body and its Soul are first conjoined, and then both are mixed with the Spirit; these we call the Sun, the Moon, and the Water, which are one in kind, although three in Number, and yet indeed are but two, because the Sun is hid, and doth not shew his light. Two Bodies thus combined, we often call our Lead, our Brass, and our Hermaphrodite, being within red and fixed, but appeareth to sight Saturnine, white and volatile, these Natures being separable, are by our Art made to become inseparable.

This is the wonder of our secret Work, that what is perfect, we cause to become retrograde, waiting a long time with patience until the Water congeal, which being obtained, we then sublime, exalt, and fix to dust this fifth Essence, which then we must again revive and circulate so oft, until Nature have advanced it onto its utmost height, still adding fresh Matter, as it needeth, and causing it to pass through the shades of Night, we gently decocting it, until clear Aurora bring the bright beams of Phoebus to appear.

Thus is the perfect amended by the imperfect, and both together are made transcendent in virtue; And thus by the help of Art assisting Nature, she is enabled to exceed her own Work alone; which is a sight that will greatly rejoice the painful Artist, and make him to forget all his toil and trouble.

Wherefore, let the practice be thus; take one Ounce of Sol, and of the Magnet Three, it makes four Ounces of the Body, to which add four Ounces of the Water, and let these be ordered thus; first let the rich Robes of Sol, be whitened by the moisture of the Moon, which may be done with a gentle Fire; the Mass shall then appear to the Eye Saturnine, and fluxible in heat like to Lead; then pour there on the due Pondus of Virgin Mercury, thus is the Body red, fixt, and solid in the hidden center, altho to sight it appeareth white, tender, and volatile.

This done, have in readiness a Glass Phial, of an Oval, or Spherical form, into which the matter must be put, be careful to Seal up the neck thereof so close, with the Seal of Hermes, that the enclosed Spirits may be secured from passing out, or the outward Air from entering there in. Let thy Glass be of such a fitt proportion as may contain at least four times the quantity you enclose, whereby a convenient space will be allowed for receiving the ascending Dew, which falling down again, doth thus by a long continued rotation dispose the Body to Solution, causing it to rot and dye, which after doth revive, and both become joined in a true union. But on the other hand take heed thy Glass be not too large, for then the Female Sperm would be too much dispersed, and thereby either it would not at all or very ill return to its Male, or fixed Earth; whereby thy Work would be spoiled; therefore let the bigness of thy Glass be proportioned to the quantity of thy Matter as aforesaid.

Wherefore one quarter of an Ounce of the purest Gold may serve for the Work, or for a trial a Dram may suffice for if you observe a due Pondus, Solis the Eight part of the whole compound, whose

price is not so great but that a poor Man may bear the charge, unless he work amiss; therefore let the following Rules be observed; if to one part of the Man you take three parts of the Woman, then you must take four parts of the Water, to equal the Earth; but if you take one of the Man, and two of the Woman and to them add four of the Water, then will the Water be one part more than the Earth, as appeareth clearly by Ripley.

It now remains that we unfold the Secret of all our Fires, which so many have mistaken, whose Doctrine, as the Sages hold befits the curious Pen of a skilful Master, whereof I shall now speak with candour, and therefore friendly Reader carefully attend to what I shall here discover. First then consider well, and weigh in thy Mind the Reason of all our Works, and their Causes; by this means thou mayest be brought to understand that which hath confounded and mislead so many; wherefore I shall so far help thee as Reason may allow, which by the effect thou shalt my candor or prove.

Our Fires are these blocks at which the ignorant do fatally stumble; and Authors have written thereof so mystically, that hardly any Man can find a sufficient guide in what he should seek: no marvel then if he who knoweth our Fires may claim a Masters place. For Fire in our Art is used Homonumally, which is the cause that so many err therein; sometimes it doth signify our Water, which is so near of kin to our Laton; sometimes it denoteth the perfect Body, and sometimes neither, out floateth in the Water; that is the Sulphur of our Compound, is called a Fire, which in our Work is twofold, the one is perfect, and the product of Nature which how to find this Treatise doth fully shew: the other is included within our Water, by which thousands of Searchers have been deluded. Also our Water is threefold, and all these have so many various denominations of Fire, that he who shall attempt this Work without good judgement and care, shall surely spend his Cost and Time in vain: if therefore, thou wilt follow me, I shall be to thee a true and faithfull guide herein.

