

The Stone  
of the  
Philosophers  
*by*  
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## The Stone of the Philosophers

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Though I have already twice suffered chains and imprisonment in Bohemia, an indignity which has been offered to me in no other part of the world, yet my mind, remaining unbound, has all this time exercised itself in the study of that philosophy which is despised only by the wicked and foolish, but is praised and admired by the wise. Nay, the saying that none but fools and lawyers hate and despise Alchemy has passed into a proverb. Furthermore, as during the preceding three years I have used great labour, expense, and care in order to discover for your Majesty that which might afford you much profit and pleasure, so during my imprisonment - a calamity which has befallen me through the action of your Majesty - I am utterly incapable of remaining idle. Hence I have written a treatise, by means of which your imperial mind may be guided into all the truth of the more ancient philosophy, whence, as from a lofty eminence, it may contemplate and distinguish the fertile tracts from the barren and stony wilderness. But if my teaching displease you, know that you are still altogether wandering astray from the true scope and aim of this matter, and are utterly wasting your money, time, labour, and hope. A familiar acquaintance with the different branches of knowledge has taught me this one thing, that nothing is more ancient, excellent, or more desirable than truth, and whoever neglects it must pass his whole life in the shade. Nevertheless, it always was, and always will be, the way of mankind to release Barabbas and to crucify Christ. This I have - for my good, no doubt - experienced in my own case. I venture to hope, however, that my life and character will so become known to posterity that I may be counted among those who have suffered much for the sake of truth. The full certainty of the present treatise time is powerless to abrogate. If your Majesty will deign to peruse it at your leisure, you will easily perceive that my mind is profoundly versed in this study.

(1) All genuine and judicious philosophers have traced back things to their first principles, that is to say, those comprehended in the threefold division of Nature. The generation of animals they have attributed to a mingling of the male and female in sexual union; that of vegetables to their own proper seed; while as the principle of minerals they have assigned earth and viscous water.

(2) All specific and individual things which fall under a certain class, obey the general laws and are referable to the first principles of the class to which they belong.

(3) Thus, every animal is the product of sexual union; every plant, of its proper seed; every mineral, of the mixture of its generic earth and water.

(4) Hence, an unchangeable law of Nature regulates the generation of everything within the limits of its own particular genus.

(5) It follows that, with reference to their origin, animals are generically distinct from vegetables and minerals; the same difference exists respectively between vegetables and minerals and the two other natural kingdoms.

(6) The common and universal matter of these three principles is called Chaos.

(7) Chaos contains within itself the four elements of all that is, viz., fire, air, water, and earth, by the mixture and motion of which the forms of all earthly things are impressed upon their subjects.

- (8) These elements have four qualities: heat, coldness, humidity, dryness. The first inheres in fire, the second in water, the third in air, the fourth in earth.
- (9) By means of these qualities, the elements act upon each other, and motion takes place.
- (10) Elements either act upon each other, or are acted on, and are called either active or passive.
- (11) Active elements are those which, in a compound, impress upon the passive a certain specific character, according to the strength and extent of their motion. These are water and fire.
- (12) The passive elements - earth and air - are those which by their inactive qualities readily receive the impressions of the aforesaid active elements.
- (13) The four elements are distinguished, not only by their activity and passivity, but also by the priority and posteriority of their motions.
- (14) Priority and posteriority are here predicated either with references to the position of the whole sphere, or the importance of the result or aim of the motion.
- (15) In space, heavy objects tend downwards, and light objects upwards; those which are neither light nor heavy hold an intermediate position.
- (16) In this way, even among the passive elements, earth holds a higher place than air, because it delights more in rest; for the less motion, the more passivity.
- (17) The excellence of result has reference to perfection and imperfection, the mature being more perfect than the immature. Now, maturity is altogether due to the heat of fire. Hence fire holds the highest place among active elements.
- (18) Among the passive elements, the first place belongs to that which is most passive, i.e., which is most quickly and easily influenced. In a compound, earth is first passively affected, then air.
- (19) Similarly, in every compound, the perfecting element acts last; for perfection is a transition from immaturity to maturity.
- (20) Maturity being caused by heat, cold is the cause of immaturity.
- (21) It is clear, then, that the elements, or remote first principles of animals, vegetables, and minerals, in Chaos, are susceptible of active movements in fire and water, and of passive movements in earth and air. Water acts on earth, and transmutes it into its own nature; fire heats air, and also changes it into its own likeness.
- (22) The active elements may be called male, while the passive elements represent the female principle.
- (23) Any compound belonging to any of these three kingdoms - animal, vegetable, mineral - is female in so far as it is earth and air, and male in so far as it is fire and water.
- (24) Only that which has consistency is sensuously perceptible. Elementary fire and air, being naturally subtle, cannot be seen.
- (25) Only two elements, water and earth, are visible, and earth is called the hiding-place of fire,

water the abode of air.

(26) In these two elements we have the broad law of limitation which divides the male from the female.

(27) The first matter of vegetables is the water and earth hidden in its seed, these being more water than earth.

(28) The first matter of animals is the mixture of the male and female sperm, which embodies more moisture than dryness.

(29) The first matter of minerals is a kind of viscous water, mingled with pure and impure earth.

(30) Impure earth is combustible sulphur, which hinders all fusion, and superficially matures the water joined to it, as we see in the minor minerals, marcasite, magnesia, antimony, etc.

(31) Pure earth is that which so unites the smallest parts of its aforesaid water that they cannot be separated by the fiercest fire, so that either both remain fixed or are volatilized.

(32) Of this viscous water and fusible earth, or sulphur, is composed that which is called quicksilver, the first matter of the metals.

(33) Metals are nothing but Mercury digested by different degrees of heat.

(34) Different modifications of heat cause, in the metallic compound, either maturity or immaturity.

(35) The mature is that which has exactly attained all the activities and properties of fire. Such is gold.

(36) The immature is that which is dominated by the element of water, and is never acted on by fire. Such are lead, tin, copper, iron, and silver.

(37) Only one metal, viz., gold, is absolutely perfect and mature. Hence it is called the perfect male body.

(38) The rest are immature and, therefore, imperfect.

(39) The limit of immaturity is the beginning of maturity; for the end of the first is the beginning of the last.

(40) Silver is less bounded by aqueous immaturity than the rest of the metals, though it may indeed be regarded as to a certain extent impure, still its water is already covered with the congealing vesture of its earth, and it thus tends to perfection.

(41) This condition is the reason why silver is everywhere called by the Sages the perfect female body.

(42) All other metals differ only in the degree of their imperfection, according as they are more or less bounded by the said immaturity; nevertheless, all have a certain tendency towards perfection, though they lack the aforesaid congealing vesture of their earth.

(43) This congealing force is the effect of earthy coldness, balancing its own proper humidity, and

causing fixation in the fluid matter.

(44) The lesser metals are fusible in a fierce fire, and therefore lack this perfect congealing force. If they become solid when cool, this is due to the arrangement of their aforesaid earthy particles.

(45) According to the different ways in which this viscous water and pure earth are joined together, so as to produce quicksilver by coagulation, with the mediation of natural heat, we have different metals, some of which are called perfect, like gold and silver, while the rest are regarded as imperfect.

(46) Whoever would imitate Nature in any particular operation must first be sure that he has the same matter, and, secondly, that this substance is acted on in a way similar to that of Nature. For Nature rejoices in natural method, and like purifies like.

(47) Hence they are mistaken who strive to elicit the medicine for the tinging of metals from animals or vegetables. The tincture and the metal tinged must belong to the same root or genus; and as it is the imperfect metals upon which the Philosopher's Stone is to be projected, it follows that the powder of the Stone must be essentially Mercury. The Stone is the metallic matter which changes the forms of imperfect metals into gold, as we may learn from the first chapter of "The Code of Truth": "The Philosophical Stone is the metallic matter converting the substances and forms of imperfect metals"; and all Sages agree that it can have this effect only by being like them.

(48) That Mercury is the first matter of metals, I will attempt to prove by the saying of some Sages. In the Turba Philosophorum, chapter i., we find the following words: "In the estimation of all Sages, Mercury is the first principle of all metals."

And a little further on: "As flesh is generated from coagulated blood, so gold is generated out of coagulated Mercury."

Again, towards the end of the chapter: "All pure and impure metallic bodies are Mercury, because they are generated from the same."

Arnold writes thus to the King of Aragon: "Know that the matter and sperm of all metals are Mercury, digested and thickened in the womb of the earth; they are digested by sulphureous heat, and according to the quality and quantity of the sulphur different metals are generated. Their matter is essentially the same, though there may be some accidental differences, such as a greater or less degree of digestion, etc. All things are made of that into which they may be resolved, e.g., ice or snow, which may be resolved into water; and so all metals may be resolved into quicksilver; hence they are made out of quicksilver."

The same view is set forth by Bernard of Trevisa, in his book on the "Transmutation of Metals": "Similarly, quicksilver is the substance of all metals; it is as a water by reason of the homogeneity which it possesses with vegetables and animals, and it receives the virtues of those things which adhere to it in decoction." A little further on the same Trevisan affirms that "Gold is nothing but quicksilver congealed by its sulphur."

And, in another place, he writes as follows: "The solvent differs from the soluble only in proportion and degree of digestion, but not in matter, since Nature has formed the one out of the other without any addition, even as by a process equally simple and wonderful she evolves gold out of quicksilver."

Again: "The Sages have it that gold is nothing but quicksilver perfectly digested in the bowels of the earth, and they have signified that this is brought about by sulphur, which coagulates the Mercury, and digests it by its own heat. Hence the Sages have said that gold is nothing but mature quicksilver."

Such also is the concensus of other authorities. "The Sounding of the Trumpet" gives forth no uncertain note: "Extract quicksilver from the bodies, and you have above the ground quicksilver and sulphur of the same substance of which gold and silver are made in the earth."

The "Way of Ways" leads to the same conclusion: "Reverend Father, incline they venerable ears, and understand that quicksilver is the sperm of all metals, perfect and imperfect, digested in the bowels of the earth by the heat of sulphur, the variety of metals being due to the diversity of their sulphur."

We find in the same tract a similar canon: "All metals in the earth are generated in Mercury, and thus Mercury is the first matter of metals."

To these words Avicenna signifies his assent in chapter iii.: "As ice, which by heat is dissolved into water, is clearly generated out of water, so all metals may be resolved into Mercury, whence it is clear that they are generated out of it."

This reasoning is confirmed by "The Sounding of the Trumpet": "Every passive body is reduced to its first matter by operations contrary to its nature; the first matter is quicksilver, being itself the oil of all liquid and ductile things."

So also the third chapter of the "Correction of Fools": "The nature of all fusible things is that of Mercury coagulated out of a vapour, or the heat of red or white incumbustible sulphur."

In chapter i. of the "Art of Alchemy" we read: "All Sages agree that the metals are generated from the vapour of sulphur and quicksilver."

Again, a passage in the Turba Philosophorum runs thus: "It is certain that every subject derives from that into which it can be resolved. All metals may be resolved into quicksilver, hence they were once quicksilver."

If it were worth while, I might adduce hundreds of other passages from the writings of the Sages, but as they would serve no good purpose, I will let these suffice.

Those persons make a great mistake who suppose that the thick water of Antimony, or that viscous substance which is extracted from sublimed Mercury, or from Mercury and Jupiter dissolved together in a damp spot, can in any case be the first substance of metals.

Antimony can never assume metallic qualities, because its water and moisture are not tempered with dry, subtle, earth, and want, moreover, that unctuousness which is characteristic of malleable metals. But, as Chambar well says in the "Code of Truth": "It is only through jealousy that Sages have called the Stone Antimony."

In the same way, those who destroy the natural composition of Mercury, in order to resolve it into a thick or limpid water, which they call the first matter of metals, fight against Nature in the dark, like blinded gladiators.

As soon as Mercury loses its specific form, it becomes something else, which cannot thenceforth mingle with metals in their smallest parts, and is made void for the work of the Philosophers.

Whoever is taken up with such childish experiments, should listen to the Sage of Trevisa in his "Transmutation of Metals":

"Who can find truth that destroys the humid nature of Mercury? Some foolish persons change its specific metallic arrangement, corrupt its natural humidity by dissolution, and disproportionate quicksilver from its original mineral quality, which wanted nothing but purification and simple digestion. By means of salts, vitriol, and alum, they destroy the seed which Nature has been at pains to develop. For seed in human and sensitive things is formed by Nature and not by art, but by art it is united and mixed. Seed needs no addition, and brooks no diminution. If it is to produce a new thing of the same genus, it must remain the very same thing that was formed by Nature. All teaching that changes Mercury is false and vain, for this is the original sperm of metals, and its moisture must not be dried up, for otherwise it will not dissolve. Too much fire will cause a morbid heat, like that of a fever, and change the passive into active elements, thus the balance of forces is destroyed, and the whole work marred. Yet these fools extract from the lesser minerals corrosive waters, into which they project the different species of metals, and thus corrode them.

"The only natural solution is that by which out of the solvent and the soluble, or male and female, there results a new species. No water can naturally dissolve metals except that which abides with them in substance and form, which also the dissolved metals can again congeal; this is not the case with aqua fortis, seeing that it only destroys the specific arrangement. Only that water can rightly

dissolve metals which is inseparable from them in fixation, and such a water is Mercury, but not aqua fortis, or any thing else which those fools are pleased to call Mercurial Water." Thus far Trevisan.

Persons who have fallen into this fatal error may also derive benefit from the teaching of Avicenna on this point: "Quicksilver is cold and humid, and of it, or with it, God had created all metals. It is aerial, and becomes volatile by the action of fire, but when it has withstood the fire a little time, it accomplishes great marvels, and is itself only a living spirit of unexampled potency. It enters and penetrates all bodies, passes through them, and is their ferment. It is then the White and the Red Elixir and is an everlasting water, the water of life, the Virgin's milk, the spring, and that Alum of which whosoever drinks cannot die, etc. It is the wanton serpent that conceives of its own seed, and brings forth on the same day. With its poison it destroys all things. It is volatile, but the wise make it to abide the fire, and then it transmutes as it has been transmuted, and tinges as it has been tinged, and coagulates as it has been coagulated. Therefore is the generation of quicksilver to be preferred before all minerals; it is found in all ores, and has its sign with all. Quicksilver is that which saves metals from combustion, and renders them fusible. It is the Red Tincture which enters into the most intimate union with metals, because it is of their own nature, mingles with them indissolubly in all their smallest parts, and, being homogeneous, naturally adheres to them. Mercury receives all homogeneous substances, but rejects all that is heterogeneous, because it delights in its own nature, but recoils from whatsoever is strange. How foolish, then, to spoil and destroy that which Nature made the seed of all metallic virtue by elaborate chemical operations!"

The "Rosary" bids us be particularly careful, lest in purifying the quicksilver we dissipate its virtue, and impair its active force. A grain of wheat, or any other seed, will not grow if its generative virtue be destroyed by excessive external heat. Therefore, purify your quicksilver by distillation over a gentle fire.

Says the Sage of Trevisa: "If the quicksilver be robbed of its due metallic proportion, how can other substances of the same metallic genus be generated from it? It is a mistake to suppose that you can work miracles with a clear limpid water extracted from quicksilver. Even if we could get such a water, it would not be of use, either as to form or proportion, nor could it restore or build up a perfect metallic species. For as soon as the quicksilver is changed from its first nature, it is rendered unfit for our operation, since it loses its spermatic and metallic quality. I do, indeed, approve of impure and gross Mercury being sublimed and purified once or twice with simple salt, according to the proper method of the Sages, so long as the fluxibility or radical humour of such Mercury remains unimpaired, that is to say, so long as its specific mercurial nature is not destroyed, and so long as its outward appearance does not become that of a dry powder."

In the "Ladder of the Sages" we are told to beware of vitrification in the solution of bodies, with the odour and taste of imperfect substances, and also of the generative virtue of their form being in any way scorched and destroyed by corrosive waters.

If you have been trying to do any of these things, you may see how grievous your mistake has been. For the water of the Sages adheres to nothing except homogeneous substances. It does not wet your hands if you touch it, but scorches your skin, and frets and corrodes every substance with which it comes in contact, except gold and silver (it would not affect these until they have been dissipated and dissolved by spirits and strong waters), and with these it combines most intimately. But the other mixture is most childish, it is condemned by the concert of the Sages, and by my own experience.

I now propose to shew that quicksilver is the water with which, and in which, the solution of the Sages takes place, by putting before the reader the opinions of many Philosophers living in different countries and ages.

Says Menalates in the Turba: "Whoever joins quicksilver to the body of magnesia, and the woman to the man, extracts the hidden nature by which bodies are coloured. Know that quicksilver is a consuming fire which mortifies bodies by its contact."

Another Sage, in the Turba, says: "Divide the elements by fire, unite them through the mediation of Mercury, which is the greatest arcanum, and so the magistry is complete, the whole difficulty

consisting in the solution and conjunction. The solution, or separation, takes place through the mediation of Mercury, which first dissolves the bodies, and these are again united by ferment and Mercury."

Rosinus makes Gold address Mercury as follows: "Dost thou dispute with me, Mercury? I am the Lord, the Stone which abides the fire." Says Mercury: "Thou sayest true; but I have begotten thee, and one part of me quickens many of thee, since thou art grudging in comparison with me. Whoever will join me to my brother or sister shall live and rejoice, and make me sufficient for thee."

In the 5th chapter of the "Book of Three Words," we read: "I tell thee that in Mercury are the works of the planets, and all their imaginations in its pages."

Aristotle says that the first mode of preparation is that the Stone shall become Mercury; he calls Mercury the first body, which acts on gross substances and changes them into its own likeness. "If Mercury did nothing else than render bodies subtle and like itself, it would suffice us."

Senior: "Our Stone, then, is congealed water, that is to say, Mercury congealed in gold and silver, and, when fixed, resistant to the fire."

"The Sounding of the Trumpet": "Mercury contains all that the Sages seek, and destroys all flaky gold. It dissolves, softens, and extracts the soul from the body."

"The Book on the Art of Alchemy": "The Sages were first put upon attempting to clothe inferior bodies in the glory and splendour of the perfect body when they discovered that metals differ only according to the greater or smaller degree of their digestion, and are all generated from Mercury, with which they extracted gold and reduced it to its first nature."

The "Correction of Fools": "Observe that crude Mercury dissolves bodies and reduces them to their first matter or nature. Being made of clear water, it always strives to corrode the crude, and especially that which is nearest to its own nature, viz., gold and silver." The same book observes: "You can make use of crude Mercury as follows - to seal up and open natures, since similar things are helpful one to another." Once more: "Quicksilver is the root in the Art of Alchemy, for the Sages say that all metals are of it, and through it, and in it - it follows that the metals must first be reduced to Mercury, the matter and sperm of all metals."

Again: "The reason why all metals must be reduced to the nature of vapour is because we see that all are generated of quicksilver, though the mediation of which they came into being."

Gratianus: "Purify Laton, i.e., copper(ore), with Mercury, for Laton is of gold and silver, a compound, yellow, imperfect body."

"The Sounding of the Trumpet": "Common Mercury is called a spirit. If you do not resolve the body into Mercury, with Mercury, you cannot obtain its hidden virtue."

"Art of Alchemy," chapter vi.: "The second part of the Stone we call living Mercury, which, being living and crude, is said to dissolve bodies, because it adheres to them in their innermost being. This is the Stone without which Nature does nothing."

"Rosary": "Mercury never dies, except with its brother and sister. When Mercury mortifies the matter of the Sun and Moon, there remains a matter like ashes."

The Sage of Trevisa: "Add nothing above ground for digesting and thickening Mercury into the nature of gold or of metals." Again: "This solution is possible and natural, that is to say, by Art as handmaid to Nature, and is unique and necessary in the work; but it is brought about only by quicksilver, in such proportions as commend themselves to a good workman who knows the inmost properties of Nature."

"Art of Alchemy": "Who can sufficiently extol Mercury, for Mercury alone has power to reduce gold to its first nature?"

From these quotations it is clear what the Sages meant by their water, and what they thought of this wonderful liquid, viz., Mercury, to which they ascribed all power in the Magistry, for nothing can be perfected outside its own genus. Men digest vegetables, not in the blood of animals, but in water which is their first principle, nor are minerals affected by the vegetable liquid. In the words of the "Sounding of the Trumpet": "The whole Magistry consists in dividing the elements from the metals, and purifying them, and in separating the sulphur of Nature from the metals."

Furthermore, as Hermes says, only homogeneous substances cohere, and only they can produce



offspring after their own kind, i.e., if you want a medicine which is to generate metals, its origin must be metallic, since "species are tinged by their genus," as the philosopher testifies.

In short, our Magistry consists in the union of the male and female, or active and passive, elements through the mediation of our metallic water and a proper degree of heat. Now, the male and female are two metallic bodies, and this I will again prove by irrefragable quotations from the Sages:

Dantius bids us prepare the bodies and dissolve them.

Rhasis: "Change the bodies into water, and the water into earth: then all is done."

Galienus: "Prepare the bodies, and purify them of the blackness in which is corruption, till the white becomes white and red, then dissolve both, etc."

Calid (chapter i.): "If you do not make the bodies subtle, so that they may be impalpable to touch, you will not gain your end. If they have not been ground, repeat your operation, and see that they are ground and subtilized. If you do this, you will be directed to your desired goal."

Aristotle: "Bodies cannot be changes except by reduction into their first matter."

Calid (chapter v.): "Similarly, the Sages have commanded us to dissolve the bodies so that heat adheres to their inmost parts; then we proceed to coagulation after a second dissolution with a substance which most nearly approaches them."

Menabadus: "Make bodies not bodies, and incorporeal things bodies, for this is the whole process by which the hidden virtue of Nature is extracted."

Ascanius: "The conjunction of the two is like the union of husband and wife, from whose embrace results golden water."

"Anthology of Secrets": "Wed the red man to the white woman, and you have the whole Magistry."

"The Sounding of the Trumpet": "There is another quicksilver and permanent tincture which is extracted from perfect bodies by dissolution, distillation, sublimation, and subtilization."

Hermes: "Join the male to the female in their own proper humidity, because there is no birth without union of male and female."

Plato: "Nature follows a kindred nature, contains it, and teaches it to resist the fire. Wed the man to the woman, and you have the whole Magistry."

Avicenna: "Purify husband and wife separately, in order that they may unite more intimately; for if you do not purify them, they cannot love each other. By conjunction of the two natures you get a clear and lucid nature, which, when it ascends, becomes bright and serviceable."

"Art of Alchemy": "Two bodies provide us with everything in our water."

Trevisanus: "Only that water which is of the same species, and can be thickened by bodies, can dissolve bodies."

Hermes: "Let the stones of mixture be taken in the beginning of the first work, and let them be equally mixed into earth."

"Mirror": "Our Stone must be extracted from the nature of two bodies, before it can become a perfect Elixir."

Democritus: "You should first dissolve the bodies over white hot ashes, and not grind them except only with water."

"Rosary" of Arnold: "Extract the Medicine from the most homogeneous bodies in Nature."

I have thus proved the number of the bodies from which the Elixir is obtained. I will now shew by quotations what these bodies are.

"Exposition of the Letter of King Alexander": "In this art you must wed the Sun and the Moon."

"The Sounding of the Trumpet": "The Sun only heats the earth and imparts to it his virtue through the mediation of the Moon, which, of all stars, most readily receives his light and heat."

"The Correction of Fools": "Sow gold and silver, and they will yield to your labour a thousandfold, through the mediation of that thing which alone has what you seek. The Tincture of gold and silver exhibits the same metallic proportions as the imperfect metals, because they have a common first matter in Mercury."

Again: "Tinge with gold and silver, because gold gives the golden and silver the silver colour and nature. Reject all things that have not naturally or virtually the power of tinging, as in them is no

fruit, but only waste of money and gnashing of teeth."

Senior: "I, the Sun, am hot and dry, and thou, the Moon, art cold and moist; when we are wedded together in a closed chamber, I will gently steal away thy soul."

Rosinus to Saratant: "From the living water we obtain earth, a homogeneous dead body, composed of two natures, that of the Sun and that of the Moon."

Again: "When the Sun, my brother, for the love of me (silver) pours his sperm (i.e. his solar fatness) into the chamber (i.e. my Lunar body), namely, when we become one in a strong and complete complexion and union, the child of our wedded love will be born."

Hermes: "Its humidity is of the empire of the Moon, and its fatness of the empire of the Sun, and these two are its coagulum and pure seed."

Astratus says: "Whoever would attain the truth, let him take the humour of the Sun and the Spirit of the Moon."

Turba Philosophorum: "Both bodies in their perfection should be taken for the composition of the Elixir, whether orange or white, for neither becomes liquid without the other."

Again, Gold says: "No one kills me but my sister."

Aristotle: "If I did not see gold and silver, I should certainly say that Alchemy was not true."

The Sage: "The foundation of our Art is gold and its shadow."

"Art of Alchemy": "We have already said that gold and silver must be united."

"Rosary": "There is an addition of orange colour by which the Medicine is perfected from the substance of fixed sulphur, i.e., both medicines are obtained from gold and silver."

The Sage: "Whoever knows how to tinge sulphur and quicksilver has reached the great arcanum.

Gold and silver must be in the Tincture, and also the ferment of the spirit."

"Rosary": "The ferment of the Sun is the sperm of the man, the ferment of the Moon, the sperm of the woman. Of both we get a chaste union and a true generation."

"The Sounding of the Trumpet": "You want silver to subtilize your gold, and make it volatile by removing its impurity, since the silver has a greater need of the light of gold. Therefore Hermes, as also Aristotle in his treatise on Plants, says that gold is its father, and silver its mother; nothing else is needed for our Stone. Silver is the field in which the seed of gold is sown." And a little further on: "In my sister, the Moon, grows your wisdom, and not in any other of my servants, saith the Lord Sun. I am like seed sown in good and pure soil, which sprouts and grows and multiplies and yields great gain to the sower. I, the Sun, give to thee, the Moon, my beauty, the light of the Sun, when we are united in our smallest parts." And the Moon says to the Sun: "Thou hast need of me, as the cock has need of the hen, and I need thy operation, who art perfect in morals, the father of lights, a great and mighty lord, hot and dry, and I am the waxing Moon, cold and moist, but I receive thy nature by our union."

Avicenna: "In order to obtain the red and the white Elixir, the two bodies must be united. For though gold is the most fixed and perfect of the metals, yet if it be dissolved into its smallest parts, it becomes spiritual and volatile, like quicksilver, and that because of its heat. This tincture, which is without number, is called the hot male seed. But if silver be dissolved in warm water, it remains fixed as before, and has little or no tincture, yet it readily receives the tincture in a temperament of hot and cold, and is called the cold, dry, female seed. Gold or silver by themselves are not easily fusible, but a mixture of the two melts readily, as is well known to goldsmiths. Hence if our Stone did not contain both gold and silver, it would not be liquid, and would yield no medicine through any magistry, nor tincture, for if it yielded tincture it would still have no tinging power."

And a little further on: "Take heed, then, and operate only on gold, silver, and quicksilver, since all the profit of our Art is derived from these three."

I may add that crude Mercury is the water which the Sages have used for the purpose of solution. I have proved that two bodies must be dissolved, and that they are no other than gold and silver. Now I will describe the conjunction of these two bodies by means of the crude Mercury of the Sages.

"The Light of Lights": "Know that it is gold, silver, and Mercury that whiten and redden within and without. The Dragon does not die, unless he be killed with his brother and sister, and it must be not by one, but by both together."

"The Ladder of the Sages": "Others say that a true body must be added to these two, to strengthen and shorten the operation."

"Treasury of the Sages": "Our Stone has body, soul, and spirit, the imperfect body is the body, the ferment the soul, and the water the spirit."

"The Way of Ways": "The water is called the spirit, because it gives life to the imperfect and mortified body, and imparts to it a better form; the ferment is the soul, because it gives life to the body, and changes it into its own nature."

Again: "The whole Magistry is accomplished with our water, and of it. For it dissolves the bodies, calcines and reduces them to earth, transforms them into ashes, whitens and purifies them, as Morienus says: "Azoth and fire purify Laton, that is to say, wash it and thoroughly remove its obscurity; Laton is the impure body, Azoth is quicksilver."

"The Sounding of the Trumpet": "As without the ferment there is no perfect tincture, as the Sages say, so without leaven there is no good bread. In our Stone the ferment is like the soul, which gives life to the dead body through the mediation of the spirit, or Mercury."

"The Rosary" and Peter of Zalentum say: "If the ferment, which is the medium of conjunction, be placed in the beginning, or in the middle, the work is more quickly perfected."

"The Sounding of the Trumpet": "The Elixir of the Sages is composed of three things, viz., the Lunar, the Solar, and the Mercurial Stone. In the Lunar Stone is white sulphur, in the Solar Stone red sulphur, and the Mercurial Stone embraces both, which is the strength of the whole Magistry."

Eximenus: "The water, with its adjuncts, being placed in the vessel, preserves them from combustion. The substances being ground with water, there follows the ascension of the Ethelia and the imbibition of water is sufficient by itself to complete the work."

Plato: "Take fixed bodies, join them together, wash the body in the bodily substance, and let it be strengthened with the incorporeal body, till you change it into a real body."

Pandulphus: "The fixed water is pure water of life, and no tinging poison is generated without gold and its shadow. Whoever tinges the poison of the Sages with the Sun and its shadow, has attained the highest wisdom."

Again: "Separate the elements with fire, unite them by means of Mercury, and the Magistry is complete."

Exercit, 14: "The spirit guards the body and preserves it from fire, the clarified body keeps the spirit from evaporating over the fire, the body being fixed and the spirit incombustible. Hence the body cannot be burnt, because the body and spirit are one through the soul. The soul prevents them from being separated by the fire. Hence the three together can defy the fire and anything else in the world."

Rhasis("Book of Lights"): "Our Stone is named after the creation of the world, being three and yet one. Nowhere is our Mercury found purer than in gold, silver and common Mercury."

When bodies and spirits are dissolved, they are resolved into the four elements, which become a firm and fixed substance. But when they are not both dissolved, there is a particular mixture which the fire can still separate."

Rosinus: "In our Magistry are a spirit and bodies, whence it is said: It rejoices being sown in the three associated substances."

Calid: "Prepare the strome bodies with the dissolves humidity, till either shall be reduced to its subtle form. If you do not subtilize and grind the bodies till they become impalpable, you will not find what you seek."

Rosinus: "The Stone consists of body, soul, and spirit, or water, as the Philosophers say, and is digested in one vessel. Our whole Magistry is of, and by, our water, which dissolves the bodies, not into water, but by a true philosophical solution into the water whence metals are extracted, and is calcined and reduced to earth. It makes yellow as wax those bodies into whose nature it is transformed; it substantialises, whitens, and purifies the Laton, according to the word of Morienus."

Aristotle: "Take your beloved son, and wed him to his sister, his white sister, in equal marriage, and give them the cup of love, for it is a food which prompts them to union. All pure things must be united to pure things, or they will have sons unlike themselves. Therefore, first of all, even as

Avicenna advises, sublime the Mercury, and purify in it impure bodies. Then pound and dissolve. Repeat this operation again and again."

Ascanius: "Stir up war between copper and Mercury till they destroy each other and devour each other. Then the copper coagulates the quicksilver, the quicksilver congeals the copper, and both bodies become a powder by means of diligent imbibition and digestion. Join together the red man and the white woman till they become Ethelia, that is, quicksilver. Whoever changes them into a spirit by means of quicksilver, and then makes them red, can tinge every body."

As to the nature of this copper, Gratianus instructs us in the following words: "Make Laton white, i.e., whiten copper with Mercury, because Laton is an orange imperfect body, composed of gold and silver."

I advise all and sundry to follow my teaching, as to the correctness of which my quotations from the ancients can leave no doubt, which also has received further confirmation from my own experiments. Any deviation from this course leads to deception, except only the work of Saturn, which must be performed by the subtilization of principles. The Sages say that homogeneous things only combine with each other, make each other white and red, and permit of common generation. The important point is that Mercury should act upon our earth. This is the union of male and female, of which the Sages say so much. After the water, or quicksilver, has once appeared, it grows and increases, because the earth becomes white, and this is called the impregnation. Then the ferment is coagulated, i.e., joined to the imperfect prepared body, till they become one in colour and appearance: this is termed the birth of our Stone, which the Sages call the King. Of this substance it is said in the "Art of Alchemy" that if any one scorches this flower, and separates the elements, the generative germ is destroyed.

I conclude with the words of Avicenna: "The true principle of our work is the dissolution of the Stone, because solved bodies have assumed the nature of spirits, i.e., because their quality is drier. For the solution of the body is attended with the coagulation of the spirit. Be patient, therefore, digest, pound, make yellow as wax, and never be weary of repeating these processes till they are quite perfect. For things saturated with water are thereby softened. The more you pound the substance, the more you soften it, and subtilize its gross parts, till they are thoroughly penetrated with the spirit and thus dissolved. For by pounding, roasting, and fire, the tough and viscous parts of bodies are separated."

Finally, I do you to wit, sons of knowledge, that in the work of the Sages there are three solutions. The first is that of the crude body.

The second is that of the earth of the Sages.

The third is that which takes place during the augmentation of the substance. If you diligently consider all that I have said, this Magistery will become known to you. As for me, how much I have endured on account of this Art, history will reveal to future ages.

# Mary the Prophetess

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## The practise of Mary the Prophetess in the Alchymicall Art.

Aros the Philosopher had a meeting with Mary the Prophetess the Sister of Moyses, and approaching to her, he paid her respect and said unto her. O Prophetess, I have truly heard many say of you that you whiten the Stone in one day.

And Mary said, Yea, Aros, even in a part of one day.

Aros said: O Lady Mary, when will the Work be which you affirm? How shall we whiten and afterwards add blackness?

Mary said; O Aros, oftentimes Nations have dyd about this part. Know you not, O Aros; that there is a water or a thing which whitens Hendragem?

Then Aros answering said to her. O Lady it is so as you say, but in a long time.

Mary answered, Hermes in all his Books has said that the Philosophers whiten the Stone in one hour of the day.

Aros said to her, Oh how excellent is that?

Mary said, it is most excellent to him that is ignorant of it.

Aros said, if men have all the four Elements, he [Hermes] said that their fumes might be compleated, and complexioned, and coagulated, and retained in one day, untill they doe fullfill the consequence (i.e. attain the end).

Mary said, O Aros, by God, if thy senses or understanding were not solid, you should not hear these words from me, untill the Lord should fill my Heart with the grace of his divine Will. Nevertheless take the Allum of Spain, the white gumm and the red gumm, which is the Kibric of the Philosophers, and their Sol and the greater Tincture, and marry Gumm with Gumm togeather with a true Matrimony. Mary said, make them like a running Water, and vitrify this water which has been laboured or wrought upon for one day, out of the two Lubechs, upon the fixed body, and liquefy them by the secret of Nature in the Vessel of Philosophy. Did you understand us?

Yes Lady.

Mary said, Keep the fume and take care that none of it fly away. And let your measure be with a gentle fire such as is the Measure of the heat of the Sun in the Month of June or July, and stay by your Vessel and behold it with care how it grows black, grows red, and grows white in less than three hours of the day, and the fume will penetrate the body, and the Spirit will be bound up, and they will be like milk, incerating, and liquefying and penetrating: and that is the secret.

Aros said I do not say that this will be allways.

Mary said unto him: Aros, and this is more wonderfull concerning this, that it was not among the Ancients, nor did it come to him by curing, or by the Medicinall Art and that is take the white, clear and honoured Herb growing on the Hillocks, and pound it fresh as it is in its Hour, and that is the true Body not flying from the Fire.

And Aros said it is the Stone of Truth?

And Mary said yes. But yet men know not this regimen (rule or way of working) with the speediness thereof.

Aros said, and what afterwards.

Mary said, vitrify upon it Kibric or Zibeic and there are the two fumes comprehending the two Lights, and project upon that the complement of the Tinctures of the Spirits, and the weights of Truth, and pound it all, and put it to the Fire, and you shall see wonderfull things from them. The whole government consists in the temper of the Fire, O how strange it is, how it will be moved from one colour to another, in less than an hour of the Day, untill it arrive at the mark of redness and whiteness, and cast away the Fire and permit it to cool, and open it and you will find the clear pearly Body to be of the Colour of the Poppy of the Wood mixt with whiteness and that is it which is incerating, liquefying and penetrating, and one golden piece thereof, the weight of a small golden Coin, falleth upon a thousand thousand and two hundred thousand. That is the hidden secret.

Then Aros fell down upon his face.

And Mary said to him, Lift up your head Aros: because I will shorten for you the thing, as that clear body which is thrown upon the Hillocks, and is not obtained by putrefaction or motion. Take and pound it with Gumm Elsaron, and with the two fumes because the Body comprehending or retaining them is Gumm Elsaron and grind it all. Therefore approach because it all melts. If you project its wife upon it, it will be as a distilling Water, and when the Aire shall strike it, it will be congealed and be one body, and make projection of it, and you will behold Wonders: O Aros that is the hidden secret of Scholia; and know that the said two fumes are the Root of this Art, and they are the white Kibric and the humid calx, but the fixed Body is of the Heart of Saturn comprehending the Tincture, and the Fields of Wisdom or of Scholia. And the Philosophers have named it by many and all names, and received or gathered from the Hillocks it is a clear white Body, and these are the medicine of this Art, part is procured and part is found upon the Hillocks; and know Aros that the wise men have not called it the Fields of Wisdom, or of Scholia, unless because Scholia will not be compleated but by it; and in the Scholia there are nothing but wonderfull things. For there also enters into them the four Stones, and its true regimen is as I have said. And that is first Scoyare, Ade, and Zethet; by that make your Allegory as Hermes has done in his Books Scoyas, and the Philosophers have allways made the regimen longer, and have resembled the work to every thing which ought not to make the work, and they make the Magistery to be in one year, and this but onely for hiding it from the ignorant people, untill it be confirmed in their Hearts and their senses (till they believe the Art),: because the Art will not be compleated except only in Gold; because it is the great secret of God: and they who hear of our secrets doe not verify them (nor believe them to be true), by reason of their ignorance. Did you understand Aros?

Aros said yes. But tell me about that vessel, without which the Work will not be accomplisht.

Mary said that the Vessel of Hermes which the Stoicks have concealed, and it is not a Necromanticall Vessel, but it is the Measure of your Fire.

Aros said: O Lady you have obeyed (been a scholar) in the Society of Scoyari: O Prophetess, have you found among the Secrets of the Philosophers, which they have set down in their Books, that any one can make the Art out of one Body?

And Mary said: Yes: which Hermes has not taught, because the Root of Scholia is a body which cannot be made smooth or plain and incurable (unconquerable) and it is a poyson mortifying all bodies, and it pulverises them and coagulates Mercury with its odour. And shee said, I swear to you by the eternall God, that that poison when it is dissolved untill it is made a subtile Water, I care not by what dissolution it is done, does coagulate Mercury into Luna with the strength of Truth, and it falls into the Throne of Jupiter, and forms him into Luna. And the Science is in all Bodys, but the Stoicks, by reason of the shortness of their lives, and the Length of the Work, have concealed this; and they found out these tinging Elements, and they increased them, and all the Philosophers teach them, except the Vessel of Hermes, because it is divine, and of the Wisdom of the Lord hidden from Nations: and they who are ignorant of it, know not the Regimen of Truth, because of their Ignorance of the Vessel of Hermes.

Mary briefly soundeth forth

Strange things like Thunder round the Earth.

She with two Gumms makes the Bottome stay

What else would fly away.

Three things if you three hours attend

Are chained together in the End.

Mary the Light of dew, and Art has got

In three hours to tye the Knot.

Pluto's daughter, it is she

Who bindeth Loves confederacy

Joyned with three seeds she does aspire

To be exalted in the Fire.

## An Alchemical Mass

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Introitus. Our Lord, fount of goodness, inspirer of the sacred art, from whom all good things come to your faithful, have mercy.

Christe. Christ, Holy one, blessed stone of the art of the science who for the salvation of the world hast inspired the light of the science, for the extirpation of the unbelievers, have mercy.

Kyrie. Our Lord, divine fire, help our hearts, that we may be able, to your praise, to expand the sacraments of the art, have mercy.

Graduale. He descends like rain upon the fleece, and as showers falling gently upon the earth. Allelujah. O blessed creator of the earth, whiter than snow, sweeter than sweetness, fragrant at the bottom of the vessel like balsam. O salutary medicine for men, that cureth every weakness of the body: O sublime fount whence gushes forth truly the true water of life into the garden of thy faithful.

Ave Maria. Hail beautiful lamp of heaven, shining light of the world! Here art thou united with the moon, here is made the band of Mars and the conjunction of Mercury. From these three is born through through the magistry of the art, in the river bed, the strong giant whom a thousand times a thousand seek, when these three shall have dissolved, not into rain water... but into mercurial water, into this our blessed gum which dissolves of itself and is named the Sperm of the Philosophers. Now he makes haste to bind and betroth himself to the virgin bride, and to get her with child in the bath over a moderate fire. But the Virgin will not become pregnant at once unless she be kissed in repeated embraces. Then she conceives in her body, and thus is begotten the child of good omen, in accordance with the order of nature. Then will appear in the bottom of the vessel the mighty Ethiopian, burned, calcined, discoloured, altogether dead and lifeless. He asks to be buried, to be sprinkled with his own moisture and slowly calcined till he shall arise in glowing form from the fierce fire... Behold a wondrous restoration and renewal of the Ethiopian! Because of the bath of rebirth he takes a new name, which the philosophers call the natural sulphur and their son, this being the stone of the philosophers. And behold it is one thing, one root, one essence with nothing extraneous added and from which much that was superfluous is taken away by the magistry of the art... It is the treasure of treasures, the supreme philosophical potion, the divine secret of the ancients. Blessed is he that finds such thing. One that has seen this thing writes and speaks openly, and I know that his testimony is true. Praise be to God for evermore.

# The Mirror of Alchemy

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The Mirror of Alchemy, composed by the famous Friar, Roger Bacon, sometime fellow of Martin College and Brasen-nase College in Oxenforde.

## CHAPTER I.

### Of the Definitions of Alchemy.

In many ancient Books there are found many definitions of this Art, the intentions whereof we must consider in this Chapter. For Hermes said of this Science: Alchemy is a Corporal Science simply composed of one and by one, naturally conjoining things more precious, by knowledge and effect, and converting them by a natural commixtion into a better kind. A certain other said: Alchemy is a Science, teaching how to transform any kind of metal into another: and that by a proper medicine, as it appeared by many Philosophers' Books. Alchemy therefore is a science teaching how to make and compound a certain medicine, which is called Elixir, the which when it is cast upon metals or imperfect bodies, does fully perfect them in the very projection.

## CHAPTER II.

### Of the natural principles, and procreation of Minerals.

Secondly, I will perfectly declare the natural principles and procreations of Minerals: where first it is to be noted, that the natural principles in the mines, are Argent-vive, and Sulphur. All metals and minerals, whereof there be sundry and diverse kinds, are begotten of these two: but: I must tell you, that nature always intends and strives to the perfection of Gold: but many accidents coming between, change the metals, as it is evidently to be seen in diverse of the Philosophers books. For according to the purity and impurity of the two aforesaid principles, Argent-vive, and Sulphur, pure, and impure metals are engendered: to wit, Gold, Silver, Steel, Lead, Copper, and Iron: of whose nature, that is to say, purity, and impurity, or unclean superfluity and defect, give ear to that which follows.

#### Of the nature of Gold.

Gold is a perfect body, engendered of Argent-vive pure, fixed, clear, red, and of Sulphur clean, fixed, red, not burning, and it wants nothing.

#### Of the nature of silver.

Silver is a body, clean, pure, and almost perfect, begotten of Argent-vive, pure, almost fixed, clear, and white, and of such a like Sulphur: It wants nothing, save a little fixation, color, and weight.

#### Of the nature of Steel.

Steel is a body clean, imperfect, engendered of Argent-vive pure, fixed & not fixed clear, white outwardly, but red inwardly, and of the like Sulphur. It wants only decoction or digestion,

#### Of the nature of Lead.

Lead is an unclean and imperfect body, engendered of Argent-vive impure, not fixed, earthy, dressy, somewhat white outwardly, and red inwardly, and of such a Sulphur in part burning, It wants purity, fixation, color, and firing.

#### Of the nature of Copper.

Copper is an unclean and imperfect body, engendered of Argent-vive, impure, not fixed, earthy, burning, red not clear, and of the like Sulphur. It wants purity, fixation, and weight: and has too much of an impure color, and earthiness not burning.



### Of the nature Iron.

Iron is an unclean and imperfect body, engendered of Argent-vive impure, too much fixed, earthy, burning, white and red not clear, and of the like Sulphur: It wants fusion, purity, and weight: It has too much fixed unclean Sulphur, and burning earthiness. That which has been spoken, every Alchemist must diligently observe.

### CHAPTER III.

Out of what things the matter of Elixir must be more nearly extracted.

The generation of metals, as well perfect, as imperfect, is sufficiently declared by that which has been already spoken, Now let us return to the imperfect matter that must be chosen and made perfect. Seeing that by the former Chapters we have been taught, that all metals are engendered of Argent-vive and Sulphur, and how that their impurity and uncleanness does corrupt, and that nothing may be mingled with metals which have not been made or sprung from them, it: remains clean enough, that no strange thing which has not his original from these two, is able to perfect them, or to make a Change and new transmutation of them: so that it is to be wondered at, that any wise man should set his mind upon living creatures, or vegetables which are far off, when there be minerals to be found near enough: neither may we in any way think, that any of the Philosophers placed the Art in the said remote things, except it were by way of comparison: but of the aforesaid two, all metals are made, neither does any thing cleave unto them or is joined with them, not yet changes them, but that which is of them, and so of right we must take Argent-vive and Sulphur for the matter of our stone: Neither does Argent-vive by itself alone, nor Sulphur by itself alone, beget any metal, but of the commixtion of them both, diverse metals and minerals are diversely brought forth. Our matter therefore must be chosen of the commixtion of them both: but our final secret is most excellent, and most hidden, to wit, of what mineral thing that is more near than others, it should be made: and in making choice hereof, we must be very wary. I put the case then, if our matter were first of all drawn out of vegetables, (of which sort are herbs, trees, and whatsoever springs out of the earth) here we must first make Argent-vive & Sulphur, by a long decoction, from which things, and their operation we are excused: for nature herself offers unto us Argent-vive and Sulphur. And if we should draw it from living creatures (of which sort is man's blood, hair, urine, excrements, hens' eggs, and what else proceed from living creatures) we must likewise out of them extract Argent-vive and Sulphur by decoction, from which we are freed, as we were before. Or if we should choose it out of middle minerals (of which sort are all kinds of Magnesia, Marchasites, of Tutia, Coppers, Allums, Baurach, Salts, and many other) we should likewise, as afore, extract Argent-vive and Sulphur by decoction: from which as from the former, we are also excused. And if we should take one of the seven spirits by itself, as Argent-vive, or Sulphur alone, or Argent-vive and one of the two Sulphurs, or Sulphur-vive, or Auripigment, or Citrine Arsenicum, or red alone, or the like: we should never effect it, because since nature does never perfect anything without equal commixtion of both, neither can we: from these therefore, as from the foresaid Argent-vive and Sulphur in their nature we are excused. Finally, if we should choose them, we should mix everything as it is, according to a due proportion, which no man knows, and afterward decoct it to coagulation, into a solid lump: and therefore we are excused from receiving both of them in their proper nature: to wit, Argent-vive and Sulphur, seeing we know not their proportion, and that we may meet with bodies, wherein we shall find the said things proportioned, coagulated and gathered together, after a due manner. Keep this secret more secretly. Gold is a perfect masculine body, without any superfluity or diminution: and if it: should perfect imperfect bodies mingled with it by melting only, it should be Elixir to red. Silver is also a body almost perfect, and feminine, which if it should almost perfect imperfect bodies by his common melting only, it should be Elixir to white which it is not, nor cannot be, because they only are perfect. And if this perfection might be mixed with the imperfect, the imperfect should not be perfected with the perfect, but rather their perfection's should be diminished by the imperfect, and become imperfect. But if they were more

than perfect, either in a two-fold, four-fold, hundred-fold, or larger proportion, they might then well perfect the imperfect. And forasmuch as nature does always work simply, the perfection which is in them is simple, inseparable, and incommiscible, neither may they by art be put in the stone, for ferment to shorten the work, and so brought to their former state, because the most volatile does overcome the most fixed. And for that gold is a perfect body, consisting of Argent-vive, red and clear, and of such a Sulphur, therefore we choose it not for the matter of our stone to the red Elixir, because it is so simply perfect, without artificial mundification, and so strongly digested and fed with a natural heat, that with our artificial fire, we are scarcely able to work on gold or silver, And though nature does perfect anything, yet she cannot thoroughly mundify, or perfect and purify it, because she simply works on that which she has. If therefore we should choose gold or silver for the matter of the stone, we should hard and scantily find fire working in them. And although we are not ignorant of the fire, yet could we not come to the thorough mundification and perfection of it, by reason of his most firm knitting together, and natural composition: we are therefore excused for taking the first too red, or the second too white, seeing we may find out a thing or some body of as clean, or rather more clean Sulphur and Argent-vive, on which nature has wrought little or nothing at all, which with our artificial fire, and experience of our art, we are able to bring unto his due concoction, mundification, color and fixation, continuing our ingenious labor upon it. There must therefore be such a matter chosen, where in there is Argent-vive, clean, pure, clear, white and red, not fully complete, but equally and proportionably commixt after a due manner with the like Sulphur, and congealed into a solid mass, that by our wisdom and discretion, and by our artificial fire, we may attain unto the uttermost cleanness of it, and the purity of the same, and bring it to that pass, that after the work ended, it might be a thousand thousand times more strong and perfect, then the simple bodies themselves, decoct by their natural heat. Be therefore wise: for if you shall be subtle and witty in my Chapters (wherein by manifest prose I have laid open the matter of the stone easy to be known) you shall taste of that delightful thing, wherein the whole intention of the Philosophers is placed.

### CHAPTER III.

Of the manner of working, and of moderating, and continuing the fire.

I hope ere this time you have already found out by the words already spoken (if you are not most dull, ignorant, and foolish) the certain matter of the learned Philosophers blessed stone, whereon Alchemy works, while we endeavor to perfect the imperfect, and that with things more then perfect. And for that nature has delivered us the imperfect only with the perfect, it is our part to make the matter (in the former Chapters declared unto us) more then perfect by our artificial labor. And if we know not the manner of working, what is the cause that we do not see how nature (which of long time has perfected metals) does continually work! Do we not see, that in the Mines through the continual heat that is in the mountains thereof, the grossness of water is so decocted and thickened, that in continuance of time it becomes Argent-vive? And that of the fatness of the earth through the same heat and decoction, Sulphur is engendered! And that through the same heat without intermission continued in them, all metals are engendered of them according to their purity and impurity? and that nature does by decoction alone perfect or make all metals, as well perfect as imperfect? O extreme madness! what, I pray you, constrains you to seek to perfect the foresaid things by strange melancholical and fantastical regiments! as one says: Woe to you that will overcome nature, and make metals more then perfect by a new regiment, or work sprung from your own senseless brains. God has given to nature a straight way, to wit, continual concoction, and you like fools despise it, or else know it not. Again, fire and Azot, are sufficient for you. And in another place, Heat perfects all things. And elsewhere, see, see, see, and be not weary. And in another place, let your fire be gentle, and easy, which being always equal, may continue burning: and let it not increase, for if it does, you shall suffer great loss. And in another place, Know you that in one thing, to wit, the stone, by one way, to wit, decoction, and in one vessel the whole mastery is performed.

And in another place, patiently, and continually, and in another place, grind it seven times. And in another place, It is ground with fire, And in another place, this work is very like to the creation of man: for as the Infant in the beginning is nourished with light meats, but the bones being strengthened with stronger: so this mastery also, first it must have an easy fire, whereby we must always work in every essence of decoction. And though we always speak of a gentle fire, yet in truth, we think that in governing the work, the fire must always by little and little be increased and augmented unto the end.

## CHAPTER V.

### Of the quality of the Vessel and Furnace.

The means and manner of working, we have already determined: now we are to speak of the Vessel and Furnace, in what sort, and of what things they must be made. Whereas nature by a natural fire decocts the metals in the Mines, she denies the like decoction to be made without a vessel fit for it. And if we propose to imitate nature in concocting, wherefore do we reject her vessel! Let us first of all therefore, see in what place the generation of metals is made. It does evidently appear in the places of Minerals, that in the bottom of the mountain there is heat continually alike, the nature whereof is always to ascend, and in the ascension it always dries up, and coagulates the thicker or grosser water hidden in the belly, or veins of the earth, or mountain, into Argent-vive. And if the mineral fatness of the same place arising out of the earth, be gathered warm together in the veins of the earth, it runs through the mountain, and becomes Sulphur. And as a man may see in the foresaid veins of that place, that Sulphur engendered of the fatness of the earth (as is before touched) meets with the Argent-vive (as it is also written) in the veins of the earth, and begets the thickness of the mineral water. There, through the continual equal heat in the mountain, in long process of time diverse metals are engendered, according to the diversity of the place. And in these Mineral places, you shall find a continual heat. For this cause we are of right to note, that the external mineral mountain is everywhere shut up within itself, and stony: for if the heat might issue out, there should never be engendered any metal. If therefore we intend to immitate nature, we must needs have such a furnace like unto the Mountains, not in greatness, but in continual heat, so that the fire put in, when it ascends, may find no vent: but that the heat may beat upon the vessel being close shut, containing in it the matter of the stone: which vessel must be round, with a small neck, made of glass or some earth, representing the nature or close knitting together of glass: the mouth whereof must be signed or sealed with a covering of the same matter, or with lute. And as in the mines, the heat does not immediately touch the matter of Sulphur and Argent-vive, because the earth of the mountain comes everywhere between: So this fire must not immediately touch the vessel, containing the matter of the aforesaid things in it, but it must be put into another vessel, shut closed in the like manner, that so the temperate heat may touch the matter above and beneath, and where ever it be, more aptly and fitly: whereupon Aristotle says, in the light of lights, that Mercury is to be concocted in a three-fold vessel, and that the vessel must be of most hard Glass, or (which is better) of Earth possessing the nature of Glass.