Some do erroneously judge, and therefore so ordain their Work, as that culinary Fire may claim no place therein, which they suppose to be applied in vain, and therefore such who do use it herein they are pleased to grace with the name of Vulgar Sophisters, deriding both them and their Works: for say they, it is the undoubted sense of authors, that our Fire is Magical, and not culinary, and therefore who so shall use Elemental Fire, shall surely miss his end, and on this ground they seek an uncouth Fire, not knowing what they seek.

It is true indeed that nature's Fire is Sulphur: which is hid within the Center, and this moveth the Work from State to State; and it is this that Authors bid the careful Artist by all means to improve; this is the hidden heat, which worketh invisibly, and is not to be discerned by the Eye. But yet it is as true, that the inward heat is actuated by the outward; because the fixed must thereby be raised from its seat, and made to fly with the volatile: like as an Egg needeth the heat of the Hen to produce a chicken, which being withheld the operation ceaseth.

Therefore thy Matter being found, take it and cleanse it from all its faeces, which mixt in a due proportion, put it into a proper Glass of a due bigness as before described, which must be so carefully closed up that the Spirits may not transpire; then place it in its nest, and set it; into a Furnace so curiously contrived, as that an equal and continual heat may be always kept there-in; this is our Outward Agent, which if wanting, the Work is straightway stopt, and runs to ruins; but take heed thy heat be not too great, which would surely destroy thy Work, as by the effect thou shalt find for hast makes waste, as all authors have forewarned.

Hence it follows that the outward Heat, is to be judged oft and regulated according to the inward Operation; of which I shall now treat in due order, whereby the Artist from the appearance of things to the Eye, may be directed either to increase or lessen the Heat, so as may be most suitable to effect the Work.

First then, when thy Glass is set in its Nest of Sand, let it be so fixed that it may not move in any wise, and then apply such a proper Heat under it, as may cause the latter to flow above, taking care that the Nest be so securely closed above, that no Air may pass in or out, nor thy Glass ever be suffered to cool: therefore never let thy Fire be so far spent (by Night or Day) that any cold should annoy thy Glass, but be careful to supply it from time to time with fresh Fuel as the former wasteth. To which purpose such a Furnace is to be chosen, which the Wise men have called an Athanor, wherein the continual Heat is to be Kept; having always ready a supply of Coals as occasion may require, and being careful to attend the same, at least once in twelve hours, between which whiles you may spend your time, where you list.

The Furnace may be made of Brick, laid in well tempered Mortar, made of Loam, mixt with Sand and Horse Dung, carefully beaten together, until it become such a Mass as may not be liable to crack; some in preparing their Mortar, mix therewith Ashes, some Hair or Flocks, etc. some one thing and some another; but however endeavour to choose the best. For next to the Matter itself a good furnace is the choicest Thing a Man should seek; and since Fire must bring; the Work to perfection, it were worth ones pains to bestow a weeks time in preparing a good Furnace, so artfully contriv'd, as may admit of various degrees of Heat at pleasure, and that it may be governed with such certainty as not to be liable to error.

Let your Furnace be composed of such Materials as unapt to moulder, chop or crack, because it being necessary to continue the Fire for a long time, such cranks or cracks, would make it difficult to guide the Fire to any certain decree requisite, but would almost unavoidably cause it to be greater or less than is desired.

Also take care not to build your Furnace where it may be liable to any accident or misfortune, that the Rain may not crop thereon, or the Wind blow upon your Glass, for so should you one time or other loose your Work; therefore be wary herein, that safety may attend your care, which you must dally continue to the end or your Work.

Likewise I esteem it necessary to chose a light-some place for your Furnace, for the Mind of the Artist will doubtless be so strongly inclined to beheld the Operations, as to desire to view them hourly, or daily at the least; which will be both delightful and satisfactory in seeing the Work goes right. Let not the Room where thou keepest thy immortal Heat, be such, as that the fumes arising from the Coals may find no vent; for so thou mayest catch such harm (as some through carelessness have done) as may cause the to repent too late, and perhaps such hurtful Scents might hazard thy Life.

If thou canst build thy Furnace high a Chimney it may be very convenient for carrying off the fumes aloft; but if thou judgest such a place too dark, then place it in a large Room, where then thou must not visit thy Glass too oft, nor stay by it too long at a time, for fear of harm: but if thou canst have an upper Room it would be best, in which such a vent might be contrived, that the fumes may pass freely away; then mightest thou be bolder, and attend it more frequently without danger; wherefore

the Wise Man teach, that oft viewing the Work keeps the Artist from going astray, besides it is a pleasure to behold the various motions of the Work in the Fire.