## CHAPTER VI.

### Of the accidental and essential colours appearing in the work.

The matter of the stone thus ended, you shall know the certain manner of working, by what manner and regiment, the stone is often changed in decoction into diverse colors. Whereupon one says, So many colors, so many names. According to the diverse colors appearing in the work, the names likewise were varied by the Philosophers: whereon, in the first operation of our stone, it is called putrifaction, and our stone is made black: whereof one says, When you find it black, know that in that blackness whiteness is hidden, and you must extract the same from his most subtle blackness. But after putrifaction it waxes red, not with a true redness, of which one says: It is often red, and

often of a citrine color, it often melts, and is often coagulated, before true whiteness. And it dissolves itself, it coagulates itself, it putrifies itself, it colors itself, it mortifies itself, it quickens itself it makes itself black, it makes itself white, it makes itself red. It is also green: whereon another says, Concoct it, till it appears green unto you, and that is the soul. And another, Know, that in that: green his soul bears dominion. There appears also before whiteness the peacocks color, whereon one says thus, Know you that all the colors in the world, or that may be imagined, appear before whiteness, and afterward true whiteness follows. Whereof one says: When it has been decocted pure and clean, that it shines like the eyes of fishes, then are we to expect his utility, and by that time the stone is congealed round, And another says: When you shall find whiteness atop in the glass, be assured that in that whiteness, redness is hidden: and this you must extract: but concoct it while it becomes all red: for between true whiteness and true redness, there is a certain ash-color: of which it is said, After whiteness, you cannot err, for increasing the fire, you shall come to an ash-color: of which another says: Do not set light by the ashes, for God shall give it to you molten: and then at the last the King is invested with a red crown the by will of God.

## CHAPTER VII.

How to make projection of the medicine upon any imperfect body.

I have largely accomplished my promise of that great mastery, for making the most excellent Elixir, red and white. For conclusion, we are to treat of the manner of projection, which is the accomplishment of the work, the desired and expected joy. The red Elixir turns into a citrine color infinitely, and changes all metals into pure gold. And the white Elixir does infinitely whiten, and brings every metal to perfect whiteness. But we know that one metal is farther off from perfection than another, and one more near than another. And although every metal may by Elixir be reduced to perfection, nevertheless the nearest are more easily, speedily, and perfectly reduced, then those which are far distant, And when we meet with a metal that is near to perfection, we are thereby excused from many that are far off. And as for the metals which of them be near, and which far off, which of them I say be nearest to perfection, if you are wise and discrete, you shall find to be plainly and truly set out in my Chapters. And without doubt, he that is so quick sighted in this my Mirror, that by his own industry he can find out the true matter, he does full well know upon what body the medicine is to be projected to bring it to perfection. For the forerunners of this Art, who have found it out by their philosophy, do point out with their finger the direct and plain way, when they say: Nature, contains nature: Nature overcomes nature: and Nature meeting with her nature, exceedingly rejoices, and is changed into other natures, And in another place, Every like rejoices in his like: for likeness is said to be the cause of friendship, whereof many Philosophers have left a notable secret, Know you that the sour does quickly enter into his body, which may by no means be joined to another body, And in another place, The soul does quickly enter into his own body, which if you go about to join with another body, you shall loose your labor: for the nearness itself is more clear. And because corporeal things in this regiment are made incorporeal, and contrariwise things incorporeal corporeal, and in the shutting up of the work, the whole body is made a spiritual fixed thing: and because also that spiritual Elixir evidently, whether white or red, is so greatly prepared and decocted beyond his nature, it is no marvel that it cannot be mixed with a body, on which it is projected, being only melted. It is also a hard matter to Project it on a thousand thousand and more, and incontinently to penetrate and transmute them. I will therefore now deliver unto you a great and hidden secret. one part is to be mixed with a thousand of the next body, and let: all this be surely put into a fit vessel, and set it in a furnace of fixation, first with a lent fire, and afterwards increasing the fire for three days, till they be inseparably joined together, and this is a work of three days: then again and finally every part hereof by itself, must be projected upon another thousand parts of any near body: and this is a work of one day, Or one hour, or a moment, for which our wonderful God is eternally to be praised.

Here ends the Mirror of Alchemy, composed by the most learned Philosopher, Roger Bacon.

# On the Philadelphian Gold

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## A Conference betwixt Philochrysus and Philadelphus On the Philadelphian Gold.

**Philochrysus:** This was upon me to ask you. You may remember then that you told me how the description of your city which we then read, was more literal, than is easy to be believed, and withal more mystical than it is possible for the wisest of mortals to comprehend. And in particular you told me that it was built first of true and substantial Gold; secondly of fine Gold; thirdly of transparent or glassy Gold; and fourthly of living Gold.

I desire now that you would answer me to all these particulars in order. Do you then say that this city is built of true Gold, and that it is not only metaphorically said to be built of Gold? Is it as real and substantial, is it as visible and palpable, and has it as many good qualities as this which I have now in my hand?

**Philadelphus:** Yes, Philochrysus, I can assure you that it is built of true and not metaphorical Gold, as some would have it only to be. This Gold, I say, is no less real and substantial, and no less visible and palpable to its inhabitants and has as many, yea more, good qualities that that which you hold in your hand, and seem so pleased with. I know that this is a strange language, and I shall have much ado to make myself understood by you but in any degree. Because I must speak of that which you have never seen, or handled; though others have both seen and handled of it, and you also may come in time to do the same. So that it will be almost as hard a matter for one that is born blind to understand the philosophy of colours, or one born deaf the nature and distinction of sounds, as for you to comprehend what I am about to say of a certain substance that is visible to some but not to you, palpable to some but not to you; and which therefore you have no kind of apprehension of.

**Philochrysus:** I promise to be very attentive. Do me the favour but to satisfy me as far as you can.

**Philadelphus:** Well, I will endeavour your satisfaction, after that you shall have answered me a question or two that I have to propose to you.

**Philochrysus:** I am very ready to do it.

**Philadelphus:** Why do ye believe that piece of Gold which ye showed me, to be true, real and substantial, and not shadowy, figurative and accidental?

**Philochrysus:** Why do I believe so? I am not such a stranger to the truth, as not to be able to distinguish it from a shadow. A shadow will fly from me if I go to catch at it, but this I can grasp fast enough. A shadow depends on the substance, and on the position of the Sun which casts it. It has no figure but from the substance, and that is always very faint and weak; it cannot be touched, it has no ponderosity, no light, no power in it. But this is ponderous, bright and powerful. You see me touch it, and its figure is not faint or weak but vivid and strong, without depending upon anything else. Wherever I move it, and whatever the position of it may be to the Sun or light, it still retains the same shape and the same substance. And now I have it fast, I dare venture its flying away.

**Philadelphus:** I see you are well satisfied with yourself. But pray tell me, how would you give a description of it, to satisfy another that had never seen it, or perhaps never heard of it; or if ever

heard of it, yet not otherwise than as a figurative sound to please children with, or as a rattle, a picture, a shadow, a name without substance, without reality? How would you make it to be understood to a Philosopher, and how to a merchant that is no philosopher, supposing them both to be strangers to the nature and use of this sovereign metal?

**Philochrysus:** Truly, Philadelphus, you begin to puzzle me. And besides I cannot see whither all your windings and turnings will at last lead me. Indeed, it would be a difficult matter to resolve satisfactorily either a Philosopher or a merchant concerning this dear precious metal, if they have not some manner of notice of it beforehand. But since it is not unlawful to make such a supposition, I am ready also to make such an answer as I can.

I would therefore endeavour to satisfy them, by making use of such ideas, images and conceptions which they are already acquainted with; and by compounding them and dividing them, I would strive to frame in the inquirer an idea, image and conception hereof, which might approach as near as possible to the truth. As for instance, if I were to discourse with a philosopher, whom I will suppose to live in the remotest part of Tartary, or in some dark corner near to the Northern Pole where mines of Gold were never so much as heard of, and no name even found for it in the language of the country. I would think in the first place what to call it, that he might in some sort apprehend me, while I am discoursing with him. Now because some Copper mines may be near to him, and he may have both seen and handled and also tried several experiments upon this metal, therefore I will call it fine Copper or perhaps fine Brass, if this be likewise known to him. Then because I must speak to him in his own terms, and he has used himself to those of Mercury and Sulphur, I will tell him this fine Copper is compounded of a pure Mercurial Water and a pure Sulphureous earth, exactly proportioned and duly maturated and concocted by the Sun-beams in some proper matrix or vessel.

Next I will, as far as I am able, show him the difference, both in quantity and quality, of the compounding principles of this fine Copper, and of his Copper. Whereupon I tell him that the Mercurial Water, which enters into the composition of this fine Copper, is not only more subtle, defecated and pure, than that which is in that Gothic Copper of his, but also that it is there in a much greater quantity. Likewise I tell him that the quantity of the Brimstone or Sulphureous Earth, which enters into the composition of the Gothic copper is greater than that which is in this fine (which I call for distinction the Peruvian) Copper, but that in the former it is more coarse than in the latter. Herein lies the main difference of the Peruvian and the Gothic Copper (which I must make my philosopher understand) as to the composition of the principles both in the one and the other. Which are both essentially the same, but diversified as well according to quality as quantity. He must then confess to me, that the Mercury in the Gothic Copper must needs be originally infected and poisoned, and that there must be a defect in its proportion: as likewise that the coarseness, the superfluity and the combustibleness of its Sulphur are no inconsiderable impediments to the perfection of this metal. And he will grant me to this, I believe, though he never have seen the fine metal of Peru, that there may be such a Copper there found as I do describe, if there may be but a Mercury, or water of Life, freed from its original infection and poison, and then fitly adapted and conjoined with a proper Sulphur that shall be pure and of an incombustible nature, so as not to diminish in the severest fires.

However perhaps he will maintain, that I ought not altogether to despise the Sulphureous Earth of his Gothick Copper; for that though it were not so pure, fixed and permanent as that of the other, yet it was of the very same essence and nature with it, and therefore also might possibly come to be in like manner purified and made incombustible.

And when I have brought him thus far, then I may speak unto him of the several properties of our fine copper, and leave him to compare them with those of that coarse sort which is only known to him. And here if I could give him an exact calculation of the weight of a cubical inch of the Peruvian Copper, comparing it with a cubical inch of the Gothick and showing the preponderancy of that above this, I should settle in him a just idea as to one property of it. Another property is purity and clarity, which I must in the next place give him to understand by deduction from such

ideas or conceptions which he has already admitted. A third is its tincture, and here as I must heighten that idea which he has entertained on one side, so I must lessen it on the other, that this man may exactly quadrate with the original. A fourth and main property which I am to tell him of is Fixation, or the immortality and indefectibility of the tincture, life or soul of this metallic body. Besides all which I may in the fifth place discourse to him of the extreme ductability or rarefaction of it; if it might not be too prodigious for his belief; and sixthly, of its medicinal uses and qualities, which would afford me a great variety of matters to entertain him with.

And thus I shall have in some degree satisfied my Tartarian or my Gothick Philosopher, that the fine Copper of Peru is not metaphorical or symbolical, as his poor country men, who have never seen it, would persuade him: but that it is as truly, really and substantially of a metallic nature and consistence, as that which he daily handles for such. And he now begins to understand how this fine copper, which I otherwise call Gold, is compounded of the same (yet better graduated) principles, with a more exact proportion than his, and that it is not metaphorically, but really a metallic substance, more ponderous, and brighter than the other, also of a bitter (though not so deep) Tincture, more fixed and ductile, and lastly more proper for human bodies, to be used internally or externally, when prepared according to Art.

So I take my leave of my Philosopher, and go next to my merchant. Here I shall not have so much to do, as with the former. I need only to mind him in brief of the several properties about which I discoursed my philosopher, and then declare unto him the great and excellent use thereof in commerce, so as more than four hundred times to answer the other in common valuation, and often more than five hundred.

**Philadelphus:** Tis enough, I find you like well the subject that you are upon, but hope it will serve to lead you into one that is far better. Of all that you have now said, nothing will be found to be in vain, when I shall come to examine you. The tables may come perhaps to be turned upon yourself. Wherefore let me persuade you to try thoroughly, whether that be indeed gold, which you believe to be so. But since you have been pleased to satisfy me as to what I demanded, I am now most ready to satisfy you, as to what was propounded; only I must first premise two or three things that I may be understood by you. Wherefore be now attentive and consider well what I am about to say.

**Philochrysus:** I will be sure Sir, to attend your motion, for I begin to be very jealous, that you have been carrying on all this while some plot to undermine me. But pray let us hear your premises, and I promise to make the best use of all the ears and eyes which I have.

**Philadelphus:** The first thing that I wish then to premise is this, That the Divine Blessing was originally spoken forth upon the whole Creation of God. Or as some would rather choose to express it - It was outspoken into the Creation, that is, by a real, vital and essential infusion engrafted into it. So that whatever come out of the hands of God was good. No evil should ever be derived from the Divine Being, who notwithstanding the supreme liberty of Will, is necessitated when He acts, to act according to Goodness. No sin nor death, no barrenness or drought, no weakness or disproportion could at all proceed from him. Wherefore he rejoicing, as it were, in the works of his hands, pronounced them both severally and universally to be good, yea very good, as considered in their whole system, and harmonious union with each other.

**Philochrysus:** I must grant that you say. But I would fain see to what purpose It will serve you.

**Philadelphus:** You may yet, before we part.

**Philochrysus:** I cannot deny but that God blessed the whole Creation and that all the works of his hands are good. Make your best of it.

**Philadelphus:** The second thing that I have to premise is but as a corollary from the former, and is strengthened by universal experience. It is this, The Works of the Creation are not Now in the same State, as they were when they first came out of the hands of God, or as when the Divine Blessing was pronounced upon them, or outspoken onto them, yet with this limitation, so far as they are within our Sphere or Orb. For experience doth at this day too sufficiently attest that the creatures, whether they be of the animal, vegetable or mineral kingdom, cannot be all said to be good, howsoever they be considered, either separately by themselves, or conjunctly in harmony with the rest. And whatever may be pleaded on their behalf by some acute philosophers and divines, that all the creatures are, even at this day, good; though not positively, yet relatively, and with respect both to their present constitution and the constitution of the world in general, it is evident, to me at least, if either the undoubted records of scripture, or the natural light of reason may judge of the appeal, that all that they can say will, if it prove any thing, certainly conduce to the very overturning of the positive goodness of the Divine Being, and the introducing in the room thereof a certain relative, hypothetical and imaginary goodness, and to the building up a very odd and irregular system of the Universe.

This if it were necessary, I might at large deduce through several particulars, proving the absurdity and inconsistency of such a supposition, that has been taken up of late by some men of name, and by them too much authorised to the dishonour of God, though they might not perhaps design it so, as I am apt both to hope and believe. But this would lead me out very far and keep me too long from the resolution of the question in hand. However, Philochrysus, if at any other time you think it worth your while to demand a particular satisfaction as to this point, I shall be most willing to give it to you.

**Philochrysus:** I thank you, Philadelphus. At present I am well enough satisfied in this matter; yea so much as I have often with my self admired, even when bit by a flea, how any could be serious in pleading for the perfection of the present constitution of the World of Nature, as if it never had been better, or was never to be better; but after it shall have lasted out such a term, that it must return back again into its primitive state of nothingness; by the most dreadful dissolution through Fire. This their catastrophe of Our World, I must confess, did never very well please me; but did always stick.

**Philadelphus:** Its is then granted by you that the present constitution of this terrestrial world in which we live, is not so perfect and good as it was originally brought forth by God, and that it may, by the gift of god, recover again its original constitution.

**Philochrysus:** It is granted.

**Philadelphus:** Well! Answer me now this one question. Which do you now think best deserves to be called by this or that name, that which is most perfect in its kind, and that which comes up most really to the true and original frame of its nature, or that which falls short of it, and is very Imperfect as to its kind?

As for instance, you take two sheep, or two horses, and of these let one be placed at the right hand and the other at the left. Suppose now the horse at the right hand to have all the most excellent features and proportions of an horse, and that at the left to have none of them at all, but to be very mean and despicable. Suppose also the sheep at the right hand, to be very plump and fat, and to wear a Golden Fleece upon its back, and that at the left to be lean, deformed and leprous. Will you hereupon say that the horse at the left hand is a real horse, but that at the right a metaphorical one? Or that the sheep at the left is a true sheep, but not that at the right? And will you not rather say that these by approaching nearer to the perfection of their nature, and to the original integrity and beauty in which they were first both brought forth from the Divine exemplar, do less deserve to be called figurative or allegorical than the other.



**Philochrysus:** So indeed it seems to me, if either of these may be called a figurative sheep, or a figurative horse, it must be the left-handed ones, who come not up to the primitive constitution of their nature, into which the divine blessing was spoken, but have fallen under the curse, and suffered the depravation of their first pure form, according to the supposition that is granted you. And if any one had ever seen such an other but such lean and deformed sheep, or such ill conditioned and disproportioned jakes, verily I say should much condemn his rashness, if he should say there were no other, but positively conclude these to be the best of the kind, and that above them are but hypothetical metaphors, or poetical expressions of somewhat transcending nature. Yea I should be a little angry if he should be so obstinate as to stand out against the authentic relations of ocular witness, or go to oblige me to deny my own senses, because his have not had the same experience which mine also had.

**Philadelphus:** Suppose also that you have two bushels of wheat, the one whereof is half full of chaff, the other perfectly cleansed, the one blighted, the other large grained and sound. Would you say that the blighted and chaffy corn is only real and substantial, but the sound and the cleansed to be no more than a metaphor or a shadow. I believe not.

Suppose once more that you have two pips of Spanish wine, the one natural and unsophisticated, clean and sprightly, the other pipe sophisticated and filled up half with water: and that you have tasted only of the latter. Would you say that this only is true wine, and not the other?

**Philochrysus:** No, Philadelphus, I think I should not so far expose my own judgment. And though I should not have tasted of the finest wine, yet would I not say there is no better than that I have tasted; and assert that what I am told of the other is only fancy or figure.

**Philadelphus:** Now my dear Philochrysus, Hold to your words. For I see two pieces of gold, the one as at your right hand, the other is at your left, the one celestial gold, the other terrestrial gold, like as there are bodies celestial and bodied terrestrial. The gold of your left hand you see and handle, and say therefore that it is substantial. The gold of the right hand you see not neither can you handle, and conclude therefore that it is shadowy. The reason whereof is this. The former has a peculiar virtue in it to blind that eye by which the former Gold may be discerned, and to induce such a paralytic numbness and deadness on all one part of the man that has a lust after it, that he cannot possibly feel or handle the other till his disease be first removed from him. But as for me, that Gold which you call substantial, I should of the two rather choose to call shadowy Gold, and that which you think to be shadowy and figurative, I must call substantial and real, on far greater reasons than you have produced to move me to the contrary.

**Philochrysus:** I cannot but believe my senses. You shall not easily persuade me out of them. For if they deceive me, I can be certain of nothing.

**Philadelphus:** Be not afraid: you may keep your senses still for me. Since the senses deceive none; but it is the judgment which is made upon them that may be erroneous. Take care therefore that you judge not amiss, and think that to be in the object itself which is nothing but an impression produced by it upon the sensory. But tell me, do you ever dream?

**Philochrysus:** Yes I do.

**Philadelphus:** You may then remember how you thought that you have seen, felt and handled various objects which have vanished away as soon as you awakened.

**Philochrysus:** I do. And particularly I call to mind, how I have sometime thought myself to be rolling among bags of gold. So that it has been no small trouble to me to find myself undeceived in the morning.

**Philadelphus:** Forget not this. The application will not be difficult, and very nearly concerns you, my friend. Philochrysus, you are in a dream at this very instant, and you will certainly find yourself undeceived in the morning, when your senses that are now locked up in sleep shall recover themselves.

**Philochrysus:** In a dream say you? Nay, then the whole world is a dream. All that I do is dream and fancy, and whatever I behold or handle is but a shadow. Will you make all the world beside yourself to be in a dream? Will you make all the hurly-burlies in it, all the traffickings, negotiations, and wars, with all manner of transactions, private and public, civil and religious, to be nothing more but the sportive imaginations of the night? Will you make nothing to be real or substantial of what is seen, felt, heard or understood by us poor mortals? Sure, Philadelphus, you are no sceptic.

**Philadelphus:** No, I am an eclectic. But yet I have found the good of scepticism, as to many things that you believe. And if it go not too far, it is the foundation of all solid knowledge, natural, political or divine. Wherefore, however strange it may appear to you, it is not very far from the truth, to say that this world, with all that is in it, is but a dream or a shadow when compared with the invisible worlds. I am afraid to press you too much with these matters, and therefore I only said it is not very far from the truth to say so, but the indubitable records wherein in manifestly the finger of God, would bear me out, if I should say that it is the very truth itself. Search into these and you will find enough to open your eyes and let you see that the form of this World passeth away, and that all that belongs to it is no more than as a vision of the night, which flies away with the day break. My thoughts have been formerly the same with yours: the poisoned cup from the hand of the Fair Harlot, whom I have mentioned to you, cast me into a deep sleep. And in it I remember, I had just the same dreams which you have now. I thought terrestrial gold was as substantial as you imagine it to be, and of the celestial gold I had no manner of apprehension; but was contented to look on it as a figure and not as a substance. But I was roused out of my sleep by a swift messenger out of the Heavenly Philadelphia, upon which all the enchanted scenes of the night immediately fled away, and I awakened recovering the senses which had been before chained up, and then I quickly perceived my errors. Ah! Philochrysus! Awake! Awake! There stands now at your right hand one of the citizens of that beautiful city, who holds before him a medal made of the same gold, which he would present to you, if you would but suffer your eyes to be opened, and would not hold so fast the shadow.

**Philochrysus:** What mean you to do with me? Oh! A little more sleep, a little more slumber, a little more of this worlds, and then I awake. Disturb me not.

**Philadelphus:** He talks in his sleep. Ho! Ho! Philochrysus. You will not yet be awakened I find. I will therefore for a little time grant you your hearts desire, and this once, suppose that you are not asleep while you sleep, but that your dream is a reality, and all the conclusions that you have made from the exercise of your outward senses to be true. For by parity of reason (even granting what you say) as you do conclude the terrestrial gold to be true, real and substantial, I do conclude the celestial to be so, and much more so. If you plead sensation for yours, I know those that plead it for ours, and that deserve as much (at least) to be believed as any that you bring. But lest you might not so readily believe or apprehend perhaps the witnesses that I could produce, I will proceed with you as you would do with your Goth or Tartar, that had never heard of the gold mines of Peru. Wherefore I must needs tell you that if the Peruvian gold be true gold, then the Philadelphian gold deserves also of right so to be called, yea is much better qualified of the two to bear this name, as it is more perfect in its kind, and as it more nearly approaches then the former to the true and original frame of pure and undefiled nature, exactly compounded according to the divine exemplar, and duly concocted in the bowels of the everlasting mountains, the mountains of the Sun and the Mountains of the Moon. Whence, supposing the difference of Philadelphian and Peruvian Gold to be, as the difference of Peruvian and Gothic Copper; this will not hinder but that the Philadelphian Gold, both

according to the greater purity of its constituent principles (as without the least alloy of the curse) and the most exact proportion of them, may well deserve to be looked on no less real than the Peruvian.

**Philochrysus:** If it be so, pray dear Philadelphus, give me some of it, that I may make a proof.

**Philadelphus:** You are not yet out of your dream, you know not what you say. For you neither understand what manner of Gold this is, neither who it is that can give it. It may be called to you by a thousand names, but I do assure you that it is true and proved gold. And let me tell you that your gold, or the false brass of Peru, is not constituted of Principles altogether pure and defected, but mixed with some close and inherent imperfections. Neither are the proportions adjusted according to perfect Nature, but only according to the perfect constitution of this terrestrial orb. The curse that has entered into the whole lower Creation has also entered into this, and it is not a perfect metal, except with respect to the lapsed and broken frame of this our Earth.

**Philochrysus:** Hah! Philadelphus! I am wondering where you will run at last. I am not so much in a dream, but I can laugh at these amusements of yours. Did ever any before deny Gold to be a perfect metal?

**Philadelphus:** Mistake me not. I do not deny it to be a perfect metal with respect to the present order of things in their Fallen State. But I do positively aver that it is not a perfect metal with respect to that primitive and original order of Beings which proceeded immediately from God through His Word, wherein and whereby they subsist; but that it partakes of the curse, as well as all the other subjects of the mineral or metallic kingdom, though not in the same degree. Now there is an Inherent curse, and there is also an Adherent Curse, and of both of these it more or less participates.

**Philochrysus:** Pray what do you mean by an Inherent Curse, and how do you appropriate it to the Terrestrial Gold.

**Philadelphus:** Know what is the Blessing and you cannot fail to know what is the Curse in Nature. There is an Inherent Blessing in every creature, and there is also an Adherent Blessing. Without the former God could never have pronounced them good, and without the latter they could never have been serviceable to man, or to the rest of their fellow creatures. A privation, or loss, in either of these kinds, is called the Curse. And as it has diverse degrees and is variously specified, so takes it up diverse names, as Death, Darkness, Hades, Sheol, the Turba, the Left Hand, the Seed of the Serpent, the Mist out of the Earth, Lilith, Arimanius, Poison, the Blood of the Old Dragon, the Prisons, the North, and many others.

The benediction now of both kinds may be lessened, hidden or removed either in part or in whole. The Adherent Benediction may possibly admit of a total remove and separation, but the inherent can never do this without the destruction and annihilation of the subject wherein it is. Whence though it may be hid, yet can it never be separated without the entire disunion of its constituent and vital principles. Which are not perishable, but endure the same, notwithstanding all the cortices, veils, and coverings, wherewith they may be overcast or oppressed, and which are said to be under the president-ship of so many evil Angels.

Behold then here is Wisdom to take away the Inherent Curse from the creature, and to cause the disappeared Blessing to reappear, and exert forth itself. Now shall you understand how this curse is to be appropriated to the terrestrial Gold, and how the contrary Blessing is to be predicated of the celestial. But in the first place you are to take notice, that as the inherent is here less than in any other subjects of the same Kingdom and Order, so the Adherent Curse is greater. In the second place you are to observe that the primary and Radical principles being (as to us) invisible in themselves, the secondary and elementary, which may be made visible, can be here only examined

into.

In the third place, I am now to acquaint you that these elementary principles, which I call also Spermatical, as I call the former Seminal, are vastly different in the state of pure and of corrupt Nature.

For in pure nature there is found a bright living crystalline water, full of spirit, power and energy; but in Nature corrupted there is a water that is opposite to this, being without Light, Life, or purity, without spirituality or strength, and void of all benign efficacy. Wherefore as a stagnated pool remote from the sun beams, or as a dead insipid phlegm, is not to be regarded or valued, so likewise there is found a bright, living and crystalline earth (such as hath been, and such as will be, and such as is even at this time, when it appears not, except to some few) which is sometimes compared to fine silver, and is called the Salt of the Earth. And in this Blessed earth is locked up the Spirit, Energy and Seed of the Mineral and vegetable kingdoms in their purest constitution, yea and of the animal too. For that it contains in itself the Fire of Nature, by which the wheel of her Magia, according to all the seven forms and spirits is set to work.

On the contrary there is a dull, dead and opaceous earth that is mixed more or less with all terrestrial subjects, and that may by Art be separated from them. This is the Curse of the Earth which must be taken away and dissolved, before the Blessed and new Earth can appear, wherefore it is called the Damned Earth.

**Philochrysus:** I hope you will not say that there is any of what the Chymists call Damned Earth in this our Gold. For I cannot bear the thought of it. Pray therefore explain yourself here a little.

**Philadelphus:** It is you yourself that make the particular application, for I did not. And indeed, Sir, I was almost afraid to touch you so near the quick. But if your Gold, Philochrysus, be a terrestrial subject (which you will scarce deny) then I am sure it must have some share of this Damned earth in it. For the Curse has not a command to stop when it came to a mine of Gold, but like a leaven it passed through and through, and infected the whole earth, and all that belonged to it. There might not indeed so much of it here abide as elsewhere, and therefore I said there was less of the Inherent Curse in this, than in any other subject of the same kingdom or order. Yet there is some, and that too very considerable, if either reason or experience may be allowed to pass the judgment. But this would lead us too far into a Philosophical disquisition.

Let it suffice at present to consider whether what a vulgar and ordinary artist may be able to give an ocular demonstration of in the greatest part of earthly subjects, an expert master may not be as able to give the same in All?

Wherefore be not angry, dear sir, at what I have asserted, but learn to bear the thought of what will be so much your disappointment, as to let you see the fair idol of your heart is not so lovely as you have imagined it to be, and that it is not all true gold that glisters in your hand.

There is a Damned Earth Terra Damnata et Maledicta that cleaves so fast to it, as is not (easily) to be separated by the refiners art. And I am informed from credible testimonies, that whosoever shall be understanding in heart and skillful in hand, to separate this vile earth from the precious Solar Earth in the body of Terrestrial Gold, shall find the quantity of the former (however small when compared to the inferior metals) to exceed the other. And if what is related concerning the degradation of Gold by an eminent and curious eye-witness of this nation, whom all the philosophical and Christian world stands obliged to (and who had this generous and noble design to vindicate Religion from all sectarian polity or partiality, and to establish it upon solid and immutable grounds, be true; and if also the daily experiments) made even in ordinary laboratories of the possibility of its supergradation and Exaltation, by losing in its weight, and so possessing an higher Tincture and Clarity, may deserve any credit: Then is it certain that it may still arrive to an higher degree both of Fixation and Purity, than it could ever meet with in the Bowels of the Accursed earth.

But whether this can ever be quite set free from its Inherent Curse or no, is not so material to our present purpose. However there is a vein, I can assure you, of Paradisical Gold, which not having

been with it infected, is by Moses pronounced to be good, (Genesis 2, 12). And yet even this is no more to be compared with the Philadelphian or Sionitical Gold, than the Peruvian is with it. Hereby you may, in part I hope apprehend what is meant both by the Blessing and the Curse, which are inherent in this Metallic body.

**Philochrysus:** I do, I think, pretty well understand you. But pray what do you mean by an Adherent Curse, and how is that to be appropriated to the Terrestrial Gold?

**Philadelphus:** The Adherent Curse is that which adheres or cleaves to the Creature, by external application, and not by Internal Constitution, or composition. And here by external application I mean not barely any outward abuse of the same whatever, but also (and chiefly) any degree of adhesion of the Human Soul to it, how intrinsic soever, and the more intrinsic still the more dangerous, it being foreign, incongruous, and extrinsic both to the Soul, and to the creature which she seeks to cleave as to her blessing. Now though your terrestrial Gold has indeed not so much of the inherent, yet has it far more of the Adherent Curse, which is much the worst of the two. And though it should be never so perfect as to its composition, that avails not if this other Curse sticks to it. Yea, on the contrary, this will be so much the greater and the heavier, as in the case of the Tartarization [2 Peter, 2, 4.] of those angels who kept not their first estate of adhesion to the Original Beauty and Goodness, and in that of the Golden Calf of Israel, concerning which the Jews have to this very day a celebrated proverb, that no punishment is ever inflicted upon them in which there is not some portion of this calf. And I fear the same may be justly applicable not to them alone. What Evil of Sin is there in the whole world that is not perpetrated for the sake of it? And what Evil of pain, or dreadful judgments by the Divine nemesis have not already been pulled down upon particular persons, upon families and upon whole kingdoms? Behold, and consider the times of old; what examples all histories both sacred and profane doth give you. To conclude, how many are there that for the sake of this, labour the greatest part of their lives in the very fire, who at length reap nought but smoke and dross, in the room of those Golden Mountains which they hereby imagined to themselves? And how many weary themselves all their lives for very vanity, while being deceived with the false show of an adhering blessing, they find only misery and repentance; who, had they taken but half that pains to discover the Paradisical or Philadelphian mine of Gold, would never have been left in such plunges at the last? Behold all this proceeds from its Adherent Curse. Remember, prithee Philochrysus, the dying aphorism of the richest Subject of the world at that time, as well as the best politician, and the most faithful servant; which famous aphorism is, I suppose, not unknown to you.

**Philochrysus:** You mean, I know the saying of that great man, which he left in his legacy to posterity: Had I but taken but half that pains to serve my God, as I took to serve my Prince, he would not now have deserted me.

**Philadelphus:** I do so. And withal I assure you, my good friend, that if you were but half as diligent in seeking after the celestial, as you are in seeking after the terrestrial Gold, you would be experimentally convinced that I have spoken nothing to you all this while but the very Truth, and you would find yourself possessed of substance instead of vanity.

**Philochrysus:** I am at a loss. I know not what to make of that which you say. Disturb me not out of my sleep. For I would rather dream on at the old rate, than be molested. Have pity on me, and depart from me. For I am Philochrysus. I am a lover of that what you have contemptibly nicknamed terrestrial Gold. The which to me is a Celestial substance. But you will hardly allow it to be a substance at all, that so you may the more exalt the Gold (as you call it) of your own country, which I must call imaginary. Tell me not then that mine is vanity, or the shadow only of a substance. Neither speak to me of labouring for smoke and dross. I know what is substance, I thank my stars, and I can distinguish between what is true and what is counterfeit. Mine hath been tried in the Fire,

and weighed in the balance. It hath stood in the one; and in the other hath been found to have its just weight. Can you also pretend to this?

**Philadelphus:** Yes, more than pretend. Mine is indeed Gold tried in the Fire, and it has been also weighed in the balance as well as yours. And let me tell you besides, that your gold shall never be able to endure this fire-trial, but shall fly away in it as lead and dross. And one grain of the Gold of my City if put into the balance will preponderate this whole room full of yours. Whence the Crown that is mad out of this Gold is called emphatically a weight of Glory and an Hyperbolical or excessive weight, yea a far exceeding and Hyperbolically Hyperbolical weight [2 Corinthians 4,17.] So far exceeds the celestial Gold in preponderosity the terrestrial Gold when weighed together, as no hyperbole can reach. It exceeds in like manner in clarity and lustre, in fixation and permanency, in the superexcellency of its Tincture, in ductibility and divisibility; and in all manner of medicinal uses both for Spirit, Soul and Body, all which it revives, exhilarates and perfects. And in the last place all the merchandise of your World is not to be compared with it. This alone can truly and really and lastingly make you rich. It would not be difficult to particularize each of these, and to show hereby the reality and substantiality of this Gold that I plead for, not only equally with, but far above that which is dug out of the Earth. But all that can be said hereupon, would but serve so much the more to exasperate you if you comprehend it not, or will not attend to it. In vain therefore would it be for me to give you (at present) a particular description of its several properties, as also of its constituent principles and the manner of their union. I must wait to do that till those senses which are fallen asleep in you shall come to be awakened. But I am therefore sent that I might rouse you out of your sleep. Forgive me that I thus wake you. O Philochrysus! what has become of the eye-salve of Sophia? Arise and anoint your eyes.

**Philochrysus:** Hold! I think I now begin to see. I must confess that I can now see the possibility of what you drive at, but that it is actually so, I cannot yet perceive. I remember I was once a little acquainted with one that might possibly be of your society, and I did hear him exclaim from the pulpit in this manner: "Think ye, ye shall be set up as pillars in the Temple of God to uphold it? or that you shall be full of gold in you pockets, of the finest gold tried in the Fire, like the rich men of the Earth? and to ruffle it in silks, and fine raiment as those in princes' courts? Do you think that these things are here meant in these promises made to the Seven Churches? No, No, dream of no such things, for I say there is not one word true according to the letter.

**Philadelphus:** I do say that every word, every syllable, every letter is true, and that there are real and substantial pillars in the Temple of God, real and substantial Gold in the City of God, and real and substantial raiment worn by the citizens thereof. And yet at the same time, I do assert that there is no Word, syllable or letter true, if strictly taken according to that low idea which the natural man has fixed to these words. For as much as there is a more than hyperbolical excess in the difference of one from the other. As each property by itself considered will manifest. And if you are convinced of the possibility (at least) of what I have said, you must acknowledge the actual existence hereof. For that there can be no other reason invented whereby you deny it, but its impossibility and inconsistency.

**Philochrysus:** I resign therefore, and yield to you, that the City of Philadelphia may be built of true, real and substantial Gold, which has nothing of the curse either Inherent or Adherent sticking to it, according to the sense that the describer means, or that you explain, though not according to that which the natural man would have.

**Philadelphus:** You comprehend me right. I shall therefore proceed. I said then, in the second place, that it is built of fine Gold, much more fine and higher graduated than any you can ever have seen. This you may in part already understand by what has been said hitherto. But here I shall much more stand in need of words whereby to express myself.

**Philochrysus:** I long greatly to hear you speak distinctly of this Superfine and supergraduated Gold. I shall not forget what you have said. Therefore proceed on.

**Philadelphus:** You need but remember your Gothic philosopher. Consider also that there is a twofold body, There is a material and elementary body, and there is an spiritual and a heavenly body. The one is gross, the other fine.

**Philochrysus:** I can understand perfectly what you mean by the former, but the notion of an immaterial body seems to me the very same contradiction as that of an immaterial substance seemed to an eminent asserter of materialism called Philautus. If you had but him to deal with, he would make work, I believe, with your non-elementary and spiritual body.

**Philadelphus:** It may be so. But I never feared the strength of reasoning in Philautus, though I know him pretty well, and all his principles whether in Philosophy, Divinity or politics are opposite to mine. He is the express character of the natural man throughout, and in his works everywhere you have the most lively image of the Fallen State of Nature, whereof great advantage may be made by the wise, it being no where that I know so deeply and philosophically handled. This indeed he mistakes for the true and original State of Nature; but herein he speaks well enough, and true enough, as a natural or animal Man, and without deviating, most exactly follows his principles wherever they lead him. On the other side the most learned and profound of all his answerers very admirably both describes and demonstrates the true and original state of Nature, such as it was, and such as it shall be again, but not such as it is at present. As for Philautus he is not dead, but lives in his disciples, and will live as long as the present corrupt state of Nature shall remain upon the Earth. For the Psyche in man is never able to penetrate beyond the image; only the pure spirit of Sophia can reach to the life, which is so imaged out in discourse. Hence he who had only the Psyche, was not able to distinguish betwixt the one and the other, but he took them both to be the same. So finding in the origination of several languages that a Spirit was imaged forth or signified by Breath, he presently concludes that the Spirit and Breath were one and the same, and consequently that all Spirits (as such) were material and corporeal beings. he in the like manner, finding in the verbal image of substance was expressed that which stands under, or props up somewhat, entertained immediately a most gross and sensible conception hereof, and tied it down to matter. So then nothing could be a greater absurdity to him, or a more manifest contradiction, than to believe an immaterial substance, that is an immaterial matter. Now among those who have a great and just abhorrence for his sentiments, all are not set free themselves from the very same method of argumentation, as from a numerous induction of instances might be verified if need were. Wherefore I shall only beg of you what is highly necessary in order to your understanding of what I speak, and to your passing a judgment thereupon, that you content not yourself with the lax and popular sense of a word, as that which is generally very equivocal, but that you seek out the strict and close idea that is to be affixed to it, for the removal of all ambiguity in the terms, and the distinction of the image from its original, or (as the Schools would rather speak) of the Signum from Signatum, the sign from the thing signified.

**Philochrysus:** It is very just what you require, Philadelphus. None can gainsay this method, after what the celebrated author of An Essay on Human Understanding, together with a French philosopher of the first magnitude, have written on it, shall be looked into. Wherefore tell me in the first place, what you mean by Substance?

**Philadelphus:** Hereby I understand that which hath both Essence and Existence, being created by God, and made capable of bearing up, or supporting various modes of Being.

**Philochrysus:** What do you mean by Body?

**Philadelphus:** Hereby I understand a substance that is extended, and is capable of various modes of Extension. Two of which modes are penetrability and impenetrability.

**Philochrysus:** Is penetrability then a mode of extension? I always thought that all matter was impenetrable.

**Philadelphus:** True. All Matter is impenetrable, but all body is not. And penetrability is as much a mode of extension as impenetrability. For where there is no co-extension there is no penetration, and where there is no penetration there can be no life. Without therefore all Nature were dead, it remains that extended substances may be penetrated. Now there are extended substances, or rather one extended substance (of which I may speak to you hereafter) which can penetrate others, but which cannot be penetrated by any. There are also extended substances which can penetrate others by co-extension, and which may themselves also be penetrated by others. lastly there are extended substances or bodies which cannot penetrate others, but which may be penetrated by them. Thus by the outward light of this world, which is a body of the second order, the Earth may be penetrated, which can neither penetrate it or any other substance.

**Philochrysus:** What do you mean by Matter?

**Philadelphus:** Hereby I understand a body that is impenetrable, and divisible, and which is capable of various modes of division. So that all Matter is Body, but all Body is not Matter. By impenetrable I mean not that which cannot be at all penetrated, but I mean that which is not to be penetrated by any thing of its own order, and which itself can penetrate nothing.

**Philochrysus:** How can the same Body be impenetrable and divisible?

**Philadelphus:** Because it is impenetrable, therefore it is divisible into parts. For if it could be penetrated, then would there be no need of division, or separation of the parts? Wherefore that which is penetrable is also indivisible, or rather indiscernible, and consequently incorruptible.

**Philochrysus:** I comprehend your meaning. And now I conceive what is your notion of an immaterial or Spiritual Body called likewise a Non-elementary (which is a Quintessential) or heavenly Body; Namely, that it is an extended substance, penetrable, penetrative, indivisible, indiscernible, and incorruptible. As on the contrary your notion of a material and elementary body must be this, that it is an extended substance, impenetrable, penetrated, divisible, discernible and corruptible. I begin consequently to understand a little your notion of Material and Spiritual, of Elementary and Heavenly Gold, and why you call the one gross and the other fine Gold. But notwithstanding that I conceive how the Material and Elementary Gold is an extended Substance which is impenetrable to all terrestrial bodies, and may be penetrated by the Celestial, which is also divisible into parts, yea Discernible into the minutest atoms, yet can I not easily yield that it should be corruptible.

**Philadelphus:** All that is compounded of Elements must be more or less corruptible. And though certain elementary bodies may have arrived at some degree of incorruptibility, yet it is but a degree, it being impossible for them to be ever perfectly freed from corruption, but by a dissolution and a resuscitation. For this is a most assured maxim, that all things must be perfected upon the cross and all things must be tried by Fire Without passing through the Cross there is no resurrection, without passing through the Fire there is no Fixation or Incorruption, no Purification or Spiritualization. Hence the messenger of the Covenant of Immortality is by a certain prophet compared to a refiners Fire, who saith of him that he shall purify the Priesthood and purge them as Gold that they may rightly offer the sacrifice of Minha to Jehovah. Hence also a great and wise King saith, the word (or outflowing emanation of the Lord is refined; and again he cries out Thy Word is exceedingly



refined most fine and pure. And likewise this very Word of the Lord or the Word the Lord saith to the shepherds of Israel: I will refine them as Silver is refined, and will try them as Gold is tried. And elsewhere he saith, I have refined thee melted thee down, and then brought thee out of the furnace. For this cause the precious Sons of Zion are compared to fine gold, and the Angelical man who appeared to Daniel had his loins Girded with fine Gold of Ophir. From this also an account may be given why the Altar of Incense was made of refined Gold, together with the Ark and the Cherubims, also why Wisdom's oracle is so often compared to fine Gold; and lastly why the Shulamite describes both the head and the feet of her beloved to be as of fine Gold, that is such an indivisible, indiscernible and incorruptible substance, as being extended is therefore a body, and as possessing all the properties of the material and gross Gold, is therefore a spiritual body, or immaterial and celestial gold.

**Philochrysus:** I must confess that I have always taken a spiritual body to be a contradiction in terms, for I never heard otherwise before but that Spirit and Body were contraries. But now I begin to mistrust that I have not been used rightly to apply ideas to words.

**Philadelphus:** Your diffidence is well grounded. For I do not find that Spirit and Body are anywhere opposed as contraries in those writings which command the greatest authority and deference above all others to them. I find indeed frequently spirit and flesh to be set as opposites, but spirit and body never. Nay I find it there expressly asserted that there is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so in like manner there is a natural Gold and there is a spiritual, which surpasseth the former, as the spiritual Body of the Resurrection doth this Natural and Elementary body which we now wear about us. Moreover the same highly mystic author tells those who being immersed in the flesh had no notion of a Spiritual or Heavenly Body, any more than you had.

**Philochrysus:** There are also Celestial Bodies (of a spiritual and heavenly property) and Bodies Terrestrial (of a material and earthly property as common gold but the Glory of the Celestial is one, and the glory of the Terrestrial is another; that is, the glory of the Philadelphian Gold differs from the glory of the Peruvian, as far as heaven is from Earth.

**Philochrysus:** You extremely amaze me, good Philadelphus, to tell me that the City from whence you are named is built of such fine gold. But pray now go on, if you are not weary, to satisfy me in the third place, whether it be built of Transparent and Glassy Gold.

**Philadelphus:** Be not over hasty, but take time to meditate upon what I (through the assistance of the Good Spirit) have freely communicated to you. Neither have I done yet with the former, for I am not yet come to the top of the ladder with you. Perhaps your head may be giddy in endeavouring to reach it at this present. Wherefore though I cannot be ever weary of discoursing these matters, yet I will now take my leave of you with one parallel instance, which you may digest against we meet the next time. Consider what difference there is betwixt the faeces of any terrestrial subject, from which the spirit is separated, and the Spirit itself of that very subject (which is a Spiritual Body) when seven times rectified; and hereby as in a glass you may discern how far that Gross and Earthly Gold I am speaking of, wherewith the Holy City of my brethren is built. In the meanwhile I shall leave with you this Hieroglyphical figure of a star being the mark of this Gold, and also of the city, showing its constituent parts the Water and Fire of the Philadelphians; its manifold and wonderful properties, how it is formed, and how it is made to multiply itself.

# Tract on the Tincture and Oil of Antimony by Roger Bacon

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## Preface

Dear reader, at the end of his Tract on Vitriol, Roger Bacon mentions that because of the multiplication of the Tincture that is made from Vitriol, the lover of Art should acquaint himself with the Tract De Oleo Stibii. Therefore I considered that it would be good and useful that the Tract De Oleo Stibii follows next. And if one thoroughly ponders and compares these tinctures with one another, then I have no doubt that one will not finish without exceptional profit. Yet, every lover of Art, should mind always to keep one eye on Nature and the other on Art and manual labour. For, when these two do not stand together, then it is a lame work, as when someone thinks he can walk a long path on one leg only, which is easily seen to be impossible, Vale.

Joachim Tanckivs  
De Oleo Antimonii Tractatus.  
ROGERII BACONIS ANGLI  
Summi Philosophi & Chemicus.

Stibium, as the Philosophers say, is composed from the noble mineral Sulphur, and they have praised it as the black lead of the Wise. The Arabs in their language, have called it Asinat vel Azinat, the alchemists retain the name Antimonium. It will however lead to the consideration of high Secrets, if we seek and recognize the nature in which the Sun is exalted, as the Magi found that this mineral was attributed by God to the Constellation Aries, which is the first heavenly sign in which the Sun takes its exaltation or elevation to itself. Although such things are thrown to the winds by common people, intelligent people ought to know and pay more attention to the fact that exactly at this point the infinitude of secrets may be partly contemplated with great profit and in part also explored. Many, but these are ignorant and unintelligent, are of the opinion that if they only had Stibium, they would get to it by Calcination, others by Sublimation, several by Reverberation and Extraction, and obtain its great Secret, Oil, and Perfectum Medicinam. But I tell you, that here in this place nothing will help, whether Calcination, Sublimation, Reverberation nor Extraction, so that subsequently a perfect Extraction of metallic virtue that translates the inferior into the superior, may profitably come to pass or be accomplished. For such shall be impossible for you. Do not let yourselves be confused by several of the philosophers who have written of such things, i.e., Geber, Albertus Magnus, Rhasis, Rupecilla, Aristoteles and many more of that kind. And this you should note. Yes, many say, that when one prepares Stibium to a glass, then the evil volatile Sulphur will be gone, and the Oil, which may be prepared from the glass, would be a very fixed oil, and would then truly give an ingress and Medicine of imperfect metals to perfection. These words and opinions are perhaps good and right, but that it should be thus in fact and prove itself, this will not be. For I say to you truly, without any hidden speech; if you were to lose some of the above mentioned Sulphur by the preparation and the burning, as a small fire may easily damage it, so that you have lost the right penetrating spirit, which should make our whole Antimonii corpus into a perfect red oil, so that it also can ascend over the helm with a sweet smell and very beautiful colors and the whole body of this mineral with all its members, without loss of any weight, except for the foecum, shall be an oil and go over the helm. And note also this: How would it be possible for the body to go into an oil, or give off its sweet oil, if it is put into the last essence and degree? For glass is in all things the outermost and least essence. For you shall know that all creatures at the end of the world, or on the last and coming judgement of the last day, shall become glass or a lovely amethyst and this according to the families of the twelve Patriarchs, as in the families of jewels

which Hermes the Great describes in his book: As we have elaborately reported and taught in our book de Cabala.

You shall also know that you shall receive the perfect noble red oil, which serves for the translation of metals in vain, if you pour acetum correctum over the Antimonium and extract the redness. Yes not even by Reverberation, and even if its manifold Beautiful colors show themselves, this will not make any difference and is not the right way. You may indeed obtain and make an oil out of it, but it has no perfect force and virtue for transmutation or translation of the imperfect metals into perfection itself. This you must certainly know.

AND NOW WE PROCEED TO THE MANUAL LABOUR, AND THUS THE PRACTICA  
FOLLOWS.

Take in the Name of God and the Holy Trinity, fine and well cleansed Antimonii ore, which looks nice, white, pure and internally full of yellow rivulets or veins. It may also be full of red and blue colors and veins, which will be the best. Pound and grind to a fine powder and dissolve in a water or Aqua Regis, which will be described below, finely so that the water may conquer it. And note that you should take it out quite soon after the solution so that the water may conquer it. And note that you should take it out quite soon after the solution so that the water will have no time to damage it, since it quickly dissolves the Antimonii Tincture. For in its nature our water is like the ostrich, which by its heat digests and consumes all iron; for given time, the water would consume it and burn it to naught, so that it would only remain as an idle yellow earth, and then it would be quite spoilt.

Consider by comparison Luna, beautiful clean and pure, dissolved in this our water. And let it remain therein for no more than a single night when the water is still strong and full of Spirit,

And I tell you, that your good Luna has then been fundamentally consumed and destroyed and brought to nought in this our water.

And if you want to reduce it to a pure corpus again, then you will not succeed, but it will remain for you as a pale yellow earth, and occasionally it may run together in the shape of a horn or white horseshoe, which may not be brought to a corpus by any art.

Therefore you must remember to take the Antimonium out as soon as possible after the Solution, and precipitate it and wash it after the custom of the alchemists, so that the matter with its perfect oil is not corroded and consumed by the water.

THE WATER; WHEREIN WE DISSOLVE THE ANTIMONIUM, IS MADE THUS:

Take Vitriol one and a half (alii 2. lb.) Sal armoniac one pound, Arinat (alii Alun) one half pound / Sal niter one and a half pound, Sal gemmae (alii Sal commune) one pound, Alumen crudum (alii Entali) one half pound. These are the species that belong to and should be taken for the Water to dissolve the Antimonium.

Take these Species and mix them well among each other, and distill from this a water, at first rather slowly. For the Spiritus go with great force,, more than in other strong waters. And beware of its spirits, for they are subtle and harmful in their penetration.

When you now have the dissolved Antimony, clean and well sweetened, and its sharp waters washed out, so that you do not notice any sharpness any more, then put into a clean vial and overpour it with a good distilled vinegar. Then put the vial in Fimum Equinum, or Balneum Mariae, to putrefy forty (alii four) days and nights, and it will dissolve and be extracted red as blood. Then take it out and examine how much remains to be dissolved, and decant the clear and pure, which

will have a red colour, very cautiously into a glass flask. Then pour fresh vinegar onto it, and put it into Digestion as before, so that that which may have remained with the faecibus, it should thus have ample time to become dissolved. Then the faeces may be discarded, for they are no longer useful, except for being scattered over the earth and thrown away. Afterwards pour all the solutions together into a glass retort, put into Balneum Mariae, and distill the sharp vinegar rather a fresh one, since the former would be too weak, and the matter will very quickly become dissolved by the vinegar. Distill it off again, so that the matter remains quite dry. Then take common distilled water and wash away all sharpness, which has remained with the matter from the vinegar, and then dry the matter in the sun, or otherwise by a gentle fire, so that it becomes well dried. It will then be fair to behold, and have a bright red color. The Philosophers, when they have thus prepared our Antimonium in secret, have remarked how its outermost nature and power has collapsed into its interior, and its interior thrown out and has now become an oil that lies hidden in its innermost and depth, well prepared and ready. And henceforth it cannot, unto the last judgement, be brought back to its first essence. And this is true, for it has become so subtle and volatile, that as soon as it senses the power of fire, it flies away as a smoke with all its parts because of its volatility.