Some choose to built a Tower by the side of their Nest, and this indeed giveth a certain Heat, but then the Coals will often rest therein, and not fall down freely to the Fire as it needeth them: some make their nest above the Coals, and they work not amiss; hence thou mayest choose either way, but certain it is, that some herein are better Workmen than others, and do contrive their Business with so much judgement and accuracy, as scarce to vary a point from their intention; and such no doubt will sooner attain their end, and bear away the Prize, than those who are less mindful in governing their Heat, who sometimes carelessly let it slack, and then again increase it by turns; which unequal procedure setteth the Work behind, and causeth Nature with less delight to run her course, who is so skillful in her curious Laws, that when she hath once begun, never ceaseth to operate unless she meet with an interruption which accordingly retards the Work.

It is were good if one a chosen friend can have as a partner in this Work, werby you might attend the same by turns, and so might both spend your alternate time in reading, writing, or walking the Fields, or a pleasant Garden, etc. as best suiteth your inclinations: for to be every day confin'd for so long a time, to such a careful attention as it requireth, would too much oppress the Spirits with anxious care; nor is it to good to be ever rolling one Stone, since manifold Evils might attend too much thoughtfulness, and therefore I advise the sometimes to divert thyself at pleasure.

Let not thy Operations be known to any but thy surest Friend, and do not as many Searchers have done, make all privy to your intentions, for they will be sure to mock and deride your folly; and therefore it is best to be silent; neither let thy Wife, thy Children, or thy Servants, be acquainted therewith, least they discourse thereof and expose it amongst their Companions, and acquaintance; but carry thyself with all the Secrecy thou canst, pretending; ignorance thereof, and counting the Art as a Fable.

For shoudest thou happen to miss thy aim, and for thy time and Cost, reap nought out Expense and Care what Man would have himself thought to be one of those who by this Art had reduced himself to want? Or shoudest thou obtain the matchless Prize, yet what wise Man would have it known, that he had the Art of making Gold? Therefore it is better tacitly to enjoy it, not crying Roastmeat in the open Street, than to lay ones self subject to such, whom if you did not supply with Money at pleasure, or shew them the Art, would destroy both you and Art.

Consider well the danger, and be assur'd 'tis better to live in safety, than in fear, and so enure your self to secrecy that none nay hear thereof from you, either by boasting of what you can do, nor yet for any price procure the Secret from you. To which purpose beware of Drink and Company, for the one besots, and the other allures, for 'tis unlikely that he should keep a Secret long, who too often or too largely allows himself in Drinking, but on the contrary it is certain that Temperance is the best and most assured barr to command the tongues, without which it will not be long bridle.

All these Things being rightly observed, I next advise the not to expect the event with over greedy desire, but minding the Sayings of the Wise, and waiting with Patience the appointed Time, you'l be sure to find the End; But he that hopes in a short time to receive his Harvest, doth in fine deceive himself; hence some are so impatient that they cannot long left their Glass stand, quiet, but will be moveing, turning, or shaking it, where-by they do much wrong to Nature's Work, who being thus

forced out or her own path, doth follow the fancies of those foolish Artists; which whoso violates her Course, will reap nothing but Wind.

Commit thy self and thy Work to God above, intreat his Grace and help, keeping thy self from all Vice and Sin, see that thou begin with him alone; this is the way for to attain success, otherwise thou mayest long toil, but always in vain. And if thou art so happy as to attain this rare Jewel, which many seek, but very few do find, be sure to thy utmost thou honour God, relieve the Poor, and help the Sick: Let not this great Talent be buried in a Napkin, but pursue Charitable Works, and do no wrong to any Man; so shall thou see Gods blessing rest on thee, whilst thou hast thy abode with Mortals here, and will be to the an earnest of that everlasting Happiness hereafter, which thou shouldest ever have in view. For of all the Blessings of this Life this Art is the greatest and of the highest Value, which is given only to such as endeavour to improve and use it well, who being truly Wise, do not doat on the fading pleasures of this Life, as to neglect the Everlasting Bliss.

I shall now briefly, yet plainly disclose the real workings of our Stone, with all its Colours as they appear in their proper Seasons; and he who snail heedfully observe my Discourse shall find that it truly sheweth more than hath ever been revealed by any Man, although there is something herein yet concealed.

Know therefore, that as soon as thy Compound shall feel the Fire, it will flow like onto Lead; the tender body which is the Soul of Steel, doth shew such mighty efficacy, that Solis whitened and devoured therein, on both of which Media's broth must then be poured. This is then our Sea, wherein there swimeth Five Fishes, who have neither Scale nor Bone, this Sea is ever round, without any brim, and both the Sea and Fishes are all one; these we digest until they make a broth, and all join in Unity.