Several poor and common Laborers, when they have prepared the Antimonium thus, have taken one part out, to take care of their expenses, so that they may more easily do the rest of the work and complete it, They then mixed it with one part Salmiac, one part Vitro (alii. Nitro, alii. Titro), one part Rebohat, to cleanse the Corpera, and then proceeded to project this mixture onto a pure Lunam. And if the Luna was one Mark, they found two and a half Loth good gold after separation; sometimes even more. And therewith they had accomplished a work providing for their expenses, so that they might even better expect to attain to the Great Work. And the foolish called this a bringing into the Lunam, but they are mistaken. For such gold is not brought in by the Spiritibus (alii. Speciebus), but any Luna contains two Mark gold to the Loth, some even more. But this gold is united to the Lunar nature to such a degree that it may not be separated from it, neither by Aquafort, nor by common Antimonium, as the goldsmiths know. When however the just mentioned mixture is thrown onto the Lunam in flux, then such a separation takes place that the Luna quite readily gives away her implanted gold either in Aquafort or in Regal, and lets herself separate from it, strikes it to the ground and precipitates it, which would or might otherwise not happen. Therefore it is not a bringing into the Lunam, but a bringing out of the Luna.

But we are coming back to our Proposito and purpose of our work, for we wish to have the Oil, which has only been known and been acquainted with this magistry, and not by the foolish.

When you then have the Antimonium well rubified according to the above given teaching, then you shall take a well rectified Spiritum vini, and pour it over the red powder of Antimony, put it in a gentle Balneum Mariae to dissolve for four days and nights, so that everything becomes well dissolved. If however something should remain behind, you overpour the same with fresh Spiritu vini, and put it into the Balneum Mariae again, as said before, and everything should become well dissolved. And in case there are some more faeces there, but there should be very little, do them away, for they are not useful for anything. The Solutiones put into a glass retort, lute on a helm and connect it to a receiver, also well luted, to receive the Spiritus. Put it into Balneum Mariae. Thereafter you begin, in the Name of God, to distill very leisurely at a gentle heat, until all the Spiritus Vini has come over. You then pour the same Spiritum that you have drawn off, back onto the dry matter, and distill it over again as before. And this pouring on and distilling off again, you continue so often until you see the Spiritum vini ascend and go over the helm in all kinds of colours. Then it is time to follow up with a strong fire, and a noble blood red Oleum will ascend, go through the tube of the helm and drip into the recipient. Truly, this is the most secret way of the Wise to distill the very highly praised oil of Antimonii, and it is a noble, powerful, fragrant oil of great virtue, as you will hear below in the following. But here I wish to teach and instruct you who are poor and without means to expect the Great Work in another manner; not the way the ancients did it

by separating the gold from the Luna. Therefore take this oil, one lot, [ancient weight unit used for the weighing of gold and silver coins - about 1/30 pound] eight lot of Saturn calcined according to art, and carefully imbibe the oil, drop by drop, while continuously stirring the calx Saturni. Then put it ten days and nights in the heat, in the furnace of secrets, and let the fire that this furnace contains, increase every other day by one degree. The first two days you give it the first degree of fire, the second two days you give it the second degree, and after four days and nights you put it into the third degree of fire and let it remain there for three days and nights. After these three days you open the window of the fourth degree, for which likewise three days and nights should be sufficient. Then take it out, and the top of the Saturnus becomes very beautiful and of a reddish yellow colour. This should be melted with Venetian Boreas. When this has been done, you will find that the power of our oil has changed it to good gold. Thus you will again have subsistence, so that you may better expect the Great Work. We now come back to our purpose where we left it earlier. Above you have heard, and have been told to distill the Spiritum vini with the Oleum Antimonii over the helm into the recipient as well as the work of changing the Saturnum into gold. But now we wish to make haste and report about the second tinctural work. Here it will be necessary to separate the Spiritum vini from the oil again, and you shall know that it is done thus:

Take the mixture of oil and wine spirit put it into a retort, put on a helm, connect a receiver and place it all together into the Balneum Mariae. Then distill all the Spiritum vini from the oil, at a very gentle heat, until you are certain that no more Spiritus vini is to be found within this very precious oil. And this will be easy to check; for when you see several drops of Spiritu vini ascend over the helm and fall into the recipient, this is the sign that the Spiritus vini has become separated from the oil. Then remove the fire from the Balneo, though it was very small, so that it may cool all the sooner. Now remove the recipient containing the Spiritu vini, and keep it in a safe place, for it is full of Spiritus which it has extracted from the oil and retained. It also contains admirable virtues, as you will hear hereafter.

But in the Balneo you will find the blessed bloodred Oleum Antimonii in the retort, which should be taken out very carefully. The helm must be very slowly removed, taking care to soften and wash off the Lute, so that no dirt falls down into the beautiful red oil and makes it turbid. This oil you must store with all possible precaution so that it receives no damage. For you now have a Heavenly Oil that shines on a dark night and emits light as from a glowing coal. And the reason for this is that its innermost power and soul has become thrown out unto the outermost, and the hidden soul is now revealed and shines through the pure body as a light through a lantern: Just as on Judgement Day our present invisible and internal souls will manifest through our clarified bodies, that in this life are impure and dark, but the soul will then be revealed and seen unto the outermost of the body, and will shine as the bright sun. Thus you now have two separate things: Both the Spirit of Wine full of force and wonder in the arts of the human body: And then the blessed red, noble, heavenly Oleum Antimonii, to translate all diseases of the imperfect metals to the Perfection of gold. And the power of the Spiritual Wine reaches very far and to great heights. For when it is rightly used according to the Art of Medicine: I tell you, you have a heavenly medicine to prevent and to cure all kinds of diseases and ailments of the human body. And its uses are thus, as follows:

#### AGAINST PODAGRA or GOUT

In the case of gout one should let three drops of this Spiritu vini, that has received the power of the Antimony, fall into a small glass of wine. This has to be taken by the patient on an empty stomach at the very moment in time when he sense the beginning or arrival of his trouble, bodily ailment and pain. On the next day and afterwards on the third day it should also be taken and used in the same way. On the first day it takes away all pain, however great it may be, and prevents swelling. On the second day it causes a sweat that is very inconstant, viscous and thick, that smells and tastes quite sour and offensive, and occurs mostly where the joints and limbs are attached. On the third day,

regardless of whether any medicine has been taken, a purging takes place of the veins into the bowels, without any inconvenience, pain or grief. And this demonstrates a great power of Nature.

#### AGAINST LEPROSY

To begin with the patient is given six drops on an empty stomach. And arrange it so that the unclean person is alone without the company of any healthy people, in a separate and convenient place. For his whole body will soon begin to smoke and steam with a stinking mist or vapor. And on the second day his skin will start to flake and much uncleanness will detach itself from his body. He should then have three more drops of the medicine ready, which he should take and use in solitude on the fourth day. Then on the eighth or ninth day, by means of this medicine and through the bestowal of Divine mercy and blessing, he will be completely cleansed and his health restored.

#### AGAINST APOPLEXIA OR STROKE

In the case of stroke, let a drop of the unadmixed tincture fall onto the tongue of the person in need. At once it will raise itself and distribute itself like a mist or smoke, and rectify and dissolve the struck part. But if the stroke has hit the body or other members, he should be given three drops at the same time in a glass of good wine, as previously taught in the case of Podagra.

#### AGAINST HYDROPE OR DROPSY

In the case of dropsy give one drop each day for six days in a row, in Aqua Melissa or Valeriana. On the seventh day give three drops in good wine. Then it is enough.

#### AGAINST EPILEPSIA, CATALEPSIA, & ANALEPSIA.

In case of the falling sickness, give him two drops at the beginning of the Paroxismi in Aqua Salviae, and after three hours again two drops. This will suffice. But if further symptoms should occur, then give him two more drops as above.

#### AGAINST HECTIC

In case of consumption and dehydration, give him two drops in Aqua Violarum the first day. On the second day, give him two more drops in good wine.

#### AGAINST FEVER

In cases of all kinds of hot fevers, give him three drops in a well distilled St. Johnswort water or Cichorii at the beginning of the Paroxismi. Early in the morning on the following day, again give him three drops in good wine on an empty stomach.

#### AGAINST PEST

In the case of pestilence give the patient seven drops in a good wine, and see to it that the infected person is all by himself, and caused to sweat. Then this poison will, with Divine assistance, do him no harm.

#### FOR THE PROLONGATION AND MAINTENANCE OF A HEALTHY LIFE.

Take and give at the beginning and entry of spring, when the sun has entered the sign of Aries, two drops; and at the beginning with God's help, be safe and protected against bad health and poisoned air, unless the incurred disease was predestined and fatally imposed upon man by the Almighty God.

But we now wish to proceed to the Oleum Antimonii and its Power, and show how this oil may also help the diseased and imperfect metallic bodies. Take in the Name of God, very pure refined gold, as much as you want and think will suffice. Dissolve it in a rectified Wine, prepared the way one usually makes Aquam Vitae. And after the gold has become dissolved, let it digest for a month. Then put it into a Balneum, and distill off the spiritum vini very slowly and gently. Repeat this several times, as long and as often until you see that your gold remains behind in fundo as a sap. And such is the manner and opinion of several of the ancients on how this oil may also help the diseased and imperfect metallic bodies.

Take, in the Name of God, very pure refined gold, as much as you want and think will suffice. Dissolve it in a rectified Wine, prepared the way one usually makes Aquam Vitae. And after the gold has become dissolved, let it digest for a month. Then put it into a Balneum, and distill off the spiritum vini very slowly and gently. Repeat this several times, as long and as often until you see that your gold remains behind in fundo as a sap. And such is the manner and opinion of several of

the ancients on how to prepare the gold. But I will show and teach you a much shorter, better and more useful way. Viz. that you instead of such prepared gold take one part Mercurii Solis, the preparation of which I have already taught in another place by its proper process. Draw off its airy water so that it becomes a subtle dust and calx. Then take two parts of our blessed oil, and pour the oil very slowly, drop by drop onto the dust of the Mercurii Solis, until everything has become absorbed. Put it in a vial, well sealed, into a heat of the first degree of the oven of secrets, and let it remain there for ten days and nights. You will then see your powder and oil quite dry, such that it has become a single piece of dust of a blackish grey colour. After ten days give it the second degree of heat, and the grey and black colour will slowly change into a whiteness so that it becomes more or less white. And at the end of these ten days, the matter will take on a beautiful rose white. But this may be ignored. For this colour is only due to the Mercurio Solis, that has swallowed up our blessed oil, and now covers it with the innermost part of its body. But by the power of the fire, our oil will again subdue such Mercurium Solis, and throw it into its innermost. And the oil with its very bright red colour will rule over it and remain on the outside. Therefore it is time, when twenty years (sic) have passed, that you open the window of the third degree [The alchemical ovens had small openings at different heights, by means of which the heat was regulated.] The external white colour and force will then completely recede inwardly, and the internal red colour will, by the force of the fire, become external. Keep also this degree of fire for ten days, without increase or decrease. You will then see your powder, that was previously white, now become very red. But for the time being this redness may be ignored (is of no consequence), for it is still unfixed and volatile; and at the end of these ten days, when the thirtieth day has passed, you should open the last window of the fourth degree of fire, Let it stay in this degree for another ten days, and this very bright red powder will begin to melt. Let it stay in flux for these ten days. And when you take it out you will find on the bottom a very bright red and transparent stone, ruby colored, melted into the shape of the vial. This stone may be used for Projection, as has been taught in the tract on Vitriol. Praise God in Eternity for this His high revelation, and thank Him in Eternity. Amen.

#### ON THE MULTIPLICATION LAPIDIS STIBII.

The ancient sages, after they had discovered this stone and prepared it to perfect power and translation of the imperfect metals to gold, long sought to discover a way to increase the power and efficiency of this stone. And they found two ways to multiply it: One is a multiplication of its power, such that the stone may be brought much further in its power of Transmutation. And this multiplication is very subtle, the description of which may be found in the Tract on Gold. The second multiplication is an Augmentum quantitatis of the stone with its former power, in such a way that it neither loses any of its power, nor gains any, but in such a manner that its weight increases and keeps on increasing ever more, so that a single ounce grows and increases to many ounces. To achieve this increase or Multiplication one has to proceed in the following manner: Take in the Name of God, your stone, and grind it to a subtle powder, and add as much Mercurii Solis as was taught before. Put these together into a round vial, seal with sigillo Hermetis, and put it into the former oven exactly as taught, except that the time has to be shorter and less now. For where you previously used ten (alii thirty) days, you may now not use more than four (alii ten) days. In other respects the work is exactly the same as before. Praise and thank God the Almighty for His high revelation, and diligently continue your prayers fir His Almighty Mercy and Divine blessings of this Work and Art as well as His granting you a good health and fortuitous welfare. And moreover, take care always to help and counsel the poor.

LAVS DEO OMNIPOTENTI

NOTA.

He who wishes to know more about Antiomonio may consult Fr. Basilii Valentini, Triumphal Chariot of Antimonii with comments by Theodor Kerckring, p. 15.

# Turba Philosophorum (part 1)

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## The Turba Philosophorum.

The Epistle of Arisleus, prefixed to the Words of the Sages, concerning the Purport of this Book, for the Benefit of Posterity, and the same being as here follows:-

Arisleus, begotten of Pythagoras, a disciple of the disciples by the grace of thrice great Hermes, learning from the seat of knowledge, unto all who come after wisheth health and mercy. I testify that my master, Pythagoras, the Italian, master of the wise and chief of the Prophets, had a greater gift of God and of Wisdom than was granted to any one after Hermes. Therefore he had a mind to assemble his disciples, who were now greatly increased, and had been constituted the chief persons throughout all regions for the discussion of this most precious Art, that their words might be a foundation for posterity. He then commanded Iximidrus, of highest council, to be the first speaker, who said:-

### The First Dictum.

Iximidrus saith:- I testify that the beginning of all things is a Certain Nature, which is perpetual, coequalling all things, and that the visible natures, with their births and decay, are times wherein the ends to which that nature brings them are beheld and summoned. Now, I instruct you that the stars are igneous, and are kept within bounds by the air. If the humidity and density of the air did not exist to separate the flames of the sun from living things, then the Sun would consume all creatures. But God has provided the separating air, lest that which He has created should be burnt up. Do you not: observe that the Sun when it rises in the heaven overcomes the air by its heat, and that the warmth penetrates from the upper to the lower parts of the air? If, then, the air did not presently breathe forth those winds whereby creatures are generated, the Sun by its heat would certainly destroy all that lives. But the Sun is kept in check by the air, which thus conquers because it unites the heat of the Sun to its own heat, and the humidity of water to its own humidity. Have you not remarked how tenuous water is drawn up into the air by the action of the heat of the Sun, which thus helps the water against itself? If the water did not nourish the air by such tenuous moisture, assuredly the Sun would overcome the air. The fire, therefore, extracts moisture from the water, by means of which the air conquers the fire itself. Thus, fire and water are enemies between which there is no consanguinity, for the fire is hot and dry, but the water is cold and moist. The air, which is warm and moist, joins these together by its concording medium; between the humidity of water and the heat of fire the air is thus placed to establish peace. rind look ye all how there shall arise a spirit from the tenuous vapour of the air, because the heat being joined to the humour, there necessarily issues something tenuous, which will become a wind. For the heat of the Sun extracts something tenuous out of the air, which also becomes spirit and life to all creatures. All this, however, is disposed in such manner by the will of God, and a coruscation appears when the heat of the Sun touches and breaks up a cloud.

The Turba saith:- Well hast thou described the fire, even as thou knowest concerning it, and thou hast believed the word of thy brother.

### The Second Dictum.

Exumedrus saith:- I do magnify the air according to the mighty speech of Iximidrus, for the work is improved thereby. The air is inspissated, and it is also made thin; it grows warm and becomes cold. The inspissation thereof takes place when it is divided in heaven by the elongation of the Sun; its rarefaction is when, by the exaltation of the Sun in heaven, the air becomes warm and is rarefied. It



is comparable with the complexion of Spring, in the distinction of time, which is neither warm nor cold. For according to the mutation of the constituted disposition with the altering distinctions of the soul, so is Winter altered. The air, therefore, is inspissated when the Sun is removed from it, and then cold supervenes upon men.

Whereat the Turba said:- Excellently hast thou described the air, and given account of what thou knowest to be therein.

### **The Third Dictum.**

Anaxagoras saith:- I make known that the beginning of all those things which God hath created is weight and proportion, for weight rules all things, and the weight and spissitude of the earth is manifest in proportion; but weight is not found except in body. And know, all ye Turba, that the spissitude of the four elements reposes in the earth; for the spissitude of fire falls into air, the spissitude of air, together with the spissitude received from the fire, falls into water; the spissitude also of water, increased by the spissitude of fire and air, reposes in earth. Have you not observed how the spissitude of the four elements is conjoined in earth! The same, therefore, is more inspissated than all.

Then saith the Turba:- Thou hast well spoken. Verily the earth is more inspissated than are the rest. Which, therefore, is the most rare of the four elements and is most worthy to possess the rarity of these four?

He answereth:- Fire is the most rare among all, and thereunto cometh what is rare of these four. But air is less rare than fire, because it is warm and moist, while fire is warm and dry; now that which is warm and dry is more rare than the warm and moist.

They say unto him:- The which element is of less rarity than air!

He answereth:- Water, since cold and moisture inhere therein, and every cold humid is of less rarity than a warm humid.

Then do they say unto him:- Thou hast spoken truly. What, therefore, is of less rarity than water?

He answereth:- Earth, because it is cold and dry, and that which is cold and dry is of less rarity than that which is cold and moist.

Pythagoras saith:- Well have ye provided, O Sons of the Doctrine, the description of these four natures, out of which God hath created all things. Blessed, therefore, is he who comprehends what ye have declared, for from the apex of the world he shall not find an intention greater than his own! Let us, therefore, make perfect our discourse.

They reply:- Direct every one to take up our speech in turn. Speak thou, O Pandolfus!

### **The Fourth Dictum.**

But Pandolfus saith:- I signify to posterity that air is a tenuous matter of water, and that it is not separated from it. It remains above the dry earth, to wit, the air hidden in the water, which is under the earth. If this air did not exist, the earth would not remain above the humid water.

They answer:- Thou hast said well; complete, therefore, thy speech.

But he continueth:- The air which is hidden in the water under the earth is that which sustains the earth, lest it should be plunged into the said water; and it, moreover, prevents the earth from being overflowed by that water. The province of the air is, therefore, to fill up and to make separation between diverse things, that is to say, water and earth, and it is constituted a peacemaker between hostile things, namely, water and fire, dividing these, lest they destroy one another.

The Turba saith:- If you gave an illustration hereof, it would be clearer to those who do not understand.

He answereth:- An egg is an illustration, for therein four things are conjoined; the visible cortex or shell represents the earth, and the albumen, for white part, is the water. But a very thin inner cortex is joined to the outer cortex, representing, as I have signified to you, the separating medium between earth and water, namely, that air which divides the earth from the water. The yolk also of the egg represents fire; the cortex which contains the yolk corresponds to that other air which separates the water from the fire. But they are both one and the same air, namely, that which separates things frigid, the earth from the water, and that which separates the water from the fire. But the lower air is thicker than the upper air, and the upper air is more rare and subtle, being nearer to the fire than the lower air. In the egg, therefore, are four things- earth, water, air, and fire. But the point of the Sun, these four excepted, is in the centre of the yolk, and this is the chicken. Consequently, all philosophers in this most excellent art have described the egg as an example, which same thing they have set over their work.

### **The Fifth Dictum.**

Arisleus saith:- Know that the earth is a hill and not a plain, for which reason the Sun does not ascend over all the zones of the earth in a single hour; but if it were flat, the sun would rise in a moment over the whole earth.

Parmenides saith:- Thou hast spoken briefly, O Arisleus!

He answereth: Is there anything the Master has left us which bears witness otherwise? Yet I testify that God is one, having never engendered or been begotten, and that the head of all things after Him is earth and fire, because fire is tenuous and light, and it rules all things on earth, but the earth, being ponderous and gross, sustains all things which are ruled by fire.

### **The Sixth Dictum.**

Lucas saith:- You speak only about four natures; and each one of you observes something concerning these. Now, I testify unto you that all things which God hath created are from these four natures, and the things which have been created out of them return into them, In these living creatures are generated and die, and all things take place as God hath predestinated.

Democritus, the disciple of Lucas, answereth:- Thou hast well spoken, O Lucas, when dealing with the four natures!

Then saith Arisleus:- O Democritus, since thy knowledge was derived from Lucas, it is presumption to speak among those who are well acquainted with thy master!

Lucas answereth:- albeit Democritus received from me the science of natural things, that knowledge was derived from the philosophers of the Indies and from the Babylonians; I think he surpasses those of his own age in this learning.

The Turba answereth:- When he attains to that age he will give no small satisfaction, but being in his youth he should keep silence.

### **The Seventh Dictum.**

Lucusta saith:- All those creatures which have been described by Lucas are two only, of which one is neither known nor expressed, except by piety, for it is not seen or felt.

Pythagoras saith:- Thou hast entered upon a subject which, if completed, thou wilt describe subtly. State, therefore, what is this thing which is neither felt, seen, nor known.

Then he:- It is that which is not known, because in this world it is discerned by reason without the clients thereof, which are sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch. O Crowd of the Philosophers, know you not that it is only sight which can distinguish white from black, and hearing only which can discriminate between a good and bad word! Similarly, a wholesome odour cannot be separated by reason from one which is fetid, except through the sense of smell, nor can sweetness be discriminated from bitterness save by means of taste, nor smooth from rough unless by touch.

The Turba answereth:- Thou hast well spoken, yet hast thou omitted to treat of that particular thing which is not known, or described, except by reason and piety.

Saith he:- Are ye then in such haste! Know that the creature which is cognised in none of these five ways is a sublime creature, and, as such, is neither seen nor felt, but is perceived by reason alone, of which reason Nature confesses that God is a partaker.

They answer:- Thou hast spoken truly and excellently.

And he:- I will now give a further explanation. Know that this creature, that is to say, the world, hath a light, which is the Sun, and the same is more subtle than all other natures, which light is so ordered that living beings may attain to vision. But if this subtle light were removed, they would become darkened, seeing nothing, except the light of the moon, or of the stars, or of fire, all which are derived from the light of the Sun, which causes all creatures to give light. For this God has appointed the Sun to be the light of the world, by reason of the attenuated nature of the Sun. And know that the sublime creature before mentioned has no need of the light of this Sun, because the Sun is beneath that creature, which is more subtle and more lucid. This light, which is more lucid than the light of the Sun, they have taken from the light of God, which is more subtle than their light. Know also that the created world is composed of two dense things and two rare things, but nothing of the dense is in the sublime creature. Consequently the Sun is rarer than all inferior creatures.

The Turba answereth:- Thou hast excellently described what thou hast related. And if, good Master, thou shalt utter anything whereby our hearts may be vivified, which now are mortified by folly, thou wilt confer upon us a great boon!

### **The Eighth Dictum.**

Pythagoras saith:- I affirm that God existed before all things, and with Him was nothing, as He was at first. But know, all ye Philosophers, that I declare this in order that I may fortify your opinion concerning these four elements and arcana, as well as in the sciences thereof, at which no one can arrive save by the will of God. Understand, that when God was alone, He created four things- fire, air, water, and earth, out of which things He afterwards created all others, both the sublime and the inferior, because He predestinated from the beginning that all creatures extracted from water should

multiply and increase, that they might dwell in the world and perform His judgments therein. Consequently, before all, He created the four elements, out of which He afterwards created what He willed, that is to say, diverse creatures, some of which were produced from a single element.

The Turba saith:- Which are these, O Master!

And he:- They are the angels, whom He created out of fire.

But the Turba:- Which, then, are created out of two?

And he:- Out of the elements of fire and air are the sun, moon, and stars composed. Hence the angels are more lucid than the sun, moon, and stars, because they are created from one substance, which is less dense than two, while the sun and the stars are created from a composition of fire and air.

The Turba saith:- And what concerning the creation of Heaven?

Then he:- God created the Heaven out of water and air, whence this is also composed of two, namely, the second of the rarer things, which is air, and the second of the denser things, which is water.

And they:- Master, continue thy discourse concerning these three, and rejoice our hearts with thy sayings, which are life to the dead.

But the other answereth:- I notify to you that God hath further made creatures out of three and out of four; out of three are created flying things, beasts, and vegetables; some of these are created out of water, air, and earth, some out of fire, air, and earth.

But the Turba saith:- Distinguish these divers creatures one from another.

And he:- Beasts are created out of fire, air, and earth; dying things out of fire, air, and water, because flying things, and all among vegetables which have a spirit, are created out of water, while all brute animals are from earth, air, and fire. Yet in vegetables there is no fire, for they are created out of earth, water, and air.

Whereat the Turba saith:- Let us assume that a fire, with your reverence's pardon, does reside in vegetables.

And he:- Ye have spoken the truth, and I affirm that they contain fire.

And they:- Whence is that fire?

He answereth:- Out of the heat of the air which is concealed therein; for I have signified that a thin fire is present in the air, but the elementary fire concerning which you were in doubt is not produced, except in things which have spirit and soul. But out of four elements our father Adam and his sons were created, that is, of fire, air, water, and likewise earth. Understand, all ye that are wise, how everything which God hath created out of one essence dies not until the Day of Judgment. The definition of death is the disjunction of the composite, but there is no disjunction of that which is simple, for it is one. Death consists in the separation of the soul from the body, because anything formed out of two, three, or four components must disintegrate, and this is death. Understand, further, that no complex substance which lacks fire eats, drinks, or sleeps, because in all things which have a spirit fire is that which eats.

The Turba answereth:- How is it, Master, that the angels, being created of fire, do not eat, seeing thou assertest that fire is that which eats!

And he: Hence ye doubt, each having his opinion, and ye are become opponents, but if ye truly knew the elements, ye would not deny these things. I agree with all whose judgment it is that simple fire eats not, but thick fire. The angels, therefore, are not created out of thick fire, but out of the thinnest of very thin fire; being created, then, of that which is most simple and exceedingly thin, they neither eat, drink, nor sleep.

And the Turba:- Master, our faculties are able to perceive, for by God's assistance we have exhausted thy sayings, but our faculties of hearing and of sight are unable to carry such great things. May God reward thee for the sake of thy disciples, since it is with the object of instructing future generations that thou hast summoned us together from our countries, the recompense of which thou wilt not fail to receive from the Judge to come.

Arisleus saith:- Seeing that thou hast gathered us together for the advantage of posterity, I think that no explanations will be more useful than definitions of those four elements which thou hast taught us to attain.

And he:- None of you are, I suppose, ignorant that all the Wise have propounded definitions in God.

The Turba answereth:- Should your disciples pass over anything, it becomes you, O Master, to avoid omissions for the sake of future generations.

And he:- If it please you, I will begin the disposition here, since envious men in their books have separated that, or otherwise I will put it at the end of the book.

Whereat the Turba saith:- Place it where you think it will be dearest for future generations.

And he:- I will place it where it will not be recognised by the foolish, nor ignored by the Sons of the Doctrine, for it is the key, the perfection and the end.

### **The Ninth Dictum.**

Eximenus saith:- God hath created all things by his word, having said unto them: Be, and they were made, with the four other elements, earth, water, air, and fire, which He coagulated, and things contrary were commingled, for we see that fire is hostile to water, water hostile to fire, and both are hostile to earth and air. Yet God hath united them peacefully, so that they love one another. Out of these four elements, therefore, are all things created- heaven and the throne thereof; the angels; the sun, moon, and stars; earth and sea, with all things that are in the sea, which indeed are various, and not alike, for their natures have been made diverse by God, and also the creatures. But the diversity is more than I have stated; each of these natures is of diverse nature, and by a legion of diversities is the nature of each diverse. Now this diversity subsists in all creatures, because they were created out of diverse elements. Had they been created out of one element, they would have been agreeing natures. But diverse elements being here mingled, they lose their own natures, because the dry being mixed with the humid and the cold combined with the hot, become neither cold nor hot; so also the humid being mixed with the dry becomes neither dry nor humid. But when the four elements are commingled, they agree, and thence proceed creatures which never attain to perfection, except they be left by night to putrefy and become visibly corrupt. God further completed his creation by means of increase, food, life, and government. Sons of the Doctrine, not without purpose have I described to you the disposition of these four elements, for in them is a secret arcanum; two of them are perceptible to the sense of touch and vision, and of these the operation

and virtue are well known. These are earth and water. But there are two other elements which are neither visible nor tangible, which yield naught, whereof the place is never seen, nor are their operations and force known, save in the former elements, namely, earth and water; now when the four elements are not commingled, no desire of men is accomplished. But being mixed, departing from their own natures, they become another thing. Over these let us meditate very carefully.

And the Turba:- Master, if you speak, we will give heed to Your words.

Then he:- I have now discoursed, and that well. I will speak only useful words which ye will follow as spoken. Know, all present, that no true tincture is made except from our copper. Do not therefore, exhaust your brains and your money, lest ye fill your hearts with sorrow. I will give you a fundamental axiom, that unless you turn the aforesaid copper into white, and make visible coins and then afterwards again turn it into redness, until a Tincture: results, verily, ye accomplish nothing. Burn therefore the copper, break it up, deprive it of its blackness by cooking, imbuing, and washing, until the same becomes white. Then rule it.

### **The Tenth Dictum.**

Arisleus saith:- Know that the key of this work is the art of Coins. Take, therefore, the body which I have shewn to you and reduce it to thin tablets. Next immerse the said tablets in the Water of our Sea, which is permanent Water, and, after it is covered, set it over a gentle fire until the tablets are melted and become waters or Etheliae, which are one and the same thing. Mix, cook, and simmer in a gentle fire until Brodium is produced, like to Saginatum. Then stir in its water of Etheliae until it be coagulated, and the coins become variegated, which we call the Flower of Salt. Cook it, therefore, until it be deprived of blackness, and the whiteness appear. Then rub it, mix with the Gum of Gold, and cook until it becomes red Etheliae. Use patience in pounding lest you become weary. Imbue the Ethelia with its own water, which has preceded from it, which also is Permanent Water, until the same becomes red. This, then, is Burnt Copper, which is the Leaven of Gold and the Flower thereof. Cook the same with Permanent Water, which is always with it, until the water be dried up. Continue the operation until all the water is consumed, and it becomes a most subtle powder.

### **The Eleventh Dictum.**

Parmenides saith:- Ye must know that envious men have dealt voluminously with several waters, brodiums, stones, and metals, seeking to deceive all you who aspire after knowledge. Leave, therefore, all these, and make the white red, out of this our copper, taking copper and lead, letting these stand for the grease, or blackness, and tin for the liquefaction. Know ye, further, that unless ye rule the Nature of Truth, and harmonize well together its complexions and compositions, the consanguineous with the consanguineous, and the first with the first, ye act improperly and effect nothing, because natures will meet their natures, follow them, and rejoice. For in them they putrefy and are generated, because Nature is ruled by Nature, which destroys it, turns it into dust, reduces to nothing, and finally herself renews it, repeats, and frequently produces the same. Therefore look in books, that ye may know the Nature of Truth, what putrefies it and what renews, what savour it possesses, what neighbours it naturally has, and how they love each other, how also after love enmity and corruption intervene, and how these natures should be united one to another and made at peace, until they become gentle in the fire in similar fashion. Having, therefore, noticed the facts in this Art, set your hands to the work. If indeed, ye know not the Natures of Truth, do not approach the work, since there will follow nothing but harm, disaster, and sadness. Consider, therefore, the teaching of the Wise, how they have declared the whole work in this saying:- Nature rejoices in Nature, and Nature contains Nature. In these words there is shewn forth unto you the whole work. Leave, therefore, manifold and superfluous things, and take quicksilver, coagulate in the body of Magnesia, in Kuhul, or in Sulphur which does not burn; make the same nature white, and place it

upon our Copper, when it becomes white. And if ye cook still more, it becomes red, when if ye proceed to coction, it becomes gold. I tell you that it turns the sea itself into red and the colour of gold. Know ye also that gold is not turned into redness save by Permanent Water, because Nature rejoices in Nature.: Reduce, therefore, the same by means of cooking into a humour, until the hidden nature appear. If, therefore, it be manifested externally, seven times imbue the same with water, cooking, imbuing, and washing, until it become red. O those celestial natures, multiplying the natures of truth by the will of God! O that potent Nature, which overcame and conquered natures, and caused its natures to rejoice and be glad! This, therefore, is that special and spiritual nature to which the God thereof can give what fire cannot. Consequently, we glorify and magnify that [species], than which nothing is more precious in the true tincture, or the like in the smallest degree to be found. This is that truth which those investigating wisdom love. For when it is liquefied with bodies, the highest operation is effected. If ye knew the truth, what great thanks ye would give me! Learn, therefore, that while you are tingeing the cinders, you must destroy those that are mixed. For it overcomes those which are mixed, and changes them to its own colour. And as it visibly overcame the surface, even so it mastered the interior. And if one be volatile but the other endure the fire, either joined to the other endures the fire. Know also, that if the vapours have whitened the surfaces, they will certainly whiten the interiors. Know further, all ye seekers after Wisdom, that one matter overcomes four, and our Sulphur alone consumes all things.

The Turba answereth: Thou hast spoken excellently well, O Parmenides, but thou hast not demonstrated the disposition of the smoke to posterity, nor how the same is whitened!

### **The Twelfth Dictum.**

Lucas saith: I will speak at this time, following the steps of the ancients. Know, therefore, all ye seekers after Wisdom, that this treatise is not from the beginning of the ruling! Take quicksilver, which is from the male, and coagulate according to custom. Observe that I am speaking to you in accordance with custom, because it has been already coagulated. Here, therefore, is not the beginning of the ruling, but I prescribe this method, namely, that you shall take the quicksilver from the male, and shall either impose upon iron, tin, or governed copper, and it will be whitened. White Magnesia is made in the same way, and the male is converted with it. But forasmuch as there is a certain affinity between the magnet and the iron, therefore our nature rejoices.) Take, then, the vapour which the Ancients commanded you to take, and cook the same with its own body until tin is produced. Wash away its blackness according to custom, and cleanse and roast at an equable fire until it be whitened. But every body is whitened with governed quicksilver, for Nature converts Nature. Take, therefore, Magnesia, Water of Alum, Water of Nitre, Water of the Sea, and Water of Iron; whiten with smoke.: Whatsoever ye desire to be whitened is whitened with this smoke, because it is itself white, and whitens all things. Mix, therefore, the said smoke with its faeces until it be coagulated and become excessively white. Roast this white copper till it germinates of itself, since the Magnesia when whitened does not suffer the spirits to escape, or the shadow of copper to appear, because Nature contains Nature. Take, therefore, all ye Sons of the Doctrine, the white sulphureous nature, whiten with salt and dew, or with the Flower of White Salt, until it become excessively white. And know ye, that the Flower of White Salt is Ether from Ethelia. The same must be boiled for seven days, till it shall become like gleaming marble, for when it has reached this condition it is a very great Arcanum, seeing that Sulphur is mixed with Sulphur, whence an excellent work is accomplished, by reason of the affinity between them, because natures rejoice in meeting their own natures. Take, therefore, Mardek and whiten the same with Gadenbe, that is, wine and vinegar, and Permanent Water. Roast and coagulate until the whole does not liquefy in a fire stronger than its own, namely, the former fire. Cover the mouth of the vessel securely, but let it be associated with its neighbour, that it may kindle the whiteness thereof, and beware lest the fire blaze up, for in this case it becomes red prematurely, and this will profit you nothing, because in the beginning of the ruling you require the white. Afterwards coagulate the same until you attain the red.

Let your fire be gentle in the whitening, until coagulation take place. Know that when it is coagulated we call it the Soul, and it is more quickly converted from nature into nature. This, therefore, is sufficient for those who deal with the Art of Coins, because one thing makes it but many operate therein. For ye need not a number of things, but one thing only, which in each and every grade of your work is changed into another nature.

The Turba saith: Master, if you speak as the Wise have spoken, and that briefly, they will follow you who do not wish to be wholly shut in with darkness.

### **The Thirteenth Dictum.**

Pythagoras saith:- We posit another government which is not from another root, but it differs in name. And know, all ye seekers after this Science and Wisdom, that whatsoever the envious may have enjoined in their books concerning the composition of natures which agree together, in savour there is only one, albeit to sight they are as diverse as possible. Know, also, that the thing which they have described in so many ways follows and attains its companion without fire, even as the magnet follows the iron, to which the said thing is not vainly compared, nor to a seed, nor to a matrix, for it is also like unto these. And this same thing, which follows its companion without fire, causes many colours to appear when embracing it, for this reason, that the said one thing enters into every regimen, and is found everywhere, being a stone, and also not a stone; common and precious; hidden and concealed, yet known by everyone; of one name and of many names, which is the Spume of the Moon. This stone, therefore, is not a stone, because it is more precious; without it Nature never operates anything; its name is one, yet we have called it by many names on account of the excellence of its nature.

The Turba answereth:- O! Master! wilt thou not mention some of those names for the guidance of seekers?

And he:- It is called White Ethelia, White Copper, and that which flies from the fire and alone whitens copper. Break up, therefore, the White Stone, and afterwards coagulate it with milk. Then pound the calx in the mortar, taking care that the humidity does not escape from the vessel; but coagulate it in the vessel until it shall become a cinder. Cook also with Spume of Luna and regulate. For ye shall find the stone broken, and already imbued with its own water. This, therefore, is the stone which we call by all names, which assimilates the work and drinks it, and is the stone out of which also all colours appear. Take, therefore, that same gum, which is from the scoriae, and mix with cinder of calx, which you have ruled, and with the faeces which you know, moistening with permanent water. Then look and see whether it has become a powder, but if not, roast in a fire stronger than the first fire, until it be pounded. Then imbue with permanent water, and the more the colours vary all the more suffer them to be heated. Know, moreover, that if you take white quicksilver, or the Spume of Luna, and do as ye are bidden, breaking up with a gentle fire, the same is coagulated, and becomes a stone. Out of this stone, therefore, when it is broken up, many colours will appear to you. But herein, if any ambiguity occur to you in our discourse, do as ye are bidden, ruling the same until a white and coruscating stone shall be produced, and so ye find your purpose.

### **The Fourteenth Dictum.**

Acsubofen saith:- Master, thou hast spoken without envy, even as became thee, and for the same may God reward thee!

Pythagoras saith:- May God also deliver thee, Acsubofen, from envy!



Then he:- Ye must know, O Assembly of the Wise, that sulphurs are contained in sulphurs, and humidity in humidity.

The Turba answereth:- The envious, O Acsubofen, have uttered something like unto this! Tell us, therefore, what is this humidity?

And he:- Humidity is a venom, and when venom penetrates a body, it tinges it with an invariable colour, and in no wise permits the soul to be separated from the body, because it is equal thereto. Concerning this, the envious have said: When one flies and the other pursues, then one seizes upon the other, and afterwards they no longer flee, because Nature has laid hold of its equal, after the manner of an enemy, and they destroy one another. For this reason, out of the sulphureous mixed sulphur is produced a most precious colour, which varies not, nor flees from the fire, when the soul enters into the interior of the body and holds the body together and tinges it. I will repeat my words in Tyrian dye. Take the Animal which is called Kenckel, since all its water is a Tyrian colour, and rule the same with a gentle fire, as is customary, until it shall become earth, in which there will be a little colour. But if you wish to obtain the Tyrian tincture, take the humidity which that thing has ejected, and place it therewith gradually in a vessel, adding that tincture whereof the colour was disagreeable to you. Then cook with that same marine water until it shall become dry. Afterwards moisten with that humour, dry gradually, and cease not to imbue it, to cook, and to dry, until it be imbued with all its humour. Then leave it for several days in its own vessel, Until the most precious Tyrian colour shall come out from it to the surface. Observe how I describe the regimen to you! Prepare it with the urine of boys, with water of the sea, and with permanent clean water, so that it may be tinged, and decoct with a gentle fire, until the blackness altogether shall depart from it, and it be easily pounded. Decoct, therefore, in its own humour until it clothe itself with a red colour. But if ye wish to bring it to the Tyrian colour, imbue the same with continual water, and mix, as ye know to be sufficient, according to the rule of sight; mix the same with permanent water sufficiently, and decoct until rust absorb the water. Then wash with the water of the sea which thou hast prepared, which is water of desiccated calx; cook until it imbibe its own moisture; and do this day by day. I tell you that a colour will thence appear to you the like of which the Tyrians have never made. And if ye wish that it should be a still more exalted colour, place the gum in the permanent water, with which ye shall dye it alternately, and afterwards desiccate in the sun. Then restore to the aforesaid water and the black Tyrian colour is intensified. But know that ye do not tinge the purple colour except by cold. Take, therefore, water which is of the nature of cold, and steep wool therein until it extract the force of the tincture from the water. Know also that the Philosophers have called the force which proceeds from that water the Flower. Seek, therefore, your intent in the said water; therein place what is in the vessel for days and nights, until it be clothed with a most precious Tyrian colour.

### **The Fifteenth Dictum.**

Frictes saith:- O all ye seekers after Wisdom, know that the foundation of this Art, on account of which many have perished, is one only. There is one thing which is stronger than all natures, and more sublime in the opinion of philosophers, whereas with fools it is more common than anything. But for us it is a thing which we reverence. Woe unto all ye fools! How ignorant are ye of this Art, for which ye would die if ye knew it! I swear to you that if kings were familiar with it, none of us would ever attain this thing. O how this nature changeth body into spirit! O how admirable is Nature, how she presides over all, and overcomes all!

Pythagoras saith:- Name this Nature, O Frictes!

And he:- It is a very sharp vinegar, which makes gold into sheer spirit, without which vinegar, neither whiteness, nor blackness, nor redness, nor rust can be made. And know ye that when it is

mixed with the body, it is contained therein, and becomes one therewith; it turns the same into a spirit, and tinges with a spiritual and invariable tincture, which is indelible. Know, also, that if ye place the body over the fire without vinegar, it will be burnt and corrupted. And know, further, that the first humour is cold. Be careful, therefore, of the fire, which is inimical to cold. Accordingly, the Wise have said: "Rule gently until the sulphur becomes incombustible." The Wise men have already shewn to those who possess reason the disposition of this Art, and the best point of their Art, which they mentioned, is, that a little of this sulphur burns a strong body. Accordingly they venerate it and name it in the beginning of their book, and the son of Adam thus described it. For this vinegar burns the body, converts it into a cinder, and also whitens the body, which, if ye cook well and deprive of blackness, is changed into a stone, so that it becomes a coin of most intense whiteness. Cook, therefore, the stone until it be disintegrated, and then dissolve and temper with water of the sea. Know also, that the beginning of the whole work is the whitening, to which succeeds the redness, finally the perfection of the work; but after this, by means of vinegar, and by the will of Gcd, there follows a complete perfection, Now, I have shewn to you, O disciples of this Turba, the disposition of the one thing, which is more perfect, more precious, and more honourable, than all natures, and I swear to you by God that I have searched for a long time in books so that I might arrive at the knowledge of this one thing, while I prayed also to God that he would teach me what it is. My prayer was heard, He shewed me clean water, whereby I knew pure vinegar, and the more I did read books, the more was I illuminated.

### **The Sixteenth Dictum.**

Socrates saith:- Know, O crowd of those that still remain of the Sons of the Doctrine, that no tincture can be produced without Lead, which possesses the required virtue. Have ye not seen how thrice-great Hermes infused the red into the body, and it was changed into an invariable colour? Know, therefore, that the first virtue is vinegar, and the second is the Lead of which the Wise have spoken, which if it be infused into all bodies, renders all unchangeable, and tinges them with an invariable colour. Take, therefore, Lead which is made out of the stone called Kuhul; let it be of the best quality, and let it be cooked till it becomes black. Then pound the same with Water of Nitre until it is thick like grease, and cook again in a very bright fire until the spissitude of the body is destroyed, the water being rejected. Kindle, therefore, above it until the stone becomes clean, abounding in precious metal, and exceedingly white. Pound it afterwards with dew and the sun, and with sea and rain water for 31 days, for 10 days with salt water, and 10 days with fresh water, when ye shall find the same like to a metallic stone. Cook the same once more with water of nitre until it become tin by liquefaction. Again cook until it be deprived of moisture, and become dry. But know that when it becomes dry it drinks up what remains of its humour swiftly, because it is burnt lead. Take care, however, lest it be burnt. Thus we call it incombustible sulphur. Pound the same with the sharpest vinegar, and cook till it becomes thick, taking care lest the vinegar be changed into smoke and perish; continue this coction for 150 days. Now, therefore, I have demonstrated the disposition of the white lead, all which afterwards follows being no more than women's work and child's play. Know, also, that the arcanum of the work of gold proceeds out of the male and the female, but I have shewn you the male in the lead, while, in like manner, I have discovered for you the female in orpiment. Mix, therefore, the orpiment with the lead, for the female rejoices in receiving the strength of the male, because she is assisted by the male. But the male receives a tingeing spirit from the female. Mix them, therefore, together, place in a glass vessel, and pound with Ethelia and very sharp vinegar; cook for seven days, taking care lest the arcanum smoke away, and leave throughout the night. But if ye wish it to put on mud (colour), seeing that it is already dry, again imbue with vinegar. Now, therefore, I have notified to you the power of orpiment, which is the woman by whom is accomplished the most great arcanum. Do not shew these unto the evil, for they will laugh. It is the Ethelia of vinegar which is placed in the preparation, by which things God perfects the work, whereby also spirits take possession of bodies, and they become spiritual.

### **The Seventeenth Dictum.**

Zimon saith:- O Turba of Philosophers and disciples, now hast thou spoken about making into white, but it yet remains to treat concerning the reddening! Know, all ye seekers after this Art, that unless ye whiten, ye cannot make red, because the two natures are nothing other than red and white. Whiten, therefore, the red, and redden the white! Know, also, that the year is divided into four seasons; the first season is of a frigid complexion, and this is Winter; the second is of the complexion of air, and this is Spring; then follows the third, which is summer, and is of the complexion of fire; lastly, there is the fourth, wherein fruits are matured, which is Autumn. In this manner, therefore, ye are to rule your natures, namely, to dissolve ill winter, to cook in spring, to coagulate in summer, and to gather and tinge the fruit in autumn. Having, therefore, given this example, rule the tingeing natures, but if ye err, blame no one save yourselves.

The Turba answereth:- Thou hast treated the matter extremely well; add, therefore, another teaching of this kind for the sake of posterity.

And he:- I will speak of making lead red. Take the copper which the Master ordered you to take at the beginning of his book, combine lead therewith, and cook it until it becomes thick; congeal also and desiccate until it becomes red. Here certainly is the Red Lead of which the wise spake; copper and lead become a precious stone; mix them equally, let gold be roasted with them, for this, if ye rule well, becomes a tingeing spirit in spirits. So when the male and the female are conjoined there is not produced a volatile wife, but a spiritual composite. From the composite turned into a red spirit is produced the beginning of the world. Behold this is the lead which we have called Red Lead, which is of our work, and without which nothing is effected!

### **The Eighteenth Dictum.**

Mundus saith to the Turba:- The seekers after this Art must know that the Philosophers in their books have described gum in many ways, but it is none other than permanent water, out of which our precious stone is generated. O how many are the seekers after this gum, and how few there are who find it! Know that this gum is not ameliorated except by gold alone. For there be very many who investigate these applications, and they find certain things, yet they cannot sustain the labours because they are diminished. But the applications which are made out of the gum and out of the honourable stone, which has already held the tincture, they sustain the labours, and are never diminished. Understand, therefore, my words, for I will explain unto you the applications of this gum, and the arcanum existing therein. Know ye that our gum is stronger than gold, and all those who know it do hold it more honourable than gold, yet gold we also honour, for without it the gum cannot be improved. Our gum, therefore, is for Philosophers more precious and more sublime than pearls, because out of gum with a little gold we buy much. Consequently, the Philosophers, when committing these things to writing that the same might not perish, have not set forth in their books the manifest disposition, lest every one should become acquainted therewith, and having become familiar to fools, the same would not sell it at a small price. Take, therefore, one part of the most intense white gum; one part of the urine of a white calf; one part of the gall of a fish; and one part of the body of gum, without which it cannot be improved; mix these portions and cook for forty days. When these things have been done, congeal by the heat of the sun till they are dried. Then cook the same, mixed with milk of ferment, until the milk fail; afterwards extract it, and until it become dry evaporate the moisture by heat. Then mix it with milk of the fig, and cook it till that moisture be dried up in the composite, which afterwards mix with milk of the root of grass, and again cook until it be dry. Then moisten it with rainwater, then sprinkle with water of dew, and cook until it be dried. Also imbue with permanent water, and desiccate until it become of the most intense dryness. Having done these things: mix the same with the gum which is equipped with all manner of colours, and cook strongly until the whole force of the water perish; and the entire body be deprived of its

humidity, while ye imbue the same by cooking, until the dryness thereof be kindled. Then dismiss for forty days. Let it remain in that trituration or decocting until the spirit penetrate the body. For by this regimen the spirit is made corporeal, and the body is changed into a spirit. Observe the vessel, therefore, lest the composition fly and pass off in fumes. These things being accomplished, open the vessel, and ye will find that which ye purposed. This, therefore, is the arcanum of gum, which the Philosophers have concealed in their books.

### **The Nineteenth Dictum.**

Dardaris saith:- It is common knowledge that the Masters before us have described Permanent Water. Now, it behoves one who is introduced to this Art to attempt nothing till he is familiar with the power of this Permanent Water, and in commixture, contrition, and the whole regimen, it behoves us to use invariably this famous Permanent Water. He, therefore, who does not understand Permanent Water, and its indispensable regimen, may not enter into this Art, because nothing is effected without the Permanent Water. The force thereof is a spiritual blood, whence the Philosophers have called it Permanent Water, for, having pounded it with the body, as the Masters before me have explained to you, by the will of God it turns that body into spirit. For these, being mixed together and reduced to one, transform each other; the body incorporates the spirit, and the spirit incorporates the body into tinged spirit, like blood. And know ye, that whatsoever hath spirit the same hath blood also as well. Remember, therefore, this arcanum!

### **The Twentieth Dictum.**

Belus saith:- O disciples, ye have discoursed excellently!

Pythagoras answers:- Seeing that they are philosophers, O Belus, why hast thou called them disciples?

He answereth:- It is in honour of their Master, lest I should make them equal with him.

Then Pythagoras saith:- Those who, in conjunction with us, have composed this book which is called the Turba, ought not to be termed disciples.

Then he:- Master, they have frequently described Permanent Water, and the making of the White and the Red in many ways, albeit under many names; but in the modes after which they have conjoined weights, compositions, and regimens, they agree with the hidden truth. Behold, what is said concerning this despised thing! A report has gone abroad that the Hidden Glory of the Philosophers is a stone and not a stone, and that it is called by many names, lest the foolish should recognise it, Certain wise men have designated it after one fashion, namely, according to the place where it is generated; others have adopted another, founded upon its colour, some of whom have termed it the Green Stone; by other some it is called the Stone of the most intense Spirit of Brass, not to be mixed with bodies; by yet others its description has been further varied, because it is sold for coins by lapidaries who are called saven; some have named it Spume of Luna; some have distinguished it astronomically or arithmetically; it has already received a thousand titles, of which the best is: "That which is produced out of metals." So also others have called it the Heart of the Sun, and yet others have declared it to be that which is brought forth out of quicksilver with the milk of volatile things.

### **The Twenty-first Dictum.**

Pandolfus saith:- O Belus, thou hast said so much concerning the despised stone that thou hast left nothing to be added by thy brethren! Howsoever, I teach posterity that this despised stone is a

permanent water, and know, all ye seekers after Wisdom, that permanent water is water of mundane life, because, verily, Philosophers have stated that Nature rejoices in Nature, Nature contains Nature, and Nature overcomes Nature. The Philosophers have constituted this short dictum the principle of the work for reasonable persons. And know ye that no body is more precious or purer than the Sun, and that no tingeing venom: is generated without the Sun and its shadow. He, therefore, who attempts to make the venom of the Philosophers without these, already errs, and has fallen into that pit wherein his sadness remains. But he who has tinged the venom of the wise out of the Sun and its shadow has arrived at the highest Arcanum. Know also that our coin when it becomes red, is called gold; he, therefore, who knows the hidden Cambar of the Philosophers, to him is the Arcanum already revealed.

The Turba answereth:- Thou hast even now intelligibly described this stone, yet thou hast not narrated its regimen nor its composition. Return, therefore, to the description.

He saith:- I direct you to take an occult and honourable arcanum, which is White Magnesia, and the same is mixed and pounded with wine, but take care not to make use of this except it be pure and clean; finally place it in its vessel, and pray God that He may grant you the sight of this very great stone. Then cook gradually, and, extracting, see if it has become a black stone, in which case ye have ruled excellently well. But rule it thus for the white, which is a great arcanum, until it becomes Kuhul, closed up with blackness, which blackness see that it does not remain longer than forty days. Pound the same, therefore, with its confections, which are the said flower of copper, gold of the Indies whose root is one, and a certain extract of an unguent, that is, of a crocus, that is, fixed exalted alum; cook the four, therefore, permanently for 40 or 42 days. After these days God will show you the principle(or beginning) of this stone, which is the stone Atitos, of which favoured sight of God there are many accounts. Cook strongly, and imbue with the gum that remains. And know ye that so often as ye imbue the cinder, so often must it be desiccated and again humectated, until its colour turns into that which ye desire. Now, therefore, will I complete that which I have begun, if God will look kindly on us. Know also that the perfection of the work of this precious stone is to rule it with the residue of the third part of the medicine, and to preserve the two other parts for imbuing and cooking alternately till the required colour appears. Let the fire be more intense than the former; let the matter be cerated, and when it is desiccated it coheres. Cook, therefore, the wax until it imbibes the gluten of gold, which being desiccated, imbue the rest of the work seven times until the other two thirds be finished, and true earth imbibe them all. Finally, place the same on a hot fire until the earth extract its flower and be satisfactory. Blessed are ye if ye understand! But, if not, I will repeat to you the perfection of the work. Take the clean white, which is a most great arcanum, wherein is the true tincture; imbue sand therewith, which sand is made out of the stone seven times imbued, until it drink up the whole, and close the mouth of the vessel effectually, as you have often been told. For that which ye seek of it by the favour of God, will appear to you, which is the stone of Tyrian colour. Now, therefore, I have fulfilled the truth, so do I conjure you by God and your sure Master, that you show not this great arcanum, and beware of the wicked!

### **The Twenty-Second Dictum.**

Theophilus saith: Thou hast spoken intelligently and elegantly, and art held free from envy.

Saith the Turba:- Let your discretion, therefore, explain to us what the instructing Pandolfus has stated, and be not envious.

Then he:- O all ye seekers after this science, the arcanum of gold and the art of the coin is a dark vestment, and no one knows what the Philosophers have narrated in their books without frequent reading, experiments, and questionings of the Wise. For that which they have concealed is more

sublime and obscure than it is possible to make known in words, and albeit some have dealt with it intelligibly and well, certain others have treated it obscurely; thus some are more lucid than others.

The Turba answereth: Thou hast truly spoken.

And he:- I announce to posterity that between boritis and copper there is an affinity, because the boritis of the Wise liquefies; the copper, and it changes as a fluxible water. Divide, therefore, the venom into two equal parts, with one of which liquefy the copper, but preserve the other to Pound and imbue the same, until it is drawn out into plates; cook again with the former part of the venom, cook two to seven in two; cook to seven in its own water for 42 days; finally, open the vessel, and ye shall find copper turned into quicksilver; wash the same by cooking until it be deprived of its blackness, and become as copper without a shadow. Lastly, cook it continuously until it be congealed. For when it is congealed it becomes a very great arcanum. Accordingly, the Philosophers have called this stone Boritis; cook, therefore, that coagulated stone until it becomes a matter like mucra. Then imbue it with the Permanent water which I directed you to reserve, that is to say, with the other portion, and cook it many times until its colours manifest. This, therefore, is the very great putrefaction which extracts (or contains in itself) the very great arcanum.

Saith the Turba:- Return to thine exposition, O Theophilus!

And he:- It is to be known that the same affinity which exists between the magnet and iron, also exists assuredly between copper and permanent water. If, therefore, ye rule copper and permanent water as I have directed, there will thence result the very great arcanum in the following fashion. Take white Magnesia and quicksilver, mix with the male, and pound strongly by cooking, not with the hands, until the water become thin. But dividing this water into two parts, in the one part of the water cook it for eleven, otherwise, forty days, until there be a white flower, as the flower of salt in its splendour and coruscation: but strongly close the mouth of the vessel, and cook for forty days, when ye will find it water whiter than milk; deprive it of all blackness by cooking; continue the cooking until its whole nature be disintegrated, until the defilement perish, until it be found clean, and is wholly broken up (or becomes wholly clean). But if ye wish that the whole arcanum, which I have given you, be accomplished, wash the same with water, that is to say, the other part which I counselled you to preserve, until there appear a crocus, and leave in its own vessel. For the Iksir pounds (or contains) itself; imbue also with the residue of the water, until by decoction and by water it be pounded and become like a syrup of pomegranates; imbue it, therefore, and cook, until the weight of the humidity shall fail, and the colour which the Philosophers have magnified shall truly appear.

### **The Twenty-third Dictum.**

Cerus saith:- Understand, all ye Sons of the Doctrine, that which Theophilus hath told you, namely, that there exists an affinity between the magnet and the iron, by the alliance of composite existing between the magnet and the iron, while the copper is fitly ruled for one hundred days: what statement can be more useful to you than that there is no affinity between tin and quicksilver!

The Turba answereth:- Thou hast ill spoken, having disparaged the true disposition.

And he:- I testify that I say nothing but what is true why are you incensed against me Fear the Lord, all ye Turba, that you Master may believe you!

The Turba answereth:- Say what you will.

And he:- I direct you to take quicksilver, in which is the male potency or strength; cook the same with its body until it becomes a fluxible water; cook the masculine together with the vapour, until each shall be coagulated and become a stone. Then take the water which you had divided into two parts, of which one is for liquefying and cooking the body, but the second is for cleansing that which is already burnt, and its companion, which [two] are made one. Imbue the stone seven times, and cleanse, until it be disintegrated, and its body be purged from all defilement, and become earth. Know also that in the time of forty-two days the whole is changed into earth; by cooking, therefore, liquefy the same until it become as true water, which is quicksilver. Then wash with water of nitre until it become as a liquefied coin. Then cook until it be congealed and become like to tin, when it is a most great arcanum; that is to say, the stone which is out of two things. Rule the same by cooking and pounding, until it becomes a most excellent crocus. Know also that unto water desiccated with its companion we have given the name of crocus. Cook it, therefore, and imbue with the residual water reserved by you until you attain your purpose.

### **The Twenty-fourth Dictum.**

Bocascus saith:- Thou hast spoken well, O Belus, and therefore I follow thy steps!

He answereth:- As it may please you, but do not become envious, for that is not the part of the Wise.

And Bocascus:- Thou speakest the truth, and thus, therefore, I direct the Sons of the Doctrine. Take lead, and, as the Philosophers have ordained, imbue, liquefy, and afterwards congeal, until a stone is produced; then rule the stone with gluten of gold and syrup of pomegranates until it be broken up. But you have already divided the water into two parts, with one of which you have liquefied the lead, and it has become as water; cook, therefore, the same until it be dried and have become earth; then pound with the water reserved until it acquire a red colour, as you have been frequently ordered.

The Turba answereth:- Thou hast done nothing but pile up ambiguous words. Return, therefore, to the subject.

And he:- Ye who wish to coagulate quicksilver, must mix it with its equal. Afterwards cook it diligently until both become permanent water, and, again, cook this water until it be coagulated. But let this be desiccated with its own equal vapour, because ye have found the whole quicksilver to be coagulated by itself. If ye understand, and place in your vessel what is necessary, cook it until it be coagulated, and then pound until it becomes a crocus like to the colour of gold.

### **The Twenty-fifth Dictum.**

Menabdus saith:- May God reward thee for the regimen, since thou speakest the truth! For thou hast illuminated thy words.

And they:- It is said because thou praisest him for his sayings, do not be inferior to him.

And he:- I know that I can utter nothing but that which he hath uttered; however, I counsel posterity to make bodies not bodies, but these incorporeal things bodies. For by this regimen the composite is prepared, and the hidden part of its nature is extracted. With these bodies accordingly join quicksilver and the body of Magnesia, the woman also with the man, and by means of this there is extracted our secret Ethelia, through which bodies are coloured; assuredly, if I understand this regimen, bodies become not bodies, and incorporeal things become bodies. If ye diligently pound the things in the fire and digest (or join to) the Ethelias, they become clean and fixed things. And know ye that quicksilver is a fire burning the bodies, mortifying and breaking up, with one regimen,

and the more it is mixed and pounded with the body, the more the body is disintegrated, while the quicksilver is attenuated and becomes living. For when ye shall diligently pound fiery quicksilver and cook it as required, ye will possess Ethel, a fixed nature and colour, subject to every tincture, which also overcomes, breaks, and constrains the fire. For this reason it does not colour things unless it be coloured, and being coloured it colours. And know that no body can tinge itself unless its spirit be extracted from the secret belly thereof, when it becomes a body and soul without the spirit, which is a spiritual tincture, out of which colours have manifested, seeing that a dense thing does not tinge a tenuous, but a tenuous nature colours that which enters into a body. When, however, ye have ruled the body of copper, and have extracted from it a most tenuous (subject), then the latter is changed into a tincture by which it is coloured. Hence has the wise man said, that copper does not tinge unless first it be tinged. And know that those four bodies which you are directed to rule are this copper, and that the tinctures which I have signified unto you are the condensed and the humid, but the condensed is a conjoined vapour, and the humid is the water of sulphur, for sulphurs are contained by sulphurs, and rightly by these things Nature rejoices in Nature, and overcomes, and constrains.



## Turba Philosophorum (part 2)

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### The Twenty-Sixth Dictum.

Zenon saith:- I perceive that you, O crowd of the Wise, have conjoined two bodies, which your Master by no means ordered you to do!

The Turba answereth:- Inform us according to your own opinion, O Zenon, in this matter, and beware of envy! Then he:- Know that the colours which shall appear to you out of it are these. Know, O Sons of the Doctrine, that it behoves you to allow the composition to putrefy for forty days, and then to sublimate five times in a vessel. Next join to a fire of dung, and cook, when these colours shall appear to you: On the first day black citrine, on the second black red, on the third like unto a dry crocus, finally, the purple colour will appear to you; the ferment and the coin of the vulgar shall be imposed; then is the Ixir composed out of the humid and the dry, and then it tinges with an invariable tincture. Know also that it is called a body wherein there is gold. But when ye are composing the Ixir, beware lest you extract the same hastily, for it lingers. Extract, therefore, the same as an Ixir. For this venom is, as it were, birth and life, because it is a soul extracted out of many things, and imposed upon coins: its tincture, therefore, is life to those things with which it is joined, from which it removes evil, but it is death to the bodies from which it is extracted. Accordingly, the Masters have said that between them there exists the same desire as between male and female, and if any one, being introduced to this Art, should know these natures, he would sustain the tediousness of cooking until he gained his purpose according to the will of God.

### The Twenty-Seventh Dictum.

Gregorius saith:- O all ye Turba, it is to be observed that the envious have called the venerable stone Efflucidinus, and they have ordered it to be ruled until it coruscates like marble in its splendour.

And they:- Show, therefore, what it is to posterity.

Then he:- Willingly; you must know that the copper is commingled with vinegar, and ruled until it becomes water. Finally, let it be congealed, and it remains a coruscating stone with a brilliancy like marble, which, when ye see thus, I direct you to rule until it becomes red, because when it is cooked till it is disintegrated and becomes earth, it is turned into a red colour. When ye see it thus, repeatedly cook and imbue it until it assume the aforesaid colour, and it shall become hidden gold. Then repeat the process, when it will become gold of a Tyrian colour. It behoves you, therefore, O all ye investigators of this Art, when ye have observed that this Stone is coruscating, to pound and turn it into earth, until it acquires some degree of redness; then take the remainder of the water which the envious ordered you to divide into two parts, and ye shall imbibe them several times until the colours which are hidden by no body appear unto you. Know also that if ye rule it ignorantly, ye shall see nothing of those colours. I knew a certain person who commenced this work, and operated the natures of truth, who, when the redness was somewhat slow in appearing, imagined that he had made a mistake, and so relinquished the work. Observe, therefore, how ye make the conjunction, for the punic dye, having embraced his spouse, passes swiftly into her body, liquefies, congeals, breaks up, and disintegrates the same. Finally, the redness does not delay in coming, and if ye effect it without the weight, death will take place, whereupon it will be thought to be bad. Hence, I order that the fire should be gentle in liquefaction, but when it is turned to earth make the same intense, and imbue it until God shall extract the colours for us and they appear.

### The Twenty-Eighth Dictum.

Custos saith:- I am surprised, O all ye Turba! at the very great force and nature of this water, for when it has entered into the said body, it turns it first into earth, and next into powder, to test the perfection of which take in the hand, and if ye find it impalpable as water, it is then most excellent; otherwise, repeat the cooking until it is brought to the required condition. And know that if ye use any substance other than our copper, and rule with our water, it will profit you nothing. If, on the other hand, ye rule our copper with our water, ye shall find all that has been promised by us.

But the Turba answereth:- Father, the envious created no little obscurity when they commanded us to take lead and white quicksilver, and to rule the same with dew and the sun till it becomes a coin-like stone.

Then he:- They meant our copper and our permanent water, when they thus directed you to cook in a gentle fire, and affirmed that there should be produced the said coin-like stone, concerning which the Wise have also observed, that Nature rejoices in Nature, by reason of the affinity which they know to exist between the two bodies, that is to say, copper and permanent water. Therefore, the nature of these two is one, for between them there is a mixed affinity, without which they would not so swiftly unite, and be held together so that they may become one.

Saith the Turba:- Why do the envious direct us to take the copper which we have now made, and roasted until it has become gold!

### **The Twenty-Ninth Dictum.**

Diamedes saith:- Thou hast spoken already, O Moses [Custos], in an ungrudging manner, as became thee; I will also confirm thy words, passing over the hardness of the elements which the wise desire to remove, this disposition being most precious in their eyes. Know, O ye seekers after this doctrine, that man does not proceed except from a man; that only which is like unto themselves is begotten from brute animals; and so also with flying creatures.

I have treated these matters in compendious fashion, exalting you towards the truth, who yourselves omit prolixity, for Nature is truly not improved by Nature, save with her own nature, seeing that thou thyself art not improved except in thy son, that is to say, man in man. See, therefore, that ye do not neglect the precepts concerning her, but make use of venerable Nature, for out of her Art cometh, and out of no other. Know also that unless you seize hold of this Nature and rule it, ye will obtain nothing. Join, therefore, that male, who is son to the red slave, in marriage with his fragrant wife, which having been done, Art is produced between them; add no foreign matter unto these things, neither powder nor anything else; that conception is sufficient for us, for it is near, yet the son is nearer still. How exceeding precious is the nature of that red slave, without which the regimen cannot endure!

Bacsen saith:- O Diomedes, thou hast publicly revealed this disposition!

He answereth:- I will even shed more light upon it. Woe unto you who fear not God, for He may deprive you of this art! Why, therefore, are you envious towards your brethren?

They answer:- We do not flee except from fools; tell us, therefore, what is thy will?

And he:- Place Citrine with his wife after the conjunction into the bath; do not kindle the bath excessively, lest they be deprived of sense and motion; cause them to remain in the bath until their body, and the colour thereof, shall become a certain unity, whereupon restore unto it the sweat thereof; again suffer it to die; then give it rest, and beware lest ye evaporate them by burning them in too strong a fire. Venerate the king and his wife, and do not burn them, since you know not when

you may have need of these things, which improve the king and his wife. Cook them, therefore, until they become black, then white, afterwards red, and finally until a tingeing venom is produced. O seekers after this Science, happy are ye, if ye understand, but if not, I have still performed my duty, and that briefly, so that if ye, remain ignorant, it is God who hath concealed the truth from you! Blame not, therefore, the Wise, but yourselves, for if God knew that ye possessed a faithful mind, most certainly he would reveal unto you the truth. Behold, I have established you therein, and have extricated you from error!

### **The Thirtieth Dictum.**

Bacsen saith:- Thou hast spoken well, O Diomedes, but I do not see that thou hast demonstrated the disposition of Corsufle to posterity! Of this same Corsufle the envious have spoken in many ways, and have confused it with all manner of names.

Then he:- Tell me, therefore, O Bacsen, according to thy opinion in these matters, and I swear by thy father that this is the head of the work, for the true beginning hereof cometh after the completion.

Bacsen saith:- I give notice, therefore, to future seekers after this Art, that Corsufle is a composite, and that it must be roasted seven times, because when it arrives at perfection it tinges the whole body.

The Turba answereth:- Thou hast spoken the truth, O Bacsen!

### **The Thirty-First Dictum.**

Pythagoras Saith:- How does the discourse of Bacsen appear to you, since he has omitted to name the substance by its artificial names?

And they:- Name it, therefore, oh Pythagoras!

And he:- Corsufle being its composition, they have applied to it all the names of bodies in the world, as, for example, those of coin, copper, tin, gold, iron, and also the name of lead, until it be deprived of that colour and become Ixir.

The Turba answereth:- Thou hast spoken well, O Pythagoras!

And he:- Ye have also spoken well, and some among the others may discourse concerning the residual matters.

### **The Thirty-Second Dictum.**

Bonellus saith: According to thee, O Pythagoras, all things die and live by the will of God, because that nature from which the humidity is removed, that nature which is left by nights, does indeed seem like unto something that is dead; it is then turned and (again) left for certain nights, as a man is left in his tomb, when it becomes a powder. These things being done, God will restore unto it both the soul and the spirit thereof, and the weakness being taken away, that matter will be made strong, and after corruption will be improved, even as a man becomes stronger after resurrection and younger than he was in this world. Therefore it behoves you, O ye Sons of the Doctrine, to consume that matter with fire boldly until it shall become a cinder, when know that ye have mixed it excellently well, for that cinder receives the spirit, and is imbued with the humour until it assumes a fairer colour than it previously possessed. Consider, therefore, O ye Sons of the Doctrine, that

artists are unable to paint with their own tinctures until they convert them into a powder; similarly, the philosophers cannot combine medicines for the sick slaves until they also turn them into powder, cooking some of them to a cinder, while others they grind with their hands. The case is the same with those who compose the images of the ancients. But if ye understand what has already been said, ye will know that I speak the truth, and hence I have ordered you to burn up the body and turn it into a cinder, for if ye rule it subtly many things will proceed from it, even as much proceeds from the smallest things in the world. It is thus because copper like man, has a body and a soul, for the inspiration of men cometh from the air, which after God is their life, and similarly the copper is inspired by the humour from which that same copper receiving strength is multiplied and augmented like other things. Hence, the philosophers add, that when copper is consumed with fire and iterated several times, it becomes better than it was.

The Turba answereth:- Show, therefore, O Bonellus, to future generations after what manner it becometh better than it was!

And he:- I will do so willingly; it is because it is augmented and multiplied, and because God extracts many things out of one thing, since He hath created nothing which wants its own regimen, and those qualities by which its healing must be effected. Similarly, our copper, when it is first cooked, becomes water; then the more it is cooked, the more is it thickened until it becomes a stone, as the envious have termed it, but it is really an egg tending to become a metal. It is afterwards broken and imbued, when ye must roast it in a fire more intense than the former, until it shall be coloured and shall become like blood in combustion, when it is placed on coins and changes them into gold, according to the Divine pleasure. Do you not see that sperm is not produced from the blood unless it be diligently cooked in the liver till it has acquired an intense red colour, after which no change takes place in that sperm? It is the same with our work, for unless it be cooked diligently until it shall become a powder, and afterwards be putrefied until it shall become a spiritual sperm, there will in no wise proceed from it that colour which ye desire. But if ye arrive at the conclusion of this regimen, and so obtain your purpose, ye shall be princes among the People of your time.

### **The Thirty-Third Dictum.**

Nicarus saith:- Now ye have made this arcanum public.

The Turba answereth:- Thus did the Master order.

And he:- Not the whole, nevertheless.

But they:- He ordered us to clear away the darkness therefrom; do thou, therefore, tell us.

And he:- I counsel posterity to take the gold which they wish to multiply and renovate, then to divide the water into two parts.

And they:- Distinguish, therefore, when they divide the water.

But he:- It behoves them to burn up our copper with one part. For the said copper, dissolved in that water, is called the ferment of Gold, if ye rule well. For the same in like manner are cooked and liquefy as water; finally, by cooking they are congealed, crumble, and the red appears. But then it behoves you to imbue seven times with the residual water, until they absorb all the water, and, all the moisture being dried up, they are turned into dry earth; then kindle a fire and place therein for forty days until the whole shall putrefy, and its colours appear.

### **The Thirty-Fourth Dictum.**

Bacsen saith:- On account of thy dicta the Philosophers said beware. Take the regal Corsufle, which is like to the redness of copper, and pound in the urine of a calf until the nature of the Corsufle is converted, for the true nature has been hidden in the belly of the Corsufle.

The Turba saith:- Explain to posterity what the nature is.

And he:- A tingeing spirit which it hath from permanent water, which is coin-like, and coruscates.

And they:- Shew, therefore, how it is extracted.

And he:- It is pounded, and water is poured upon it seven times until it absorbs the whole humour, and receives a force which is equal to the hostility of the fire; then it is called rust. Putrefy the same diligently until it becomes a spiritual powder, of a colour like burnt blood, which the fire overcoming hath introduced into the receptive belly of Nature, and hath coloured with an indelible colour. This, therefore, have kings sought, but not found, save only to whom God has granted it.

But the Turba saith:- Finish your speech, O Bacsen.

And he:- I direct them to whiten copper with white water, by which also they make red. Be careful not to introduce any foreign matter.

And the Turba:- Well hast thou spoken, O Bacsen, and Nictimerus also has spoken well!

Then he:- If I have spoken well, do one of you continue.

### **The Thirty-Fifth Dictum.**

But Zimon saith:- Hast thou left anything to be said by another?

And the Turba:- Since the words of Nicarus and Bacsen are of little good to those who seek after this Art, tell us, therefore, what thou knowest, according as we have said.

And he:- Ye speak the truth, O all ye seekers after this Art! Nothing else has led you into error but the sayings of the envious, because what ye seek is sold at the smallest possible price. If men knew this, and how great was the thing they held in their hands, they would in no wise sell it. Therefore, the Philosophers have glorified that venom, have treated of it variously, and in many ways, have taken and applied to it all manner of names, wherefore, certain envious persons have said: It is a stone and not a stone, but a gum of Ascotia, consequently, the Philosophers have concealed the power thereof. For this spirit which ye seek, that ye may tinge therewith, is concealed in the body, and hidden away from sight, even as the soul in the human body. But ye seekers after the Art, unless ye disintegrate this body, imbue and pound both cautiously and diligently, until ye extract it from its grossness (or grease), and turn it into a tenuous and impalpable spirit, have your labour in vain. Wherefore the Philosophers have said: Except ye turn bodies into not bodies, and incorporeal things into bodies, ye have not yet discovered the rule of operation.

But the Turba saith:- Tell, therefore, posterity how bodies are turned into not-bodies.

And he:- They are pounded with fire and Ethelia till they become a powder. And know that this does not take place except by an exceedingly strong decoction, and continuous contrition, performed with a moderate fire, not with hands, with imbibition and putrefaction, with exposure to the sun and to Ethelia. The envious caused the vulgar to err in this Art when they stated that the thing is common in its nature and is sold at a small price. They further said that the nature was more

precious than all natures, wherefore they deceived those who had recourse to their books. At the same time they spoke the truth, and therefore doubt not these things.

But the Turba answereth:- Seeing that thou believest the sayings of the envious, explain, therefore, to posterity the disposition of the two natures.

And he:- I testify to you that Art requires two natures, for the precious is not produced without the common, nor the common without the precious. It behoves you, therefore, O all ye Investigators of this Art, to follow the sayings of Victimerus, when he said to his disciples: Nothing else helps you save to sublimate water and vapour.

And the Turba:- The whole work is in the vapour and the sublimation of water. Demonstrate, therefore, to them the disposition of the vapour.

And he:- When ye shall perceive that the natures have become water by reason of the heat of the fire, and that they have been purified, and that the whole body of Magnesia is liquefied as water; then all things have been made vapour, and rightly, for then the vapour contains its own equal, wherefore the envious call either vapour, because both are joined in decoctions, and one contains the other. Thus our stag finds no path to escape, although flight be essential to it. The one keeps back the other, so that it has no opportunity to fly, and it finds no place to escape; hence all are made permanent, for when the one falls, being hidden in the body, it is congealed with it, and its colour varies, and it extracts its nature from the properties which God has infused into His elect, and it alienates it, lest it flee. But the blackness and redness appear, and it falls into sickness, and dies by rust and putrefaction; properly speaking, then, it has not a flight, although it is desirous to escape servitude; then when it is free it follows its spouse, that a favourable colour may befall itself and its spouse; its beauty is not as it was, but when it is placed with coins, it makes them gold. For this reason, therefore, the Philosophers have called the spirit and the soul vapour. They have also called it the black humid wanting perlution; and forasmuch as in man there are both humidity and dryness, thus our work, which the envious have concealed, is nothing else but vapour and water.

The Turba answereth:- Demonstrate vapour and water!

And he:- I say that the work is out of two; the envious have called it composed out of two, because these two become four, wherein are dryness and humidity, spirit and vapour.

The Turba answereth:- Thou hast spoken excellently, and without envy. Let Zimon next follow.

### **The Thirty-Sixth Dictum.**

Afflontus, the Philosopher, saith:- I notify to you all, O ye investigators of this Art, that unless ye sublime the substances at the commencement by cooking, without contrition of hands, until the whole become water, ye have not yet found the work. And know ye, that the copper was formerly called sand, but by others stone, and, indeed, the names vary in every regimen. Know further, that the nature and humidity become water, then a stone, if ye cause them to be well complexionated, and if ye are acquainted with the natures, because the part which is light and spiritual rises to the top, but that which is thick and heavy remains below in the vessel. Now this is the contrition of the Philosophers, namely, that which is not sublimated sinks down, but that which becomes a spiritual powder rises to the top of the vessel, and this is the contrition of decoction, not of hands. Know also, that unless ye have turned all into powder, ye have not yet pounded them completely. Cook them, therefore, successively until they become converted, and a powder. Wherefore Agadaimon saith:- Cook the copper until it become a gentle and impalpable body, and impose in its own vessel; then sublimate the same six or seven times until the water shall descend. And know that when the water

has become powder then has it been ground diligently. But if ye ask, how is the water made a powder? note that the intention of the Philosophers is that the body before which before it falls into the water is not water may become water; the said water is mixed with the other water, and they become one water. It is to be stated, therefore, that unless ye turn the thing mentioned into water, ye shall not attain to the work. It is, therefore, necessary for the body to be so possessed by the flame of the fire that it is disintegrated and becomes weak with the water, when the water has been added to the water, until the whole becomes water. But fools, hearing of water, think that this is water of the clouds. Had they read our books they would know that it is permanent water, which cannot become permanent without its companion, wherewith it is made one. But this is the water which the Philosophers have called Water of Gold, the Igneous, Good Venom, and that Sand of Many Names which Hermes ordered to be washed frequently, so that the blackness of the Sun might be removed, which he introduced in the solution of the body. And know, all ye seekers after this Art, that unless ye take this pure body, that is, our copper without the spirit, ye will by no means see what ye desire, because no foreign thing enters therein, nor does anything enter unless it be pure. Therefore, all ye seekers after this Art, dismiss the multitude of obscure names, for the nature is one water; if anyone err, he draws nigh to destruction, and loses his life. Therefore, keep this one nature, but dismiss what is foreign.

### **The Thirty-Seventh Dictum.**

Bonellus saith:- I will speak a little concerning Magnesia.

The Turba answereth:- Speak.

And he:- O all ye Sons of the Doctrine, when mixing Magnesia, place it in its vessel, the mouth of which close carefully, and cook with a gentle fire until it liquefy, and all become water therein! For the heat of the water acting thereupon, it becomes water by the will of God. When ye see that the said water is about to become black, ye know that the body is already liquefied. Place again in its vessel, and cook for forty days, until it drink up the moisture of the vinegar and honey. But certain persons uncover it, say, once in each week, or once in every ten nights; in either case, the ultimate perfection of pure water appears at the end of forty days, for then it completely absorbs the humour of the decoction. Therefore, wash the same, and deprive of its blackness, until, the blackness being removed, the stone becomes dry to the touch. Hence the envious have said:- Wash the Magnesia with soft water, and cook diligently, until it become earth, and the humour perish. Then it is called copper. Subsequently, pour very sharp vinegar upon it, and leave it to be soaked therein. But this is our copper, which the Philosophers have ordained should be washed with permanent water, wherefore they have said: Let the venom be divided into two parts, with one of which burn up the body, and with the other putrefy. And know, all ye seekers after this Science, that the whole work and regimen does not take place except by water, wherefore, they say that the thing which ye seek is one, and, unless that which improves it be present in the said thing, what ye look for shall in no wise take place. Therefore, it behoves you to add those things which are needful, that ye may thereby obtain that which you purpose.

The Turba answereth:- Thou has spoken excellently, O Bonellus! If it please thee, therefore, finish that which thou art saying; otherwise repeat it a second time.

But he:- Shall I indeed repeat these and like things? O all ye investigators of this Art, take our copper; place with the first part of the water in the vessel; cook for forty days; purify from all uncleanness; cook further until its days be accomplished, and it become a stone having no moisture. Then cook until nothing remains except faeces. This done, cleanse seven times, wash with water, and when the water is used up leave it to putrefy in its vessel, so long as may seem desirable to your purpose. But the envious called this composition when it is turned into blackness that which

is sufficiently black, and have said: Rule the same with vinegar and nitre. But that which remained when it had been whitened they called sufficiently white, and ordained that it should be ruled with permanent water. Again, when they called the same sufficiently red, they ordained that it should be ruled with water and fire until it became red.

The Turba answereth:- Show forth unto posterity what they intended by these things.

And he:- They called it Ixir satis, by reason of the variation of its colours. In the work, however, there is neither variety, multiplicity, nor opposition of substances; it is necessary only to make the black copper white and then red. However, the truth-speaking Philosophers had no other intention than that of liquefying, pounding, and cooking Ixir until the stone should become like unto marble in its splendour. Accordingly, the envious again said: Cook the same with vapour until the stone becomes coruscating by reason of its brilliancy. But when ye see it thus, it is, indeed, the most great Arcanum. Notwithstanding, ye must then pound and wash it seven times with permanent water; finally, again pound and congeal in its own water, until ye extract its own concealed nature. Wherefore, saith Maria, sulphurs are contained in sulphurs, but humour in like humour, and out of sulphur mixed with sulphur, there comes forth a great work. But I ordain that you rule the same with dew and the sun, until your purpose appear to you. For I signify unto you that there are two kinds of whitening and of making red, of which one consists in rust and the other in contrition and decoction. But ye do not need any contrition of hands. Beware, however, of making a separation from the waters lest the poisons get at You, and the body perish with the other things which are in the vessel.

### **The Thirty-Eighth Dictum.**

Effistus saith:- Thou hast spoken most excellently, O Bonellus, and I bear witness to all thy words!

The Turba saith:- Tell us if there be any service in the speech of Bonellus, so that those initiated in this disposition may be more bold and certain.

Effistus saith:- Consider, all ye investigators of this Art, how Hermes, chief of the Philosophers, spoke and demonstrated when he wished to mix the natures. Take, he tells us, the stone of gold, combine with humour which is permanent water, set in its vessel, over a gentle fire until liquefaction takes place. Then leave it until the water dries, and the sand and water are combined, one with another; then let the fire be more intense than before, until it again becomes dry, and is made earth. When this is done, understand that here is the beginning of the arcanum; but do this many times, until two-thirds of the water perish, and colours manifest unto you.

The Turba answereth:- Thou hast spoken excellently, O Effistus! Yet, briefly inform us further.

And he:- I testify to Posterity that the dealbation doth not take place save by decoction. Consequently, Agadaimon has very properly treated of cooking, of pounding, and of imbuing, ethelia. Yet I direct you not to pour on the whole of the water at one time, lest the Ixir be submerged, but pour it in gradually, pound and dessicate, and do this several times until the water be exhausted. Now concerning this the envious have said: Leave the water when it has all been poured in, and it will sink to the bottom. But their intention is this, that while the humour is drying, and when it has been turned into powder, leave it in its glass vessel for forty days, until it passes through various colours, which the Philosophers have described. By this method of cooking the bodies put on their spirits and spiritual tinctures, and become warm.

The Turba answereth:- Thou hast given light to us, O Effistus, and hast done excellently! Truly art thou cleared from envy; wherefore, let one of you others speak as he pleases.



### **The Thirty-Ninth Dictum.**

Bacsen saith:- O all ye seekers after this Art, ye can reach no useful result without a patient, laborious, and solicitous soul, persevering courage, and continuous regimen. He, therefore, who is willing to Persevere in this disposition, and would enjoy the result, may enter upon it, but he who desires to learn over speedily, must not have recourse to our books, for they impose great labour before they are read in their higher sense, once, twice, or thrice. Therefore, the Master saith:- Whosoever bends his back over the study of our books, devoting his leisure thereto, is not occupied with vain thoughts, but fears God, and shall reign in the Kingdom without fail until he die. For what ye seek is not of small price. Woe unto you who seek the very great and compensating treasure of God! Know ye not that for the smallest Purpose in the world, earthly men will give themselves to death, and what, therefore, ought they to do for this most excellent and almost impossible offering? Now, the regimen is greater than is perceived by reason, except through divine inspiration. I once met with a person who was as well acquainted with the elements as I myself, but when he proceeded to rule this disposition, he attained not to the joy thereof by reason of his sadness and ignorance in ruling, and excessive eagerness, desire, and haste concerning the purpose. Woe unto you, sons of the Doctrine! For one who plants trees does not look for fruit, save in due season; he also who sows seeds does not expect to reap, except at harvest time. How, then, should ye desire to attain this offering when ye have read but a single book, or have adventured only the first regimen? But the Philosophers have plainly stated that the truth is not to be discerned except after error, and nothing creates greater pain at heart than error in this Art, while each imagines that he has almost the whole world, and yet finds nothing in his hands. Woe unto you! Understand the dictum of the Philosopher, and how he divided the work when he said- pound, cook, reiterate, and be thou not weary. But when thus he divided the work, he signified commingling, cooking, assimilating, roasting, heating, whitening, pounding, cooking Ethelia, making rust or redness, and tingeing. Here, therefore, are there many names, and yet there is one regimen. And if men knew that one decoction and one contrition would suffice them, they would not so often repeat their words, as they have done, and in order that the mixed body may be pounded and cooked diligently, have admonished you not to be weary thereof. Having darkened the matter to you with their words, it suffices me to speak in this manner. It is needful to complexionate the venom rightly, then cook many times, and do not grow tired of the decoction. Imbue and cook it until it shall become as I have ordained that it should be ruled by you- namely, impalpable spirits, and until ye perceive that the Ixir is clad in the garment of the Kingdom. For when ye behold the Ixir turned into Tyrian colour, then have ye found that which the Philosophers discovered before you. If ye understand my words (and although my words be dead, yet is there life therein for those who understand themselves), they will forthwith explain any ambiguity occurring herein. Read, therefore, repeatedly, for reading is a dead speech, but that which is uttered with the lips the same is living speech. Hence we have ordered you to read frequently, and, moreover, ponder diligently over the things which we have narrated.

### **The Fortieth Dictum.**

Jargus saith:- Thou hast left obscure a part of thy discourse, O Bacsen!

And he:- Do thou, therefore, Jargus, in thy clemency shew forth the same!

And he answereth:- The copper of which thou hast before spoken is not copper, nor is it the tin of the vulgar; it is our true work (or body) which must be combined with the body of Magnesia, that it may be cooked and pounded without wearying until the stone is made. Afterwards, that stone must be pounded in its vessel with the water of nitre, and, subsequently, placed in liquefaction until it is destroyed. But, all ye investigators of this art, it is necessary to have a water by which the more you cook, so much the more you sprinkle, until the said copper shall put on rust, which is the foundation of our work. Cook, therefore, and pound with Egyptian vinegar.

### **The Forty-First Dictum.**

Zimon saith:- Whatsoever thou hast uttered, O Jargos, is true, yet I do not see that the whole Turba hath spoken concerning the rotundum.

Then he:- Speak, therefore, thine opinion concerning it, O Zimon!

Zimon saith:- I notify to Posterity that the rotundum turns into four elements, and is derived out of one thing.

The Turba answereth:- Inasmuch as thou art speaking, explain for future generations the method of ruling.

And he:- Willingly: it is necessary to take one part of our copper, but of Permanent Water three parts; then let them be mixed and cooked until they be thickened and become one stone, concerning which the envious have said: Take one part of the pure body, but three parts of copper of Magnesia; then commingle with rectified vinegar, mixed with male of earth; close the vessel, observe what is in it, and cook continuously until it becomes earth.

### **The Forty-Second Dictum.**

Ascanius saith:- Too much talking, O all ye Sons of the Doctrine, leads this subject further into error! But when ye read in the books of the Philosophers that Nature is one only, and that she overcomes all things: Know that they are one thing and one composite. Do ye not see that the complexion of a man is formed out of a soul and body; thus, also, must ye conjoin these, because the Philosophers, when they prepared the matters and conjoined spouses mutually in love with each other, behold there ascended from them a golden water!

The Turba answereth:- When thou wast treating of the first work, lo! thou didst turn unto the second! How ambiguous hast thou made thy book, and how obscure are thy words!

Then he:- I will perform the disposition of the first work.

The Turba answereth:- Do this.

And he:- Stir up war between copper and quicksilver, until they go to destruction and are corrupted, because when the copper conceives the quicksilver it coagulates it, but when the quicksilver conceives the copper, the copper is congealed into earth; stir up, therefore, a fight between them; destroy the body of the copper until it becomes a powder. But conjoin the male to the female, which are vapour and quicksilver, until the male and the female become Ethel, for he who changes them into spirit by means of Ethel, and next makes them red, tinges every body, because, when by diligent cooking ye pound the body, ye extract a pure, spiritual, and sublime soul therefrom, which tinges every body.

The Turba answereth:- Inform, therefore, posterity what is that body.

And he:- It is a natural sulphureous thing which is called by the names of all bodies.

### **The Forty-Third Dictum.**

Dardaris saith:- Ye have frequently treated of the regimen, and have introduced the conjunction, yet I proclaim to posterity that they cannot extract the now hidden soul except by Ethelia, by which

bodies become not bodies through continual cooking, and by sublimation of Ethelia. Know also that quicksilver is fiery, burning every body more than does fire, also mortifying bodies, and that every body which is mingled with it is ground and delivered over to be destroyed. When, therefore, ye have diligently pounded the bodies, and have exalted them as required, therefrom is produced that Ethel nature, and a colour which is tingeing and not volatile, and it tinges the copper which the Turba said did not tinge until it is tinged, because that which is tinged tinges. Know also that the body of the copper is ruled by Magnesia, and that quicksilver is four bodies, also that the matter has no being except by humidity, because it is the water of sulphur, for sulphurs are contained in sulphurs.

The Turba saith:- O Dardaris, inform posterity what sulphurs are!

And he:- Sulphurs are souls which are hidden in four bodies, and, extracted by themselves, do contain one another, and are naturally conjoined. For if ye rule that which is hidden in the belly of sulphur with water, and cleanse well that which is hidden, then nature rejoices, meeting with nature, and water similarly with its equal. Know ye also that the four bodies are not tinged but tinge.

And the Turba:- Why dost thou not say like the ancients that when they are tinged, they tinge?

And he:- I state that the four coins of the vulgar populace are not tinged, but they tinge copper, and when that copper is tinged, it tinges the coins of the populace.

#### **The Forty-Fourth Dictum.**

Moyses saith:- This one thing of which thou hast told us, O Dardaris, the Philosophers have called by many names, sometimes by two and sometimes by three names!

Dardaris answereth:- Name it, therefore, for posterity, setting aside envy.

And he:- The one is that which is fiery, the two is the

body composed in it, the three is the water of sulphur, with which also it is washed and ruled until it be perfected. Do ye not see what the Philosopher affirms, that the quicksilver which tinges gold is quicksilver out of Cambar?

Dardaris answereth:- What dost thou mean by this? For the Philosopher says: sometimes from Cambar and sometimes from Orpiment.

And he:- Quicksilver of orpiment is Cambar of Magnesia, but quicksilver is sulphur ascending from the mixed composite. Ye must, therefore, mix that thick thing with fiery venom, putrefy, and diligently pound until a spirit be produced, which is hidden in that other spirit; then is made the tincture which is desired of you all.

#### **The Forty-Fifth Dictum.**

But Plato saith: It behoves you all, O Masters, when those bodies are being dissolved, to take care lest they be burnt up, as also to wash them with sea water, until all their salt be turned into sweetness, clarifies, tinges, becomes tincture of copper, and then goes off in flight! Because it was necessary that one should become tingeing, and that the other should be tinged, for the spirit being separated from the body and hidden in the other spirit, both become volatile. Therefore the Wise have said that the gate of flight must not be opened for that which would flee, (or that which does not flee), by whose flight death is occasioned, for by the conversion of the sulphureous thing into a

spirit like unto itself, either becomes volatile, since they are made aeriform spirits prone to ascend in the air. But the Philosophers seeing that which was not volatile made volatile with the volatiles, iterated these to a body like to the non-volatiles, and put them into that from which they could not escape. They iterated them to a body like unto the bodies from which they were extracted, and the same were then digested. But as for the statement of the Philosopher that the tingeing agent and that which is to be tinged are made one tincture, it refers to a spirit concealed in another humid spirit. Know also that one of the humid spirits is cold, but the other is hot, and although the cold humid is not adapted to the warm humid, nevertheless they are made one. Therefore, we prefer these two bodies, because by them we rule the whole work, namely, bodies by not-bodies, until incorporeals become bodies, steadfast in the fire, because they are conjoined with volatiles, which is not possible in any body, these excepted. For spirits in every wise avoid bodies, but fugitives are restrained by incorporeals. Incorporeals, therefore, similarly flee from bodies; those, consequently, which do not flee are better and more precious than all bodies. These things, therefore, being done, take those which are not volatile and join them; wash the body with the incorporeal until the incorporeal receives a non-volatile body; convert the earth into water, water into fire, fire into air, and conceal the fire in the depths of the water, but the earth in the belly of the air, mingling the hot with the humid, and the cold with the dry. Know, also, that Nature overcomes Nature, Nature rejoices in Nature, Nature contains Nature.

### **The Forty-Sixth Dictum.**

Attamus saith:- It is to be noted that the whole assembly of the Philosophers have frequently treated concerning

Rubigo. Rubigo, however, is a fictitious and not a true name.

The Turba answereth:- Name, therefore, Rubigo by its true name, for by this it is not calumniated.

And he:- Rubigo is according to the work, because it is from gold alone.

The Turba answereth:- Why, then, have the Philosophers referred it to the leech?

He answereth:- Because water is hidden in sulphureous gold as the leech is in water; rubigo, therefore, is rubefaction in the second work, but to make rubigo is to whiten in the former work, in which the Philosophers ordained that the flower of gold should be taken and a proportion of gold equally.

### **The Forty-Seventh Dictum.**

Mundus saith:- Thou hast already treated sufficiently of Rubigo, O Attamus! I will speak, therefore, of venom, and will instruct future generations that venom is not a body, because subtle spirits have made it into a tenuous spirit, have tinged the body and burned it with venom, which venom the Philosopher asserts will tinge every body. But the Ancient Philosophers thought that he who turned gold into venom had arrived at the purpose, but he who can do not this profiteth nothing. Now I say unto you, all ye Sons of the Doctrine, that unless ye reduce the thing by fire until those things ascend like a spirit, ye effect nought. This, therefore, is a spirit avoiding the fire and a ponderous smoke, which when it enters the body penetrates it entirely, and makes the body rejoice. The Philosophers have all said: Take a black and conjoining spirit; therewith break up the bodies and torture them till they be altered.

### **The Forty-Eighth Dictum.**

Pythagoras saith:- We must affirm unto all you seekers after this Art that the Philosophers have treated of conjunction (or continuation) in various ways. But I enjoin upon you to make quicksilver con strain the body of Magnesia, or the body Kuhul, or the Spume of Luna, or incombustible sulphur, or roasted calx, or alum which is out of apples, as ye know. But if there was any singular regimen for any of these, a Philosopher would not say so, as ye know. Understand, therefore, that sulphur, calx, and alum which is from apples, and Kuhul, are all nothing else but water of sulphur. Know ye also that Magnesia, being mixed with quicksilver and sulphur, they pursue one another. Hence you must not dismiss that Magnesia without the quicksilver, for when it is composed it is called an exceeding strong composition, which is one of the ten regimens established by the Philosophers. Know, also, that when Magnesia is whitened with quicksilver, you must congeal white water therein, but when it is reddened you must congeal red water, for, as the Philosophers have observed in their books, the regimen is not one. Accordingly, the first congelation is of tin, copper, and lead. But the second is composed with water of sulphur. Some, however, reading this book, think that the composition can be bought. It must be known for certain that nothing of the work can be bought, and that the science of this Art is nothing else than vapour and the sublimation of water, with the conjunction, also, of quicksilver in the body of Magnesia; but, heretofore, the Philosophers have demonstrated in their books that the impure water of sulphur is from sulphur only, and no sulphur is produced without the water of its calx, and of quicksilver, and of sulphur.

### **The Forty-Ninth Dictum.**

Belus saith:- O all ye Philosophers, ye have not dealt sparingly concerning composition and contact, but composition, contact, and congelation are one thing! Take, therefore, a part From the one composition and a part out of ferment of gold, and on these impose pure water of sulphur. This, then, is the potent (or revealed) arcanum which tinges every body.

Pythagoras answereth:- O Belus, why hast thou called it a potent arcanum, yet hast not shown its work!

And he:- In our books, O Master, we have found the same which thou hast received from the ancients!

And Pythagoras:- Therefore have I assembled you together, that you might remove any obscurities which are in any books.

And he:- Willingly, O Master! It is to be noted that pure water which is from sulphur is not composed of sulphur alone, but is composed of several things, for the one sulphur is made out of several sulphurs. How, therefore, O Master, shall I compose these things that they may become one!

And he:- Mix, O Belus, that which strives with the fire with that which does not strive, for things which are conjoined in a fire suitable to the same contend, because the warm venoms of the physician are cooked in a gentle, incomburent fire! Surely ye perceive what the Philosophers have stated concerning decoction, that a little sulphur burns many strong things, and the humour which remains is called humid pitch, balsam of gum, and other like things. Therefore our Philosophers are made like to the physicians, notwithstanding that the tests of the physicians are more intense than those of the Philosophers.

The Turba answereth:- I wish, O Belus, that you would also shew the disposition of this potent arcanum!

And he:- I proclaim to future generations that this arcanum proceeds from two compositions, that is to say, sulphur and magnesia. But after it is reduced and conjoined into one, the Philosophers have

called it water, spume of Boletus (i.e., a species of fungus), and the thickness of gold. When, however, it has been reduced into quicksilver, they call it sulphur of water; sulphur also, when it contains sulphur, they term a fiery venom, because it is a potent (or open) arcanum which ascends from those things ye know.

### **The Fiftieth Dictum.**

Pandolphus saith:- If, O Belus, thou dost describe the sublimation of sulphur for future generations, thou wilt accomplish an excellent thing!

And the Turba:- Do thou show it forth, therefore, O Pandolphus!

And he:- The philosophers have ordered that quicksilver should be taken out of Cambar, and albeit they spoke truly, yet in these words there is a little ambiguity, the obscurity of which I will remove. See then that the quicksilver is sublimed in tabernacles, and extract the same from Cambar, but there is another Cambar in sulphur which Belus hath demonstrated to you, for out of sulphur mixed with sulphur, many works proceed. When the same has been sublimed, there proceeds from the Cambar that quicksilver which is called Ethelia, Orpiment, Zendrio, or Sanderich, Ebsemich, Magnesia, Kuhul, or Chuhul, and many other names. Concerning this, philosophers have said that, being ruled by its regimen (for ten is the perfection of all things), its white nature appears, nor is there any shadow therein. Then the envious have called it lead from Ebmich, Magnesia, Marteck, White Copper. For, when truly whitened, it is devoid of shadow and blackness, it has left its thickened ponderous bodies, and therewith a clean humid spirit has ascended, which spirit is tincture. Accordingly, the wise have said that copper has a soul and a body. Now, its soul is spirit, and its body is thick. Therefore, it behoves you to destroy the thick body until ye extract a tingeing spirit from the same. Mix, also, the spirit extracted therefrom with light sulphur until you, investigators, find your design accomplished.

### **The Fifty-First Dictum.**

Horfolcos saith:- Thou hast narrated nothing, O Pandolphus, save the last regimen of this body! Thou hast, therefore, composed an ambiguous description for readers. But if its regimen were commenced from the beginning, you would destroy this obscurity.

Saith the Turba:- Speak, therefore, concerning this to posterity, so far as it may please you.

And he:- It behoves you, investigators of this Art, first to burn copper in a gentle fire, like that required in the hatching of eggs. For it behoves you to burn it with its humidity lest its spirit be burnt, and let the vessel be closed on all sides, so that its colour [heat] may be increased, the body of copper be destroyed, and its tingeing spirit be extracted, concerning which the envious have said: Take quicksilver out of the Flower of Copper, which also they have called the water of our copper, a fiery venom, and a substance extracted from all things, which further they have termed Ethelia, extracted out of many things. Again, some have said that when all things become one, bodies are made not-bodies, but not-bodies bodies. And know, all ye investigators of this Art, that every body is dissolved with the spirit with which it is mixed, with which without doubt it becomes a similar spiritual thing, and that every spirit which has a tingeing colour of spirits, and is constant against fire, is altered and coloured by bodies. Blessed then be the name of Him who hath inspired the Wise with the idea of turning a body into a spirit having strength and colour, unalterable and incorruptible, so that what formerly was volatile sulphur is now made sulphur not-volatile, and incombustible! Know, also, all ye sons of learning, that he who is able to make your fugitive spirit red by the body mixed with it, and then from that body and that spirit can extract the tenuous nature hidden in the belly thereof, by a most subtle regimen, tinges every body, if only he is patient in spite of the

tedium of extracting. Wherefore the envious have said: Know that out of copper, after it is humectated by the moisture thereof, is pounded in its water, and is cooked in sulphur, if ye extract a body having Ethelia, ye will find that which is suitable as a tincture for anything. Therefore the envious have said: Things that are diligently pounded in the fire, with sublimation of the Ethelia, become fixed tinctures. For whatsoever words ye find in any man's book signify quicksilver, which we call water of sulphur, which also we sometimes say is lead and copper and copulated coin.

### **The Fifty-Second Dictum.**

Ixumdrus saith:- You will have treated most excellently, O Horfolcus, concerning the regimen of copper and the humid spirit, provided you proceed therewith.

And he:- Perfect, therefore, what I have omitted, O Ixumdrus!

Ixumdrus saith:- You must know that this Ethelia which you have previously mentioned and notified, which also the envious have called by many names, doth whiten, and tinge when it is whitened; then truly the Philosophers have called it the Flower of Gold, because it is a certain natural thing. Do you not remember what the Philosophers have said, that before it arrives at this terminus, copper does not tinge? But when it is tinged it tinges, because quicksilver tinges when it is combined with its tincture. But when it is mixed with those ten things which the Philosophers have denominated fermented urines, then have they called all these things Multiplication. But some have termed their mixed bodies Corsufle and Gum of Gold. Therefore, those names which are found in the books of the Philosophers, and are thought superfluous and vain, are true and yet are fictitious, because they are one thing, one opinion, and one way. This is the quicksilver which is indeed extracted from all things, out of which all things are produced, which also is pure water that destroys the shade of copper. And know ye that this quicksilver, when it is whitened, becomes a sulphur which contains sulphur, and is a venom that has a brilliance like marble; this the envious call Ethelia, orpiment and sandarac, out of which a tincture and pure spirit ascends with a mild fire, and the whole pure flower is sublimated, which flower becomes wholly quicksilver. It is, therefore, a most great arcanum which the Philosophers have thus described, because sulphur alone whitens copper. Ye, O investigators of this Art, must know that the said sulphur cannot whiten copper until it is whitened in the work! And know ye also that it is the habit of this sulphur to escape. When, therefore, it flees from its own thick bodies, and is sublimated as a vapour, then it behoves you to retain it otherwise with quicksilver of its own kind, lest it vanish altogether. Wherefore the Philosophers have said, that sulphurs are contained by sulphurs. Know, further, that sulphurs tinge, and then are they certain to escape unless they are united to quicksilver of its own kind. Do not, therefore, think that because it tinges and afterwards escapes, it is the coin of the Vulgar, for what the Philosophers are seeking is the coin of the Philosophers, which, unless it be mixed with white or red, which is quicksilver of its own kind, would doubtless escape. I direct you, therefore, to mix quicksilver with quicksilver (of its kind) until together they become one clean water composed out of two. This is, therefore, the great arcanum, the confection of which is with its own gum; it is cooked with flowers in a gentle fire and with earth; it is made red with mucra and with vinegar, salt, and nitre, and with mutal is turned into rubigo, or by any of the select tingeing agents existing in our coin.

### **The Fifty-Third Dictum.**

Exumenus saith:- The envious have laid waste the whole Art with the multiplicity of names, but the entire work must be the Art of the Coin. For the Philosophers have ordered the doctors of this art to make coin-like gold, which also the same Philosophers have called by all manner of names.