Having attended Forty Days, then shall appear Black of the Blackest, like unto a well burnt Coal, when this thou seest and having passed the doom of blackness, thou needest not to fear but the White will at last shew itself, and afterward you will cone in due time onto the sparkling Red. This blackness is the Gate by which we enter into the light of paradise, this is the way, by which the Bodies are reduced to their center, and a dismal Night bringeth forth a glorious Day; let therefore thy chief care be to attain this Black, or else all other Signs shall be in vain.

At first the Colour appeareth argent, for the Sun must descend into the Womb of Luna, and both must be reduced into their first Matter, which is effected by Mercury alone, which so amendeth Nature in its kind, that the Sun and Moon are both soon eclipsed in this Water, the only cause of which alteration is the continual working of the Fire; by means whereof the Water draws from the Sun and Moon a Water of Life, wherein is hid a Spirit of great might, and is the proper seed of Sol and Luna. This Water and Spirit do evermore attend each other, and circulath incessantly, still rising like an Air, and again descending, for those Spirits being loosed continue to operate until they become fixed, to the desire of the Artist.

But beware thy Spirits find anywhere to exhale, for that would spoil thy Work, and cause the much hurt, by thus breaking one of the strictest Laws of thy Work; neither cause them to rise too fiercely, lest they break thy Glass; which therefore cause to be made as strong as may be, and equally blown, without either knotts or flaws therein, which thou shalt set within a Ring of Brass, wherein let it be fixed with moistened Bone Ashes, closely pressed down, as a safeguard, thereunto.

Thou shall see thy Waters fly aloft, and also thy Body boiling underneath; and this Circulation thou shalt continue so long until the Eagle destroy the Dragon, when all dying together shall turn into an ugly Toad, which thou shalt burn until the Black decrease, which will be succeeded by manifold Colours, and the Light appeareth, this course continue with patience, until thou behold the Moon doth rise with her bright beams: this then is our young King which cometh from the East, bearing a Crescent Moon upon his Crest.

But here beware of making thy Heat over-great, and thereby causing the Red to appear before its time in colour like to a wild Poppy, with siccily; for that will be to thee a fatal Sign, shewing that thou workest amiss, by thus burning thy flowers, and turning them into precipitate. Therefore, for certainty in thy Operation, proceed therein with a gentle Fire, and be not moved with hate anticipate thy Work, no not a Day, but with patience wait until the Black being past, then mayest thou augment thy Fire a little, but rather let it be too little than too much, which will be the safer, which is the concurrent Council of all the old Sages, on which you may rely, as on a fix'd ground: For much time shall pass before thou see thy Gold resolve and rot, and this Work the Magi have found so tedious, that thereof they have oft complained.

And now I shall in few 'words discover all the hidden Operations of our new Art, which yet is old, but hard to find, amongst which I shall declare many Mysteries; therefore attend diligently onto what I shall teach you in the following Discourse upon the Oath of Secrecy.

The End of the Second Book.

The Third and Last Book.

In the foregoing Books, I have largely described the Art of Alchemy in general; which as it is divided into Six distinct Parts, viz. Calcination, Dissolution, Separation, Conjunction, Putrefaction and Congelation, I shall now in this last Book severally explain: Therefore, with serious thoughts and diligence endeavour herein to find the Truth.

Calcination.

First we Calcine the Body, and thereby it becometh porous, or else, we can in no wise obtain the quickening Life, which enlivens every Thing, which being sever'd, the Carkese appeareth vile to the eyes, but being by Art removed, we then find that which we so much desire hid in the Dish of Hermes. Thus when the Earth is made spongy, it is termed the slaying of the Spirit, for then cur Water is turned into Earth in the Dragon's Den, and the Earth returns unto its primeeve Matter: In which Calcination we always preserve moisture and unctuousness, which they do otherwise greatly err.

Some by Art make divers corroding Waters, wherein they Calcine Metalline Species, but then their Liquor forsaketh the Earth, nor can any Mans skill combine them: this way we leave to Fools, as being fit for, nothing, but to waste ones Substance and Time upon to no purpose, whereof beware.

But our Calcination is performed only in its own Kind, by mixing the Crude with that which is Perfect, the first dissolving the fixt, and the other fixing that which is fugitive; therefore they work much amiss who take such Waters as wet the Hand, for such to cur Art are quite useless.