The Turba answereth:- Inform, therefore, posterity, O Exumenus, concerning a few of these names, that they may take warning!

And he:- They have named it salting, sublimating, washing, and pounding Ethelias, whitening in the fire, frequently cooking vapour and coagulating, turning into rubigo, the confection of Ethel, the art of the water of sulphur and coagula. By all these names is that operation called which has pounded and whitened copper. And know ye, that quicksilver is white to the sight, but when it is possessed by the smoke of sulphur, it reddens and becomes Cambar. Therefore, when quicksilver is cooked with its confections it is turned into red, and hence the Philosopher saith that the nature of lead is swiftly converted. Do you not see that the Philosophers have spoken without envy! Hence we deal in many ways with pounding and reiteration, that ye may extract the spirits existing in the vessel, which the fire did not cease to burn continuously. But the water placed with those things prevents the fire from burning, and it befalls those things that the more they are possessed by the flame of fire, the more they are hidden in the depths of the water, lest they should be injured by the heat of the fire; but the water receives them in its belly and repels the flame of fire from them.

The Turba answereth:- Unless ye make bodies not-bodies ye achieve nothing. But concerning the sublimation of water the Philosophers have treated not a little. And know that unless ye diligently pound the thing in the fire, the Ethelia does not ascend, but when that does not ascend ye achieve nothing. When, however, it ascends it is an instrument for the intended tincture with which ye tinge, and concerning this Ethelia Hermes saith: Sift the things which ye know; but another: Liquefy the things. Therefore, Arras saith: Unless ye pound the thing diligently in the fire, Ethelia does not ascend. The Master hath put forth a view which I shall now explain to the reasoners. Know ye that a very great wind of the south, when it is stirred up, sublimates clouds and elevates the vapours of the sea.

The Turba answereth:- Thou hast dealt obscurely.

And he:- I will explain the testa, and the vessel wherein is incombustible sulphur. But I order you to congeal fluxible quicksilver out of many things, that two may be made three, and four one, and two one.

### **The Fifty-Fourth Dictum.**

Anaxagoras saith:- Take the volatile burnt thing which lacks a body, and incorporate it. Then take the ponderous thing, having smoke, and thirsting to imbibe.

The Turba answereth:- Explain, O Anaxagoras, what is this obscurity which you expound, and beware of being envious!

And he:- I testify to you that this volatile burnt thing, and this other which thirsts, are Ethelia, which has been conjoined with sulphur. Therefore, place these in a glass vessel over the fire, and cook until the whole becomes Cambar. Then God will accomplish the arcanum ye seek. But I direct you to cook continuously, and not to grow tired of repeating the process. And know ye that the perfection of this work is the confection of water of sulphur with tabula; finally, it is cooked until it becomes Rubigo, for all the Philosophers have said: He who is able to turn Rubigo into golden venom has already achieved the desired work, but otherwise his labour is vain.

### **The Fifty-Fifth Dictum.**

Zenon saith:- Pythagoras hath treated concerning the water, which the envious have called by all names. Finally, at the end of his book he has treated of the ferment of gold, ordaining that thereon



should be imposed clean water of sulphur, and a small quantity of its gum. I am astonished, O all ye Turba, how the envious have in this work discoursed of the perfection rather than the commencement of the same!

The Turba answereth:- Why, therefore, have you left it to putrefy?

And he:- Thou hast spoken truly; putrefaction does not take place without the dry and the humid. But the vulgar putrefy with the humid. Thus the humid is merely coagulated with the dry. But out of both is the beginning of the work. Notwithstanding, the envious have divided this work into three parts, asserting that one quickly flees, but the other is fixed and immovable.

### **The Fifty-Sixth Dictum.**

Constans saith:- What have you to do with the treatises of the envious, for it is necessary that this work should deal with four things?

They answer:- Demonstrate, therefore, what are those four?

And he:- Earth, water, air, and fire. Ye have then those four elements without which nothing is ever generated, nor is anything absolved in the Art. Mix, therefore, the dry with the humid, which are earth and water, and cook in the fire and in the air, whence the spirit and the soul are dessicated. And know ye that the tenuous tingeing agent takes its power out of the tenuous part of the earth, out of the tenuous part of the fire and of the air, while out of the tenuous part of the water, a tenuous spirit has been dessicated. This, therefore, is the process of our work, namely, that everything may be turned into earth when the tenuous parts of these things are extracted, because a body is then composed which is a kind of atmospheric thing, and thereafter tinges the imposed body of coins. Beware, however, O all ye investigators of this art, lest ye multiply things, for the envious have multiplied and destroyed for you! They have also described various regimens that they might deceive; they have further called it (or have likened it to) the humid with all the humid, and the dry with all the dry, by the name of every stone and metal, gall of animals of the sea, the winged things of heaven and reptiles of the earth. But do ye who would tinge observe that bodies are tinged with bodies. For I say to you what the Philosopher said briefly and truly at the beginning of his book. In the art of gold is the quicksilver from Cambar, and in coins is the quicksilver from the Male. In nothing, however, look beyond this, since the two quicksilvers are also one.

### **The Fifty-Seventh Dictum.**

Acratus saith:- I signify to posterity that I make philosophy near to the Sun and Moon. He, therefore, that will attain to the truth let him take the moisture of the Sun and the Spume of the Moon.

The Turba answereth:- Why are you made an adversary to your brethren?

And he:- I have spoken nothing but the truth.

But they:- Take what the Turba hath taken.

And he:- I was so intending, yet, if you are willing, I direct posterity to take a part of the coins which the Philosophers have ordered, which also Hermes has adapted to the true tingeing, and a part of the copper of the Philosophers, to mix the same with the coins, and place all the four bodies in the vessel, the mouth of which must be carefully closed, lest the water escape. Cooking must proceed for seven days, when the copper, already pounded with the coins, is found turned into water. Let both be again slowly cooked, and fear nothing. Then let the vessel be opened, and a blackness

will appear above. Repeat the process, cook continually until the blackness of Kuhul, which is from the blackness of coins, be consumed. For when that is consumed a precious whiteness will appear on them; finally, being returned to their place, they are cooked until the whole is dried and is turned into stone. Also repeatedly and continuously cook that stone born of copper and coins with a fire sharper than the former, until the stone is destroyed, broken up, and turned into cinder, which is a precious cinder. Alas, O ye sons of the Doctrine, how precious is that which is produced from it! Mixing, therefore, the cinder with water, cook again, until that cinder liquefy therewith, and then cook and imbue with permanent water, until the composition becomes sweet and mild and red. Imbue until it becomes humid. Cook in a still hotter fire, and carefully close the mouth of the vessel, for by this regimen fugitive bodies become not-fugitive, spirits are turned into bodies, bodies into spirits, and both are connected together. Then are spirits made bodies having a tingeing and germinating soul.

The Turba answereth:- Now hast thou notified to posterity that Rubigo attaches itself to copper after the blackness is washed off with permanent water. Then it is congealed and becomes a body of Magnesia. Finally, it is cooked until the whole body is broken up. Afterwards the volatile is turned into a cinder and becomes copper without its shadow. Attrition also truly takes place. Concerning, therefore, the work of the Philosophers, what hast thou delivered to posterity, seeing that thou hast by no means called things by their proper names!

And he:- Following your own footsteps, I have discoursed even as have you.

Bonellus answereth:- You speak truly, for if you did otherwise we should not order your sayings to be written in our books.

### **The Fifty-Eighth Dictum.**

Balgus saith:- The whole Turba, O Acratus, has already spoken, as you have seen, but a benefactor sometimes deceives, though his intention is to do good.

And they:- Thou speakest truly. Proceed, therefore, according to thy opinion, and beware of envy!

Then he:- You must know that the envious have described this arcanum in the shade; in physical reasoning and astronomy, and the art of images; they have also likened it to trees; they have ambiguously concealed it by the names of metals, vapours, and reptiles; as is generally perceived in all their work. I, nevertheless, direct you, investigators of this science, to take iron and draw it into plates; finally, mix (or sprinkle) it with venom, and place it in its vessel, the mouth of which must be closed most carefully, and beware lest ye too much increase the humour, or, on the other hand, lest it be too dry, but stir it vigorously as a mass, because, if the water be in excess, it will not be contained in the chimney, while, if it be too dry, it will neither be conjoined nor cooked in the chimney; hence I direct you to confect it diligently; finally, place it in its vessel, the mouth of which must be closed internally and externally with clay, and, having kindled coals above it, after some days ye shall open it, and there shall ye find the iron plates already liquefied; while on the lid of the vessel ye shall find globules. For when the fire is kindled the vinegar ascends, because its spiritual nature passes into the air, wherefore, I direct you to keep that part separately. Ye must also know that by multiplied decoctions and attritions it is congealed and coloured by the fire, and its nature is changed. By a similar decoction and liquefaction Cambar is not disjoined. I notify to you that by the said frequent decoction the weight of a third part of the water is consumed, but the residue becomes a wind in the Cambar of the second spirit. And know ye that nothing is more precious or more excellent than the red sand of the sea, for the Sputum of Luna is united with the light of the Sun's rays. Luna is perfected by the coming on of night, and by the heat of the Sun the dew is congealed. Then, that being wounded, the dew of the death dealer is joined, and the more the days pass on the

more intensely is it congealed, and is not burned. For he who cooks with the Sun is himself congealed, and that signal whiteness causes it to overcome the terrene fire.

Then saith Bonites:- Do you not know, O Balgus, that the Spume of Luna tinges nothing except our copper?

And Balgus:- Thou speakest truly.

And he:- Why, therefore, hast thou omitted to describe that tree, of the fruit whereof whosoever eateth shall hunger nevermore?

And Balgus:- A certain person, who has followed science, has notified to me after what manner he discovered this same tree, and appropriately operating, did extract the fruit and eat of it. But when I inquired of him concerning the growth and the increment, he described that pure whiteness, thinking that the same is found without any laborious disposition. Then its Perfection is the fruit thereof. But when I further asked how it is nourished with food until it fructifies, he said: Take that tree, and build a house about it, which shall wholly surround the same, which shall also be circular, dark, encircled by dew, and shall have placed on it a man of a hundred years; shut and secure the door lest dust or wind should reach them. Then in the time of 180 days send them away to their homes. I say that man shall not cease to eat of the fruit of that tree to the perfection of the number [of the days] until the old man shall become young. O what marvellous natures, which have transformed the soul of that old man into a juvenile body, and the father is made into the son! Blessed be thou, O most excellent God!

### **The Fifty-Ninth Dictum.**

Theophilus saith:- I propose to speak further concerning those things which Bonites hath narrated.

And the Turba:- Speak, Brother, for thy brother hath discoursed elegantly.

And he:- Following in the steps of Bonites I will make perfect his sayings. It should be known that all the Philosophers, while they have concealed this disposition, yet spoke the truth in their treatises when they named water of life, for this reason, that whatsoever is mixed with the said water first dies, then lives and becomes young. And know, all ye disciples, that iron does not become rusty except by reason of this water, because it tinges the plates; it is then placed in the sun till it liquefies and is imbued, after which it is congealed. In these days it becomes rusty, but silence is better than this illumination.

The Turba answereth:- O Theophilus, beware of becoming envious, and complete thy speech!

And he:- Would that I might repeat the like thing!

And they:- What is thy will?

Then he:- Certain fruits, which proceed first from that perfect tree, do flourish in the beginning of the summer, and the more they are multiplied the more are they adorned, until they are perfected, and being mature become sweet. In the same way that woman, fleeing from her own children, with whom she lives, although partly angry, yet does not brook being overcome, nor that her husband should possess her beauty, who furiously loves her, and keeps awake contending with her, till he shall have carnal intercourse with her, and God make perfect the foetus, when he multiplies children to himself according to his pleasure. His beauty, therefore, is consumed by fire who does not approach his wife except by reason of lust. For when the term is finished he turns to her. I also

make known to you that the dragon never dies, but the Philosophers have put to death the woman who slays her spouses. For the belly of that woman is full of weapons and venom. Let, therefore, a sepulchre be dug for the dragon, and let that woman be buried with him, who being strongly joined with that woman, the more he clasps her and is entwined with her, the more his body, by the creation of female weapons in the body of the woman, is cut up into parts. For perceiving him mixed with the limbs of a woman he becomes secure from death, and the whole is turned into blood. But the Philosophers, beholding him turned into blood, leave him in the sun for certain days, until the lenitude is consumed, the blood dries up, and they find that venom which now is manifest. Then the wind is hidden.

### **The Sixtieth Dictum.**

Bonellus saith:- Know, all ye disciples, that out of the elect things nothing becomes useful without conjunction and regimen, because sperma is generated out of blood and desire. For the man mingling with the woman, the sperm is nourished by the humour of the womb, and by the moistening blood, and by heat, and when forty nights have elapsed the sperm is formed. But if the humidity of the blood and of the womb were not heat, the sperm would not be dissolved, nor the foetus be procreated. But God has constituted that heat and blood for the nourishment of the sperm until the foetus is brought forth, after which it is not nourished, save by milk and fire, sparingly and gradually, while it is dust, and the more it burns the more, the bones being strengthened, it is led towards youth, arriving at which it is independent. Thus it behoves you also to act in this Art. Know ye that without heat nothing is ever generated, and that the bath causes the matter to perish by means of intense heat. If, indeed, it be frigid, it puts to flight and disperses, but if it have been tempered, it is convenient and sweet to the body, wherefore the veins become smooth and the flesh is augmented. Behold it has been demonstrated to you, all ye disciples! Understand, therefore, and in all things which ye attempt to rule, fear God.

### **The Sixty-First Dictum.**

Moses saith:- It is to be observed that the envious have named lead of copper instruments of formation, simulating, deceiving posterity, to whom I give notice that there are no instruments except from our own white, strong, and splendid powder, and from our concave stone and marble, to the whole work whereof there is no more suitable powder, nor one more conjoined to our composition, than the powder of Alociae, out of which are produced instruments of formation. Further, the Philosophers have already said: Take instruments out of the egg. Yet they have not said what the egg is, nor of what bird. And know ye that the regimen of these things is more difficult than the entire work, because, if the composition be ruled more than it should be, its light is taken and extinguished by the sea. Wherefore the Philosophers have ordered that it should be ruled with profound judgment. The moon, therefore, being at the full, take this and place in sand till it be dissolved. And know ye that while ye are placing the same in sand and repeating the process, unless ye have patience, ye err in ruling, and corrupt the work. Cook, therefore, the same in a gentle fire until ye see that it is dissolved. Then extinguish with vinegar, and ye shall find one thing separated from three companions. And know ye that the first, Ixir, commingles, the second burns, while the third liquefies. In the first place, therefore, impose nine ounces of vinegar twice - first while the vessel is being made hot, and second when it is heated.

### **The Sixty-Second Dictum.**

Mundus saith:- It behoves you, O all ye seekers after this Art, to know that whatsoever the Philosophers have narrated or ordained, Kenckel, herbs, geldum, and carmen, are one thing! Do not, therefore, trouble about a plurality of things, for there is one Tyrian tincture of the Philosophers to which they have given names at will, and having abolished the proper name, they have called it

black, because it has been extracted from our sea. And know that the ancient priests did not condescend to wear artificial garments, whence, for purifying altars, and lest they should introduce into them anything sordid or impure, they tinged Kenckel with a Tyrian colour; but our Tyrian colour, which they placed in their altars and treasuries, was more clean and fragrant than can be described by me, which also has been extracted from our red and most pure sea, which is sweet and of a pleasant odour, and is neither sordid nor impure in putrefaction. And know ye that we have given many names to it. which are all true - an example of which, for those that possess understanding, is to be traced in corn that is being ground. For after grinding it is called by another name, and after it has been passed through the sieve, and the various substances have been separated one from another, each of these has its own name, and yet fundamentally there is but one name, to wit, corn, from which many names are distinguished. Thus we call the purple in each grade of its regimen by the name of its own colour.

### **The Sixty-Third Dictum.**

Philosophus saith:- I notify to posterity that the nature is male and female, wherefore the envious have called it the body of Magnesia, because therein is the most great arcanum! Accordingly, O all ye seekers after this Art, place Magnesia in its vessel, and cook diligently! Then, opening it after some days, ye shall find the whole changed into water. Cook further until it be coagulated, and contain itself. But, when ye hear of the sea in the books of the envious, know that they signify humour, while by the basket they signify the vessel, and by the medicines they mean Nature, because it germinates

and flowers. But when the envious say: Wash until the blackness of the copper passes away, certain people name this blackness coins. But Agadimon has clearly demonstrated when he boldly put forth these words: It is to be noted, O all ye demonstrators of this art, that the things [or the copper] being first mixed and cooked once, ye shall find the prescribed blackness! That is to say, they all become black. This, therefore, is the lead of the Wise, concerning which they have treated very frequently in their books. Some also call it [the lead] of our black coins.

### **The Sixty-Fourth Dictum.**

Pythagoras saith:- How marvellous is the diversity of the Philosophers in those things which they formerly asserted, and in their coming together [or agreement], in respect of this small and most common thing, wherein the precious thing is concealed! And if the vulgar knew, O all ye investigators of this art, the same small and vile thing, they would deem it a lie! Yet, if they knew its efficacy, they would not vilify it, but God hath concealed this from the crowd lest the world should be devastated.

### **The Sixty-Fifth Dictum.**

Horfolcus saith:- You must know, O all ye who love wisdom, that whereas Mundus hath been teaching this Art, and placing before you most lucid syllogisms, he that does not understand what he has said is a brute animal! But I will explain the regimen of this small thing, in order that any one, being introduced into this Art, may become bolder, may, more assuredly consider it, and although it be small, may compose the common with that which is dear, and the dear with that which is common. Know ye that in the beginning of the mixing, it behoves you to commingle elements which are crude, gentle, sincere, and not cooked or governed, over a gentle fire. Beware of intensifying the fire until the elements are conjoined, for these should follow one another, and be embraced in a complexion, whereby they are gradually burnt, until they be dessicated in the said gentle fire. And know that one spirit burns one thing and destroys one thing, and one body strengthens one spirit, and teaches the same to contend with the fire. But, after the first combustion,

it is necessary that it should be washed, cleansed, and dealbated on the fire until all things become one colour; with which, afterwards, it behoves you to mix the residuum of the whole humour, and then its colour will be exalted. For the elements, being diligently cooked in the fire, rejoice, and are changed into different natures, because the liquefied, which is the lead, becomes not-liquefied, the humid becomes dry, the thick body becomes a spirit, and the fleeing spirit becomes strong and fit to do battle against the fire. Whence the Philosopher saith: Convert the elements and thou shalt find what thou seekest. But to convert the elements is to make the moist dry and the fugitive fixed. These things being accomplished by the disposition, let the operator leave it in the fire until the gross be made subtle, and the subtle remain as a tingeing spirit. Know ye, also, that the death and life of the elements proceed from fire, and that the composite germinates itself, and produces that which ye desire, God favouring. But when the colours begin ye shall behold the miracles of the wisdom of God, until the Tyrian colour be accomplished. O wonder-working Nature, tingeing other natures! O heavenly Nature, separating and converting the elements by regimen! Nothing, therefore, is more precious than these Natures in that Nature which multiplies the composite, and makes fixed and scarlet.

### **The Sixty-Sixth Dictum.**

Exemiganus saith:- Thou hast already treated, O Lucas, concerning living and concealed silver, which is Magnesia, as it behoves thee, and thou hast commanded posterity to prove [or to experiment] and to read the books, knowing what the Philosophers have said: Search the latent spirit and disesteem it not, seeing that when it remains it is a great arcanum and effects many good things.

### **The Sixty-Seventh Dictum.**

Lucas saith:- I testify to posterity, and what I set forth is more lucid than are your words, that the Philosopher saith: Burn the copper, burn the silver, burn the gold.

Hermiganus replies:- Behold something more dark than ever!

The Turba answereth:- Illumine, therefore, that which is dark.

And he:- As to that which he said - Burn, burn, burn, the diversity is only in the names, for they are one and the same thing.

And they:- Woe unto you! how shortly hast thou dealt with it! why art thou Poisoned with jealousy!

And he:- Is it desirable that I should speak more clearly?

And they:- Do so.

And he:- I signify that to whiten is to burn, but to make red is life. For the envious have multiplied many names that they might lead posterity astray, to whom I testify that the definition of this Art is the liquefaction of the body and the separation of the soul from the body, seeing that copper, like a man, has a soul and a body. Therefore, it behoves you, O all ye Sons of the Doctrine, to destroy the body and extract the soul therefrom! Wherefore the Philosophers said that the body does not penetrate the body, but that there is a subtle nature, which is the soul, and it is this which tinges and penetrates the body. In nature, therefore, there is a body and there is a soul.

The Turba answereth:- Despite your desire to explain, you have put forth dark words.

And he:- I signify that the envious have narrated and said that the splendour of Saturn does not appear unless it perchance be dark when it ascends in the air, that Mercury is hidden by the rays of the Sun, that quicksilver vivifies the body by its fiery strength, and thus the work is accomplished. But Venus, when she becomes oriental, precedes the Sun.

### **The Sixty-Eighth Dictum.**

Attamus saith:- Know, O all ye investigators of this Art, that our work, of which ye have been inquiring, is produced by the generation of the sea, by which and with which, after God, the work is completed! Take, therefore, Halsut and old sea stones, and boil with coals until they become white. Then extinguish in white vinegar. If 24 ounces thereof have been boiled, let the heat be extinguished with a third part of the vinegar, that is, 8 ounces; pound with white vinegar, and cook in the sun and black earth for 42 days. But the second work is performed from the tenth day of the month of September to the tenth day [or grade] of Libra. Do not impose the vinegar a second time in this work, but leave the same to be cooked until all its vinegar be dried up and it becomes a fixed earth, like Egyptian earth. And the fact that one work is congealed more quickly and another more slowly, arises from the diversity of cooking. But if the place where it is cooked be humid and dewy it is congealed more quickly, while if it be dry it is congealed more slowly.

### **The Sixty-Ninth Dictum.**

Florus saith:- I am thinking of perfecting thy treatise, O Mundus, for thou has not accomplished the disposition of the cooking!

And he:- Proceed, O Philosopher!

And Florus:- I teach you, O Sons of the Doctrine, that the sign of the goodness of the first decoction is the extraction of its redness!

And he:- Describe what is redness.

And Florus:- When ye see that the matter is entirely black, know that whiteness has been hidden in the belly of that blackness. Then it behoves you to extract that whiteness most subtly from that blackness, for ye know how to discern between them. But in the second decoction let that whiteness be placed in a vessel with its instruments, and let it be cooked gently until it become completely white. But when, O all ye seekers after this Art, ye shall perceive that whiteness appear and flowing over all, be certain that redness is hid in that whiteness! However, it does not behove you to extract it, but rather to cook it until the whole become a most deep red, with which nothing can compare. Know also that the first blackness is produced out of the nature of Marteck, and that redness is extracted from that blackness, which red has improved the black, and has made peace between the fugitive and the non-fugitive, reducing the two into one.

The Turba answereth:- And why was this?

And he:- Because the cruciated matter when it is submerged in the body, changes it into an unalterable and indelible nature. It behoves you, therefore, to know this sulphur which blackens the body. And know ye that the same sulphur cannot be handled, but it cruciates and tinges. And the sulphur which blackens is that which does not open the door to the fugitive and turns into the fugitive with the fugitive. Do you not see that the cruciating does not cruciate with harm or corruption, but by co-adunation and utility of things? For if its victim were noxious and inconvenient, it would not be embraced thereby until its colours were extracted from it unalterable and indelible. This we have called water of sulphur, which water we have prepared for the red

tinctures; for the rest it does not blacken; but that which does blacken, and this does not come to pass without blackness, I have testified to be the key of the work.

### **The Seventieth Dictum.**

Mundus saith:- Know, all ye investigators of this Art, that the head is all things, which if it hath not, all that it imposes profits nothing. Accordingly, the Masters have said that what is perfected is one, and a diversity of natures does not improve that thing, but one and a suitable nature, which it behoves you to rule carefully, for by ignorance of ruling some have erred. Do not heed, therefore, the plurality of these compositions, nor those things which the philosophers have enumerated in their books. For the nature of truth is one, and the followers of Nature have termed it that one thing in the belly whereof is concealed the natural arcanum. This arcanum is neither seen nor known except by the Wise. He, therefore, who knows how to extract its complexion and rules equably, for him shall a nature rise forth therefrom which shall conquer all natures, and then shall that word be fulfilled which was written by the Masters, namely, that Nature rejoices in Nature, Nature overcomes Nature, and Nature contains Nature; at the same time there are not many or diverse Natures, but one having in itself its own natures and properties, by which it prevails over other things. Do you not see that the Master has begun with one and finished one? Hence has he called those unities Sulphureous Water, conquering all Nature.

### **The Seventy-First Dictum.**

Bracus saith:- How elegantly Mundus hath described this sulphureous water! For unless solid bodies are destroyed by a nature wanting a body, until the bodies become not-bodies, and even as a most tenuous spirit, ye cannot [attain] that most tenuous and tingeing soul, which is hidden in the natural belly. And know that unless the body be withered up and so destroyed that it dies, and unless ye extract from it its soul, which is a tingeing spirit, ye are unable to tinge a body therewith.

### **The Seventy-Second Dictum.**

Philosophus saith:- The first composition, that is, the body of Magnesia, is made out of several things, although they become one, and are called by one name, which the ancients have termed Albar of copper. But when it is ruled it is called by ten names, taken from the colours which appear in the regimen of the body of this Magnesia. It is necessary, therefore, that the lead be turned into blackness; then the ten aforesaid shall appear in the ferment of gold, with sericon, which is a composition called by ten names. When all these things have been said, we mean nothing more by these names than Albar of copper, because it tinges every body which has entered into the composition. But composition is twofold - one is humid, the other is dry. When they are cooked prudently they become one, and are called the good thing of several names. But when it becomes red it is called Flower of Gold, Ferment of Gold, Gold of Coral, Gold of the Beak. It is also called redundant red sulphur and red orpiment. But while it remains crude lead of copper, it is called bars and plates of metal. Behold I have revealed its names when it is raw, which also we should distinguish from the names when it has been cooked. Let it therefore be pondered over. It behoves me now to exhibit to you the quantity of the fire, and the numbers of its days, and the diversity of intensity thereof in every grade, so that he who shall possess this book may belong unto himself, and be freed from poverty, so that he shall remain secure in that middle way which is closed to those who are deficient in this most precious art. I have seen, therefore, many kinds of fire. One is made out of straw and cinder, coals and flame, but one without flame. Experiment shows that there are intermediate grades between these kinds. But lead is lead of copper, in which is the whole arcanum. Now, concerning the days of the night in which will be the perfection of the most great arcanum, I will treat in its Proper place in what follows. And know most assuredly that if a little gold be placed in the composition, there will result a patent and white tincture. Wherefore also a



sublime gold and a patent gold is found in the treasuries of the former philosophers. Wherefore those things are unequal which they introduce into their composition. Inasmuch as the elements are commingled and are turned into lead of copper, coming out of their own former natures, they are turned into a new nature. Then they are called one nature and one genus. These things being accomplished, it is placed in a glass vessel, unless in a certain way the composition drinks the water and is altered in its colours. In every grade it is beheld, when it is coloured by a venerable redness. Although concerning this elixir we read in the sayings of the philosophers: Take gold, occurring frequently, it is only needful to do so once. Wishing, therefore, to know the certitude of the adversary, consider what Democritus saith, how he begins speaking from bottom to top, then reversing matters he proceeds from top to bottom. For, he said: Take iron, lead, and albar for copper, which reversing, he again says: And our copper for coins, lead for gold, gold for gold of coral, and gold of coral for gold of crocus. Again, in the second place, when he begins from the top to the bottom, he saith: Take gold, coin, copper, lead, and iron; he shews, therefore, by his sayings that only semi-gold is taken. And without doubt gold is not changed into rust without lead and copper, and unless it be imbued with vinegar known by the wise, until, being cooked, it is turned into redness. This, therefore, is the redness which all the Philosophers signified, because, how ever they said: Take gold and it becomes gold of coral; Take gold of coral and it becomes purple gold - all these things are only names of those colours, for it behoves them that vinegar be placed in it, because these colours come from it. But by these things which the Philosophers have mentioned under various names, they have signified stronger bodies and forces. It is taken, therefore, once, that it may become rubigo and then vinegar is imposed on it. For when the said colours appear, it is necessary that each be decocted in forty days, so that it may be desiccated, the water being consumed; finally being imbued and placed in the vessel, it is cooked until its utility appear. Its first grade becomes as a citrine mucra, the second as red, the third as the dry pounded crocus of the vulgar. So is it imposed upon coin.

## **Conclusion.**

Agmon saith:- I will add the following by way of a corollary. Whosoever does not liquefy and coagulate errs greatly. Therefore, make the earth black; separate the soul and the water thereof, afterwards whiten; so shall ye find what ye seek. I say unto you that whoso makes earth black and then dissolves with fire, till it becomes even like unto a naked sword, who also fixes the whole with consuming fire, deserves to be called happy, and shall be exalted above the circle of the world. This much concerning the revelation of our stone, is, we doubt not, enough for the Sons of the Doctrine. The strength thereof, shall never become corrupted, but the same, when it is placed in the fire, shall be increased. If you seek to dissolve, it shall be dissolved; but if you would coagulate, it shall be coagulated. Behold, no one is without it, and yet all do need it! There are many names given to it, and yet it is called by one only, while, if need be, it is concealed. It is also a stone and not a stone, spirit, soul, and body; it is white, volatile, concave, hairless, cold, and yet no one can apply the tongue with impunity to its surface. If you wish that it should fly, it flies; if you say that it is water, you Speak the truth; if you say that it is not water, you speak falsely. Do not then be deceived by the multiplicity of names, but rest assured that it is one thing, unto which nothing alien is added. Investigate the place thereof, and add nothing that is foreign. Unless the names were multiplied, so that the vulgar might be deceived, many would deride our wisdom.

# Coelum philosophorum by Paracelsus

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## THE COELUM PHILOSOPHORUM, OR BOOK OF VEXATIONS;

By PHILIPPUS THEOPHRASTUS PARACELSUS.  
THE SCIENCE AND NATURE OF ALCHEMY, AND WHAT OPINION SHOULD  
BE  
FORMED THEREOF.

Regulated by the Seven Rules or Fundamental Canons according  
to the seven commonly known Metals; and containing a  
Preface with certain Treatises and Appendices.

### THE PREFACE OF THEOPHRASTUS PARACELSUS TO ALL ALCHEMISTS AND READERS OF THIS BOOK.

YOU who are skilled in Alchemy, and as many others as promise yourselves great riches or chiefly desire to make gold and silver, which Alchemy in different ways promises and teaches; equally, too, you who willingly undergo toil and vexations, and wish not to be freed from them, until you have attained your rewards, and the fulfilment of the promises made to you; experience teaches this every day, that out of thousands of you not even one accomplishes his desire. Is this a failure of Nature or of Art? I say, no; but it is rather the fault of fate, or of the unskilfulness of the operator.

Since, therefore, the characters of the sign of the stars and planets of heaven, together with the other names, inverted words, receipts, materials, and instruments are thoroughly well known to such as are acquainted with this art, it would be altogether superfluous to recur to these same subjects in the present book, although the use of such signs, names, and characters at the proper time is by no means without advantage.

But herein will be noticed another way of treating Alchemy different from the previous method, and deduced by Seven Canons from the sevenfold series of the metals. This, indeed, will not give scope for a pompous parade of words, but, nevertheless, in the consideration of those Canons everything which should be separated from Alchemy will be treated at sufficient length, and, moreover, many secrets of other things are herein contained. Hence, too, result certain marvellous speculations and new operations which frequently differ from the writings and opinions of ancient operators and natural philosophers, but have been discovered and confirmed by full proof and experimentation. Moreover, in this Art nothing is more true than this, though it be little known and gains small confidence. All the fault and cause of difficulty in Alchemy, whereby very many persons are reduced to poverty, and others labour in vain, is wholly and solely lack of skill in the operator, and the defect or excess of materials, whether in quantity or quality, whence it ensues that, in the course of operation, things are wasted or reduced to nothing. If the true process shall have been found, the substance itself while transmuting approaches daily more and more towards perfection. The straight road is easy, but it is found by very few.

Sometimes it may happen that a speculative artist may, by his own eccentricity, think out for himself some new method in Alchemy, be the consequence anything or nothing. He need do nought in order to reduce something into nothing, and again bring back something out of nothing. Yet this proverb of the incredulous is not wholly false. Destruction perfects that which is good; for the good cannot appear on account of that which conceals it. The good is least good whilst it is thus concealed. The concealment must be removed that so the good may be able freely to appear in its

own brightness. For example, the mountain, the sand, the earth, or the stone in which a metal has grown is such a concealment. Each one of the visible metals is a concealment of the other six metals. By the element of fire all that is imperfect is destroyed and taken away, as, for instance, the five metals, Mercury, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, and Saturn.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, the perfect metals, Sol and Luna, are not consumed in that same fire. They remain in the fire: and at the same time, out of the other imperfect ones which are destroyed, they assume their own body and become visible to the eyes. How, and by what method, this comes about can be gathered from the Seven Canons. Hence it may be learnt what are the nature and property of each metal, what it effects with the other metals, and what are its powers in commixture with them.

But this should be noted in the very first place: that these Seven Canons cannot be perfectly understood by every cursory reader at a first glance or a single reading. An inferior intelligence does not easily perceive occult and abstruse subjects. Each one of these Canons demands no slight discussion. Many persons, puffed up with pride, fancy they can easily comprehend all which this book comprises. Thus they set down its contents as useless and futile, thinking they have something far better of their own, and that therefore they can afford to despise what is here contained.

## THE COELUM PHILOSOPHORUM.

### PART I.

#### THE SEVEN CANONS OF THE METALS.

##### THE FIRST CANON.

###### CONCERNING THE NATURE AND PROPERTIES OF MERCURY.<sup>2</sup>

All things are concealed in all. One of them all is the concealer of the rest – their corporeal vessel, external, visible, and movable. All liquefactions are manifested in that vessel. For the vessel is a living and corporeal spirit, and so all coagulations or congelations enclosed in it, when prevented from flowing and surrounded, are not therewith content. No name can be found for this liquefaction, by which it may be designated; still less can it be found for its origin. And since no heat is so strong as to be equalised therewith, it should be compared to the fire of Gehenna. A liquefaction of this kind has no sort of connection with others made by the heat of natural fire, or congelated or coagulated by natural cold. These congelations, through their weakness, are unable to obtain in Mercury, and therefore, on that account, he altogether contemns them. Hence one may gather that elementary powers, in their process of destruction, can add nothing to, nor take away anything from, celestial powers (which are called Quintessence or its elements), nor have they any capacity for operating. Celestial and infernal powers do not obey the four elements, whether they be dry, moist, hot, or cold. No one of them has the faculty of acting against a Quintessence; but each one contains within itself its own powers and means of action.<sup>3</sup>

##### THE SECOND CANON.

###### CONCERNING THE NATURE AND PROPERTIES OF JUPITER.

In that which is manifest (that is to say, the body of Jupiter) the other six corporeal metals are spiritually concealed, but one more deeply and more tenaciously than another. Jupiter has nothing of a Quintessence in his composition, but is of the nature of the four elementaries. On this account

this liquefaction is brought about by the application of a moderate fire, and, in like manner, he is coagulated by moderate cold. He has affinity with the liquefactions of all the other metals. For the more like he is to some other nature, the more easily he is united thereto by conjunction. For the operation of those nearly allied is easier and more natural than of those which are remote. The remote body does not press upon the other. At the same time, it is not feared, though it may be very powerful. Hence it happens that men do not aspire to the superior orders of creation, because they are far distant from them, and do not see their glory. In like manner, they do not much fear those of an inferior order, because they are remote, and none of the living knows their condition or has experienced the misery of their punishment. For this cause an infernal spirit is accounted as nothing. For more remote objects are on that account held more cheaply and occupy a lower place, since according to the propriety of its position each object turns out better, or is transmuted. This can be proved by various examples.

The more remote, therefore, Jupiter is found to be from Mars and Venus, and the nearer Sol and Luna, the more "goldness" or "silveriness", if I may so say, it contains in its body, and the greater, stronger, more visible, more tangible, more amiable, more acceptable, more distinguished, and more true it is found than in some remote body. Again, the more remote a thing is, of the less account is it esteemed in all the respects aforesaid, since what is present is always preferred before what is absent. In proportion as the nearer is clear the more remote is occult. This, therefore, is a point which you, as an Alchemist, must seriou(S)ly debate with yourself, how you can relegate Jupiter to a remote and abstruse place, which Sol and Luna occupy, and how, in turn, you can summon Sol and Luna from remote positions to a near place, where Jupiter is corporeally posited; so that, in the same way, Sol and Luna also may really be present there corporeally before your eyes. For the transmutation of metals from imperfection to perfection there are several practical receipts. Mix the one with the other. Then again separate the one pure from the other. This is nothing else but the process of permutation, set in order by perfect alchemical labour. Note that Jupiter has much gold and not a little silver. Let Saturn and Luna be imposed on him, and of the rest Luna will be augmented.<sup>4</sup>

### THE THIRD CANON.

#### CONCERNING MARS AND HIS PROPERTIES.

The six occult metals have expelled the seventh from them, and have made it corporeal, leaving it little efficacy, and imposing on it great hardness and weight. This being the case, they have shaken off all their own strength of coagulation and hardness, which they manifest in this other body. On the contrary, they have retained in themselves their colour and liquefaction, together with their nobility. It is very difficult and laborious for a prince or a king to be produced out of an unfit and common man. But Mars acquires dominion. with strong and pugnacious hand, and seizes on the position of king. He should, however, be on his guard against snares; that he be not led captive suddenly and unexpectedly. It must also be considered by what method Mars may be able to take the place of king, and Sol and Luna, with Saturn, hold the place of Mars.<sup>5</sup>

### THE FOURTH CANON.

#### CONCERNING VENUS AND ITS PROPERTIES.

The other six metals have rendered Venus an extrinsical body by means of all their colour and method of liquefaction. It may be necessary, in order to understand this, that we should show, by some examples, how a manifest thing may be rendered occult, and an occult thing rendered materially manifest by means of fire. Whatever is combustible can be naturally transmuted by fire from one form into another, namely, into lime, soot, ashes, glass, colours, stones, and earth. This

last can again be reduced to many new metallic bodies. If a metal, too, be burnt, or rendered fragile by old rust, it can again acquire malleability by applications of fire.<sup>6</sup>

#### THE FIFTH CANON.

##### CONCERNING THE NATURE AND PROPERTIES OP SATURN.

Of his own nature Saturn speaks thus: The other six have cast me out as their examiner. They have thrust me forth from them and from a spiritual place. They have also added a corruptible body as a place of abode, so that I may be what they neither are nor desire to become. My six brothers are spiritual, and thence it ensues that so often as I am put in the fire they penetrate my body and, together with me, perish in the fire, Sol and Luna excepted. These are purified and ennobled in my water. My spirit is a water softening the rigid and congelated bodies of my brothers. Yet my body is inclined to the earth. Whatever is received into me becomes conformed thereto, and by means of us is converted into one body. It would be of little use to the world if it should learn, or at least believe, what lies hid in me, and what I am able to effect. It would be more profitable it should ascertain what I am able to do with myself. Deserting all the methods of the Alchemists, it would then use only that which is in me and can be done by me. The stone of cold is in me. This is a water by means of which I make the spirits of the six metals congeal into the essence of the seventh, and this is to promote Sol with Luna.<sup>7</sup>

Two kinds of Antimony are found: one the common black by which Sol is purified when liquefied therein. This has the closest affinity with Saturn. The other kind is the white, which is also called Magnesia and Bismuth. It has great affinity with Jupiter, and when mixed with the other Antimony it augments Luna.

#### THE SIXTH CANON.

##### CONCERNING LUNA AND THE PROPERTIES THEREOF.

The endeavour to make Saturn or Mars out of Luna involves no lighter or easier work than to make Luna, with great gain, out of Mercury, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, or Saturn. It is not useful to transmute what is perfect into what is imperfect, but the latter into the former. Nevertheless, it is well to know what is the material of Luna, or whence it proceeds. Whoever is not able to consider or find this out will neither be able to make Luna. It will be asked, What is Luna? It is among the seven metals which are spiritually concealed, itself the seventh, external, corporeal, and material. For this seventh always contains the six metals spiritually hidden in itself. And the six spiritual metals do not exist without one external and material metal. So also no corporeal metal can have place or essence without those six spiritual ones. The seven corporeal metals mix easily by means of liquefaction, but this mixture is not useful for making Sol or Luna. For in that mixture each metal remains in its own nature, or fixed in the fire, or flies from it. For example, mix, in any way you can, Mercury, Jupiter, Saturn, Mars, Venus, Sol, and Luna. It will not thence result that Sol and Luna will so change the other five that, by the agency of Sol and Luna, these will become Sol and Luna. For though all be liquefied into a single mass, nevertheless each remains in its nature whatever it is. This is the judgment which must be passed on corporeal mixture. But concerning spiritual mixture and communion of the metals, it should be known that no separation or mortification is spiritual, because such spirits can never exist without bodies. Though the body should be taken away from them and mortified a hundred times in one hour, nevertheless, they would always acquire another much more noble than the former. And this is the transposition of the metals from one death to another, that is to say, from a lesser degree into one greater and higher, namely, into Luna; and from a better into the best and most most perfect, that is, into Sol, the brilliant and altogether royal metal. It is most true, then, as frequently said above, that the six metals always generate a seventh, or

produce it from themselves clear in its *esse*.

A question may arise: If it be true that Luna and every metal derives its origin and is generated from the other six, what is then its property and its nature? To this we reply: From Saturn, Mercury, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, and Sol, nothing and no other metal than Luna could be made. The cause is that each metal has two good virtues of the other six, of which altogether there are twelve. These are the spirit of Luna, which thus in a few words may be made known. Luna is composed of the six spiritual metals and their virtues, whereof each possesses two. Altogether, therefore, twelve are thus posited in one corporeal metal, which are compared to the seven planets and the twelve celestial signs. Luna has from the planet Mercury, and from Aquarius and Pisces, its liquidity and bright white colour. So Luna has from Jupiter, with Sagittarius and Taurus, its white colour and its great firmness in fire. Luna has from Mars, with Cancer and Aries, its hardness and its clear sound. Luna has from Venus, with Gemini and Libra, its measure of coagulation and its From Saturn, with Virgo and Scorpio, its homogeneous body, with gravity. From Sol, with Leo and Virgo, its spotless purity and great constancy against the power of fire. Such is the knowledge of the natural exaltation and of the course of the spirit and body of Luna, with its composite nature and wisdom briefly summarised. Furthermore, it should be pointed out what kind of a body such metallic spirits acquire in their primitive generation by means of celestial influx. For the metal-digger, when he has crushed the stone, contemptible as it is in appearance, liquefies it, corrupts it, and altogether mortifies it with fire. Then this metallic spirit, in such a process of mortification, receives a better and more noble body, not friable but malleable. Then comes the Alchemist, who again corrupts, mortifies, and artificially prepares such a metallic body. Thus once more that spirit of the metal assumes a more noble and more perfect body, putting itself forward clearly into the light, except it be Sol or Luna. Then at last the metallic spirit and body are perfectly united, are safe from the corruption of elementary fire, and also incorruptible.<sup>8</sup>

#### THE SEVENTH CANON.

##### CONCERNING THE NATURE OF SOL AND ITS PROPERTIES.

The seventh after the six spiritual metals is corporeally Sol, which in itself is nothing but pure fire. What in outward appearance is more beautiful, more brilliant, more clear and perceptible, a heavier, colder, or more homogeneous body to see? And it is easy to perceive the cause of this, namely, that it contains in itself the congelations of the other six metals, out of which it is made externally into one most compact body. Its liquefaction proceeds from elementary fire, or is caused by the liquations of Mercury, with Pisces and Aquarius, concealed spiritually within it. The most manifest proof of this is that Mercury is easily mingled corporeally with the Sun as in an embrace. But for Sol, when the heat is withdrawn and the cold supervenes after liquefaction, to coagulate and to become hard and solid, there is need of the other five metals, whose nature it embraces in itself – Jupiter, Saturn, Mars, Venus, Luna. In these five metals the cold abodes with their regimens are especially found. Hence it happens that Sol can with difficulty be liquefied without the heat of fire, on account of the cold whereof mention has been made. For Mercury cannot assist with his natural heat or liquefaction, or defend himself against the cold of the five metals, because the heat of Mercury is not sufficient to retain Sol in a state of liquefaction. Wherefore Sol has to obey the five metals rather than Mercury alone. Mercury itself has no office of itself save always to flow. Hence it happens that in coagulations of the other metals it can effect nothing, since its nature is not to make anything hard or solid, but liquid. To render fluid is the nature of heat and life, but cold has the nature of hardness, consolidation, and immobility, which is compared to death. For example, the six cold metals, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, Mars, Venus, Luna, if they are to be liquefied must be brought to that condition by the heat of fire. Snow or ice, which are cold, will not produce this effect, but rather will harden. As soon as ever the metal liquefied by fire is removed therefrom, the cold, seizing upon it, renders it hard, congelated, and immovable of itself. But in order that Mercury may remain fluid and alive continually, say, I pray you, whether this will be affected with heat on

cold? Whoever answers that this is brought about by a cold and damp nature, and that it has its life from cold – the promulgator of this opinion, having no knowledge of Nature, is led away by the vulgar. For the vulgar man judges only falsely, and always holds firmly on to his error. So then let him who loves truth withdraw therefrom. Mercury, in fact, lives not at all from cold but from a warm and fiery nature. Whatever lives is fire, because heat is life, but cold the occasion of death. The fire of Sol is of itself pure, not indeed alive, but hard, and so far shews the colour of sulphur in that yellow and red are mixed therein in due proportion. The five cold metals are Jupiter, Mars, Saturn, Venus, and Luna, which assign to Sol their virtues; according to cold, the body itself; according to fire, colour; according to dryness, solidity; according to humidity, weight; and out of brightness, sound. But that gold is not burned in the element of terrestrial fire, nor is even corrupted, is effected by the firmness of Sol. For one fire cannot burn another, or even consume it; but rather if fire be added to fire it is increased, and becomes more powerful in its operations. The celestial fire which flows to us on the earth from the Sun is not such a fire as there is in heaven, neither is it like that which exists upon the earth, but that celestial fire with us is cold and congealed, and it is the body of the Sun. Wherefore the Sun can in no way be overcome by our fire. This only happens, that it is liquefied, like snow or ice, by that same celestial Sun. Fire, therefore, has not the power of burning fire, because the Sun is fire, which, dissolved in heaven, is coagulated with us.

Gold is in its	1	Celestial		Dissolved	
Essence three-	{	2	Elementary}	and	Fluid
fold		3	Metallic	is	Corporeal.

## THE END OF THE SEVEN CANONS.

## THE COELUM PHILOSOPHORUM.

### PART II.

#### CERTAIN TREATISES AND APPENDICES ARISING OUT OF

#### THE SEVEN CANONS.

#### GOD AND NATURE DO NOTHING IN VAIN.

THE eternal position of all things, independent of time, without beginning or end, operates everywhere. It works essentially where otherwise there is no hope. It accomplishes that which is deemed impossible. What appears beyond belief or hope emerges into truth after a wonderful fashion.

#### NOTE ON MERCURIUS VIVUS.

Whatever tinges with a white colour has the nature of life, and the properties and power of light, which causally produces life. Whatever, on the other hand, tinges with blackness, or produces black, has a nature in common with death, the properties of darkness, and forces productive of death. The earth with its frigidty is a coagulation and fixation of this kind of hardness. For the house is always dead; but he who inhabits the house lives. If you can discover the force of this illustration you have conquered.

Tested liquefactive powder.  
Burn fat verbena.<sup>9</sup>

Recipe. – Salt nitre, four ounces; a moiety of sulphur; tartar, one ounce. Mix and liquefy.

#### WHAT IS TO BE THOUGHT CONCERNING THE CONGELATION OF MERCURY.

To mortify or congeal Mercury, and afterwards seek to turn it into Luna, and to sublimate it with great labour, is labour in vain, since it involves a dissipation of Sol and Luna existing therein. There is another method, far different and much more concise, whereby, with little waste of Mercury and less expenditure of toil, it is transmuted into Luna without congelation. Any one can at pleasure learn this Art in Alchemy, since it is so simple and easy; and by it, in a short time, he could make any quantity of silver and gold. It is tedious to read long descriptions, and everybody wishes to be advised in straightforward words. Do this, then; proceed as follows, and you will have Sol and Luna, by help whereof you will turn out a very rich man. Wait awhile, I beg, while this process is described to you in few words, and keep these words well digested, so that out of Saturn, Mercury, and Jupiter you may make Sol and Luna. There is not, nor ever will be, any art so easy to find out and practise, and so effective in itself. The method of making Sol and Luna by Alchemy is so prompt that there is no more need of books, or of elaborate instruction, than there would be if one wished to write about last year's snow.

#### CONCERNING THE RECEIPTS OF ALCHEMY.

What, then, shall we say about the receipts of Alchemy, and about the diversity of its vessels and instruments? These are furnaces, glasses, jars, waters, oils, limes, sulphurs, salts, saltpetres, alums, vitriols, chrysocollae, copper-greens, atraments, auri-pigments, fel vitri, ceruse, red earth, thucia, wax, lutum sapientiae, pounded glass, verdigris, soot, testae ovorum, crocus of Mars, soap, crystal, chalk, arsenic, antimony, minium, elixir, lazurium, gold-leaf, salt-nitre, sal ammoniac, calamine stone, magnesia, bolus armenus, and many other things. Moreover, concerning preparations, putrefactions, digestions, probations, solutions, cementings, filtrations, reverberations, calcinations, graduations, rectifications, amalgamations, purgations, etc., with these alchemical books are crammed. Then, again, concerning herbs, roots, seeds, woods, stones, animals, worms, bone dust, snail shells, other shells, and pitch. These and the like, whereof there are some very far-fetched in Alchemy, are mere incumbrances of work; since even if Sol and Luna could be made by them they rather hinder and delay than further one's purpose. But it is not from these – to say the truth – that the Art of making Sol and Luna is to be learnt. So, then, all these things should be passed by, because they have no effect with the five metals, so far as Sol and Luna are concerned. Someone may ask, What, then, is this short and easy way, which involves no difficulty, and yet whereby Sol and Luna can be made? Our answer is, this has been fully and openly explained in the Seven Canons. It would be lost labour should one seek further to instruct one who does not understand these. It would be impossible to convince such a person that these matters could be so easily understood, but in an occult rather than in an open sense.

**THE ART IS THIS:** After you have made heaven, or the sphere of Saturn, with its life to run over the earth, place on it all the planets, or such, one or more, as you wish, so that the portion of Luna may be the smallest. Let all run, until heaven, or Saturn, has entirely disappeared. Then all those planets will remain dead with their old corruptible bodies, having meanwhile obtained another new, perfect, and incorruptible body.

That body is the spirit of heaven. From it these planets again receive a body and life, and live as before. Take this body from the life and the earth. Keep it. It is Sol and Luna. Here you have the Art altogether, clear and entire. If you do not yet understand it, or are not practised therein, it is well. It is better that it should be kept concealed, and not made public.

#### HOW TO CONJURE THE CRYSTAL SO THAT ALL THINGS MAY BE SEEN IN IT.



To conjure is nothing else than to observe anything rightly, to know and to understand what it is. The crystal is a figure of the air. Whatever appears in the air, movable or immovable, the same appears also in the speculum or crystal as a wave. For the air, the water, and the crystal, so far as vision is concerned, are one, like a mirror in which an inverted copy of an object is seen.

#### CONCERNING THE HEAT OF MERCURY.

Those who think that Mercury is of a moist and cold nature are plainly in error, because it is by its nature in the highest degree warm and moist, which is the cause of its being in a constant state of fluidity. If it were of a moist and cold nature it would have the appearance of frozen water, and be always hard and solid, so that it would be necessary to liquefy it by the heat of fire, as in the case of the other metals. But it does not require this, since it has liquidity and flux from its own heat naturally inborn in it, which keeps it in a state of perpetual fluidity and renders it "quick", so that it can neither die, nor be coagulated, nor congealed. And this is well worth noticing, that the spirits of the seven metals, or as many of them as have been commingled, as soon as they come into the fire, contend with one another, especially Mercury, so that each may put forth its powers and virtues in the endeavour to get the mastery in the way of liquefying and transmuting. One seizes on the virtue, life, and form of another, and assigns some other nature and form to this one. So then the spirits or vapours of the metals are stirred up by the heat to operate mutually one upon the other, and transmute from one virtue to another, until perfection and purity are attained.

But what must be done besides to Mercury in order that its moisture and heat may be taken away, and in their place such an extreme cold introduced as to congeal, consolidate, and altogether mortify the Mercury? Do what follows in the sentence subjoined: Take pure Mercury closely shut up in a silver pixis. Fill a jar with fragments of lead, in the midst of which place the pixis. Let it melt for twenty-four hours, that is, for a natural day. This takes away from Mercury his occult heat, adds an external heat, and contributes the internal coldness of Saturn and Luna (which are both planets of a cold nature), whence and whereby the Mercury is compelled to congeal, consolidate, and harden. Note also that the coldness (which Mercury needs in its consolidation and mortification) is not perceptible by the external sense, as the cold of snow or of ice is, but rather, externally, there is a certain amount of apparent heat. Just in the same way is it with the heat of Mercury, which is the cause of its fluidity. It is not an external heat, perceptible in the same way as one of our qualities. Nay, externally a sort of coldness is perceptible. Whence the Sophists (a race which has more talk than true wisdom) falsely assert that Mercury is cold and of a moist nature, so that they go on and advise us to congeal it by means of heat; whereas heat only renders it more fluid, as they daily find out to their own loss rather than gain.