So soon then as Sol feels his Compeer, he relenteth like Ice in warm Water, for she is to him both Mother, Spouse, and Sister, and with her he agreeth in quality; nor is there any other Agent that may therewith be compered. This is the Salt of Nature, we so much hide, which had not the Almighty Created, this Art would have been in vain; besides that as by its great power the Gold is reanimated, it doth also add Pondus thereto, and containeth a secret Fire which rolleth the Gold: this is the sealed Fountain, which is not discerned by Fools, for want of proper Eyes, who have not been trained up in Vulcan's School, where Nature is advanced by the Wise. This is Pontanus monstrous secret Fire, which many admire but few find.

If this thou canst get, thou art freed from the trouble and care which Sophisters undergo, for this is a certain means whereby with success to attain our rare Jewel; which doth no sooner feel a gentle Fire, but straightway the Man hath a great desire to be conjoyn'd to his Wife. When the Bodies are dissolved, they will float like to Cream, and appear as white as Milk, also a fume shall arise and fall, so often until the Argent Coat decreasing into a pale colour, it become stained of a Citrine, after which all will appear Azure and Green, and at last other Colours failing it will turn as black as a Coal. The Mass shall then swell like unto Icencyed Dough, and thus shall daily change from State to State, until the whole be reduced to Water, which shall then gently ascend day by day, and growing thicker and thicker, until at last you see no Sublimation, but all remains below of a black colour and ill savour, smelling like unto liquid Pitch, which at last becometh White.

About the Fiftieth day shall various colours again appear, day by day, as Azure, Green, Citrine, Violet, and a Pale colour, and at last a dismal black shall wholly be seen; the Compound also shall often seem to flow, and as oft coagulate like to little Islands. If dryness seem to increase, attended with a Citrine Colour, and without either Azure or Green appearing therein, you then have reason to fear your progress is erroneous; but if the Sweat do kindly circulate, you need not doubt of the good State of your work.

Therefore, order your Fire wisely, observing this mean, that if Sweat, ascend and descend, assure yourself you cannot err, unless by chance; for throughout the whole Work Nature knows her proper Course, and will by Symptoms tell the to thy face, whether or no thou makest too much hast. For be assured that according to the proportion of heat thou givest, so will thy Matter be moved, if it be too great, it will put the Body into too great a Sweat, and drive away the tender Soul; or if too small, then for want of heat, thy progress and hopes will quite be frustrated.

See therefore, that thou observe thy Work carefully, and if thou seest the Compound change Colour, note that with diligence, for if thou hast proceeded erroneously thou shall perceive strange Symptoms, as the Poppy Red, and want of due blackness, which are both fatal Signs that thou workest not true: But if thou attain to a true Black, then in Ten weeks time thy Compound shall roll and dye, and all shall resolve into a subtle Powder, soft like to the Sun-beams, yet not very dry, but will shine like unto a Coal newly broken, wherein is contained a living Soul.

Dissolution.

Wherefore thy latter shall dissolve in a short space: for our workings are so concatenate, that the one containeth the other; nor doth the one cease, out straightway the other is inchoate: And it is true also that Dissolution beginneth the former Work, and perfecteth both. For when we see the Body relent into its first Matter, we say it is dissolved into a Mineral Water, at which we chiefly aim,

because we are assured that if the Spirits are freed from bondage, they will straightway begin a new Operation. For in this procedure the active nature doth suffer by the passive, in such manner, that as the Earth doth day by day relent, so likewise doth the Spirits thicken; for such is the Law of Mature,

that by how much ought is dissolved in moisture, by so much is the moisture thickened. And whatever some may conceive, yet all our Work is only to dissolve and recongeal; and thus the Body leaveth its fixity and becometh spiritual; which are all born aloft in the Air, until they arrive at the top of the Mount, from whence the Body, Soul and Spirit, descending, do cease their fugitive nature and become fixed. Then is attained what we so long have sought, for now our King being return'd from Death triumphantly is empowered to conquer all opposite force, and to command the crude Metals into purity.

Thus Dissolution is the very Key of all our Secrets, without which no Man can perform ought in Alchemy, nor can he Tinge any Metal firmly, until he resolve the perfect Metals, into a Water of their own kind, which is their primaeve Matter. For in and by Humidity alone, is the Spirit of each Thing conserved; this is the Mother of our hidden Stone, and the Key of temporary Bliss. Nature being astonished to see our Art able to perform such wonderful Operations.