True Alchemy which alone, by its unique Art, teaches how to fabricate Sol and Luna from the five imperfect metals, allows no other receipt than this, which well and truly says: Only from metals, in metals, by metals, and with metals, are perfect metals made, for in some things is Luna and in other metals is Sol.

#### WHAT MATERIALS AND INSTRUMENTS ARE REQUIRED IN ALCHEMY.

There is need of nothing else but a foundry, bellows, tongs, hammers, cauldrons, jars, and cupels made from beechen ashes. Afterwards, lay on Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sol, Venus, Mercury, and Luna. Let them operate finally up to Saturn.

#### THE METHOD OF SEEKING MINERALS.

The hope of finding these in the earth and in stones is most uncertain, and the labour very great. However, since this is the first mode of getting them, it is in no way to be despised, but greatly commended. Such a desire or appetite ought no more to be done away with than the lawful inclination of young people, and those in the prime of life, to matrimony. As the bees long for roses

and other flowers for the purpose of making honey and wax, so, too, men – apart from avarice or their own aggrandisement – should seek to extract metal from the earth. He who does not seek it is not likely to find it. God dowers men not only with gold or silver, but also with poverty, squalor, and misery. He has given to some a singular knowledge of metals and minerals, whereby they have obtained an easier and shorter method of fabricating gold and silver, without digging and smelting them, than they were commonly accustomed to, by extracting them from their primitive bodies. And this is the case not only with subterranean substances, but by certain arts and knowledge they have extracted them from the five metals generally (that is to say, from metals excocted from minerals which are imperfect and called metals), viz., from Mercury, Jupiter, Saturn, Mars and Venus, from all of which, and from each of them separately, Sol and Luna can be made, but from one more easily than from another. Note, that Sol and Luna can be made easily from Mercury, Saturn, and Jupiter, but from Mars and Venus with difficulty. It is possible to make them, however, but with the addition of Sol and Luna. Out of Magnesium and Saturn comes Luna, and out of Jupiter and Cinnabar pure Sol takes its rise. The skilful artist, however (how well I remember!), will be able by diligent consideration to prepare metals so that, led by a true method of reasoning, he can promote the perfection of metallic transformation more than do the courses of the twelve signs and the seven planets. In such matters it is quite superfluous to watch these courses, as also their aspects, good or bad days or hours, the prosperous or unlucky condition of this or that planet, for these matters can do no good, and much less can they do harm in the art of natural Alchemy. If otherwise, and you have a feasible process, operate when you please. If, however, there be anything wanting in you or your mode of working, or your understanding, the planets and the stars of heaven will fail you in your work.

If metals remain buried long enough in the earth, not only are they consumed by rust, but by long continuance they are even transmuted into natural stones, and there are a great many of these; but this is known to few. For there is found in the earth old stone money of the heathens, printed with their different figures. These coins were originally metallic, but through the transmutation brought about by Nature, they were turned into stone.

#### WHAT ALCHEMY IS.

Alchemy is nothing else but the set purpose, intention, and subtle endeavour to transmute the kinds of the metals from one to another.<sup>10</sup> According to this, each person, by his own mental grasp, can choose out for himself a better way and Art, and therein find truth, for the man who follows a thing up more intently does find the truth. It is highly necessary to have a correct estimation of stars and of stones, because the star is the informing spirit of all stones. For the Sol and Luna of all the celestial stars are nothing but one stone in itself; and the terrestrial stone has come forth from the celestial stone; through the same fire, coals, ashes, the same expulsions and repurgations as that celestial stone, it has been separated and brought, clear and pure in its brightness. The whole ball of the earth is only something thrown off, concrete, mixed, corrupted, ground, and again coagulated, and gradually liquefied into one mass, into a stony work, which has its seat and its rest in the midst of the firmamental sphere.

Further it is to be remarked that those precious stones which shall forth-with be set down have the nearest place to the heavenly or sidereal ones in point of perfection, purity, beauty, brightness, virtue, power of withstanding fire, and incorruptibility, and they have been fixed with other stones in the earth.<sup>11</sup>

They have, therefore, the greatest affinity with heavenly stones and with the stars, because their natures are derived from these. They are found by men in a rude environment, and the common herd (whose property it is to take false views of things) believe that they were produced in the same place where they are found, and that they were afterwards polished, carried around, and sold, and accounted to be great riches, on account of their colours, beauty, and other virtues. A brief description of them follows:

*The Emerald.* This is a green transparent stone. It does good to the eyes and the memory. It defends chastity; and if this be violated by him who carries it, the stone itself does not remain perfect.<sup>12</sup>

*The Adamant.* A black crystal called Adamant or else Evax, on account of the joy which it is effectual in impressing on those who carry it. It is of an obscure and transparent blackness, the colour of iron. It is the hardest of all; but is dissolved in the blood of a goat. Its size at the largest does not exceed that of a hazel nut.<sup>13</sup>

*The Magnet* Is an iron stone, and so attracts iron to itself.<sup>14</sup>

*The Pearl.* The Pearl is not a stone, because it is produced in sea shells. It is of a white colour. Seeing that it grows in animated beings, in men or in fishes, it is not properly of a stony nature, but properly a depraved (otherwise a transmuted) nature supervening upon a perfect work.<sup>15</sup>

*The Jacinth* Is a yellow, transparent stone. There is a flower of the same name which, according to the fable of the poets, is said to have been a man.<sup>16</sup>

*The Sapphire* Is a stone of a celestial colour and a heavenly nature.<sup>17</sup>

*The Ruby* Shines with an intensely red nature.<sup>18</sup>

*The Carbuncle.* A solar stone, shining by its own nature like the sun.<sup>19</sup>

*The Coral* Is a white or red stone, not transparent. It grows in the sea, out of the nature of the water and the air, into the form of wood or a shrub; it hardens in the air, and is not capable of being destroyed in fire.<sup>20</sup>

*The Chalcedony* Is a stone made up of different colours, occupying a middle place between obscurity and transparency, mixed also with cloudiness, and liver coloured. It is the lowest of all the precious stones.<sup>21</sup>

*The Topaz* Is a stone shining by night. It is found among rocks.<sup>22</sup>

*The Amethyst* Is a stone of a purple and blood colour.<sup>23</sup>

*The Chrysoprasus* Is a stone which appears like fire by night, and like gold by day.

*The Crystal* Is a white stone, transparent, and very like ice. It is sublimated, extracted, and produced from other stones.<sup>24</sup>

As a pledge and firm foundation of this matter, note the following conclusion. If anyone intelligently and reasonably takes care to exercise himself in learning about the metals, what they are, and whence they are produced: he may know that our metals are nothing else than the best part and the spirit of common stones, that is, pitch, grease, fat, oil, and stone. But this is least pure, uncontaminated, and perfect, so long as it remains hidden or mixed with the stones. It should therefore be sought and found in the stones, be recognised in them, and extracted from them, that is, forcibly drawn out and liquefied. For then it is no longer a stone, but an elaborate and perfect metal, comparable to the stars of heaven, which are themselves, as it were, stones separated from those of earth.

Whoever, therefore, studies minerals and metals must be furnished with such reason and intelligence that he shall not regard only those common and known metals which are found in the depth of the mountains alone. For there is often found at the very surface of the earth such a metal

as is not met with at all, or not equally good, in the depths. And so every stone which comes to our view, be it great or small, flint or simple rock, should be carefully investigated and weighed with a true balance, according to its nature and properties. Very often a common stone, thrown away and despised, is worth more than a cow. Regard must not always be had to the place of digging from which this stone came forth; for here the influence of the sky prevails. Everywhere there is presented to us earth, or dust, or sand, which often contain much gold or silver, and this you will mark.

## HERE ENDS THE COELUM PHILOSOPHORUM.

### NOTES

1. The three prime substances are proved only by fire, which manifests them pure, naked, clean, and simple. In the absence of all ordeal by fire, there is no proving of a substance possible. For fire tests everything, and when the impure matter is separated the three pure substances are displayed. – *De Origine Morborum ex Tribus Primis Substantiis – Paramirum*, Lib. I., c. 1. Fire separates that which is constant or fixed from that which is fugitive or volatile. – *De Morbis Metallicis*, Lib. II., Tract I. Fire is the father or active principle of separation. – "Third Fragment on Tartar" from the *Fragmenta Medica*.

2. By the mediation of Vulcan, or fire, any metal can be generated from Mercury. At the same time, Mercury is imperfect as a metal; it is semi-generated and wanting in coagulation, which is the end of all metals. Up to the half way point of their generation all metals are Mercury. Gold, for example, is Mercury; but it loses the Mercurial nature by coagulation, and although the properties of Mercury are present in it, they are dead, for their vitality is destroyed by coagulation. – *De Morbis Metallicis*, Lib. III., Tract II., c. 2. The essences and arcanas which are latent in all the six metals are to be found in the substance of Mercury. – *Ibid.*, c. 3. There are two genera of Mercury, the fixed Mercury of earth and another kind which descends from the daily constellation. – *Ibid.*, Lib. I., Tract II., c. 4. As there is a red and white Sulphur of Marcasites, a yellow, red, and black Sulphur of Talc, a purple and black Sulphur of the Cachimiae, a Sulphur of Cinnabar, and, in like manner, of marble, amethyst, etc., so is there a special Mercury of Copper, Plumbago, Zinc, Arsenic, etc. – *Ibid.* Mercury is not Quicksilver, for Mercury is dead, while Quicksilver is living. – *De Hydropisi*.

3. Nothing of true value is located in the body of a substance, but in the virtue. And this is the principle of the Quintessence, which reduces, say, 20lbs. into a single ounce, and that ounce far exceeds the entire 20lbs. in potency. Hence the less there is of body, the more in proportion is the virtue. – *De Origine Morborum Invisibilium*, Lib. IV.

4. Tin or Jupiter, is pure Mercury coagulated with a small quantity of Salt, but combined with a larger proportion of white Sulphur. It derives its colours, white, yellow, or red, from its Mercury. Its sublimation is also by Mercury, and its resolution by Salt, and it is sublimed and resolved by these. – *De Elemento Aquae*, Tract III., c. 6.

5. In the generation of Iron there is a larger proportion of Salt and Mercury, while the red Sulphur from which copper proceeds is present in a smaller quantity. It contains also a cuprine salt, but not in equal proportion with Mercury. Its constituents are its own body, which preponderates; then comes Salt, afterwards Mercury, and, lastly, Sulphur. When there is more Salt than the composition of Sulphur requires, the metal can in no wise be made, for it depends upon an equal weight of each. For fluxibility proceeds from Mercury and coagulation from Salt. Accordingly, if there be too much Salt it becomes too hard. – *De Elemento Aquae*, Lib. I V., Tract III., c. 4.

6. Venus is the first metal generated by the Archeus of Nature from the three prime principles after the marcasites and cachimiae have been separated from these. It is formed of the gross redness which is purged off from the primal Sulphur of the light red expelled in like manner from the Mercury, and of the deep yellow separated in the purification of the prime Salt by this same Archeus. – *Ibid.*, c. 3.

7. Lead is the blackness of the three first principles, which, however, is by no means a superfluity, but a peculiar metallic nature in them existing. For all metals are latent in Mercury, and they are all only Mercury. The same is to be concluded concerning Salt and Sulphur. Thus, as copper is the abundant redness of the three principles, so Lead is their blackness; but, at the same time, there are four colours concealed therein – the blackness, purged off from the three principles; redness, which contains a precipitate out of Mercury; whiteness, from the calcination of Mercury; and a certain yellowness derived from Mercury. Thus the grossness and the colours are alike due to Mercury, and Lead is, in fact, a black Mercury. – *Ibid.*, c. 5.

8. When the three prime principles have been purged of their superfluities, and from the said superfluities the imperfect metals have been generated, there remains nothing gross or crude, either in colour or substance, but only a very subtle nature of a white and purple hue. This is the most pure quality of Mercury, Salt, and Sulphur, most clear and excellent in form, substance, essence, and colour. These two essences, namely, the white and the purple, are separated by the Archeus, and out of the first fixed and coagulated, is formed silver, while from the purple there is generated gold, which is the most noble Sulphur, Salt, and Mercury, separated from all other colours, and consisting of purple alone. Its clayey or yellow appearance is accounted for by the subtlety and clearness of the metal, because all the dull colours are removed. In Silver the most prevalent colours are green and blue, which are respectively derived from the Mercury and the Salt, the Sulphur contributing nothing in the matter of colouring. On the other hand, in gold the purple colour is derived from Salt, the pellucid redness from Sulphur, and the yellow from Mercury. – *Ibid.*, c. 8.

9. Verbenas adole pingues, et mascula tura. – Virg., *Ecl.* viii. 65.

10. Alchemy is, so to speak, a kind of lower heaven, by which the sun is separated from the moon, day from night, medicine from poison, what is useful from what is refuse. – *De Colica*. Therefore learn Alchemy, which is otherwise called Spagyria. This teaches you to discern between the true and the false. Such a Light of Nature is it that it is a mode of proof in all things, and walks in light. From this light of Nature we ought to know and speak, not from mere phantasy, whence nothing is begotten save the four humours and their compounds, augmentation, stagnation, and decrease, with other trifles of this kind. These proceed, not from the clear intellect, that full treasure-house of a good man, but rather are based on a fictitious and insecure foundation. – *Paramirum*, Lib. I., c. 3.

11. When the occult dispenser of Nature in the prime principles that is to say, the potency called Ares, has produced the gross and rough genera of stones, and no further grossness remains, a diaphanous and subtle substance remains, out of which the Archeus of Nature generates the precious stones or gems. – *De Elemento Aquae*, Lib. IV., Tract IV., c. 10.

12. The body of the Emerald is derived from a kind of petrine Mercury. It receives from the same its colour, coagulated with spirit of Salt. – *Ibid.*, c. 12.

13. The most concentrated hardness of all stones combines for the generation of the adamant. The white adamant has its body from Mercury, and its coagulation from the spirit of Salt. – *Ibid.*, c. 12.

14. Fortified by experience which is the mistress of all things, and by mature theory, based on experience, I affirm that the Magnet is a stone which not only undeniably attracts steel and iron, but has also the same power over the matter of all diseases in the whole body of man. – *De Corallis*. See *Herbarius Theophrasti*.

15. The Pearl is a seed of moisture. It generates milk abundantly in women if they are deficient therein. – *De Aridura*.

16. The Jacinth, or Hyacinth, is a gem of the same genus as the Carbuncle, but is inferior thereto in its nature. – *De Elemento Aquae*, Lib. IV., Tract IV., c. 11.

17. In the matter of body and colour the Sapphire is generated from Mercury (the prime principle). It is formed over white Sulphur and white Salt from a pallid petrine Mercury. Hence white Sapphires frequently occur because a white Mercury concurs in the formation. In like manner a lute-coloured Mercury sometimes produces a clay-like hue. – *Ibid.*, c. 15.

18. The Ruby and similar gems possessing a ruddy hue are generated from the red of Sulphur, and their body is of petrine Mercury. For Mercury is the body of every precious stone. – *Ibid.*, c. 13.

19. The Carbuncle is formed of the most transparent matter which is conserved in the three principles. Mercury is the body and Sulphur the colouring thereof, with a modicum of the spirit of Salt, on account of the coagulation. All light abounds therein, because Sulphur contains in itself a clear quality of light, as the art of its transmutation demonstrates. – *Ibid.*, c. 11.

20. There are two species of red Corals – one a dull red, which varies between sub-purple and semi-black; the other a resplendent and brilliant red. As the colours differ, so also do the virtues. There is also a whitish species which is almost destitute of efficacy. In a word, as the Coral diminishes in redness, so it weakens in its qualities. *Herbarius Theophrasti*; *De Corallis*.

21. The gem Chalcedony is extracted from Salt. – *Chirurgia Magna*; *De Tumoribus*, etc., *Morbi Gallici*, Lib. III., c. 6.

22. The Topaz is an extract from the minera of Mars, and is a transplanted Iron. – *Ibid.*

23. The Amethyst is an extract of Salt, while Marble and Chalcedony are extracted from the same principle through the Amethyst. – *Ibid.*

24. The origin of Crystals is to be referred to water. They contain within them a spirit of coagulation whereby they are coagulated, as water by the freezing and glacial stars. – *Lib. Meteorum, c. 7.*

# The Book Concerning The Tincture Of The Philosophers by Paracelsus

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THE BOOK CONCERNING THE TINCTURE OF THE PHILOSOPHERS

WRITTEN AGAINST THOSE SOPHISTS BORN SINCE THE DELUGE, IN THE AGE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD;

By PH. THEOPHRASTUS BOMBAST, of HOHENHEIM,

Philosopher of the Monarchia, Prince of Spagyrist, Chief Astronomer, Surpassing Physician, and Trismegistus of Mechanical Arcana.

## PREFACE.

SINCE you, O Sophist, everywhere abuse me with such fatuous and mendacious words, on the ground that being sprung from rude Helvetia I can understand and know nothing: and also because being a duly qualified physician I still wander from one district to another; therefore I have proposed by means of this treatise to disclose to the ignorant and inexperienced: what good arts existed in the first age; what my art avails against you and yours against me; what should be thought of each, and how my posterity in this age of grace will imitate me. Look at Hermes, Archelaus, and others in the first age: see what Spagyrist and what Philosophers then existed. By this they testify that their enemies, who are your patrons, O Sophist, at the present time are but mere empty forms and idols. Although this would not be attested by those who are falsely considered your authentic fathers and saints, yet the ancient Emerald Table shews more art and experience in Philosophy, Alchemy, Magic, and the like, than could ever be taught by you and your crowd of followers. If you do not yet understand, from the aforesaid facts, what and how great treasures these are, tell me why no prince or king was ever able to subdue the Egyptians. Then tell me why the Emperor Diocletian ordered all the Spagyric books to be burnt (so far as he could lay his hands upon them). Unless the contents of those books had been known, they would have been obliged to bear still his intolerable yoke, - a yoke, O Sophist, which shall one day be put upon the neck of yourself and your colleagues.

From the middle of this age the Monarchy of all the Arts has been at length derived and conferred on me, Theophrastus Paracelsus, Prince of Philosophy and of Medicine. For this purpose I have been chosen by God to extinguish and blot out all the phantasies of elaborate and false works, of delusive and presumptuous words, be they the words of Aristotle, Galen, Avicenna, Mesva, or the dogmas of any among their followers. My theory, proceeding as it does from the light of Nature, can never, through its consistency, pass away or be changed: but in the fifty-eighth year after its millennium and a half it will then begin to flourish. The practice at the same time following upon the theory will be proved by wonderful and incredible signs, so as to be open to mechanics and common people, and they will thoroughly understand how firm and immovable is that Paracelsic Art against the triflings of the Sophists: though meanwhile that sophistical science has to have its ineptitude propped up and fortified by papal and imperial privileges. In that I am esteemed by you a mendicant and vagabond sophist, the Danube and the Rhine will answer that accusation, though I hold my tongue. Those calumnies of yours falsely devised against me have often displeased many courts and princes, many imperial cities, the knightly order, and the nobility. I have a treasure hidden in a certain city called Weinden, belonging to Forum Julii, at an inn, - a treasure which neither you, Leo of Rome, nor you, Charles the German, could purchase with all your substance. Although the signed star has been applied to the arcanum of your names, it is known to none but the sons of the divine Spagyric Art. So then, you wormy and lousy Sophist, since you deem the monarch of arcana a mere ignorant, fatuous, and prodigal quack, now, in this mid age, I determine

in my present treatise to disclose the honourable course of procedure in these matters, the virtues and preparation of the celebrated Tincture of the Philosophers for the use and honour of all who love the truth, and in order that all who despise the true arts may be reduced to poverty. By this arcanum the last age shall be illuminated clearly and compensated for all its losses by the gift of grace and the reward of the spirit of truth, so that since the beginning of the world no similar germination of the intelligence and of wisdom shall ever have been heard of. In the meantime, vice will not be able to suppress the good, nor will the resources of those vicious persons, many though they be, cause any loss to the upright.

## THE BOOK CONCERNING THE TINCTURE OF THE PHILOSOPHERS.

### CHAPTER I.

I, PHILIPPUS Theophrastus Paracelsus Bombast, say that, by Divine grace, many ways have been sought to the Tincture of the Philosophers, which finally all came to the same scope and end. Hermes Trismegistus, the Egyptian, approached this task in his own method. Orus, the Greek, observed the same process. Hali, the Arabian, remained firm in his order. But Albertus Magnus, the German, followed also a lengthy process. Each one of these advanced in proportion to his own method; nevertheless, they all arrive at one and the same end, at a long life, so much desired by the philosophers, and also at an honourable sustenance and means of preserving that life in this Valley of Misery. Now at this time, I, Theophrastus Paracelsus Bombast, Monarch of the Arcana, am endowed by God with special gifts for this end, that every searcher after this supreme philosophic work may be forced to imitate and to follow me, be he Italian, Pole, Gaul, German, or whatsoever or whosoever he be. Come hither after me, all you philosophers, astronomers, and spagyrist, of however lofty a name ye may be, I will show and open to you, Alchemists and Doctors, who are exalted by me with the most consummate labours, this corporeal regeneration. I will teach you the tincture, the arcanum<sup>1</sup>, the quintessence, wherein lie hid the foundations of all mysteries and of all works. For every person may and ought to believe in another only in those matters, which he has tried by fire. If any one shall have brought forward anything contrary to this method of experimentation in the Spagyric Art or in Medicine, there is no reason for your belief in him, since, experimentally, through the agency of fire, the true is separated from the false. The light of Nature indeed is created in this way, that by means thereof the proof or trial of everything may appear, but only to those who walk in this light. With this light we will teach, by the very best methods of demonstration, that all those who before me have approached this so difficult province with their own fancies and acute speculations have, to their own loss, incurred the danger of their foolishness. On which account, from my standpoint, many rustics have been ennobled; but, on the other hand, through the speculative and opinionative art of these many nobles have been changed into clowns, and since they carried golden mountains in their head before they had put their hand to the fire. First of all, then, there must be learnt - digestions, distillations, sublimations, reverberations, extractions, solutions, coagulations, fermentations, fixations, and every instrument which is requisite for this work must be mastered by experience, such as glass vessels, cucurbites, circulators, vessels of Hermes, earthen vessels, baths, blast-furnaces, reverberatories, and instruments of like kind, also marble, coals, and tongs. Thus at length you will be able to profit in Alchemy and in Medicine.

But so long as, relying on fancy and opinion, you cleave to your fictitious books, you are fitted and predestinated for no one of these things.

### CHAPTER II.

## CONCERNING THE DEFINITION OF THE SUBJECT AND MATTER OF THE TINCTURE OF THE PHILOSOPHERS.



Before I come, then, to the process of the Tincture, it is needful that I open to you the subject thereof: for, up to the present time, this has always been kept in a specially occult way by the lovers of truth. So, then, the matter of the Tincture (when you understand me in a Spagyric sense) is a certain thing which, by the art of Vulcan<sup>2</sup>, passes out of three essences into one essence, or it may remain. But, that I may give it its proper name, according to the use of the ancients, though it is called by many the Red Lion, still it is known by few. This, by the aid of Nature and the skill of the Artist himself, can be transmuted into a White Eagle, so that out of one two are produced; and beyond this the brightness of gold does not shine so much for the Spagyrist as do these two when kept in one. Now, if you do not understand the use of the Cabalists and the old astronomers, you are not born by God for the Spagyric art, or chosen by Nature for the work of Vulcan, or created to open your mouth concerning Alchemical Arts. The matter of the Tincture, then, is a very great pearl and a most precious treasure, and the noblest thing next to the manifestation of the Most High and the consideration of men which can exist upon earth. This is the Lili of Alchemy and of Medicine, which the philosophers have so diligently sought after, but, through the failure of entire knowledge and complete preparation, they have not progressed to the perfect end thereof. By means of their investigations and experiments, only the initial stage of the Tincture has been given to us; but the true foundation, which my colleagues must imitate, has been left for me, so that no one should mingle their shadows with our good intentions. I, by right after my long experiences, correct the Spagyrists, and separate the false or the erroneous from the true, since, by long investigations, I have found reasons why I should be able justly to blame and to change diverse things. If, indeed, I had found out experiments of the ancients better than my own, I should scarcely have taken up such great labours as, for the sake, the utility, and the advantage of all good Alchemists, I have undergone willingly. Since, then, the subject of the Tincture has been sufficiently declared, so that it scarcely could or ought to be exceeded in fidelity between two brothers, I approach its preparation, and after I have laid down the experiences of the first age, I wish to add my own inventions; to which at last the Age of Grace will by-and-by give its adhesion, whichever of the patriarchs, O Sophist, you, in the meantime, shall have made leaders.

### CHAPTER III.

#### CONCERNING THE PROCESS OF THE ANCIENTS FOR THE TINCTURE OF THE PHILOSOPHERS, AND A MORE COMPENDIOUS METHOD BY PARACELSUS.

The old Spagyrists putrefied Lili for a philosophical month, and afterwards distilled therefrom the moist spirits, until at length the dry spirits were elevated. They again imbued the caput mortuum with moist spirits, and drew them off from it frequently by distillation until the dry spirits were all elevated. Then afterwards they united the moisture that had been drawn off and the dry spirits by means of a pelican, three or four times, until the whole Lili remained dry at the bottom. Although early experience gave this process before fixation, none the less our ancestors often attained a perfect realisation of their wish by this method. They would, however, have had a shorter way of arriving at the treasure of the Red Lion if they had learnt the agreement of Astronomy with Alchemy, as I have demonstrated it in the Apocalypse of Hermes<sup>3</sup>. But since every day (as Christ says for the consolation of the faithful) has its own peculiar care, the labour for the Spagyrists before my times has been great and heavy; but this, by the help of the Holy Spirit flowing into us, will, in this last age, be lightened and made clear by my theory and practice, for all those who constantly persevere in their work with patience. For I have tested the properties of Nature, its essences and conditions, and I know its conjunction and resolution, which are the highest and greatest gift for a philosopher, and never understood by the sophists up to this time. When, therefore, the earliest age gave the first experience of the Tincture, the Spagyrists made two things out of one simple. But when afterwards, in the Middle Age, this invention had died out, their successors by diligent scrutiny afterwards came upon the two names of this simple, and they named it with one word, namely, Lili, as being the subject of the Tincture. At length the imitators of Nature putrefied this matter at its proper period just like the seed in the earth, since before this corruption nothing

could be born from it, nor any arcanum break forth from it. Afterwards they drew off the moist spirits from the matter, until at length, by the violence of the fire, the dry were also equally sublimated, so that, in this way, just as the rustic does at the proper time of year, they might come to maturity as one after another is wont to ascend and to fall away. Lastly, as after the spring comes summer, they incorporated those fruits and dry spirits, and brought the Magistry of the Tincture to such a point that it came to the harvest, and laid itself out for ripening.

#### CHAPTER IV.

### CONCERNING THE PROCESS FOR THE TINCTURE OF THE PHILOSOPHERS, AS IT IS SHORTENED BY PARACELSUS.

The ancient Spagyrist would not have required such lengthened labour and such wearisome repetition if they had learnt and practised their work in my school. They would have obtained their wish just as well, with far less expense and labour. But at this time, when Theophrastus Paracelsus has arrived as the Monarch of Arcana, the opportunity is at hand for finding out those things which were occult to all Spagyrist before me. Wherefore I say, Take only the rose-coloured blood from the Lion and the gluten from the Eagle. When you have mixed these, coagulate them according to the old process, and you will have the Tincture of the Philosophers, which an infinite number have sought after and very few have found. Whether you will or not, sophist, this Magistry is in Nature itself, a wonderful thing of God above Nature, and a most precious treasure in this Valley of Sorrows. If you look at it from without it seems a paltry thing to transmute another into something far more noble than it was before. But you must, nevertheless, allow this, and confess that it is a miracle produced by the Spagyrist, who by the art of his preparation corrupts a visible body which is externally vile, from which he excites another most noble and most precious essence. If you, in like manner, have learnt anything from the light of Aristotle, or from us, or from the rules of Serapio, come forth, and bring that knowledge experimentally to light. Preserve now the right of the Schools, as becomes a lover of honour and a doctor. But if you know nothing and can do nothing, why do you despise me as though I were an irrational Helvetian cow, and inveigh against me as a wandering vagabond? Art is a second Nature and a universe of its own, as experience witnesses, and demonstrates against you and your idols. Sometimes, therefore, the Alchemist compounds certain simples, which he afterwards corrupts according to his need, and prepares thence another thing. For thus very often out of many things one is made, which effects more than Nature of herself can do, as in Gastaynum it is perfectly well known that Venus is produced from Saturn; in Carinthia, Luna out of Venus; and in Hungary, Sol out of Luna; to pass over in silence for the time being the transmutations of other natural objects, which were well known to the Magi, and more wonderfully than Ovid narrates in his Metamorphoses do they come to the light. That you may rightly understand me, seek your Lion in the East, and your Eagle in the South, for this our work which has been undertaken. You will not find better instruments than Hungary and Istria produce. But if you desire to lead from unity by duality in trinity with equal permutation of each, then you should direct your journey to the South; so in Cyprus shall you gain all your desire, concerning which we must not dilate more profusely than we have done at present. There are still many more of these arcana which exhibit transmutations, though they are known to few. And although these may by the Lord God be made manifest to anyone, still, the rumour of this Art does not on that account at once break forth, but the Almighty gives therewith the understanding how to conceal these and other like arts even to the coming of Elias the Artist, at which time there shall be nothing so occult that it shall not be revealed. You also see with your eyes (though there is no need to speak of these things, which may be taken derisively by some) that in the fire of Sulphur is a great tincture for gems, which, indeed, exalts them to a loftier degree than Nature by herself could do. But this gradation of metals and gems shall be omitted by me in this place, since I have written sufficiently about it in my Secret of Secrets, in my book on the Vexations of Alchemists, and abundantly elsewhere. As I have begun the process of our ancestors with the Tincture of the Philosophers, I will now perfectly conclude it.

#### CHAPTER V.

## CONCERNING THE CONCLUSION OF THE PROCESS OF THE ANCIENTS, MADE BY PARACELSUS.

Lastly, the ancient Spagyrist having placed Lili in a pelican and dried it, fixed it by means of a regulated increase of the fire, continued so long until from blackness, by permutation into all the colours, it became red as blood, and therewith assumed the condition of a salamander. Rightly, indeed, did they proceed with such labour, and in the same way it is right and becoming that everyone should proceed who seeks this pearl. It will be very difficult for me to make this clearer to you unless you shall have learnt in the School of the Alchemists to observe the degrees of the fire, and also to change your vessels. For then at length you will see that soon after your Lili shall have become heated in the Philosophic Egg, it becomes, with wonderful appearances, blacker than the crow; afterwards, in succession of time, whiter than the swan; and at last, passing through a yellow colour, it turns out more red than any blood. Seek, seek, says the first Spagyrist, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. It would be impious and indecorous to put food in the mouth of a perfidious bird. Let her rather fly to it, even as I, with others before me, have been compelled to do. But follow true Art; for this will lead you to its perfect knowledge. It is not possible that anything should here be set down more fully or more clearly than I have before spoken. Let your Pharisaical schools teach you what they will from their unstable and slippery foundation, which reaches not its end or its aim. When at length you shall have been taught as accurately as possible the Alchemistic Art, nothing in the nature of things shall then at length be so difficult which cannot be made manifest to you by the aid of this Art. Nature, indeed, herself does not bring forth anything into the light which is advanced to its highest perfection, as can be seen in this place from the unity, or the union, of our duality. But a man ought by Spagyric preparations to lead it thither where it was ordained by Nature. Let this have been sufficiently said by me, concerning the process of the ancients and my correction of the Tincture of the Philosophers, so far as relates to its preparation.

Moreover, since now we have that treasure of the Egyptians in our hands, it remains that we turn it to our use: and this is offered to us by the Spagyric Magistery in two ways. According to the former mode it can be applied for the renewing of the body; according to the latter it is to be used for the transmutation of metals. Since, then, I, Theophrastus Paracelsus, have tried each of them in different ways, I am willing to put them forward and to describe them according to the signs indeed of the work, and as in experience and proof they appeared to me better and more perfectly.

### CHAPTER VI.

#### CONCERNING THE TRANSMUTATION OF METALS BY THE PERFECTION OF MEDICINE.

If the Tincture of the Philosophers is to be used for transmutation, a pound of it must be projected on a thousand pounds of melted Sol. Then, at length, will a Medicine have been prepared for transmuting the leprous moisture of the metals. This work is a wonderful one in the light of Nature, namely, that by the Magistery, or the operation of the Spagyrist, a metal, which formerly existed, should perish, and another be produced. This fact has rendered that same Aristotle, with his ill-founded philosophy, fatuous. For truly, when the rustics in Hungary cast iron at the proper season into a certain fountain, commonly called Zifferbrunnen, it is consumed into rust, and when this is liquefied with a blast-fire, it soon exists as pure Venus, and never more returns to iron. Similarly, in the mountain commonly called Kuttenberg, they obtain a lixivium out of marcasites, in which iron is forthwith turned into Venus of a high grade, and more malleable than the other produced by Nature. These things, and more like them, are known to simple men rather than to sophists, namely, those which turn one appearance of a metal into another. And these things, moreover, through the remarkable contempt of the ignorant, and partly, too, on account of the just envy of the artificers,

remain almost hidden. But I myself, in Istria, have often brought Venus to more than twenty-four (al. 38) degrees, so that the colour of Sol could not mount higher, consisting of Antimony or or Quartal, which Venus I used in all respects as other kinds.

But though the old artists were very desirous of this arcanum, and sought it with the greatest diligence, nevertheless, very few could bring it by means of a perfect preparation to its end. For the transmutation of an inferior metal into a superior one brings with it many difficulties and obstacles, as the change of Jove into Luna, or Venus into Sol. Perhaps on account of their sins God willed that the Magnalia of Nature should be hidden from many men. For sometimes, when this Tincture has been prepared by artists, and they were not able to reduce their projection to work its effects, it happened that, by their carelessness and bad guardianship, this was eaten up by fowls, whose feathers thereupon fell off, and, as I myself have seen, grew again. In this way transmutation, through its abuse from the carelessness of the artists, came into Medicine and Alchemy. For when they were unable to use the Tincture according to their desire, they converted the same to the renovation of men, as shall be heard more at large in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER VII.

### CONCERNING THE RENOVATION OF MEN.

Some of the first and primitive philosophers of Egypt have lived by means of this Tincture for a hundred and fifty years. The life of many, too, has been extended and prolonged to several centuries, as is most clearly shewn in different histories, though it seems scarcely credible to any one. For its power is so remarkable that it extends the life of the body beyond what is possible to its congenital nature, and keeps it so firmly in that condition that it lives on in safety from all infirmities. And although, indeed, the body at length comes to old age, nevertheless, it still appears as though it were established in its primal youth.

So, then, the Tincture of the Philosophers is a Universal Medicine, and consumes all diseases, by whatsoever name they are called, just like an invisible fire. The dose is very small, but its effect is most powerful. By means thereof I have cured the leprosy, venereal disease, dropsy, the falling sickness, colic, scab, and similar afflictions; also lupus, cancer, noli-me-tangere, fistulas, and the whole race of internal diseases, more surely than one could believe. Of this fact Germany, France, Italy, Poland, Bohemia, etc., will afford the most ample evidence.

Now, Sophist, look at Theophrastus Paracelsus. How can your Apollo, Machaon, and Hippocrates stand against me? This is the Catholicum of the Philosophers, by which all these philosophers have attained long life for resisting diseases, and they have attained this end entirely and most effectually, and so, according to their judgment, they named it The Tincture of the Philosophers. For what can there be in the whole range of medicine greater than such purgation of the body, by means whereof all superfluity is radically removed from it and transmuted? For when the seed is once made sound all else is perfected. What avails the ill-founded purgation of the sophists since it removes nothing as it ought? This, therefore, is the most excellent foundation of a true physician, the regeneration of the nature, and the restoration of youth. After this, the new essence itself drives out all that is opposed to it. To effect this regeneration, the powers and virtues of the Tincture of the Philosophers were miraculously discovered, and up to this time have been used in secret and kept concealed by true Spagyrist.

HERE ENDS THE BOOK CONCERNING THE TINCTURE OF THE PHILOSOPHERS.

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## NOTES

1 The Arcanum of a substance is not the virtue (*virtus*) but the essence (*vir*) and the potency (*potentia*), and is stronger than the virtue; nevertheless, an old error of the doctors conferred the name of virtues upon the potential essences. - *Paramirum*, Lib. IV. Many things are elsewhere set forth concerning the Quintessence, but what is described is really a separation or extraction of the pure from the impure, not a true quintessence, and it is more correctly termed an Arcanum. - *Explicatio Totius Astronomiae*.

2 The office of Vulcan is the separation of the good from the bad. So the Art of Vulcan, which is Alchemy, is like unto death, by which the eternal and the temporal are divided one from another. So also this art might be called the death of things. - *De Morbis Metallicis*, Lib. I., Tract III., c. 1. Vulcan is an astral and not a corporal fabricator. - *De Caduco Matricis*, Par. VI. The artist working in metals and other minerals transforms them into other colours, and in so doing his operation is like that of the heaven itself. For as the artist excocts by means of Vulcan, or the igneous element, so heaven performs the work of coction through the Sun. The Sun, therefore, is the Vulcan of heaven accomplishing coction in the earth. - *De Icteriis*. Vulcan is the fabricator and architect of all things, nor is his habitation in heaven only, that is, in the firmament, but equally in all the other elements. - *Lib. Meteorum*, c. 4. Where the three prime principles are wanting, there also the igneous essence is absent. The Igneous Vulcan is nothing else but Sulphur, Sal Nitrum, and Mercury. - *Ibid.*, c.5.

3 The Book of the Revelation of Hermes, interpreted by Theophrastus Paracelsus, concerning the Supreme Secret of the World, seems to have been first brought to light by Benedictus Figulus, and appeared as a *piece de r sistance* in his "Golden and Blessed Casket of Nature's Marvels", of which an English translation has been very recently published. ("A Golden and Blessed Casket of Nature's Marvels". By Benedictus Figulus. Now first done into English from the German original published at Frankfort in the year 1608. London: James Elliott and Co. 8vo., 1893). Among the many writings which have been fabulously attributed to Hermes, there does not seem to be any record of an apocalypse, and it is impossible to say what forged document may have been the subject of interpretation by Paracelsus. As the collection of Figulus is now so readily accessible, it is somewhat superfluous to reproduce the treatise here, but since this translation claims to include everything written by the physician of Hohenheim on the subject of Alchemy and the Universal Medicine, it is appended at this point. It should be premised that Benedictus Figulus complains bitterly of the mutilation and perversion to which the works of Paracelsus were subjected, and the Revelation of Hermes seems in many parts to betray another hand, especially in its quotation of authorities who are not countenanced by its reputed author. Hermes, Plato, Aristotle, and other philosophers, flourishing at different times, who have introduced the Arts, and more especially have explored the secrets of inferior Creation, all these have eagerly sought a means whereby man's body might be preserved from decay and become endued with immortality. To them it was answered that there is nothing which might deliver the mortal body from death; but that there is One Thing which may postpone decay, renew youth; and prolong short human life (as with the patriarchs). For death was laid as a punishment upon our first parents, Adam and Eve, and will never depart from all their descendants. Therefore, the above philosophers, and many others, have sought this One Thing with great labour, and have found that that which preserves the human body from corruption, and prolongs life, conducts itself, with respect to other elements, as it were like the Heavens; from which they understood that the Heavens are a substance above the Four Elements. And just as the Heavens, with respect to the other elements, are held to be the fifth substance (for they are indestructible, stable, and suffer no foreign admixture), so also this One Thing (compared to the forces of our body) is an indestructible essence, drying up all the superfluities of our bodies, and has been philosophically called by the above-mentioned name. It is neither hot and dry like fire, nor cold and moist like water, nor warm and moist like air, nor dry and cold like earth. But it is a skilful, perfect equation of all the Elements, a right commingling of natural forces, a most particular union of spiritual virtues, an indissoluble uniting of body and soul. It is the purest and noblest substance of an indestructible body, which cannot be destroyed nor harmed by the Elements, and is produced by Art. With this, Aristotle prepared an apple, prolonging life by its scent, when he, fifteen days before his death, could neither eat nor drink on account of old age. This spiritual Essence, or One Thing, was revealed from above to Adam, and was greatly desired by the Holy Fathers; this also Hermes and Aristotle call the Truth without Lies, the most sure of all things certain, the Secret of all Secrets. It is the Last and the Highest Thing to be sought under the Heavens, a wondrous closing and finish of philosophical work, by which are discovered the dews of Heaven and the fastnesses of Earth. What the mouth of man cannot utter is all found in this spirit. As Morienus says: "He who has this has all things, and wants no other aid. For in it are all temporal happiness, bodily health, and earthly fortune. It is the spirit of the fifth substance, a Fount of all Joys ( beneath the rays of the moon), the Supporter of Heaven and Earth, the Mover of Sea and Wind, the Outpurer of Rain, upholding the strength of all things, an excellent spirit above Heavenly and other spirits, giving Health, Joy, Peace, Love; driving away Hatred and Sorrow, bringing in Joy, expelling all Evil, quickly healing all Diseases, destroying Poverty and misery, leading to all good things, preventing all evil words and thoughts, giving man his heart's desire, bringing to the pious earthly honour and long life, but to the wicked who misuse it, Eternal Punishment". This is the Spirit of Truth, which the world cannot comprehend without the interposition of the Holy Ghost, or without the instruction of those who know it. The same is of a mysterious nature, wondrous strength, boundless power. The Saints, from the beginning of the world, have desired to behold its face. By Avicenna this Spirit is named the Soul of the World. For, as the Soul moves all the limbs of the body, so also does this Spirit move all bodies. And as the Soul is in all the limbs of the Body, so also is this Spirit in all elementary created things. It is sought by many and found by few. It is beheld from afar and found near; for it exists in

every thing, in every place, and at all times. It has the powers of all creatures; its action is found in all elements, and the qualities of all things are therein, even in the highest perfection. By virtue of this essence did Adam and the Patriarchs preserve their health and live to an extreme age, some of them also flourishing in great riches. When the philosophers had discovered it, with great diligence and labour, they straightway concealed it under a strange tongue, and in parables, lest the same should become known to the unworthy, and the pearls be cast before swine. For if everyone knew it, all work and industry would cease; man would desire nothing but this one thing, people would live wickedly, and the world be ruined, seeing that they would provoke God by reason of their avarice and superfluity. For eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath the heart of man understood what Heaven hath naturally incorporated with this Spirit. Therefore have I briefly enumerated some of the qualities of this Spirit, to the Honour of God, that the pious may reverently praise Him in His gifts (which gift of God shall afterwards come to them), and I will herewith shew what powers and virtues it possesses in each thing, also its outward appearance, that it may be more readily recognised. In its first state, it appears as an impure earthly body, full of imperfections. It then has an earthly nature, healing all sickness and wounds in the bowels of man, producing good and consuming proud flesh, expelling all stench, and healing generally, inwardly and outwardly. In its second nature, it appears as a watery body, somewhat more beautiful than before, because (although still having its corruptions) its Virtue is greater. It is much nearer the truth, and more effective in works. In this form it cures cold and hot fevers and is a specific against poisons, which it drives from heart and lungs, healing the same when injured or wounded, purifying the blood, and, taken three times a day, is of great comfort in all diseases. But in its third nature it appears as an aerial body, of an oily nature, almost freed from all imperfections, in which form it does many wondrous works, producing beauty and strength of body, and (a small quantity being taken in the food) preventing melancholy and heating of the gall, increasing the quantity of the blood and seed, so that frequent bleeding becomes necessary. It expands the blood vessels, cures withered limbs, restores strength to the sight, in growing persons removes what is superfluous and makes good defects in the limbs. In its fourth nature it appears in a fiery form (not quite freed from all imperfections, still somewhat watery and not dried enough), wherein it has many virtues, making the old young and reviving those at the point of death. For if to such an one there be given, in wine, a barleycorn's weight of this fire, so that it reach the stomach, it goes to his heart, renewing him at once, driving away all previous moisture and poison, and restoring the natural heat of the liver. Given in small doses to old people, it removes the diseases of age, giving the old young hearts and bodies. Hence it is called the Elixir of Life. In its fifth and last nature, it appears in a glorified and illuminated form, without defects, shining like gold and silver, wherein it possesses all previous powers and virtues in a higher and more wondrous degree. Here its natural works are taken for miracles. When applied to the roots of dead trees they revive, bringing forth leaves and fruit. A lamp, the oil of which is mingled with this spirit, continues to burn for ever without diminution. It converts crystals into the most precious stones of all colours, equal to those from the mines, and does many other incredible wonders which may not be revealed to the unworthy. For it heals all dead and living bodies without other medicine. Here Christ is my witness that I lie not, for all heavenly influences are united and combined therein. This essence also reveals all treasures in earth and sea, converts all metallic bodies into gold, and there is nothing like unto it under Heaven. This spirit is the secret hidden from the beginning, yet granted by God to a few holy men for the revealing of these riches to His Glory - dwelling in fiery form in the air, and leading earth with itself to heaven, while from its body there flow whole rivers of living water. This spirit flies through the midst of the Heavens like a morning mist, leads its burning fire into the water, and has its shining realm in the heavens. And although these writings may be regarded as false by the reader, yet to the initiated they are true and possible, when the hidden sense is properly understood. For God is wonderful in His works, and His wisdom is without end. This spirit in its fiery form is called a Sandaraca, in the aerial a Kybrick, in the watery an Azoth, in the earthly Alcohol and Aliocosoph. Hence they are deceived by these names who, seeking without instruction, think to find this Spirit of Life in things foreign to our Art. For although this spirit which we seek, on account of its qualities, is called by these names, yet the same is not in these bodies and cannot be in them. For a refined spirit cannot appear except in a body suitable to its nature. And, by however many names it be called, let no one imagine there be different spirits, for, say what one will, there is but one spirit working everywhere and in all things. That is the spirit which, when rising, illumines the Heavens, when setting incorporates the purity of Earth, and when brooding has embraced the Waters. This spirit is named Raphael, the Angel of God, the subtlest and purest, whom the others all obey as their King. This spiritual substance is neither heavenly nor hellish, but an airy, pure, and hearty body, midway between the highest and lowest, without reason, but fruitful in works, and the most select and beautiful of all other heavenly things. This work of God is far too deep for understanding, for it is the last, greatest, and highest secret of Nature. It is the Spirit of God, which in the Beginning filled the earth and brooded over the waters, which the world cannot grasp without the gracious interposition of the Holy Spirit and instruction from those who know it, which also the whole world desires for its virtue, and which cannot be prized enough. For it reaches to the planets, raises the clouds, drives away mists, gives its light to all things, turns everything into Sun and Moon, bestows all health and abundance of treasure, cleanses the leper, brightens the eyes, banishes sorrow, heals the sick, reveals all hidden treasures, and, generally, cures all diseases. Through this spirit have the philosophers invented the Seven Liberal Arts, and thereby gained their riches. Through the same Moses made the golden vessels in the Ark, and King Solomon did many beautiful works to the honour of God. Therewith Moses built the Tabernacle, Noah the Ark, Solomon the Temple. By this, Ezra restored the Law, and Miriam, Moses' sister, was hospitable; Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and other righteous men, have had lifelong abundance and riches; and all the saints possessing it have therewith praised God. Therefore is its acquisition very hard, more than that of gold and silver. For it is the best of all things, because, of all things mortal that man can desire in this world, nothing can compare with it, and in it alone is truth. Hence it is called the Stone and Spirit of Truth; in its works is no vanity, its praise cannot be

sufficiently expressed. I am unable to speak enough of its virtues, because its good qualities and powers are beyond human thoughts, unutterable by the tongue of man, and in it are found the properties of all things. Yea, there is nothing deeper in Nature. O unfathomable abyss of God's Wisdom, which thus hath united and comprised in the virtue and power of this One Spirit the qualities of all existing bodies! O unspeakable honour and boundless joy granted to mortal man! For the destructible things of Nature are restored by virtue of the said Spirit. O mystery of mysteries, most secret of all secret things, and healing and medicine of all things! Thou last discovery in earthly natures, last best gift to Patriarchs and Sages, greatly desired by the whole world! Oh, what a wondrous and laudable spirit is purity, in which stand all joy, riches, fruitfulness of life, and art of all arts, a power which to its initiates grants all material joys! O desirable knowledge, lovely above all things beneath the circle of the Moon, by which Nature is strengthened, and heart and limbs are renewed, blooming youth is preserved, old age driven away, weakness destroyed, beauty in its perfection preserved, and abundance ensured in all things pleasing to men! O thou spiritual substance, lovely above all things! O thou wondrous power, strengthening all the world! O thou invincible virtue, highest of all that is, although despised by the ignorant, yet held by the wise in great praise, honour, and glory, that - proceeding from humours - wakest the dead, expellest diseases, restorest the voice of the dying! O thou treasure of treasures, mystery of mysteries, called by Avicenna "an unspeakable substance", the purest and most perfect soul of the world, than which there is nothing more costly under Heaven, unfathomable in nature and power, wonderful in virtue and works, having no equal among creatures, possessing the virtues of all bodies under Heaven! For from it flow the water of life, the oil and honey of eternal healing, and thus hath it nourished them with honey and water from the rock. Therefore, saith Morienus: "He who hath it, the same also hath all things". Blessed art Thou, Lord God of our Fathers, in that Thou hast given the prophets this knowledge and understanding, that they have hidden these things (lest they should be discovered by the blind, and those drowned in worldly godlessness) by which the wise and the pious have praised Thee! For the discoverers of the mystery of this thing to the unworthy are breakers of the seal of Heavenly Revelation, thereby offending God's Majesty, and bringing upon themselves many misfortunes and the punishments of God. Therefore, I beg all Christians, possessing this knowledge, to communicate the same to nobody, except it be to one living in Godliness, of well-proved virtue, and praising God, Who has given such a treasure to man. For many seek, but few find it. Hence the impure and those living in vice are unworthy of it. Therefore is this Art to be shewn to all God-fearing persons, because it cannot be bought with a price. I testify before God that I lie not, although it appear impossible to fools, that no one has hitherto explored Nature so deeply. The Almighty be praised for having created this Art and for revealing it to God-fearing men. Amen. And thus is fulfilled this precious and excellent work, called the revealing of the occult spirit, in which lie hidden the secrets and mysteries of the world. But this spirit is one genius, and divine, wonderful, and lordly power. For it embraces the whole world, and overcomes the Elements and the fifth Substance. To our Trismegistus Spagyris, Jesus Christ, be praise and glory immortal. Amen.

# The Treasure of Treasures for Alchemists by Paracelsus

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The Treasure of Treasures for Alchemists.

By Philippus Theophrastus Bombast, Paracelsus the Great

NATURE begets a mineral in the bowels of the earth. There are two kinds of it, which are found in many districts of Europe. The best which has been offered to me, which also has been found genuine in experimentation, is externally in the figure of the greater world, and is in the eastern part of the sphere of the Sun. The other, in the Southern Star, is now in its first efflorescence. The bowels of the earth thrust this forth through its surface. It is found red in its first coagulation, and in it lie hid all the flowers and colours of the minerals. Much has been written about it by the philosophers, for it is of a cold and moist nature, and agrees with the element of water.

So far as relates to the knowledge of it and experiment with it, all the philosophers before me, though they have aimed at it with their missiles, have gone very wide of the mark. They believed that Mercury and Sulphur were the mother of all metals, never even dreaming of making mention meanwhile of a third; and yet when the water is separated from it by Spagyric Art the truth is plainly revealed, though it was unknown to Galen or to Avicenna. But if, for the sake of our excellent physicians, we had to describe only the name, the composition; the dissolution, and coagulation, as in the beginning of the world Nature proceeds with all growing things, a whole year would scarcely suffice me, and, in order to explain these things, not even the skins of numerous cows would be adequate.

Now, I assert that in this mineral are found three principles, which are Mercury, Sulphur, and the Mineral Water which has served to naturally coagulate it. Spagyric science is able to extract this last from its proper juice when it is not altogether matured, in the middle of the autumn, just like a pear from a tree. The tree potentially contains the pear. If the Celestial Stars and Nature agree, the tree first of all puts forth shoots in the month of March; then it thrusts out buds, and when these open the flower appears, and so on in due order until in autumn the pear grows ripe. So is it with the minerals. These are born, in like manner, in the bowels of the earth. Let the Alchemists who are seeking the Treasure of Treasures carefully note this. I will shew them the way, its beginning, its middle, and its end. In the following treatise I will describe the proper Water, the proper Sulphur, and the proper Balm thereof. By means of these three the resolution and composition are coagulated into one.