But in our Art we teach two Dissolutions, which are doth performed by the Fire alone and not by the hands, but the first reacheth not to the Center, nor is it adorn'd with so great change of a variety of gay colours as appeareth in the second. The first is when the Red Man is joined with his Wife, which properly is termed Liquefaction; both these being espoused with the Spirit of Life, and set upon a true Fire, they straightway fall to action, nor will the spirit cease until it have dissolved the Body. And know, that as the Body is reduced to rarity by the Water, so it dwelleth with the dissolvent, whereby the Water is induced to thicken proportionally, until both become thoroughly united into a black Powder somewhat fixed.

Put this is net a total dissolution of the whole Body, for it still retaineth some portion of its corporality, nevertheless, these Two which before were contraries, having contested with each other until they are reduced into one, do produce a Third of a Neutral nature. Yet as this Dissolution is but in part, so likewise, is the Congelation into a black Dust also in the like proportion; nature still observing this Rule, hence you may expect a far nobler Conjunction remaining in our Art.

But these Atoms shall in due time resolve, and out of them shall Azoth be expressed by Fire, this see you sublime so long untill all the Earth be raised from its Nest, and all become like unto common Argent-Vive, and of a spiritual Nature This is the noble Dissolution we so much commend, and here is made a Tetraptive Conjunction, where all the Elements agree in a never fading perfection; And now no doubt thou knowest what we intend by Dissolution, which therefore I shall now conclude.

Separation.

Of Separation I come now to treat, which hath so great affinity with the former Operation, that both do meet and proceed in one and the self-same Path, only they are in notion distinct, which otherwise are wholly linkt together. For from the first hour that we put our Matters to the Fire, we apply such a heat that the moisture may be made to fly, and circulate incessantly; out first of all the Waters like a flame ariseth like unto a smoak or steam, yet not so much but that it condenseth into pearly drops; which runneth down in veins, and so reduceth the Body where it goeth, which in time

the Fire staineth with new Colours, and these at last ascend with the Water into the Air, and again descend.

This is the Separation which we mean, and is nothing else but a constant Circulation; this looseneth the compact Body, which leaneth to the nature of the Water, to which it is of kin, and therefore by a continued circulation the Water makes an incessant Separation. And as the Bodies are twofold, of which the one is imperfect, and is easily brought into its first Matter; out yet cannot be done without Sublimation, to which all other heats availeth nothing, therefore we cause the spirits for to fly, and again to return to the Earth incessantly. For is this Sublimation made in vein, for thereby the Water is accuated, which by its often rising doth at length retain part of the Body, whereby it is animated, and becometh like to the Fire of Hell, making the Earth to swell like unto leavened Paste.

And as at first the Phlegm alone did arise, which by often rising end falling down again became more Spiritual, which the Eyes might well perceive, when it became stained with colours, as Pale, Blewish, Yellow, Green and Black, which at first was only white, which soon disappeared. The Artist beholding this doth conclude that two elements are now separated, and that which at first was raw and crude, is become fiery, and what was clear is tinted daily with resplendent Colours, shining most bleriously for many days.

Now know here, that as the Body doth dissolve, so also the Spirits by the work are congealed, no time interceding, out all doth revolve from State to State, until the seal'd Spirits are set at liberty, which we call by many Names, although one Work serveth all. This Sublimation by vapour we do not cease, no not a moment, until the Matter be brought to Dust, nor then do we increase the Fire, not with one continued heat do melt this dust to Water; and this Water we then so long sublime, until by frequent Sublimation it be slain.

So long therefore, as the Water doth arise like unto a Phlegm, we ere said to separate the Spirit both from the Soul and Body, but when the Steam by often circulation sheweth fine Colours, then is the Spirit united with the Soul, and both are severed from the Body. Then shall the Earth be benighted, when the Tincture doth arise, and the dead Body appering without its Soul, shall rott to dust; the Soul at length binds the Spirit to the Body, until it bears equal proportion therewith, and is made equally Spiritual: and thus is obtained the Art of our Calcination, Solution, Separation, Conjunction, and Putrefaction, which doth all but make a Resolution of the Letter into Unity of a purified nature; which is effected by the power of the Spirit, which meeting with resistance, it sheweth the fore-named Operations in our Work; whereof he saith true who shall affirm them all to be but one, and that this same one is performed with only one Fire, neither increased nor yet decreased, seeing our Stone needeth only incessant heating, and all is only to sublime the Water, until it shall make the fixed Body to fly aloft: then shall the Body in due time congeal the Water into a pure fixt essence: which is a Medicine that will heal all the imperfections in Metals, wherewith it may be mixed: and which Medicine if it be exalted to the Red, and then resolved into an Oil, will also powerfully cure all Diseases in Animals, restoring Nature to such a State of health, and increasing the strength of Man, besides abundantly supplying him with all the needs of Life, that thereby he may always live free from Diseases, Care and Want.

As therefore we do in Vapour subtilize the grosser elements of our Compound, so by turning round of our wheel, we male all the Vapour which ariseth soon to return again, and this continued ascending and descending, we name the Work of Separation: this is the whole beginning and ending

of what we seek; which thus we continue so long to dissever the Principles, until they at last become so conjoined as never to be parted again.

Conjunction.

This Work is called Conjunction, and that truly, for Natures are hereby so well conjoined and closely combined, they will never be severed more, but will appear as one individual; that as in Man, the Soul, Body, and Spirit are one, so this also to sight appeareth and is only one; although at first there were a Fourfold Root, which yet is but Three, which are only Two, and which at last is but only one; the which I could here demonstrate, by many Reasons.

This Operation is the true Key of Coagulation, even as Separation was the proper Mean of Dissolution; for by a constant Vapour we resolve the Body of Sol into Water, this when clean we join with its own Soul, and both these we resolve so long upon the Fire, until they will no more be made to fly, as before. And here I must warn thee, that our Conjunction, which is of all the most solemn, and most sure, cannot be made, until a thorough disjunction be made of what is foul, from that which is pure: Then must the Body rott, and putrefie, which a new Life shall revivifie.

For at first the Soul, Body, and the Spirit, are all divisible from each other; the one is red, and the other two are white, two are congeal'd, and one is bother to both; which flews and moves like unto a Mineral Water, one Body we call Sol, and the other Lune, the one is able to abide all Fire, and is most malleable under the Hammer, the other is fugitive, and if it be hammer'd will divide into dust, yet by his force is able to cause Gold to liquefie like to Wax, from which in a due heat it will not fly.

These Two, in our Art, are like to two Dragons, each being in qualities contrary to the other; the one within his Heart or Center includes the Fire of Nature, which is hidden from the sight, and is only apprehended by a mental Man, the other containeth the Fire against mature; the one is ripe, the other is raw; the one is digested, the other wants digestion; the one is fixt, the other is fugitive; the Law of the one is such as doth attend perfection, and is the perfect Seed, which we call our Sun, which by the tender Moon is soon tamed. The Spirit differs from them both, in degree, in form, and also in its qualities, and flieth like Water from the Fire, and with it makes the Soul for to rise; this Circulation is so long to be repeated until all like unto dust be seated at the bottom.

The first Conjunction is of the Sun and Moon. the Second. by a long circulation, joyneth the Water to them both, when this is done, the water is slain, and the Earth is returned to its first Matter, but yet lastly, all the Elements must be united, and this shall be performed, when as the Earth by many rotations shall be turned into Water, when thou shalt see nothing out Water; But first the grosser parts being burnt with Fire must pass the darkness of the Night, and shall then again be renewed; then shall a Vapour arise from the secret Den, like unto orient Pearl, which shall with gentle Showers wash the dark Earth from all its filth and ill scent, which dark colour being removed it shall appear in a shining Dress and all the Elements shall be united together, and for ever fixed; so that the one shall not ascend or descend without the ether; Thus are both Brother and Sister made one, in a firm union, whereby both are amended by each other; And thus you have all our Conjunctions declar'd, which ere effected by Circulation. And thus must our great elixir be prepar'd, first dividing the Spiritual Vertues from the Earth.

Putrefaction.

The first subliming with Air, and the other subsiding to the bottom, out of which shall be brought forth a rotten Carkese, called our Toad, and our Crow, because it sheweth most black in the Fire. Yet certain it is, what this Work doth not differ at all from the other aforenamed, but only nationally; and although we ere pleased to call one Work by many names, yet we really mean that he who performs one Work well, may with ease perfect the rest at his pleasure.

For our whole Art is but to open and shutt, to loose, and after that to recongeal, to volatilize, and then to fix, to put to death, and after to revive and heal; to putrefie, and afterward to cleanse, all which are but one Working, expressed in a different sense. For certain it is, that unless the Compound do rot, the Spiritual parts could, not be exactly severed, neither could the Water's impurities be cleansed, nor the terestrety of Bodies be brought to a true Tincture, which might be enabled to renew imperfect Bodies.

This is the true reason of Putrefaction, which is caused by a frequent reiteration of the Water upon the Body, and extraction of it again, by a constant Circulation; this doth open the body in such wise, as maketh it to yeild its Seed, after that it dieth. For first a life is infused into it, by the mediation of the Mon, which doth enter it unto its very center, and being thus mixed and confounded together its parts are made brittle, because that both do so embrace each other, that in the Fire they flow like Wax, and appear of one Colour.