## CONCERNING THE SULPHUR OF CINNABAR.

Take mineral Cinnabar and prepare it in the following manner. Cook it with rain water in a stone vessel for three hours. Then purify it carefully, and dissolve it in Aqua Regis, which is composed of equal parts of vitriol, nitre, and sal ammoniac. Another formula is vitriol, saltpetre, alum, and common salt.

Distil this in an alembic. Pour it on again, and separate carefully the pure from the impure thus. Let it putrefy for a month in horse-dung; then separate the elements in the following manner. If it puts forth its sign, commence the distillation by means of an alembic with a fire of the first degree. The water and the air will ascend; the fire and the earth will remain at the bottom. Afterwards join them again, and gradually treat with the ashes. So the water and the air will again ascend first, and afterwards the element of fire, which expert artists recognise. The earth will remain in the bottom of the vessel. This collect there. It is what many seek after and few find.



This dead earth in the reverberatory you will prepare according to the rules of Art, and afterwards add fire of the first degree for five days and nights. When these have elapsed you must apply the second degree for the same number of days and nights, and proceed according to Art with the material enclosed. At length you will find a volatile salt, like a thin alkali, containing in itself the Astrum of fire and earth<sup>2</sup>. Mix this with the two elements that have been preserved, the water and the earth. Again place it on the ashes for eight days and eight nights, and you will find that which has been neglected by many Artists. Separate this according to your experience, and according to the rules of the Spagyric Art, and you will have a white earth, from which its colour has been extracted. Join the element of fire and salt to the alkalised earth. Digest in a pelican to extract the essence. Then a new earth will be deposited, which put aside.

### CONCERNING THE RED LION.

Afterwards take the lion in the pelican which also is found [at] first, when you see its tincture, that is to say, the element of fire which stands above the water, the air, and the earth. Separate it from its deposit by trituration. Thus you will have the true aurum potable<sup>3</sup>. Sweeten this with the alcohol of wine poured over it, and then distil in an alembic until you perceive no acidity to remain in the Aqua Regia.

This Oil of the Sun, enclosed in a retort hermetically sealed, you must place for elevation that it may be exalted and doubled in its degree. Then put the vessel, still closely shut, in a cool place. Thus it will not be dissolved, but coagulated. Place it again for elevation and coagulation, and repeat this three times. Thus will be produced the Tincture of the Sun, perfect in its degree. Keep this in its own place.

### CONCERNING THE GREEN LION.

Take the vitriol of Venus<sup>4</sup>, carefully prepared according to the rules of Spagyric Art; and add thereto the elements of water and air which you have reserved. Resolve, and set to putrefy for a month according to instructions. When the putrefaction is finished, you will behold the sign of the elements. Separate, and you will soon see two colours, namely, white and red. The red is above the white. The red tincture of the vitriol is so powerful that it reddens all white bodies, and whitens all red ones, which is wonderful.

Work upon this tincture by means of a retort, and you will perceive a blackness issue forth. Treat it again by means of the retort, repeating the operation until it comes out whitish. Go on, and do not despair of the work. Rectify until you find the true, clear Green Lion, which you will recognise by its great weight. You will see that it is heavy and large. This is the Tincture, transparent gold. You will see marvellous signs of this Green Lion, such as could be bought by no treasures of the Roman Leo. Happy he who has learnt how to find it and use it for a tincture!

This is the true and genuine Balsam<sup>5</sup>, the Balsam of the Heavenly Stars, suffering no bodies to decay, nor allowing leprosy, gout, or dropsy to take root. It is given in a dose of one grain, if it has been fermented with Sulphur of Gold.

Ah, Charles the German, where is your treasure? Where are your philosophers? Where your doctors? Where are your decoctors of woods, who at least purge and relax? Is your heaven reversed? Have your stars wandered out of their course, and are they straying in another orbit, away from the line of limitation, since your eyes are smitten with blindness, as by a carbuncle, and other things making a show of ornament, beauty, and pomp? If your artists only knew that their prince Galen - they call none like him - was sticking in hell, from whence he has sent letters to me, they would make the sign of the cross upon themselves with a fox's tail. In the same way your Avicenna sits in the

vestibule of the infernal portal; and I have disputed with him about his aurum potable, his Tincture of the Philosophers, his Quintessence, and Philosophers' Stone, his Mithridatic, his Theriac, and all the rest. O, you hypocrites, who despise the truths taught you by a true physician, who is himself instructed by Nature, and is a son of God himself! Come, then, and listen, impostors who prevail only by the authority of your high positions! After my death, my disciples will burst forth and drag you to the light, and shall expose your dirty drugs, wherewith up to this time you have compassed the death of princes, and the most invincible magnates of the Christian world. Woe for your necks in the day of judgment! I know that the monarchy will be mine. Mine, too, will be the honour and glory. Not that I praise myself: Nature praises me. Of her I am born; her I follow. She knows me, and I know her. The light which is in her I have beheld in her; outside, too, I have proved the same in the figure of the microcosm, and found it in that universe.

But I must proceed with my design in order to satisfy my disciples to the full extent of their wish. I willingly do this for them, if only skilled in the light of Nature and thoroughly practised in astral matters, they finally become adepts in philosophy, which enables them to know the nature of every kind of water.

Take, then, of this liquid of the minerals which I have described, four parts by weight; of the Earth of red Sol two parts; of Sulphur of Sol one part. Put these together into a pelican, congeal, and dissolve them three times. Thus you will have the Tincture of the Alchemists. We have not here described its weight: but this is given in the book on Transmutations<sup>6</sup>.

So, now, he who has one to a thousand ounces of the Astrum Solis shall also tinge his own body of Sol.

If you have the Astrum of Mercury, in the same manner, you will tinge the whole body of common Mercury. If you have the Astrum of Venus you will, in like manner, tinge the whole body of Venus, and change it into the best metal. These facts have all been proved. The same must also be understood as to the Astra of the other planets, as Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Luna, and the rest. For tinctures are also prepared from these: concerning which we now make no mention in this place, because we have already dwelt at sufficient length upon them in the book on the Nature of Things and in the Archidoxies. So, too, the first entity of metals and terrestrial minerals have been made, sufficiently clear for Alchemists to enable them to get the Alchemists' Tincture.

This work, the Tincture of the Alchemists, need not be one of nine months; but quickly, and without any delay, you may go on by the Spaygric Art of the Alchemists, and, in the space of forty days, you can fix this alchemical substance, exalt it, putrefy it, ferment it, coagulate it into a stone, and produce the Alchemical Phoenix<sup>7</sup>. But it should be noted well that the Sulphur of Cinnabar becomes the Flying Eagle, whose wings fly away without wind, and carry the body of the phoenix to the nest of the parent, where it is nourished by the element of fire, and the young ones dig out its eyes: from whence there emerges a whiteness, divided in its sphere, into a sphere and life out of its own heart, by the balsam of its inward parts, according to the property of the cabalists.

HERE ENDS THE TREASURE OF THE ALCHEMISTS.

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## NOTES

1 The *Sign* is nothing else than the mark left by an operation. The house constructed by the architect is the sign of his handicraft whereby his skill and art are determined. Thus the sign is the achievement itself. - *De Colica*.

2 The earth also has its Astrum, its course, its order, just as much as the Firmament, but peculiar to the element. So also there is an Astrum in the water, even as in the earth, and in like manner with air and fire. Consequently, the upper Astrum has the Astra of the elements for its medium and operates through them by an irresistible attraction. Through

this operation of the superior and inferior Astra, all things are fecundated, and led on to their end. - *Explicatio Totius Astronomiae*. Without the Astra the elements cannot flourish. ... In the Astrum of the earth all the celestial operations thrive. The Astrum itself is hidden, the bodies are manifest. ... The motion of the earth is brought about by the Astrum of the earth. ... There are four Astra in man (corresponding to those of the four elements), for he is the lesser world. - *De Caducis*, Par. II.

3 *Aurum Potabile*, that is, Potable Gold, Oil of Gold, and Quintessence of Gold, are distinguished thus. *Aurum Potabile* is gold rendered potable by intermixture with other substances, and with liquids. Oil of Gold is an oil extracted from the precious metal without the addition of anything. The Quintessence of Gold is the redness of gold extracted therefrom and separated from the body of the metal. - *De Membris Contractis*, Tract II., c. 2.

4 If copper be pounded and resolved without a corrosive, you have Vitriol. From this may be prepared the quintessence, oil, and liquor thereof. - *De Morbis Tartareis*. Cuprine Vitriol is Vitriol cooked with Copper. - *De Morbis Vermium*, Par. 6. Chalcantum is present in Venus, and Venus can by separation be reduced into Chalcantum. - *Chirurgia Magna*. Pars. III., Lib. IV.

5 There is, indeed, diffused through all things a Balsam created by God, without which putrefaction would immediately supervene. Thus in corpses which are anointed with Balsam we see that corruption is arrested and thus in the physical body we infer that there is a certain natural and congenital Balsam, in the absence of which the living and complete man would not be safe from putrefaction. Nothing removes the Balsam but death. But this kind differs from what is more commonly called Balsam, in that the one is conservative of the living, and the other of the dead. - *Chirurgia Magna*, Pt. II., Tract II., c. 3. The confection of Balsam requires special knowledge of chemistry, and it was first discovered by the Alchemists. - *Ibid.*, Pt. I., Tract II., c. 4.

6 It is difficult to identify the treatise to which reference is made here. It does not seem to be the seventh book concerning The Nature of Things, nor the ensuing tract on Cements. The general question of natural and artificial weight is discussed in the *Aurora of the Philosophers*. No detached work on Transmutations has come down to us.

7 Know that the Phoenix is the soul of the Iliaster (that is, the first chaos of the matter of all things). ... It is also the Iliastic soul in man. - *Liber Azoth*, S. V., *Practica Lineae Vitae*.

# The Aurora of the philosophers by Paracelsus

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## THE AURORA OF THE PHILOSOPHERS.

BY THEOPHRASTUS PARACELSUS.

WHICH HE OTHERWISE CALLS HIS MONARCHIA.<sup>1</sup>

### CHAPTER I.

#### CONCERNING THE ORIGIN OF THE PHILOSOPHERS' STONE.

ADAM was the first inventor of arts, because he had knowledge of all things as well after the Fall as before<sup>2</sup>. Thence he predicted the world's destruction by water. From this cause, too, it came about that his successors erected two tables of stone, on which they engraved all natural arts in hieroglyphical characters, in order that their posterity might also become acquainted with this prediction, that so it might be heeded, and provision made in the time of danger. Subsequently, Noah found one of these tables under Mount Araroth, after the Deluge. In this table were described the courses of the upper firmament and of the lower globe, and also of the planets. At length this universal knowledge was divided into several parts, and lessened in its vigour and power. By means of this separation, one man became an astronomer, another a magician, another a cabalist, and a fourth an alchemist. Abraham, that Vulcanic Tubalcain, a consummate astrologer and arithmetician, carried the Art out of the land of Canaan into Egypt, whereupon the Egyptians rose to so great a height and dignity that this wisdom was derived from them by other nations. The patriarch Jacob painted, as it were, the sheep with various colours; and this was done by magic: for in the theology of the Chaldeans, Hebrews, Persians, and Egyptians, they held these arts to be the highest philosophy, to be learnt by their chief nobles and priests. So it was in the time of Moses, when both the priests and also the physicians were chosen from among the Magi – the priests for the judgment of what related to health, especially in the knowledge of leprosy. Moses, likewise, was instructed in the Egyptian schools, at the cost and care of Pharaoh's daughter, so that he excelled in all the wisdom and learning of that people. Thus, too, was it with Daniel, who in his youthful days imbibed the learning of the Chaldeans, so that he became a cabalist. Witness his divine predictions and his exposition of those words, "Mene, Mene, Tecelphares". These words can be understood by the prophetic and cabalistic Art. This cabalistic Art was perfectly familiar to, and in constant use by, Moses and the Prophets. The Prophet Elias foretold many things by his cabalistic numbers. So did the Wise Men of old, by this natural and mystical Art, learn to know God rightly. They abode in His laws, and walked in His statutes with great firmness. It is also evident in the Book of Samuel, that the Berelists did not follow the devil's part, but became, by Divine permission, partakers of visions and veritable apparitions, whereof we shall treat more at large in the Book of Supercelestial Things<sup>3</sup>. This gift is granted by the Lord God to those priests who walk in the Divine precepts. It was a custom among the Persians never to admit any one as king unless he were a Wise Man, pre-eminent in reality as well as in name. This is clear from the customary name of their kings; for they were called Wise Men. Such were those Wise Men and Persian Magi who came from the East to seek out the Lord Jesus, and are called natural priests. The Egyptians, also, having obtained this magic and philosophy from the Chaldeans and Persians, desired that their priests should learn the same wisdom; and they became so fruitful and successful therein that all the neighbouring countries admired them. For this reason Hermes was so truly named Trismegistus, because he was a king, a priest, a prophet, a magician, and a sophist of natural things. Such another was Zoroaster.

## CHAPTER II.

### WHEREIN IS DECLARED THAT THE GREEKS DREW A LARGE PART OF THEIR LEARNING FROM THE EGYPTIANS; AND HOW IT CAME FROM THEM TO US.

When a son of Noah possessed the third part of the world after the Flood, this Art broke into Chaldaea and Persia, and thence spread into Egypt. The Art having been found out by the superstitious and idolatrous Greeks, some of them who were wiser than the rest betook themselves to the Chaldeans and Egyptians, so that they might draw the same wisdom from their schools. Since, however, the theological study of the law of Moses did not satisfy them, they trusted to their own peculiar genius, and fell away from the right foundation of those natural secrets and arts. This is evident from their fabulous conceptions, and from their errors respecting the doctrine of Moses. It was the custom of the Egyptians to put forward the traditions of that surpassing wisdom only in enigmatical figures and abstruse histories and terms. This was afterwards followed by Homer with marvellous poetical skill; and Pythagoras was also acquainted with it, seeing that he comprised in his writings many things out of the law of Moses and the Old Testament. In like manner, Hippocrates, Thales of Miletus, Anaxagoras, Democritus, and others, did not scruple to fix their minds on the same subject. And yet none of them were practised in the true Astrology, Geometry, Arithmetic, or Medicine, because their pride prevented this, since they would not admit disciples belonging to other nations than their own. Even when they had got some insight from the Chaldeans and Egyptians, they became more arrogant still than they were before by Nature, and without any diffidence propounded the subject substantially indeed, but mixed with subtle fictions or falsehoods; and then they attempted to elaborate a certain kind of philosophy which descended from them to the Latins. These in their turn, being educated herewith, adorned it with their own doctrines, and by these the philosophy was spread over Europe. Many academies were founded for the propagation of their dogmas and rules, so that the young might be instructed; and this system flourishes with the Germans, and other nations, right down to the present day.

## CHAPTER III.

### WHAT WAS TAUGHT IN THE SCHOOLS OF THE EGYPTIANS.

The Chaldeans, Persians, and Egyptians had all of them the same knowledge of the secrets of Nature, and also the same religion. It was only the names that differed. The Chaldeans and Persians called their doctrine Sophia and Magic<sup>4</sup>; and the Egyptians, because of the sacrifice, called their wisdom priestcraft. The magic of the Persians, and the theology of the Egyptians, were both of them taught in the schools of old. Though there were many schools and learned men in Arabia, Africa, and Greece, such as Albumazar, Abenzagel, Geber, Rhasis, and Avicenna among the Arabians; and among the Greeks, Machaon, Podalirius, Pythagoras, Anaxagoras, Democritus, Plato, Aristotle, and Rhodianus; still there were different opinions amongst them as to the wisdom of the Egyptian on points wherein they themselves differed, and whereupon they disagreed with it. For this reason Pythagoras could not be called a wise man, because the Egyptian priestcraft and wisdom were not perfectly taught, although he received therefrom many mysteries and arcana; and that Anaxagoras had received a great many as well, is clear from his discussions on the subject of Sol and its Stone, which he left behind him after his death. Yet he differed in many respects from the Egyptians. Even

they would not be called wise men or Magi; but, following Pythagoras, they assumed the name of philosophy: yet they gathered no more than a few gleams like shadows from the magic of the Persians and the Egyptians. But Moses, Abraham, Solomon, Adam, and the wise men that came from the East to Christ, were true Magi, divine sophists and cabalists. Of this art and wisdom the Greeks knew very little or nothing at all; and therefore we shall leave this philosophical wisdom of the Greeks as being a mere speculation, utterly distinct and separate from other true arts and sciences.

## CHAPTER IV.

### WHAT MAGI THE CHALDEANS, PERSIANS, AND EGYPTIANS WERE.

Many persons have endeavoured to investigate and make use of the secret magic of these wise men; but it has not yet been accomplished. Many even of our own age exalt Trithemius, others Bacon and Agrippa, for magic and the cabala<sup>5</sup> – two things apparently quite distinct – not knowing why they do so. Magic, indeed, is an art and faculty whereby the elementary bodies, their fruits, properties, virtues, and hidden operations are comprehended. But the cabala, by a subtle understanding of the Scriptures, seems to trace out the way to God for men, to shew them how they may act with Him, and prophesy from Him; for the cabala is full of divine mysteries, even as Magic is full of natural secrets. It teaches of and foretells from the nature of things to come as well as of things present, since its operation consists in knowing the inner constitution of all creatures, of celestial as well as terrestrial bodies: what is latent within them; what are their occult virtues; for what they were originally designed, and with what properties they are endowed. These and the like subjects are the bonds wherewith things celestial are bound up with things of the earth, as may sometimes be seen in their operation even with the bodily eyes. Such a conjunction of celestial influences, whereby the heavenly virtues acted upon inferior bodies, was formerly called by the Magi a Gamahea<sup>6</sup>, or the marriage of the celestial powers and properties with elementary bodies. Hence ensued the excellent commixtures of all bodies, celestial and terrestrial, namely, of the sun and planets, likewise vegetables, minerals, and animals.

The devil attempted with his whole force and endeavour to darken this light; nor was he wholly frustrated in his hopes, for he deprived all Greece of it, and, in place thereof, introduced among that people human speculations and simple blasphemies against God and against His Son. Magic, it is true, had its origin in the Divine Ternary and arose from the Trinity of God. For God marked all His creatures with this Ternary and engraved its hieroglyph on them with His own finger. Nothing in the nature of things can be assigned or produced that lacks this magistry of the Divine Ternary, or that does not even ocularly prove it. The creature teaches us to understand and see the Creator Himself, as St. Paul testifies to the Romans. This covenant of the Divine Ternary, diffused throughout the whole substance of things, is indissoluble. By this, also, we have the secrets of all Nature from the four elements. For the Ternary, with the magical Quaternary, produces a perfect Septenary, endowed with many arcana and demonstrated by things which are known. When the Quaternary rests in the Ternary, then arises the Light of the World on the horizon of eternity, and by the assistance of God gives us the whole bond. Here also it refers to the virtues and operations of all creatures, and to their use, since they are stamped and marked with their arcana, signs, characters, and figures, so that there is left in them scarcely the smallest occult point which is not made clear on examination. Then when the Quaternary and the Ternary mount to the Denary is accomplished their retrogression or reduction to unity. Herein is comprised all the occult wisdom of things which God has made plainly manifest to men, both by His word and by the creatures of His hands, so that they may have a true knowledge of them. This shall be made more clear in another place.

## CHAPTER V.

### CONCERNING THE CHIEF AND SUPREME ESSENCE OF THINGS.

The Magi in their wisdom asserted that all creatures might be brought to one unified substance, which substance they affirm may, by purifications and purgations, attain to so high a degree of subtlety, such divine nature and occult property, as to work wonderful results. For they considered that by returning to the earth, and by a supreme magical separation, a certain perfect substance would come forth, which is at length, by many industrious and prolonged preparations, exalted and raised up above the range of vegetable substances into mineral, above mineral into metallic, and above perfect metallic substances into a perpetual and divine Quintessence<sup>7</sup>, including in itself the essence of all celestial and terrestrial creatures. The Arabs and Greeks, by the occult characters and hieroglyphic descriptions of the Persians and the Egyptians, attained to secret and abstruse mysteries. When these were obtained and partially understood they saw with their own eyes, in the course of experimenting, many wonderful and strange effects. But since the supercelestial operations lay more deeply hidden than their capacity could penetrate, they did not call this a supercelestial arcanum according to the institution of the Magi, but the arcanum of the Philosophers' Stone according to the counsel and judgment of Pythagoras. Whoever obtained this Stone overshadowed it with various enigmatical figures, deceptive resemblances, comparisons, and fictitious titles, so that its matter might remain occult. Very little or no knowledge of it therefore can be had from them.

## CHAPTER VI.

### CONCERNING THE DIFFERENT ERRORS AS TO ITS DISCOVERY AND KNOWLEDGE.

The philosophers have prefixed most occult names to this matter of the Stone, grounded on mere similitudes. Arnold, observing this, says in his "Rosary" that the greatest difficulty is to find out the material of this Stone; for they have called it vegetable, animal, and mineral, but not according to the literal sense, which is well known to such wise men as have had experience of divine secrets and the miracles of this same Stone. For example, Raymond Lully's "Lunaria" may be cited. This gives flowers of admirable virtues familiar to the philosophers themselves; but it was not the intention of those philosophers that you should think they meant thereby any projection upon metals, or that any such preparations should be made; but the abstruse mind of the philosophers had another intention. In like manner, they called their matter by the name of Martagon, to which they applied an occult alchemical operation; when, notwithstanding that name, it denotes nothing more than a hidden similitude. Moreover, no small error has arisen in the liquid of vegetables, with which a good many have sought to coagulate Mercury<sup>8</sup>, and afterwards to convert it with fixatory waters into Luna, since they supposed that he who in this way could coagulate it without the aid of metals would succeed in becoming the chief master. Now, although the liquids of some vegetables do effect this, yet the result is due merely to the resin, fat, and earthy sulphur with which they abound. This attracts to itself the moisture of the Mercury which rises with the substance in the process of coagulation, but without any advantage resulting. I am well assured that no thick and external Sulphur in vegetables is adapted for a perfect projection in Alchemy, as some have found out to their cost. Certain persons have, it is true, coagulated Mercury with the white and milky juice of tittinal, on account of the intense heat which exists therein; and they have called that liquid "Lac Virginis"; yet this is a false basis. The same may be asserted concerning the juice of celandine, although it colours just as though it were endowed with gold. Hence people conceived a vain idea.

At a certain fixed time they rooted up this vegetable, from which they sought for a soul or quintessence, wherefrom they might make a coagulating and transmuting tincture. But hence arose nothing save a foolish error.

## CHAPTER VII.

### CONCERNING THE ERRORS OF THOSE WHO SEEK THE STONE IN VEGETABLES.

Some alchemists have pressed a juice out of celandine, boiled it to thickness, and put it in the sun, so that it might coagulate into a hard mass, which, being afterwards pounded into a fine black powder, should turn Mercury by projection into Sol. This they also found to be in vain. Others mixed Sal Ammoniac with this powder; others the Colcothar of Vitriol, supposing that they would thus arrive at their desired result. They brought it by their solutions into a yellow water, so that the Sal Ammoniac allowed an entrance of the tincture into the substance of the Mercury. Yet again nothing was accomplished. There are some again who, instead of the abovementioned substances, take the juices of persicaria, bufonaria, dracunculus, the leaves of willow, tithymal, cataputia, flammula, and the like, and shut them up in a glass vessel with Mercury for some days, keeping them in ashes. Thus it comes about that the Mercury is turned into ashes, but deceptively and without any result. These people were misled by the vain rumours of the vulgar, who give it out that he who is able to coagulate Mercury without metals has the entire Magistry, as we have said before. Many, too, have extracted salts, oils, and sulphurs artificially out of vegetables, but quite in vain. Out of such salts, oils, and sulphurs no coagulation of Mercury, or perfect projection, or tincture, can be made. But when the philosophers compare their matter to a certain golden tree of seven boughs, they mean that such matter includes all the seven metals in its sperm, and that in it these lie hidden. On this account they called their matter vegetable, because, as in the case of natural trees, they also in their time produce various flowers. So, too, the matter of the Stone shews most beautiful colours in the production of its flowers. The comparison, also, is apt, because a certain matter rises out of the philosophical earth, as if it were a thicket of branches and sprouts: like a sponge growing on the earth. They say, therefore, that the fruit of their tree tends towards heaven. So, then, they put forth that the whole thing hinged upon natural vegetables, though not as to its matter, because their stone contains within itself a body, soul, and spirit, as vegetables do.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### CONCERNING THOSE WHO HAVE SOUGHT THE STONE IN ANIMALS.

They have also, by a name based only on resemblances, called this matter Lac Virginis, and the Blessed Blood of Rosy Colour, which, nevertheless, suits only the prophets and sons of God. Hence the sophists<sup>9</sup> gathered that this philosophical matter was in the blood of animals or of man. Sometimes, too, because they are nourished by vegetables, others have sought it in hairs, in salt of urine, in rebis; others in hens' eggs, in milk, and in the calx of egg shells, with all of which they thought they would be able to fix Mercury. Some have extracted salt out of foetid urine, supposing that to be the matter of the Stone. Some persons, again, have considered the little stones found in rebis to be the matter. Others have macerated the membranes of eggs in a sharp lixivium, with which they also mixed calcined egg shells as white as snow. To these they have attributed the arcanum of fixation for the transmutation of Mercury. Others, comparing the white of the egg to silver and the yolk to gold, have chosen it for their matter, mixing with it common salt, sal ammoniac, and burnt tartar. These they shut up in a glass vessel, and purified in a *Balneum Maris*



until the white matter became as red as blood. This, again, they distilled into a most offensive liquid, utterly useless for the purpose they had in view. Others have purified the white and yolk of eggs; from which has been generated a basilisk. This they burnt to a deep red powder, and sought to tinge with it, as they learnt from the treatise of Cardinal Gilbert. Many, again, have macerated the galls of oxen, mixed with common salt, and distilled this into a liquid, with which they moistened the cementary powders, supposing that, by means of this Magistery, they would tinge their metals. This they called by the name of "a part with a part", and thence came – just nothing. Others have attempted to transmute tutia by the addition of dragon's blood and other substances, and also to change copper and electrum into gold. Others, according to the Venetian Art, as they call it, take twenty lizard-like animals, more or less, shut them up in a vessel, and make them mad with hunger, so that they may devour one another until only one of them survives. This one is then fed with filings of copper or of electrum. They suppose that this animal, simply by the digestion of his stomach, will bring about the desired transmutation. Finally, they burn this animal into a red powder, which they thought must be gold; but they were deceived. Others, again, having burned the fishes called truitas (? trouts), have sometimes, upon melting them, found some gold in them; but there is no other reason for it than this: Those fish sometimes in rivers and streams meet with certain small scales and sparks of gold, which they eat. It is seldom, however, that such deceivers are found, and then chiefly in the courts of princes. The matter of the philosophers is not to be sought in animals: this I announce to all. Still, it is evident that the philosophers called their Stone animal, because in their final operations the virtue of this most excellent fiery mystery caused an obscure liquid to exude drop by drop from the matter in their vessels. Hence they predicted that, in the last times, there should come a most pure man upon the earth, by whom the redemption of the world should be brought about; and that this man should send forth bloody drops of a red colour, by means of which he should redeem the world from sin. In the same way, after its own kind, the blood of their Stone freed the leprous metals from their infirmities and contagion. On these grounds, therefore, they supposed they were justified in saying that their Stone was animal. Concerning this mystery Mercurius speaks as follows to King Calid: –

"This mystery it is permitted only to the prophets of God to know. Hence it comes to pass that this Stone is called animal, because in its blood a soul lies hid. It is likewise composed of body, spirit, and soul. For the same reason they called it their microcosm, because it has the likeness of all things in the world, and thence they termed it animal, as Plato named the great world an animal".

## CHAPTER IX.

### CONCERNING THOSE WHO HAVE SOUGHT THE STONE IN MINERALS.

Hereto are added the many ignorant men who suppose the stone to be three-fold, and to be hidden in a triple genus, namely, vegetable, animal, and mineral. Hence it is that they have sought for it in minerals. Now, this is far from the opinion of the philosophers. They affirm that their stone is uniformly vegetable, animal, and mineral. Now, here note that Nature has distributed its mineral sperm into various kinds, as, for instance, into sulphurs, salts, boraxes, nitres, ammoniacs, alums, arsenics, atraments, vitriols, tutias, haematites, orpiments, realgars, magnesias, cinnabar, antimony, talc, cachymia, marcasites, etc. In all these Nature has not yet attained to our matter; although in some of the species named it displays itself in a wonderful aspect for the transmutation of imperfect metals that are to be brought to perfection. Truly, long experience and practice with fire shew many and various permutations in the matter of minerals, not only from one colour to another, but from one essence to another, and from imperfection to perfection. And, although Nature has, by means of prepared minerals, reached some perfection, yet philosophers will not have it that the matter of the philosophic stone proceeds out of any of the minerals, although they say that their stone is universal.

Hence, then, the sophists take occasion to persecute Mercury himself with various torments, as with sublimations, coagulations, mercurial waters, aquafortis, and the like. All these erroneous ways should be avoided, together with other sophistical preparations of minerals, and the purgations and fixations of spirits and metals. Wherefore all the preparations of the stone, as of Geber, Albertus Magnus, and the rest, are sophistical. Their purgations, cementations, sublimations, distillations, rectifications, circulations, putrefactions, conjunctions, solutions, ascensions, coagulations, calcinations, and incinerations are utterly profitless, both in the tripod, in the athanor, in the reverberatory furnace, in the melting furnace, the accidioneum, in dung, ashes, sand, or what not; and also in the cucurbite, the pelican, retort, phial, fixatory, and the rest. The same opinion must be passed on the sublimation of Mercury by mineral spirits, for the white and the red, as by vitriol, saltpetre, alum, crocuses, etc., concerning all which subjects that sophist, John de Rupescissa, romances in his treatise on the White and Red Philosophic Stone. Taken altogether, these are merely deceitful dreams. Avoid also the particular sophistry of Geber; for example, his sevenfold sublimations or mortifications, and also the revivifications of Mercury, with his preparations of salts of urine, or salts made by a sepulchre, all which things are untrustworthy. Some others have endeavoured to fix Mercury with: the sulphurs of minerals and metals, but have been greatly deceived. It is true I have seen Mercury by this Art, and by such fixations, brought into a metallic body resembling and counterfeiting good silver in all respects; but when brought to the test it has shewn itself to be false.

## CHAPTER X.

### CONCERNING THOSE WHO HAVE SOUGHT THE STONE AND ALSO PARTICULARS IN MINERALS.

Some sophists have tried to squeeze out a fixed oil from Mercury seven times sublimed and as often dissolved by means of aquafortis. In this way they attempt to bring imperfect metals to perfection: but they have been obliged to relinquish their vain endeavour. Some have purged vitriol seven times by calcination, solution, and coagulation, with the addition of two parts of sal ammoniac, and by sublimation, so that it might be resolved into a white water, to which they have added a third part of quicksilver, that it might be coagulated by water. Then afterwards they have sublimated the Mercury several times from the vitriol and sal ammoniac, so that it became a stone. This stone they affirmed, being conceived of the vitriol, to be the Red Sulphur of the philosophers, with which they have, by means of solutions and coagulations, made some progress in attaining the stone; but in projection it has all come to nothing. Others have coagulated Mercury by water of alum into a hard mass like alum itself; and this they have fruitlessly fixed with fixatory waters. The sophists propose to themselves very many ways of fixing Mercury, but to no purpose, for therein nothing perfect or constant can be had. It is therefore in vain to add minerals thereto by sophistical processes, since by all of them he is stirred up to greater malice, is rendered more lively, and rather brought to greater impurity than to any kind of perfection. So, then, the philosophers' matter is not to be sought from thence. Mercury is somewhat imperfect; and to bring it to perfection will be very difficult, nay, impossible for any sophist. There is nothing therein that can be stirred up or compelled to perfection. Some have taken arsenic several times sublimated, and frequently dissolved with oil of tartar and coagulated. This they have pretended to fix, and by it to turn copper into silver. This, however, is merely a sophistical whitening, for arsenic cannot be fixed<sup>10</sup> unless the operator be an Artist, and knows well its tingeing spirit. Truly in this respect all the philosophers have slept, vainly attempting to accomplish anything thereby. Whoever, therefore, is ignorant as to this spirit, cannot have any hopes of fixing it, or of giving it that power which would make it capable of the virtue of transmutation. So, then, I give notice to all that the whitening of which I have just now spoken is grounded on a false basis, and that by it the copper is deceitfully whitened, but not changed.

Now the sophists have mixed this counterfeit Venus with twice its weight of Luna, and sold it to the goldsmiths and mint-masters, until at last they have transmuted themselves into false coiners – not only those who sold, but those who bought it. Some sophists instead of white arsenic take red, and this has turned out false art; because, however it is prepared, it proves to be nothing but whiteness.

Some, again, have gone further and dealt with common sulphur, which, being so yellow, they have boiled in vinegar, lixivium, or sharpest wines, for a day and a night, until it became white. Then afterwards they sublimated it from common salt and the calx of eggs, repeating the process several times; yet, still, though white, it has been always combustibile. Nevertheless, with this they have endeavoured to fix Mercury and to turn it into gold; but in vain. From this, however, comes the most excellent and beautiful cinnabar that I have ever seen. This they propose to fix with the oil of sulphur by cementation and fixation. It does, indeed, give something of an appearance, but still falls short of the desired object. Others have reduced common sulphur to the form of a hepar, boiling it in vinegar with the addition of linseed oil, or laterine oil, or olive oil. They then pour it into a marble mortar, and make it into the form of a hepar, which they have first distilled into a citrine oil with a gentle fire. But they have found to their loss that they could not do anything in the way of transmuting Luna to Sol as they supposed they would be able. As there is an infinite number of metals, so also there is much variety in the preparation of them: I shall not make further mention of these in this place, because each a mould require a special treatise. Beware also of sophisticated oils of vitriol and antimony. Likewise be on your guard against the oils of the metals, perfect or imperfect, as Sol or Luna; because although the operation of these is most potent in the nature of things, yet the true process is known, even at this day, to very few persons. Abstain also from the sophisticated preparations of common mercury, arsenic, sulphur, and the like, by sublimation, descension, fixation by vinegar, saltpetre, tartar, vitriol, sal ammoniac, according to the formulas prescribed in the books of the sophists. Likewise avoid the sophisticated tinctures taken from marcasites and crocus of Mars, and also of that sophistication called by the name of "a part with a part", and of fixed Luna and similar trifles. Although they have some superficial appearance of truth, as the fixation of Luna by little labour and industry, still the progress of the preparation is worthless and weak. Being therefore moved with compassion towards the well meaning operators in this art, I have determined to lay open the whole foundation of philosophy in three separate arcana, namely, in one explained by arsenic, in a second by vitriol, and in a third by antimony; by means of which I will teach the true projection upon Mercury and upon the imperfect metals.

## CHAPTER XI.

### CONCERNING THE TRUE AND PERFECT SPECIAL ARCANUM OF ARSENIC FOR THE WHITE TINCTURE.

Some persons have written that arsenic is compounded of Mercury and, Sulphur, others of earth and water; but most writers say that it is of the nature of Sulphur. But, however that may be, its nature is such that it transmutes red copper into white. It may also be brought to such a perfect state of preparation as to be able to tinge. But this is not done in the way pointed out by such evil sophists as Geber in "The Sum of Perfection", Albertus Magnus, Aristotle the chemist in "The Book of the Perfect Magistry", Rhasis and Polydorus; for those writers, however many they be, are either themselves in error, or else they write falsely out of sheer envy, and put forth receipts whilst not ignorant of the truth. Arsenic contains within itself three natural spirits. The first is volatile, combustibile, corrosive, and penetrating all metals. This spirit whitens Venus and after some days renders it spongy. But this artifice relates only to those who practise the caustic art. The second spirit is crystalline and sweet. The third is a tingeing spirit separated from the others before mentioned. True philosophers seek for these three natural properties in arsenic with a view to the

perfect projection of the wise men<sup>11</sup>. But those barbers who practise surgery seek after that sweet and crystalline nature separated from the tingeing spirit for use in the cure of wounds, buboes, carbuncles, anthrax, and other similar ulcers which are not curable save by gentle means. As for that tingeing spirit, however, unless the pure be separated from the impure in it, the fixed from the volatile, and the secret tincture from the combustible, it will not in any way succeed according to your wish for projection on Mercury, Venus, or any other imperfect metal. All philosophers have hidden this arcanum as a most excellent mystery. This tingeing spirit, separated from the other two as above, you must join to the spirit of Luna, and digest them together for the space of thirty-two days, or until they have assumed a new body. After it has, on the fortieth natural day, been kindled into flame by the heat of the sun, the spirit appears in a bright whiteness, and is endued with a perfect tingeing arcanum. Then it is at length fit for projection, namely, one part of it upon sixteen parts of an imperfect body, according to the sharpness of the preparation. From thence appears shining and most excellent Luna, as though it had been dug from the bowels of the earth.

## CHAPTER XII.

### GENERAL INSTRUCTION CONCERNING THE ARCANUM OF VITRIOL AND THE RED TINCTURE TO BE EXTRACTED FROM IT.<sup>12</sup>

Vitriol is a very noble mineral among the rest, and was held always in highest estimation by philosophers, because the Most High God has adorned it with wonderful gifts. They have veiled its arcanum in enigmatical figures like the following: "Thou shalt go to the inner parts of the earth, and by rectification thou shalt find the occult stone, a true medicine". By the earth they understood the Vitriol itself; and by the inner parts of the earth its sweetness and redness, because in the occult part of the Vitriol lies hid a subtle, noble, and most fragrant juice, and a pure oil. The method of its production is not to be approached by calcination or by distillation. For it must not be deprived on any account of its green colour. If it were, it would at the same time lose its arcanum and its power. Indeed, it should be observed at this point that minerals, and also vegetables and other like things which shew greenness without, contain within themselves an oil red like blood, which is their arcanum. Hence it is clear that the distillations of the druggists are useless, vain, foolish, and of no value, because these people do not know how to extract the bloodlike redness from vegetables. Nature herself is wise, and turns all the waters of vegetables to a lemon colour, and after that into an oil which is very red like blood. The reason why this is so slowly accomplished arises from the too great haste of the ignorant operators who distil it, which causes the greenness to be consumed. They have not learnt to strengthen Nature with their own powers, which is the mode whereby that noble green colour ought to be rectified into redness of itself. An example of this is white wine digesting itself into a lemon colour; and in process of time the green colour of the grape is of itself turned into the red which underlies the coerulean. The greenness therefore of the vegetables and minerals being lost by the incapacity of the operators, the essence also and spirit of the oil and of the balsam, which is noblest among arcana, will also perish.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### SPECIAL INSTRUCTION CONCERNING THE PROCESS OF VITRIOL FOR THE RED TINCTURE.

Vitriol contains within itself many muddy and viscous imperfections. Therefore its greenness<sup>13</sup> must be often extracted with water, and rectified until it puts off all the impurities of earth. When all these rectifications are finished, take care above all that the matter shall not be exposed to the sun, for this turns its greenness pale, and at the same time absorbs the arcanum. Let it be kept covered up in a warm stove so that no dust may defile it. Afterwards let it be digested in a closed glass vessel for the space of several months, or until different colours and deep redness shew themselves. Still you must not suppose that by this process the redness is sufficiently fixed. It must, in addition, be cleansed from the interior and accidental defilements of the earth, in the following manner: – It must be rectified with acetum until the earthy defilement is altogether removed, and the dregs are taken away. This is now the true and best rectification of its tincture, from which the blessed oil is to be extracted. From this tincture, which is carefully enclosed in a glass vessel, an alembic afterwards placed on it and luted so that no spirit may escape, the spirit of this oil must be extracted by distillation over a mild and slow fire. This oil is much pleasanter and sweeter than any aromatic balsam of the druggsellers, being entirely free from all acridity<sup>14</sup>. There will subside in the bottom of the cucurbite some very white earth, shining and glittering like snow. This keep, and protect from all dust. This same earth is altogether separated from its redness.

Thereupon follows the greatest arcanum, that is to say, the Supercelestial Marriage of the Soul, consummately prepared and washed by the blood of the lamb, with its own splendid, shining, and purified body. This is the true supercelestial marriage by which life is prolonged to the last and predestined day. In this way, then, the soul and spirit of the Vitriol, which are its blood, are joined with its purified body, that they may be for eternity inseparable. Take, therefore, this our foliated earth in a glass phial. Into it pour gradually its own oil. The body will receive and embrace its soul; since the body is affected with extreme desire for the soul, and the soul is most perfectly delighted with the embrace of the body. Place this conjunction in a furnace of arcana, and keep it there for forty days. When these have expired you will have a most absolute oil of wondrous perfection, in which Mercury and any other of the imperfect metals are turned into gold.

Now let us turn our attention to its multiplication. Take the corporal Mercury, in the proportion of two parts; pour it over three parts, equal in weight, of the aforesaid oil, and let them remain together for forty days. By this proportion of weight and this order the multiplication becomes infinite.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

##### CONCERNING THE SECRETS AND ARCANA OF ANTIMONY, FOR THE RED TINCTURE, WITH A VIEW TO TRANSMUTATION.

Antimony is the true bath of gold. Philosophers call it the examiner and the stilanx. Poets say that in this bath Vulcan washed Phoebus, and purified him from all dirt and imperfection. It is produced from the purest and noblest Mercury and Sulphur, under the genus of vitriol, in metallic form and brightness. Some philosophers call it the White Lead of the Wise Men, or simply the Lead. Take, therefore, of Antimony, the very best of its kind, as much as you will. Dissolve this in its own aquafortis, and throw it into cold water, adding a little of the crocus of Mars, so that it may sink to the bottom of the vessel as a sediment, for otherwise it does not throw off its dregs. After it has been dissolved in this way it will have acquired supreme beauty. Let it be placed in a glass vessel, closely fastened on all sides with a very thick lute, or else in a stone bocia, and mix with it some calcined tutia, sublimated to the perfect degree of fire. It must be carefully guarded from liquefying, because with too great heat it breaks the glass. From one pound of this Antimony a sublimation is made, perfected for a space of two days. Place this sublimated substance in a phial that it may touch the water with its third part, in a luted vessel, so that the spirit may not escape. Let it be suspended over

the tripod of arcana, and let the work be urged on at first with a slow fire equal to the sun's heat at midsummer. Then at length on the tenth day let it be gradually increased. For with too great heat the glass vessels are broken, and sometimes even the furnace goes to pieces. While the vapour is ascending different colours appear. Let the fire be moderated until a red matter is seen. Afterwards dissolve in very sharp Acetum, and throw away the dregs. Let the Acetum be abstracted and let it be again dissolved in common distilled water. This again must be abstracted, and the sediment distilled with a very strong fire in a glass vessel closely shut. The whole body of the Antimony will ascend as a very red oil, like the colour of a ruby, and will flow into the receiver, drop by drop, with a most fragrant smell and a very sweet taste<sup>15</sup>. This is the supreme arcanum of the philosophers in Antimony, which they account most highly among the arcana of oils. Then, lastly, let the oil of Sol be made in the following way: – Take of the purest Sol as much as you will, and dissolve it in rectified spirit of wine. Let the spirit be abstracted several times, and an equal number of times let it be dissolved again. Let the last solution be kept with the spirit of wine, and circulated for a month. Afterwards let the volatile gold and the spirit of wine be distilled three or four times by means of an alembic, so that it may flow down into the receiver and be brought to its supreme essence. To half an ounce of this dissolved gold let one ounce of the Oil of Antimony be added. This oil embraces it in the heat of the bath, so that it does not easily let it go, even if the spirit of wine be extracted. In this way you will have the supreme mystery and arcanum of Nature, to which scarcely any equal can be assigned in the nature of things. Let these two oils in combination be shut up together in a phial after the manner described, hung on a tripod for a philosophical month, and warmed with a very gentle fire; although, if the fire be regulated in dire proportion this operation is concluded in thirty-one days, and brought to perfection. By this, Mercury and any other imperfect metals acquire the perfection of gold.

## CHAPTER XV.

### CONCERNING THE PROJECTION TO BE MADE BY THE MYSTERY AND ARCANUM OF ANTIMONY.

No precise weight can be assigned in this work of projection, though the tincture itself may be extracted from a certain subject, in a defined proportion, and with fitting appliances. For instance, that Medicine tinges sometimes thirty, forty, occasionally even sixty, eighty, or a hundred parts of the imperfect metal. So, then, the whole business hinges chiefly on the purification of the Medicine and the industry of the operator, and, next, on the greater; or lesser cleanliness and purity of the imperfect body taken in hand. For instance, one Venus is more pure than another; and hence it happens that no one fixed weight can be specified in projection. This alone is worth noting, that if the operator happens to have taken too much of the tincture, he can correct this mistake by adding more of the imperfect metal. But if there be too much of the subject, so that the powers of the tincture are weakened, this error is easily remedied by a cineritium, or by cementations, or by ablutions in crude Antimony. There is nothing at this stage which need delay the operator; only let him put before himself a fact which has been passed over by the philosophers, and by some studiously veiled, namely, that in projections there must be a revivification, that is to say, an animation of imperfect bodies – nay, so to speak, a spiritualisation; concerning which some have said that their metals are no common ones, since they live and have a soul.

### ANIMATION IS PRODUCED IN THE FOLLOWING WAY.

Take of Venus, wrought into small plates, as much as you will, ten, twenty, or forty pounds. Let these be incrustated with a pulse made of arsenic and calcined tartar, and calcined in their own vessel for twenty-four hours. Then at length let the Venus be pulverised, washed, and thoroughly purified.

Let the calcination with ablution be repeated three or four times. In this way it is purged and purified from its thick greenness and from its own impure sulphur. You will have to be on your guard against calcinations made with common sulphur. For whatever is good in the metal is spoilt thereby, and what is bad becomes worse. To ten marks of this purged Venus add one of pure Luna. But in order that the work of the Medicine may be accelerated by projection, and may more easily penetrate the imperfect body, and drive out all portions which are opposed to the nature of Luna, this is accomplished by means of a perfect ferment. For the work is defiled by means of an impure Sulphur, so that a cloud is stretched out over the surface of the transmuted substance, or the metal is mixed with the loppings of the Sulphur and may be cast away therewith. But if a projection of a red stone is to be made, with a view to a red transmutation, it must first fall on gold, afterwards on silver, or on some other metal thoroughly purified, as we have directed above. From thence arises the most perfect gold.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### CONCERNING THE UNIVERSAL MATTER OF THE PHILOSOPHERS' STONE.

After the mortification of vegetables, they are transmuted, by the concurrence of two minerals, such as Sulphur and Salt, into a mineral nature, so that at length they themselves become perfect minerals. So it is that in the mineral burrows and caves of the earth, vegetables are found which, in the long succession of time, and by the continuous heat of sulphur, put off the vegetable nature and assume that of the mineral. This happens, for the most part, where the appropriate nutriment is taken away from vegetables of this kind, so that they are afterwards compelled to derive their nourishment from the sulphur and salts of the earth, until what was before vegetable passes over into a perfect mineral. From this mineral state, too, sometimes a perfect metallic essence arises, and this happens by the progress of one degree into another.

But let us return to the Philosophers' Stone. The matter of this, as certain writers have mentioned, is above all else difficult to discover and abstruse to understand. The method and most certain rule for finding out this, as well as other subjects – what they embrace or are able to effect – is a careful examination of the root and seed by which they come to our knowledge. For this, before all things else, a consideration of principles is absolutely necessary; and also of the manner in which Nature proceeds from imperfection to the end of perfection. Now, for this consideration it is well to have it thoroughly understood from the first that all things created by Nature consist of three primal elements, namely, natural Mercury, Sulphur, and Salt in combination, so that in some substances they are volatile, in others fixed. Wherever corporal Salt is mixed with spiritual Mercury and animated Sulphur into one body, then Nature begins to work, in those subterranean places which serve for her vessels, by means of a separating fire. By this the thick and impure Sulphur is separated from the pure, the earth is segregated from the Salt, and the clouds from the Mercury, while those purer parts are preserved, which Nature again welds together into a pure geogamic body. This operation is esteemed by the Magi as a mixture and conjunction by the uniting of three constituents, body, soul, and spirit. When this union is completed there results from it a pure Mercury. Now if this, when flowing down through its subterranean passages and veins, meets with a chaotic Sulphur, the Mercury is coagulated by it according to the condition of the Sulphur. It is, however, still volatile, so that scarcely in a hundred years is it transformed into a metal. Hence arose the vulgar idea that Mercury and Sulphur are the matter of the metals, as is certainly reported by miners. It is not, however, common Mercury and common Sulphur which are the matter of the metals, but the Mercury and the Sulphur of the philosophers are incorporated and inborn in perfect metals, and in the forms of them, so that they never fly from the fire, nor are they depraved by the force of the corruption caused by the elements. It is true that by the dissolution of this natural

mixture our Mercury is subdued, as all the philosophers say. Under this form of words our Mercury comes to be drawn from perfect bodies and from the forces of the earthly planets. This is what Hermes asserts in the following terms: "The Sun and the Moon are the roots of this Art". The Son of Hamuel says that the Stone of the philosophers is water coagulated, namely, in Sol and Luna. From this it is clearer than the sun that the material of the Stone is nothing else but Sol and Luna. This is confirmed by the fact that like produces like. We know that there are only two Stones, the white and the red. There are also two matters of the Stone, Sol and Luna, formed together in a proper marriage, both natural and artificial. Now, as we see that the man or the woman, without the seed of both, cannot generate, in the same way our man, Sol, and his wife, Luna, cannot conceive or do an thing in the way of generation, without the seed and sperm of both. Hence the philosophers gathered that a third thing was necessary, namely, the animated seed of both, the man and the woman, without which they judged that the whole of their work was fruitless and in vain. Such a sperm is Mercury, which, by the natural conjunction of both bodies Sol and Luna, receives their nature into itself in union. Then at length, and not before, the work is fit for congress, ingress, and generation; by the masculine and feminine power and virtue. Hence the philosophers have said that this same Mercury is composed of body, spirit, and soul, and that it has assumed the nature and property of all elements. Therefore, with their most powerful genius and intellect, they asserted their Stone to be animal. They even called it their Adam, who carries his own invisible Eve hidden in his body, from that moment in which they were united by the power of the Supreme God, the Maker of all creatures. For this reason it may be said that the Mercury of the Philosophers is none other than their most abstruse, compounded Mercury, and not the common Mercury. So then they have wisely said to the sages that there is in Mercury whatever wise men seek. Almadir, the philosopher, says: "We extract our Mercury from one perfect body and two perfect natural conditions incorporated together, which indeed puts forth externally its perfection, whereby it is able to resist the fire, so that its internal imperfection may be protected by the external perfections". By this passage of the sagacious philosopher is understood the Adamic matter, the limbus of the microcosm<sup>16</sup>, and the homogeneous, unique matter of the philosophers. The sayings of these men, which we have before mentioned, are simply golden, and ever to be held in the highest esteem, because they contain nothing superfluous or without force. Summarily, then, the matter of the Philosophers' Stone is none other than a fiery and perfect Mercury extracted by Nature and Art; that is, the artificially prepared and true hermaphrodite Adam, and the microcosm: That wisest of the philosophers, Mercurius, making the same statement, called the Stone an orphan. Our Mercury, therefore, is the same which contains in itself all the perfections, force, and virtues of the Sun, which also runs through all the streets and houses of all the planets, and in its own rebirth has acquired the force of things above and things below; to the marriage of which it is to be compared, as is clear from the whiteness and the redness combined in it.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### CONCERNING THE PREPARATION OF THE MATTER FOR THE PHILOSOPHIC STONE.

What Nature principally requires is that its own philosophic man should be brought into a mercurial substance, so that it may be born into the philosophic Stone. Moreover, it should be remarked that those common preparations of Geber, Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas, Rupescissa, Polydorus, and such men, are nothing more than some particular solutions, sublimations, and calcinations, having no reference to our universal substance, which needs only the most secret fire of the philosophers. Let the fire and Azoth therefore suffice for you. From the fact that the philosophers make mention of certain preparations, such as putrefaction, distillation, sublimation, calcination, coagulation, dealbation, rubification, ceration, fixation, and the like, you should understand that in their universal substance, Nature herself fulfils all the operations in the matter spoken of, and not



the operator, only in a philosophical vessel, and with a similar fire, but not common fire. The white and the red spring from one root without any intermediary. It is dissolved by itself, it copulates by itself, grows white, grows red, is made crocus-coloured and black by itself, marries itself and conceives in itself. It is therefore to be decocted, to be baked, to be fused; it ascends, and it descends. All these operations are a single operation and produced by the fire alone. Still, some philosophers, nevertheless, have, by a highly graduated essence of wine, dissolved the body of Sol, and rendered it volatile, so that it should ascend through an alembic, thinking that this is the true volatile matter of the philosophers, though it is not so. And although it be no contemptible arcanum to reduce this perfect metallic body into a volatile, spiritual substance, yet they are wrong in their separation of the elements. This process of the monks, such as Lully, Richard of England, Rupescissa, and the rest, is erroneous. By this process they thought that they were going to separate gold after this fashion into a subtle, spiritual, and elementary power, each by itself, and afterwards by circulation and rectification to combine them again in one – but in vain. For although one element may, in a certain sense, be separated from another, yet, nevertheless, every element separated in this way can again be separated into another element, but these elements cannot afterwards by circulation in a pelican, or by distillation, be again brought back into one; but they always remain a certain volatile matter, and aurum potable, as they themselves call it. The reason why they could not compass their intention is that Nature refuses to be in this way dragged asunder and separated by man's disjunctions, as by earthly glasses and instruments. She alone knows her own operations and the weights of the elements, the separations, rectifications, and copulations of which she brings about without the aid of any operator or manual artifice, provided only the matter be contained in the secret fire and in its proper occult vessel. The separation of the elements, therefore, is impossible by man. It may appear to take place, but it is not true, whatever may be said by Raymond Lully, and of that famous English golden work which he is falsely supposed to have accomplished. Nature herself has within herself the proper separator, who again joins together what he has put asunder, without the aid of man. She knows best the proportion of every element, which man does not know, however misleading writers romance in their frivolous and false recipes about this volatile gold.