By means of this Moon an entrance is obtained for the Water into the hidden veins of Sol, wherein lieth closely contained its Seed, which thus is brought out free the Center, and the Water becometh so thickened by this Seed, that at last they all return to a Limus. And thus Three Natures are blended together, which differ very much in temperament, but by oft subtilizing they are amended by each other, until by dryness the moisture be spent, and seem wholly drunk up by the Earth, which proves to it a deadly Cup. For the Body soon begins to swell, and changeth its Colour, and all the fume retiring, it at last dies and rots, until e Spirit reneweth again the dead Carkese, causing Vapours to arise, which shall wash the grass Earth, and having past the fatal doom, all shall become most Resplendent.

Now if this Circulation were not made, the Body would for ever remain in its own proper fixity, nor could there then be had from it a fixt Essence, which might advance the Base Metals to the dignity of Sol and Luna, more pure than those digged from any Mine. For by the elevation of the Water, the Body becometh drier, and so yeilds more to the Fire, than if the Matter were Waterish; nor doth the Body become Eclipsed in the Shade of Night, until the moisture be in great part spent, and the Body appear rent to Atoms, then the Vapours ceasing, and all the Spirit failing, Death doth straightway begin to dispose the Body to putriness, increasing each Day, until all both within and without appear as black as a Crow, which dark Colour at last abating, a green Colour will succeed, and then the Life returns, and by and by gay Colours banisheth the darkness; this continued longer burning in the Fire, gay Colours by degrees will come, and again vanish, this being continued all at last will shew like unto common Argent-vive, but much brighter, which the Fire doth drive above.

Congelation.

And the Air condenseth the drops, and these returning do again fly away, until the volatility ceaseth, and all abide the heat, which every Day by little and little geteth fixation, until at last no heat can banish it from its Station.

And here you may observe our procedure, how by an alternate Process we sometimes go backward, and then again come forward, thus by Dissolution so long continued, we extract Sol's most secret Seed, until the Body becomes dead; which is quickened again, until all become Spirit, and the Body disappeareth, when this is done, then is Laton by Azoth washed clean, which must be performed by many Circulations, after which the Body is seen to fly in the Air, which by reiterated Sublimations, the Substance being made perfectly clean, at last causeth its Ferment to appear. This done, it being unable to fly like a Vapour, shall twinkle on the heat like to sparkling Stars, or little Fishes Eyes, and turn, roll and move, whose Lusture is so great as to prevent thee beholding this dazzling Sight with a fixed Eye, as the Ancient Magi have said.

But ere the perfect white appear, thou shalt admire a thousand wonders, that shall hourly appear in its actions on the Fire, which before it shall attain to a clear sparkling brightness, fixt, and turned to powder like to Atoms in the Sun, it shall undergo innumerable changes; sometimes appearing fluid and dry, and after flowing again, and in less space than an hour it shall assume strange shapes, but will not continue long in and, until it become fixt in its Cell, and then all the Substance will appear like Atoms in the Sun, which is our new resplendent Moon.

And when the Light shall have so long shone on the Earth, that all darkness and obscurity is quite vanished, and all appearth like to a sparkling throne with a dry Fire, then decoct it so long, until it can penetrate and tinge all bodies white, with a due fixation to endure all assays.

Then is thy heel once truly turn'd about, and a Medicine of the first Order is made, this although but a Child, yet may it easily be brought to attain the strength of a stout Champion; by which the Artists charge, pains, and care, shall be well repaid, and in lieu thereof obtain a most inestimable, Jewel. This then imbibe first with Milk, and then with Meat, which by Art ferment until thou hast advanced it to a great Virtue, which thou mayest multiply at thy own pleasure; taking care to preserve thy Fire, and keeping a proper Store, least thy Fire going out thy Work be ruined.

Now how to make Projection is taught in the First Part, and also how to Ferment and Multiply is showed in the Second Book, here for a Proof of the Art I have brought an example of what myself did try, and therefore shall not here make any needless repetition thereof, but now with Congelation close this Treatise. For if thou prove so happy as to arrive hitherto, then mayest thou proceed by the Rules before laid down; But if otherwise thou failest herein, thou surely betrayest a gross Ignorance, or else the frowns of Fortune; And if either prevent thee, proceed no furth'er, until better Fates shall help thee to speed.

Sic explicit Medulla Alchemiae.