This is the opinion of the philosophers, that when they have put their matter into the more secret fire, and when with a moderated philosophical heat it is cherished on every side, beginning to pass into corruption, it grows black. This operation they term putrefaction, and they call the blackness by the name of the Crow's Head. The ascent and descent thereof they term distillation, ascension, and descension. The exsiccation they call coagulation; and the dealbation they call calcination; while because it becomes fluid and soft in the heat they make mention of ceration. When it ceases to ascend and remains liquid at the bottom, they say fixation is present.

In this manner it is the terms of philosophical operations are to be understood, and not otherwise.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### CONCERNING INSTRUMENTS AND THE PHILOSOPHIC VESSEL.

Sham philosophers have misunderstood the occult and secret philosophic vessel, and worse is that which is said by Aristoteles the Alchemist (not the famous Greek Academic Philosopher), giving it out that the matter is to be decocted in a triple vessel. Worst of all is that which is said by another, namely, that the matter in its first separation and first degree requires a metallic vessel; in its second degree of coagulation and dealbation of its earth a glass vessel; and in the third degree, for fixation, an earthen vessel. Nevertheless, hereby the philosophers understand one vessel alone in all the operations up to the perfection of the red stone. Since, then, our matter is our root for the white and

the red, necessarily our vessel must be so fashioned that the matter in it may be governed by the heavenly bodies. For invisible celestial influences and the impressions of the stars are in the very first degree necessary for the work: Otherwise it would be impossible for the Oriental, Chaldean, and Egyptian stone to be realised. By this Anaxagoras knew the powers of the whole firmament, and foretold that a great stone would descend from heaven to earth, which actually happened after his death. To the Cabalists our vessel is perfectly well known, because it must be made according to a truly geometrical proportion and measure, and from a definite quadrature of the circle, so that the spirit and the soul of our matter, separated from their body, may be able to raise this vessel with themselves in proportion to the altitude of heaven. If the vessel be wider, narrower, higher, or lower than is fitting, and than the dominating operating spirit and soul desire, the heat of our secret philosophic fire (which is, indeed, very severe), will violently excite the matter and urge it on to excessive operation, so that the vessel is shivered into a thousand pieces, with imminent danger to the body and even the life of the operator. On the other hand, if it be of greater capacity than is required in due proportion for the heat to have effect on the matter, the work will be wasted and thrown away. So, then, our philosophic vessel must be made with the greatest care. What the material of the vessel should be is understood only by those who, in the first solution of our fixed and perfected matter have brought that matter to its own primal quintessence. Enough has been said on this point.

The operator must also very accurately note what, in its first solution, the matter sends forth and rejects from itself.

The method of describing the form of the vessel is difficult. It should be such as Nature requires, and it must be sought out and investigated from every possible source, so that, from the height of the philosophic heaven, elevated above the philosophic earth, it may be able to operate on the fruit of its own earthly body. It should have this form, too, in order that the separation and purification of the elements, when the fire drives one from the other, may be able to be accomplished, and that each may have power to occupy the place to which it adheres; and also that the sun and the other planets may exercise their operations around the elemental earth, while their course in their circuit is neither hindered nor agitated with too swift a motion. In all these particulars which have been mentioned it must have a proper proportion of rotundity and of height.

The instruments for the first purification of mineral bodies are fusing-vessels, bellows, tongs, capels, cupels, tests, cementatory vessels, cineritiums, cucurbites, bocias for aquafortis and aqua regia; and also the appliances which are required for projection at the climax of the work.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### CONCERNING THE SECRET FIRE OF THE PHILOSOPHERS.

This is a well-known sententious saying of the philosophers, "Let fire and Azoc suffice thee". Fire alone is the whole work and the entire art. Moreover, they who build their fire and keep their vessel in that heat are in error. In vain some have attempted it with the heat of horse dung. By the coal fire, without a medium, they have sublimated their matter, but they have not dissolved it. Others have got their heat from lamps, asserting that this is the secret fire of the philosophers for making their Stone. Some have placed it in a bath, first of all in heaps of ants' eggs; others in juniper ashes. Some have sought the fire in quicklime, in tartar, vitriol, nitre, etc. Others, again, have sought it in boiling water. Thomas Aquinas speaks falsely of this fire, saying that God and the angels cannot do without this fire, but use it daily. What blasphemy is this! Is it not a manifest lie that God is not able to do without the elemental heat of boiling water? All the heats excited by those means which have

been mentioned are utterly useless for our work Take care not to be misled by Arnold de Villa Nova, who has written on the subject of the coal fire, for in this matter he will deceive you.

Almadir says that the invisible rays of our fire of themselves suffice. Another cites, as an illustration, that the heavenly heat by its reflections tends to the coagulation and perfection of Mercury, just as by its continual motion it tends to the generation of metals. Again, says this same authority, "Make a fire, vaporous, digesting, as for cooking, continuous, but not volatile or boiling, enclosed, shut off from the air, not burning, but altering and penetrating. Now, in truth, I have mentioned every mode of fire and of exciting heat. If you are a true philosopher you will understand". This is what he says.

Salmanazar remarks: "Ours is a corrosive fire, which brings over our vessel an air like a cloud, in which cloud the rays of this fire are hidden. If this dew of chaos and this moisture of the cloud fail, a mistake has been committed". Again, Almadir says, that unless the fire has warmed our sun with its moisture, by the excrement of the mountain, with a moderate ascent, we shall not be partakers either of the Red or the White Stone.

All these matters shew quite openly to us the occult fire of the wise men. Finally, this is the matter of our fire, namely, that it be kindled by the quiet spirit of sensible fire, which drives upwards, as it were, the heated chaos from the opposite quarter, and above our philosophic matter. This heat, glowing above our vessel, must urge it to the motion of a perfect generation, temperately but continuously, without intermission.

## CHAPTER XX.

### CONCERNING THE FERMENT OF THE PHILOSOPHERS, AND THE WEIGHT.

Philosophers have laboured greatly in the art of ferments and of fermentations, which seems important above all others. With reference thereto some have made a vow to God and to the philosophers that they would never divulge its arcanum by similitudes or by parables.

Nevertheless, Hermes, the father of all philosophers, in the "Book of the Seven Treatises", most clearly discloses the secret of ferments, saying that they consist only of their own paste; and more at length he says that the ferment whitens the confection, hinders combustion, altogether retards the flux of the tincture, consoles bodies, and amplifies unions. He says, also, that this is the key and the end of the work, concluding that the ferment is nothing but paste, as that of the sun is nothing but sun, and that of the moon nothing but moon. Others affirm that the ferment is the soul, and if this be not rightly prepared from the magistry, it effects nothing. Some zealots of this Art seek the Art in common sulphur, arsenic, tutia, auripigment, vitriol, etc., but in vain; since the substance which is sought is the same as that from which it has to be drawn forth. It should be remarked, therefore, that fermentations of this kind do not succeed according to the wishes of the zealots in the way they desire, but, as is clear from what has been said above, simply in the way of natural successes.

But, to come at length to the weight; this must be noted in two ways. The first is natural, the second artificial. The natural attains its result in the earth by Nature and concordance. Of this, Arnold says: If more or less earth than Nature requires be added, the soul is suffocated, and no result is perceived, nor any fixation. It is the same with the water. If more or less of this be taken it will bring a corresponding loss. A superfluity renders the matter unduly moist, and a deficiency makes it too dry and too hard. If there be over much air present, it is too strongly impressed on the tincture; if there be too little, the body will turn out pallid. In the same way, if the fire be too strong, the matter is

burnt up; if it be too slack, it has not the power of drying, nor of dissolving or heating the other elements. In these things elemental heat consists.

Artificial weight is quite occult. It is comprised in the magical art of ponderations. Between the spirit, soul, and body, say the philosophers, weight consists of Sulphur as the director of the work; for the soul strongly desires Sulphur, and necessarily observes it by reason of its weight.

You can understand it thus: Our matter is united to a red fixed Sulphur, to which a third part of the regimen has been entrusted, even to the ultimate degree, so that it may perfect to infinity the operation of the Stone, may remain therewith together with its fire, and may consist of a weight equal to the matter itself, in and through all, without variation of any degree. Therefore, after the matter has been adapted and mixed in its proportionate weight, it should be closely shut up with its seal in the vessel of the philosophers, and committed to the secret fire. In this the Philosophic Sun will rise and surge up, and will illuminate all things that have been looking for his light, expecting it with highest hope.

In these few words we will conclude the arcanum of the Stone, an arcanum which is in no way maimed or defective, for which we give God undying thanks. Now have we opened to you our treasure, which is not to be paid for by the riches of the whole world.

HERE ENDS THE AURORA OF THE PHILOSOPHERS.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The work under this title is cited occasionally in other writings of Paracelsus, but is not included in the great folio published at Geneva in 1688. It was first issued at Basle in 1575, and was accompanied with copious annotations in Latin by the editor, Gerard Dorne. This personage was a very persevering collector of the literary remains of Paracelsus, but is not altogether free from the suspicion of having elaborated his original. The Aurora is by some regarded as an instance in point; though no doubt in the main it is a genuine work of the Sage of Hohenheim, yet in some respects it does seem to approximate somewhat closely to previous schools of Alchemy, which can scarcely be regarded as representing the actual standpoint of Paracelsus.

<sup>2</sup> He who created man the same also created science. What has man in any place without labour? When the mandate went forth: Thou shalt live by the sweat of thy brow, there was, as it were, a new creation. When God uttered His fiat the world was made. Art, however, was not then made, nor was the light of Nature. But when Adam was expelled from Paradise, God created for him the light of Nature when He bade him live by the work of his hands. In like manner, He created for Eve her special light when He said to her: In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children. Thus, and there, were these beings made human and earthy that were before like angelicals. ... Thus, by the word were creatures made, and by this same word was also made the light which was necessary to man. ... Hence the interior man followed from the second creation, after the expulsion from Paradise. ... Before the Fall, that cognition which was requisite to man had not begun to develop in him. He received it from the angel when he was cast out of Paradise. ... Man was made complete in the order of the body, but not in the order of the arts. – *De Caducis*, Par. III.

<sup>3</sup> No work precisely corresponding to this title is extant among the writings of Paracelsus. The subjects to which reference is made are discussed in the *Philosophia Sagax*.

<sup>4</sup> Before all things it is necessary to have a right understanding of the nature of Celestial Magic. It originates from divine virtue. There is that magic which Moses practised, and there is the maleficent magic of the sorcerers. There are, then, different kinds of Magi. So also there is what is called the Magic of Nature; there is the Celestial Magus; there is the Magus of Faith, that is, one whose faith makes him whole. There is, lastly, the Magus of Perdition. – *Philosophia Sagax*, Lib. II., c. 6.

<sup>5</sup> Learn, therefore, Astronomic Magic, which otherwise I call cabalistic. – *De Pestilitate*, Tract I. This art, formerly called cabalistic, was in the beginning named caballa, and afterwards caballia. It is a species of magic. It was also, but falsely, called Gabanala, by one whose knowledge of the subject was profound. It was of an unknown Ethnic origin, and

it passed subsequently to the Chaldaeans and Hebrews, by both of whom it was corrupted. – *Philosophia Sagax*, Lib. I., s. v. *Probatio in Scientiam Nectromantricam*.

<sup>6</sup> The object which received the influence and exhibited the sign thereof appears to have been termed Gamaheu, Gamahey etc. But the name was chiefly given to certain stones on which various and wonderful images and figures of men and animals have been found naturally depicted, being no work of man, but the result of the providence and counsel of God. – *De Imaginibus*, c. 7 and c. 13. It is possible, magically, for a man to project his influence into these stones and some other substances. – *Ibid.*, c. 13. But they also have their own inherent virtue, which is indicated by the shape and the special nature of the impression. – *Ibid.*, c. 7. There was also an artificial Gamaheus invented and prepared by the Magi, and this seems to have been more powerful. – *De Carduo Angelico*.

<sup>7</sup> Man was regarded by Paracelsus as himself in a special manner the true Quintessence. After God had created all the elements, stars, and every other created thing, and had disposed them according to His will, He proceeded, lastly, to the forming of man. He extracted the essence out of the four elements into one mass; He extracted also the essence of wisdom, art, and reason out of the stars, and this twofold essence He congealed into one mass: which mass Scripture calls the slime of the earth. From that mass two bodies were made – the sidereal and the elementary. These, according to the light of Nature, are called the *quintum esse*. The mass was extracted, and therein the firmament and the elements were condensed. What was extracted from the four after this manner constituted a fifth. The Quintessence is the nucleus and the place of the essences and properties of all things in the universal world. All nature came into the hand of God – all potency, all property, all essence of the superior and inferior globe. All these had God joined in His hand, and from these He formed man according to His image. – *Philosophia Sagax*, Lib. I., c. 2.

<sup>8</sup> All created things proceed from the coagulated, and after coagulation must go on to resolution. From resolution proceed all procreated things. – *De Tartaro* (fragment). All bodies of minerals are coagulated by salt. – *De Natraralibus Aquis*, Lib. III., Tract 2.

<sup>9</sup> So acute is the potency of calcined blood, that if it be poured slowly on iron it produces in the first place a whiteness thereon, and then generates rust. – *Scholia in Libros de Tartaro*. In Lib. II., Tract II.

<sup>10</sup> One recipe for the fixation of arsenic is as follows: – Take equal parts of arsenic and nitre. Place these in a tiggillum, set upon coals so that they may begin to boil and to evaporate. Continue till ebullition and evaporation cease, and the substances shall have settled to the bottom of the vessel like fat melting in a frying-pan; then, for the space of an hour and a half (the longer the better), set it apart to settle. Subsequently pour the compound upon marble, and it will acquire a gold colour. In a damp place it will assume the consistency of a fatty fluid. – *De Naturalibus Rebus*, c. 9. Again: The fixation of arsenic is performed by salt of urine, after which it is converted by itself into an oil. – *Chirurgia Minor*, Lib. II.

<sup>11</sup> Concerning the kinds of arsenic, it is to be noted that there are those which flow forth from their proper mineral or metal, and are called native arsenics. Next there are arsenics out of metals after their kind. Then there are those made by Art through transmutation. White or crystalline arsenic is the best for medicine Yellow and red arsenic are utilised by chemists for investigating the transmutation of metals, in which arsenic has a special efficacy. – *De Naturalibus Rebus*, c. 9.

<sup>12</sup> The arcanum of vitriol is the oil of vitriol. Thus: after the aquosity has been removed in coction from vitriol, the spirit is elicited by the application of greater heat. The vitriol then comes over pure in the form of water. This water is combined with the *caput mortuum* left by the process, and on again separating in a *balneum maris*, the phlegmatic part passes off, and the oil, or the arcanum of vitriol, remains at the bottom of the vessel. – *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> So long as the viridity or greenness of vitriol subsists therein, it is of a soft quality and substance. But if it be excocted so that it is deprived of its moisture, it is thereby changed into a hard stone from which even fire can be struck. When the moisture is evaporated from vitriol, the sulphur which it contains predominates over the salt, and the vitriol turns red. – *De Pestilitate*, Tract I.

<sup>14</sup> The diagnosis of vitriol is concerned with it both in Medicine and Alchemy. In Medicine it is a paramount remedy. In Alchemy it has many additional purposes. The Art of Medicine and Alchemy consists in the preparation of vitriol, for it is worthless in its crude state. It is like unto wood, out of which it is possible to carve anything. Three kinds of oil are extracted from vitriol – a red oil, by distillation in a retort after an alchemistic method, and this is the most acid of all substances, and has also a corrosive quality – also a green and a white oil, distilled from crude vitriol by descension. – *De Vitriolo*. Nor let it be regarded as absurd that we assign such great virtues to vitriol, for therein resides, secret and hidden, a certain peculiar golden force, not corporeal but spiritual, which excellent and admirable virtue exists in greater

potency and certainty therein than it does in gold. When this golden spirit of vitriol is volatilized and separated from its impurities, so that the essence alone remains, it is like unto potable gold. – *De Morbis Amentium, Methodus* II., c. 1.

<sup>15</sup> Antimony can be made into a pap with the water of vitriol, and then purified by sal ammoniac, and in this manner there may be obtained from it a thick purple or reddish liquor. This is oil of antimony, and it has many virtues. – *Chirurgia Magna*, Lib. V. Take three pounds of antimony and as much of sal gemmae. Distil them together in a retort for three natural days, and so you will have a red oil, which has incredible healing power in cases of otherwise incurable wounds. – *Chirurgia Minor*, Tract II., c. 11.

<sup>16</sup> Man himself was created from that which is termed limbus. This limbus contained the potency and nature of all creatures. Hence man himself is called the microcosmus, or world in miniature. – *De Generatione Stultorum*. Man was fashioned out of the limbus, and this limbus is the universal world. – *Paramirum Aliud*, Lib. II., c. 2. The limbus was the first matter of man. ... Whosoever knows the limbus knows also what man is. Whatsoever the limbus is, that also is man. – *Paramirum Aliud*, Lib. IV. There is a dual limbus, man, the lesser limbus, and that Great Limbus from which he was produced. – *De Podagra*, s. v. *de Limbo*. The limbus is the seed out of which all creatures are produced and grow, as the tree comes forth from its own special seed. The limbus has its ground in the word of God. – *Ibid*. The limbus of Adam was heaven and earth, water and air. Therefore, man also remains in the limbus, and contains in himself heaven and earth, air and water, and these things he also himself is. – *Paragranum Alterum*, Tract II.

# Alchemical Catechism

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## A SHORT CATECHISM OF ALCHEMY

Q. What is the chief study of a Philosopher?

A. It is the investigation of the operations of Nature.

Q. What is the end of Nature?

A. God, Who is also its beginning.

Q. Whence are all things derived?

A. From one and indivisible Nature.

Q. Into how many regions is Nature separated?

A. Into four palmary regions.

Q. Which are they?

A. The dry, the moist, the warm, and the cold, which are the four elementary qualities, whence all things originate.

Q. How is Nature differentiated?

A. Into male and female.

Q. To what may we compare Nature?

A. To Mercury.

Q. Give a concise definition of Nature.

A. It is not visible, though it operates visibly; for it is simply a volatile spirit, fulfilling its office in bodies, and animated by the universal spirit-the divine breath, the central and universal fire, which vivifies all things that exist.

Q. What should be the qualities possessed by the examiners of Nature?

A. They should be like unto Nature herself. That is to say, they should be truthful, simple, patient, and persevering.

Q. What matters should subsequently engross their attention?

A. The philosophers should most carefully ascertain whether their designs are in harmony with Nature, and of a possible and attainable kind; if they would accomplish by their own power anything that is usually performed by the power of Nature, they must imitate her in every detail.

Q. What method must be followed in order to produce something which shall be developed to a superior degree than Nature herself develops it.

A. The manner of its improvement must be studied, and this is invariably operated by means of a like nature. For example, if it be desired to develop the intrinsic virtue of a given metal beyond its natural condition, the chemist must avail himself of the metallic nature itself, and must be able to discriminate between its male and female differentiations.

Q. Where does the metallic nature store her seeds?

A. In the four elements.

Q. With what materials can the philosopher alone accomplish anything?

A. With the germ of the given matter; this is its elixir or quintessence, more precious by far, and more useful, to the artist, than is Nature herself. Before the philosopher has extracted the seed, or germ, Nature, in his behalf, will be ready to perform her duty.

Q. What is the germ, or seed, of any substance?

A. It is the most subtle and perfect decoction and digestion of the substance itself; or, rather, it is the Balm of Sulphur, which is identical with the Radical Moisture of Metals.

Q. By what is this seed, or germ, engendered?

A. By the four elements, subject to the will of the Supreme Being, and through the direct intervention of the imagination of Nature.

Q. After what manner do the four elements operate?

A. By means of an incessant and uniform motion, each one, according to its quality, depositing its seed in the centre of the earth, where it is subjected to action and digested, and is subsequently expelled in an outward direction by the laws of movement.

Q. What do the philosophers understand by the centre of the earth?

A. A certain void place where nothing may repose, and the existence of which is assumed.

Q. Where, then, do the four elements expel and deposit their seeds?

A. In the ex-centre, or in the margin and circumference of the centre, which, after it has appropriated a portion, casts out the surplus into the region of excrement, scoriae, fire, and formless chaos.

Q. Illustrate this teaching by an example.

A. Take any level table, and set in its centre a vase filled with water; surround the vase with several things of various colours, especially salt, taking care that a proper distance intervenes between them all. Then pour out the water from the vase, and it will flow in streams here and there; one will encounter a substance of a red colour, and will assume a tinge of red; another will pass over the salt, and will contract a saline flavour; for it is certain that water does not modify the places which it traverses, but the diverse characteristics of places change the nature of water. In the same way the seed which is deposited by the four elements at the centre of the earth is subject to a variety of modifications in the places through which it passes, so that every existing substance is produced in the likeness of its channel, and when a seed on its arrival at a certain point encounters pure earth and pure water, a pure substance results, but the contrary in an opposite case.

Q. After what manner do the elements procreate this seed?

A. In order to the complete elucidation of this point, it must be observed that there are two gross and heavy elements and two that are volatile in character. Two, in like manner, are dry and two humid, one out of the four being actually excessively dry, and the other excessively moist. They are also masculine and feminine. Now, each of them has a marked tendency to reproduce its own species within its own sphere. Moreover, they are never in repose, but are perpetually interacting, and each of them separates, of and by itself, the most subtle portion thereof. Their general place of meeting is in the centre, even the centre of the Archeus, that servant of Nature, where coming to mix their several seeds, they agitate and finally expel them to the exterior.

Q. What is the true and the first matter of all metals?

A. The first matter, properly so called, is dual in its essence, or is in itself of a twofold nature; one, nevertheless, cannot create a metal without the concurrence of the other. The first and the palmary



essence is an aerial humidity, blended with a warm air, in the form of a fatty water, which adheres to all substances indiscriminately, whether they are pure or impure.

Q. How has this humidity been named by Philosophers?

A. Mercury.

Q. By what is it governed?

A. By the rays of the Sun and Moon.

Q. What is the second matter?

A. The warmth of the earth -otherwise, that dry heat which is termed Sulphur by the Philosophers.

Q. Can the entire material body be converted into seed?

A. Its eight-hundredth part only-that, namely, which is secreted in the centre of the body in question, and may, for example, be seen in a grain of wheat.

Q. Of what use is the bulk of the matter as regards its seed?

A. It is useful as a safeguard against excessive heat, cold, moisture, or aridity, and, in general, all hurtful inclemency, against which it acts as an envelope.

Q. Would those artists who pretend to reduce the whole matter of any body into seed derive any advantage from the process, supposing it were possible to perform it?

A. None; on the contrary, their labour would be wholly unproductive, because nothing that is good can be accomplished by a deviation from natural methods.

Q. What, therefore, should be done?

A. The matter must be effectively separated from its impurities, for there is no metal, how pure soever, which is entirely free from imperfections, though their extent varies. Now all superfluities, cortices, and scoriae must be peeled off and purged out from the matter in order to discover its seed.

Q. What should receive the most careful attention of the Philosopher?

A. Assuredly, the end of Nature, and this is by no means to be looked for in the vulgar metals, because, these having issued already from the hands of the fashioner, it is no longer to be found therein.

Q. For what precise reason?

A. Because the vulgar metals, and chiefly gold, are absolutely dead, while ours, on the contrary, are absolutely living, and possess a soul.

Q. What is the life of metals?

A. It is no other substance than fire, when they are as yet imbedded in the mines.

Q. What is their death?

A. Their life and death are in reality one principle, for they die, as they live, by fire, but their death is from a fire of fusion.

Q. After what manner are metals conceived in the womb of the earth?

A. When the four elements have developed their power or virtue in the centre of the earth, and have deposited their seed, the Archeus of Nature, in the course of a distillatory process, sublimes them superficially by the warmth and energy of the perpetual movement.

Q. Into what does the wind resolve itself when it is distilled through the pores of the earth?

A. It resolves itself into water, whence all things spring; in this state it is merely a humid vapour, out of which there is subsequently evolved the principiated principle of all substances, which also serves as the first matter of the Philosophers.

Q. What then is this principiated principle, which is made use of as the first matter by the Children of Knowledge in the philosophic achievement?

A. It is this identical matter, which, the moment it is conceived, receives a permanent and unchangeable form.

Q. Are Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, the Sun, the Moon, etc., separately endowed with individual seed?

A. One is common to them all; their differences are to be accounted for by the: locality from which they are derived, not to speak of the fact that Nature completes her work with far greater rapidity in the procreation of silver than in that of gold, and so of the other metals, each in its own proportion.

Q. How is gold formed in the bowels of the earth?

A. When this vapour, of which we have spoken, is sublimed in the centre of the earth, and when it has passed through warm and pure places, where a certain sulphureous grease adheres to the channels, then this vapour, which the Philosophers have denominated their Mercury, becomes adapted and joined to this grease, which it sublimes with itself; from such amalgamation there is produced a certain unctuousness, which, abandoning the vaporious form, assumes that of grease, and is sublimised in other places, which have been cleansed by this preceding vapour, and the earth whereof has consequently been rendered more subtle, pure, and humid; it fills the pores of this earth, is joined thereto, and gold is produced as a result.

Q. How is Saturn engendered?

A. It occurs when the said unctuousness, or grease, passes through places which are totally impure and cold.

Q. How is Venus brought forth?

A. She is produced in localities where the earth itself is pure, but is mingled with impure sulphur.

Q. What power does the vapour, which we have recently mentioned, possess in the centre of the earth?

A. By its continual progress it has the power of perpetually rarefying whatsoever is crude and impure, and of successively attracting to itself all that is pure around it.

Q. What is the seed of the first matter of all things?

A. The first matter of things, that is to say, the matter of principiating principles is begotten by Nature, without the assistance of any other seed; in other words, Nature receives the matter from the elements, whence it subsequently brings forth the seed.

Q. What, absolutely speaking, is therefore the seed of things?

A. The seed in a body is no other thing than a congealed air, or a humid vapour, which is useless except it be dissolved by a warm vapour.

Q. How is the generation of seed comprised in the metallic kingdom?

A. By the artifice of Archeus the four elements, in the first generation of Nature, distil a ponderous vapour of water into the centre of the earth ; this is the seed of metals, and it is called Mercury, not on account of its essence, but because of its fluidity, and the facility with which it will adhere to each and every thing.

Q. Why is this vapour compared to sulphur?

A. Because of its internal heat.

Q. From what species of Mercury are we to conclude that the metals are composed?

A. The reference is exclusively to the Mercury of the Philosophers, and in no sense to the common or vulgar substance, which cannot become a seed, seeing that, like other metals, it already contains its own seed.

Q. What, therefore, must actually be accepted as the subject of our matter?

A. The seed alone, otherwise the fixed grain, and not the whole body, which is differentiated into Sulphur, or living male, and into Mercury, or living female.

Q. What operation must be afterwards performed

A. They must be joined together, so that they may form a germ, after which they will proceed to the procreation of a fruit which is conformed to their nature.

Q. What is the part of the artist in this operation?

A. The artist must do nothing but separate that which is subtle from that which is gross.

Q. To what, therefore, is the whole philosophic combination reduced?

A. The development of one into two, and the reduction of two into one, and nothing further.

Q. Whither must we turn for the seed and life of meals and minerals?

A. The seed of minerals is properly the water which exists in the centre  
And the heart of the minerals.

Q. How does Nature operate by the help of Art?

A. Every seed, whatsoever its kind, is useless, unless by Nature or Art it is placed in a suitable matrix, where it receives its life by the coction of the germ! and by the congelation of the pure particle, or fixed grain.

Q. How is the seed subsequently nourished and preserved?

A. By the warmth of its body.

Q. What is therefore performed by the artist in the mineral kingdom?

A. He finishes what cannot be finished by Nature on account of the crudity of the air, which has permeated the pores of all bodies by its violence, but on the surface and not in the bowels of the earth.

Q. What correspondence have the metals among themselves?

A. It is necessary for a proper comprehension of the nature of this correspondence to consider the position of the planets, and to pay attention to Saturn, which is the highest of all, and then is succeeded by Jupiter, next by Mars, the Sun, Venus, Mercury, and, lastly, by the Moon. It must be observed that the influential virtues of the planets do not ascend but descend, and experience teaches us that Mars can be easily converted into Venus, not Venus into Mars, which is of a lower sphere. So, also, Jupiter can be easily transmuted into Mercury, because Jupiter is superior to Mercury, the one being second after the firmament, the other second above the earth, and Saturn is highest of all, while the Moon is lowest. The Sun enters into all, but it is never ameliorated by its inferiors. It is clear that there is a large correspondence between Saturn and the Moon, in the middle of which is the Sun; but to all these changes the Philosopher should strive to administer the Sun.

Q. When the Philosophers speak of gold and silver, from which they extract their matter, are we to suppose that they refer to the vulgar gold and silver?

A. By no means; vulgar silver and gold are dead, while those of the Philosophers are full of life.

Q. What is the object of research among the Philosophers?

A. Proficiency in the art of perfecting what Nature has left imperfect in the mineral kingdom, and the attainment of the treasure of the Philosophical Stone.

Q. What is this Stone?

A. The Stone is nothing else than the radical humidity of the elements, perfectly purified and educed into a sovereign fixation, which causes it to perform such great things for health, life being resident exclusively in the humid radical.

Q. In what does the secret of accomplishing this admirable work consist?

A. It consists in knowing how to educe from potentiality into activity the innate warmth, or the fire of Nature, which is enclosed in the centre of the radical humidity.

Q. What are the precautions which must be made use of to guard against failure in the work?

A. Great pains must be taken to eliminate excrements from the matter, and to conserve nothing but the kernel, which contains all the virtue of the compound.

Q. Why does this medicine heal every species of disease?

A. It is not on account of tile variety of its qualities, but simply because it powerfully fortifies the natural warmth, which it gently stimulates, while other physics irritate it by too violent an action.

Q How can you demonstrate to me the truth of the art in the matter of the tincture?

A. Firstly, its truth is founded on the fact that the physical powder, being composed of the same substance as the metals, namely, quicksilver, has the faculty of combining with these in fusion, one nature easily embracing another which is like itself. Secondly, seeing that the imperfection of the base metals is owing to the crudeness of their quicksilver, and to that alone, the physical powder, which is a ripe and decocted quicksilver, and, in itself a pure fire, can easily communicate to them its own maturity, and can transmute them into its nature, after it has attracted their crude humidity, that is to say, their quicksilver, which is the sole substance that transmutes them, the rest being nothing but scoriae and excrements, which are rejected in projection.

Q. What road should the Philosopher follow that he may attain to the knowledge and execution of the physical work?

A. That precisely which was followed by the Great Architect of the Universe in the creation of the world, by observing how the chaos was evolved.

Q. What was the matter of the chaos?

A. It could be nothing else than a humid vapour, because water alone enters into all created substances, which all finish in a strange term, this term being a proper subject for the impression of all forms.

Q. Give me an example to illustrate what you have just stated.

A. An example may be found in the special productions of composite substances, the seeds of which invariably begin by resolving themselves into a certain humour, which is the chaos of the particular matter, whence issues, by a kind of irradiation, the complete form of the plant. Moreover, it should be observed that Holy Scripture makes no mention of anything except water as the material subject whereupon the Spirit of God brooded, nor of anything except light as the universal form of things.

Q. What profit may the Philosopher derive from these considerations, and what should he especially remark in the method of creation which was pursued by the Supreme Being?

A. In the first place he should observe the matter out of which the world was made; he will see that out of this confused mass, the Sovereign Artist began by extracting light, that this light in the same moment dissolved the darkness which covered the face of the earth, and that it served as the universal form of the matter. He will then easily perceive that in the generation of all composite substances, a species of irradiation takes place, and a separation of light and darkness, wherein Nature is an undeviating copyist of her Creator. The Philosopher will equally understand after what manner, by the action of this light, the empyrean, or firmament which divides the superior and inferior waters, was subsequently produced; how the sky was studded with luminous bodies; and how the necessity for the moon arose, which was owing to the space intervening between the things above and the things below; for the moon is an intermediate torch between the superior and the inferior worlds, receiving the celestial influences and communicating them to the earth. Finally he will understand how the Creator, in the gathering of the waters, produced dry land.

Q. How many heavens can you enumerate?

A. Properly there is one only, which is the firmament that divides the waters from the waters. Nevertheless, three are admitted, of which the first is the space that is above the clouds. In this heaven the waters are rarefied, and fall upon the fixed stars, and it is also in this space that the planets and wandering stars perform their revolutions. The second heaven is the firmament of the fixed stars, while the third is the abode of the supercelestial waters.

Q. Why is the rarefaction of the waters confined to the first heaven?

A. Because it is in the nature of rarefied substances to ascend, and because God, in His eternal laws, has assigned its proper sphere to everything.

Q. Why does each celestial body invariably revolve about an axis?

A. It is by reason of the primeval impetus which it received, and by virtue of the same law which will cause any heavy substance suspended from a thread to turn with the same velocity, if the power which impels its motion be always equal.

Q. Why do the superior waters never descend?

A. Because of their extreme rarefaction. It is for this reason that a skilled chemist can derive more profit from the study of rarefaction than from any other science whatsoever.

Q. What is the matter of the firmament?

A. It is properly air, which is more suitable than water as a medium of light.

Q. After the separation of the waters from the dry earth, what was performed by the Creator to originate generation?

A. He created a certain light which was destined for this office; He placed it in the central fire, and moderated this fire by the humidity of water and by the coldness of earth, so as to keep a check upon its energy and adapt it to His design.

Q. What is the action of this central fire?

A. It continually operates upon the nearest humid matter, which it exalts into vapour; now this vapour is the mercury of Nature and the first matter of the three kingdoms.

Q. How is the sulphur of Nature subsequently formed?

A. By the interaction of the central fire and the mercurial vapour.

Q. How is the salt of the sea produced?

A. By the action of the same fire upon aqueous humidity, when the aerial humidity, which is contained therein, has been exhaled.

Q. What should be done by a truly wise Philosopher when he has once mastered the foundation and the order in the procedure of the Great Architect of the Universe in the construction of all that exists in Nature?

A. He should, as far as may be possible, become a faithful copyist of his Creator. In the physical chaos he should make his chaos such as the original actually was; he should separate the light from the darkness : he should form his firmament for the separation of the waters which are above from the waters which are below, and should successively accomplish, point by point, the entire sequence of the creative act.

Q. With what is this grand and sublime operation performed?

A. With one single corpuscle, or minute body, which, so to speak, contains nothing but faeces, filth, and abominations, but whence a certain tenebrous and mercurial humidity is extracted, which contains in itself all that is required by the Philosopher, because, as a fact, he is in search of nothing hut the true Mercury.

Q. What kind of mercury, therefore, must he make use of in performing the work? A. Of a mercury which, as such, is not found on the earth, but is extracted from bodies, yet not from vulgar mercury, as it has been falsely said.

Q. Why is the latter unfitted to the needs of our work?

A. Because the wise artist must take notice that vulgar mercury has an insufficient quantity of sulphur, and he should consequently operate upon a body created by Nature, in which Nature herself has united the sulphur and mercury that it is the work of the artist to separate.

Q. What must he subsequently do?

A. He must purify them and join them anew together.

Q. How do you denominate the body of which we have been speaking?

A. The RUDE STONE, Or Chaos, or Iliaste, or Hyle--that confused mass which is known but universally despised.

Q. As you have told me that Mercury is the one thing which the Philosopher must absolutely understand, will you give me a circumstantial description of it, so as to avoid misconception?

A. In respect of its nature, our Mercury is dual--fixed and volatile; in regard to its motion, it is also dual, for it has a motion of ascent and of descent; by that of descent, it is the influence of plants, by which it stimulates the drooping fire of Nature, and this is its first office previous to congelation. By its ascensional movement, it rises, seeking to be purified, and as this is after congelation, it is considered to be the radical moisture of substances, which, beneath its vile scoriae, still preserves the nobility of its first origin.

Q. How many species of moisture do you suppose to be in each composite thing?

A. There are three--the Elementary, which is properly the vase of the other elements; the Radical, which, accurately speaking, is the oil, or balm, in which the entire virtue of the subject is resident--lastly, the Alimentary, the true natural dissolvent, which draws up the drooping internal fire, causing corruption and blackness by its humidity, and fostering and sustaining the subject.

Q. How many species of Mercury are there known to the Philosophers?

A. The Mercury of the Philosophers may be regarded under four aspects; the first is entitled the

Mercury of bodies, which is actually their concealed seed; the second is the Mercury of Nature, which is the Bath or Vase of the Philosophers, otherwise the humid radical; to the third has been applied the designation, Mercury of the Philosophers, because it is found in their laboratory and in their minera. It is the sphere of Saturn; it is the Diana of the Wise; it is the true salt of metals, after the acquisition of which the true philosophic work may be truly said to have begun. In its fourth aspect, it is called Common Mercury, which yet is not that of the Vulgar, but rather is properly the true air of the Philosophers, the true middle substance of water, the true secret and concealed fire, called also common fire, because it is common to all minerae, for it is the substance of metals, and thence do they derive their quantity and quality.

Q. How many operations art comprised in our work?

A. There is one only, which may be resolved into sublimation, and sublimation, according to Geber, is nothing other than the elevation of the dry matter by the mediation of fire, with adherence to its own vase.

Q. What precaution should be taken in reading the Hermetic Philosophers ?

A. Great care, above all, must be observed upon this point, lest what they say upon the subject should be interpreted literally and in accordance with the mere sound of the words: For the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

Q. What books should be read in order to have an acquaintance with our science?

A. Among the ancients, all the works of Hermes should especially be studied; in the next place, a certain book, entitled The Passage of the Red Sea, and another, The Entrance into the Promised Land. Paracelsus also should be read before all among elder writers, and, among other treatises, his Chemical Pathway, or the Manual of Paracelsus, which contains all the mysteries of demonstrative physics and the most arcane Kabbalah. This rare and unique manuscript work exists only in the Vatican Library, but Sendivogius had the good fortune to take a copy of it, which has helped in the illumination of the sages of our order. Secondly, Raymond Lully must be read, and his Vade Mecum above all, his dialogue called the Tree of Life, his testament, and his codicil. There must, however, be a certain precaution exercised in respect to the two last, because, like those of Geber, and also of Arnold de Villanova, they abound in false recipes and futile fictions, which seem to have been inserted with the object of more effectually disguising the truth from the ignorant. In the third place, the Turba Philosophorum which is a collection of ancient authors, contains much that is materially good, though there is much also which is valueless. Among mediaeval writers Zachary, Trevisan, Roger Bacon, and a certain anonymous author, whose book is entitled The Philosophers, should be held especially high in the estimation of the student. Among moderns the most worthy to be prized are John Fabricius, Francois de Nation, and Jean D'Espagnet, who wrote Physics Restored, though, to say the truth, he has imported some false precepts and fallacious opinions into his treatise.

Q. When may the Philosopher venture to undertake the work?

A. When he is, theoretically, able to extract, by means of a crude spirit, a digested spirit out of a body in dissolution, which digested spirit he must again rejoin to the vital oil.

Q. Explain me this theory in a clearer manner.

A. It may be demonstrated more completely in the actual process; the great experiment may be undertaken when the Philosopher, by the medium of a vegetable menstruum, united to a mineral menstruum, is qualified to dissolve a third essential menstruum, with which menstrooms united he must wash the earth, and then exalt it into a celestial quintessence, to compose the sulphureous thunderbolt, which instantaneously penetrates substances and destroys their excrements.

Q. Have those persons a proper acquaintance with Nature who pretend to make use of vulgar gold for seed, and of vulgar mercury for the dissolvent, or the earth in which it should be sown?

A. Assuredly not, because neither the one nor the other possesses the external agent--gold, because it has been deprived of it by decoction, and mercury because it has never had it.

Q. In seeking this auriferous seed elsewhere than in gold itself, is there no danger of producing a species of monster, since one appears to be departing from Nature?

A. It is undoubtedly true that in gold is contained the auriferous seed, and that in a more perfect condition than it is found in any other body; but this does not force us to make use of vulgar gold, for such a seed is equally found in each of the other metals, and is nothing else but that fixed grain which Nature has infused in the first congelation of mercury, all metals having one origin and a common substance, as will be ultimately unveiled to those who become worthy of receiving it by application and assiduous study.

Q. What follows from this doctrine?

A. It follows that, although the seed is more perfect in gold, it may be extracted much more easily from another body than from gold itself, other bodies being more open, that is to say, less digested, and less restricted in their humidity.

Q. Give me an example taken from Nature.

A. Vulgar gold may be likened to a fruit which, having come to a perfect maturity, has been cut off from its tree, and though it contains a most perfect and well-digested seed, notwithstanding, should anyone set it in the ground, with a view to its multiplication, much time, trouble, and attention will be consumed in the development of its vegetative capabilities. On the other hand, if a cutting, or a root, be taken from the same tree, and similarly planted, in a short time, and with no trouble, it will spring up and produce much fruit.

Q. Is it necessary that an amateur of this science should understand the formation of metals in the bowels of the earth if he wishes to complete his work ?

A. So indispensable is such a knowledge that should anyone fail, before all other studies, to apply himself to its attainment, and to imitate Nature point by point therein, he will never succeed in accomplishing anything but what is worthless.

Q. How, then, does Nature deposit metals in the bowels of the earth, and of what does she compose them ?

A. Nature manufactures them all out of sulphur and mercury, and forms them by their double vapour.

Q. What do you mean by this double vapour, and how can metals be formed thereby?

A. In order to a complete understanding of this question, it must first be stated that mercurial vapour is united to sulphureous vapour in a cavernous place which contains a saline water, which serves as their matrix. Thus is formed, firstly, the Vitriol of Nature; secondly, by the commotion of the elements, there is developed out of this Vitriol of Nature a new vapour, which is neither mercurial nor sulphureous, yet is allied to both these natures, and this, passing through places to which the grease of sulphur adheres, is joined therewith, and out of their union a glutinous substance is produced, otherwise, a formless mass, which is permeated by the vapour that fills these cavernous places. By this vapour, acting through the sulphur it contains, are produced the perfect metals, provided that the vapour and the locality are pure. If the locality and the vapour are impure, imperfect metals result. The terms perfection and imperfection have reference to various degrees of concoction.

Q. What is contained in this vapour?

A. A spirit of light and a spirit of fire, of the nature of the celestial bodies, which properly should be considered as the form of the universe.



Q. What does this vapour represent?

A. This vapour, thus impregnated by the universal spirit, represents, in a fairly complete way, the original Chaos, which contained all that was required for the original creation, that is, universal matter and universal form.

Q. And one cannot, notwithstanding, make use of vulgar mercury in the process?

A. No, because vulgar mercury, as already made plain, is devoid of external agent.

Q. Whence comes it that common mercury is without its external agent?

A. Because in the exaltation of the double vapour, the commotion has been so great and searching, that the spirit, or agent, has evaporated, as occurs, with very close similarity, in the fusion of metals. The result is that the unique mercurial part is deprived of its masculine or sulphureous agent, and consequently can never be transmuted into gold by Nature.

Q. How many species of gold are distinguished by the Philosophers?

A. Three sorts :--Astral Gold, Elementary Gold, and Vulgar Gold.

Q. What is astral gold?

A. Astral Gold has its centre in the sun, which communicates it by its rays to all inferior beings. It is an igneous substance, which receives a continual emanation of solar corpuscles that penetrate all things sentient, vegetable, and mineral.

Q. What do you refer to under the term Elementary Gold ?

A. This is the most pure and fixed portion of the elements, and of all that is composed of them. All sublunary beings included in the three kingdoms contain in their inmost centre a precious grain of this elementary gold.

Q. Give me some description of Vulgar Gold ?

A. It is the most beautiful metal of our acquaintance, the best that Nature can produce, as perfect as it is unalterable in itself.

Q. Of what species of gold is the Stone of the Philosophers ?

A. It is of the second species, as being the most pure portion of all the metallic elements after its purification, when it is termed living philosophical gold. A perfect equilibrium and equality of the four elements enter into the Physical Stone, and four things are indispensable for the accomplishment of the work, namely, composition, allocation, mixture, and union, which, once performed according to the rules of art, will beget the lawful Son of the Sun, and the Phoenix which eternally rises out of its own ashes.

Q. What is actually the living gold of the Philosophers?

A. It is exclusively the fire of Mercury, or that igneous virtue, contained in the radical moisture, to which it has already communicated the fixity and the nature of the sulphur, whence it has emanated, the mercurial character of the whole substance of philosophical sulphur permitting it to be alternatively termed mercury.

Q. What other name is also given by the Philosophers to their living gold ?

A. They also term it their living sulphur, and their true fire; they recognize its existence in all bodies, and there is nothing that can subsist without it.

Q. Where must we look for our living gold, our living sulphur, and our true fire ?

A. In the house of Mercury.

Q. By what is this fire nourished?

A. By the air.

Q. Give me a comparative illustration of the power of this fire ?

A. To exemplify the attraction of this interior fire, there is no better comparison than that which is derived from the thunderbolt, which originally is simply a dry, terrestrial exhalation, united to a humid vapour. By exaltation, and by assuming the igneous nature, it acts on the humidity which is inherent to it; this it attracts to itself, transmutes it into its own nature, and then rapidly precipitates itself to the earth, where it is attracted by a fixed nature which is like unto its own.

Q. What should be done by the Philosopher after he has extracted his Mercury ?

A. He should develop it from potentiality into activity.

Q. Cannot Nature perform this of herself?

A. No; because she stops short after the first sublimation, and out of the matter which is thus disposed do the metals engender.

Q. What do the Philosophers understand by their gold and silver?

A. The Philosophers apply to their Sulphur the name of Gold, and to their Mercury the name of Silver.

Q. Whence are they derived?

A. I have already stated that they are derived from a homogeneous body wherein they are found in great abundance, whence also Philosophers know how to extract both by an admirable, and entirely philosophical, process.

Q. When this operation has been duly performed, to what other point of the practice must they next apply themselves?

A. To the confection of the philosophical amalgam, which must be done with great care, but can only be accomplished after the preparation and sublimation of the Mercury.

Q. When should your matter be combined with the living gold?

A. During the period of amalgamation only, that is to say, Sulphur is introduced into it by means of the amalgamation, and thenceforth there is one substance; the process is shortened by the addition of Sulphur, while the tincture at the same time is augmented.

Q. What is contained in the centre of the radical moisture ?

A. It contains and conceals Sulphur, which is covered with a hard rind.

Q. What must be done to apply it to the Great Work?

A. It must be drawn, out of its bonds with consummate skill, and by the method of putrefaction.

Q. Does Nature, in her work in the mines, possess a menstruum which is adapted to the dissolution and liberation of this sulphur?

A. No; because there is no local movement. Could Nature, unassisted, dissolve, putrefy, and purify the metallic body, she would herself provide us with the Physical Stone, which is Sulphur exalted and increased in virtue.

Q. Can you elucidate this doctrine by an example?

A. By an enlargement of the previous comparison of a fruit, or a seed, which, in the first place, is put into the earth for its solution, and afterwards for its multiplication. Now, the Philosopher, who is in a position to discern what is good seed, extracts it from its centre, consigns it to its proper earth,

when it has been well cured and prepared, and therein he rarefies it in such a manner that its prolific virtue is increased and indefinitely multiplied.

Q. In what does the whole secret of the seed consist ?

A. In the true knowledge of its proper earth.

Q. What do you understand by the seed in the work Of the Philosophers ?

A. I understand the interior heat, or the specific spirit, which is enclosed in the humid radical, which, in other words, is the middle substance of living silver, the proper sperm of metals, which contains its own seed.

Q. How do you set free the sulphur from its bonds?

A. By putrefaction.

Q. What is the earth of minerals ?

A. It is their proper menstruum.

Q. What pains must be taken by the Philosopher to extract that part which he requires?

A. He must take great pains to eliminate the fetid vapours and impure sulphurs, after which the seed must be injected.

Q. By what indication may the Artist be assured that he is in the right road at the beginning of his work?

A. When he finds that the dissolvent and the thing dissolved are converted into one form and one matter at the period of dissolution.

Q. How many solutions do you count in the Philosophic Work?

A. There are three. The first solution is that which reduces the crude and metallic body into its elements of sulphur and of living silver; the second is that of the physical body, and the third is the solution of the mineral earth.

Q. How is the metallic body reduced by the first solution into mercury, and then into sulphur?

A. By the secret artificial fire, which is the Burning Star.

Q. How is this operation performed?

A. By extracting from the subject, in the first place, the mercury or vapour of the elements, and, after purification, by using it to liberate the sulphur from its bonds, by corruption, of which blackness is the indication.

Q. How is the second solution performed ?

A. When the physical body is resolved into the two substances previously mentioned, and has acquired the celestial nature.

Q. What is the name which is applied by Philosophers to the Matter during this period?

A. It is called their Physical Chaos, and it is, in fact, the true First Matter, a name which can hardly be applied before the conjunction of the male--which is sulphur--with the female--which is silver.

Q. To what does the third solution refer?

A. It is the humectation of the mineral earth and it is closely bound up with multiplication.

Q. What fire must be made use of in our work ?

A. That fire which is used by Nature.

Q. What is the potency of this fire?

A. It dissolves everything that is in the world, because it is the principle of all dissolution and corruption.

Q. Why is it also termed Mercury ?

A. Because it is in its nature aerial, and a most subtle vapour, which partakes at the same time of sulphur, whence it has contracted some contamination.

Q. Where is this fire concealed ?

A. It is concealed in the subject of art.

Q. Who is it that is familiar with, and can produce, this fire?

A. It is known to the wise, who can both produce it and purify it.

Q. What is the essential potency and characteristic of this fire ?

A. It is excessively dry, and is continually in motion; it seeks only to disintegrate and to educe things from potentiality into actuality; it is that, in a word, which coming upon solid places in mines, circulates in a vaporous form upon the matter, and dissolves it.

Q. How may this fire be most easily distinguished?

A. By the sulphureous excrements in which it is enveloped, and by the saline environment with which it is clothed.

Q. What must be added to this fire so as to accentuate its capacity for incineration in the feminine species?

A. On account of its extreme dryness it requires to be moistened.

Q. How many philosophical fires do you enumerate ?

A. There are in all three--the natural, the unnatural, and the contra-natural.

Q. Explain to me these three species of fires.

A. The natural fire is the masculine fire, or the chief agent; the unnatural is the feminine, which is the dissolvent of Nature, nourishing a white smoke, and assuming that form. This smoke is quickly dissipated, unless much care be exercised, and it is almost incombustible, though by philosophical sublimation it becomes corporeal and resplendent. The contra-natural fire is that which disintegrates compounds and has the power to unbind what has' been bound very closely by Nature.

Q. Where is our matter to be found?

A. It is to be found everywhere, but it must specially be sought in metallic nature, where it is more easily available than elsewhere.

Q. What kind must be preferred before all others ?

A. The most mature, the most appropriate, and the easiest; but care, before all things, must be taken that the metallic essence shall be present, not only potentially but in actuality, and that there is, moreover, a metallic splendour.

Q. Is everything contained in this subject?

A. Yes; but Nature, at the same time, must be assisted, so that the work may be perfected and hastened, and this by the means which are familiar to the higher grades of experiment.

Q. Is this subject exceedingly precious ?

A. It is vile, and originally is without native elegance; should anyone say that it is saleable, it is the

species to which they refer, but, fundamentally, it is not saleable, because it is useful in our work alone.

Q. What does our Matter contain?

A. It contains Salt, Sulphur, and Mercury.

Q. What operation is it most important to be able to perform?

A. The successive extraction of the Salt, Sulphur, and Mercury.

Q. How is that done ?

A. By sole and perfect sublimation.

Q. What is in the first place extracted ?

A. Mercury in the form of a white smoke.

Q. What follows?

A. Igneous water, or Sulphur.

Q. What then?

A. Dissolution with purified salt, in the first place volatilising that which is fixed, and afterwards fixing that which is volatile into a precious earth, which is the Vase of the Philosophers, and is wholly perfect.

Q. When must the Philosopher begin his enterprise ?

A. At the moment of daybreak, for his energy must never be relaxed.

Q. When may he take his rest?

A. When the work has come to its perfection.

Q. At what hour is the end of the work ?

A. High noon, that is to say, the moment when the Sun is in its fullest power, and the Son of the Day-Star in its most brilliant splendour.

Q. What is the pass-word of Magnesia?

A. You know whether I can or should answer:--I reserve my speech.

Q. Give me the greeting of the Philosophers.

A. Begin ; I will reply to you.

Q. Are you an apprentice Philosopher?

A. My friends, and the wise, know me.

Q. What is the age of a Philosopher ?

A. From the moment of his researches to that of his discoveries, the Philosopher does not age.



