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THE GOLDEN FLEECE

O'R

THE FLOWER OF TREASURES

In which is succintly and methodically
handled, the Stone of the Philosophers,
his excellent effect & admirable
Virtues: and
The better to attain to the Original
& true means of Perfection.

*Inriched with Figures representing
the Colours to rise as they
successively appear in the
Practise of this
Blessed Work.*

By that great Philosopher

SOLOMON TRISMOSIN

Master to Paracelsus.



To discover one of the principal sources of alchemy we must look to conceptions centering on the Earth-Mother, minerals, and metals; and above all we must look to the "experience" of the archaic man who engaged in the mining, the fusing, and the forging of metals.

The accomplishment of the Magnum Opus is identified with the conquest of the Golden Fleece.

PREFACE

ALPHIDIUS, (truly esteemed one of the most famous & the most recommended to posterity; among the Ancient & sage Philosophers of his time) do propose to us in his divine writings; that the ordinary Contemplation, Mysterious consideration, and the continual reading of approved and renowned, chiefly contended Authors, and some who have more dismally delivered this work to us, wonderfully and never sufficiently praised, admired and revered of the most oppolent spirits; who have followed the pursuite through Curiosity or for compassion, seeing so many poor souls, consuming their days in Illusions, have thought it convenient to bring to light some glittering tinsell of that most oppolent work of our Lyon which is known by his paws in earnest of the most Spiritual light which they have contrived it being come somewhat near to this precious Stone, one might be approved by this sacred small spark.

This wise and sage Doctor saith that the Inquisitors of this terrestrial Son shall receive as much or more fruit and contentment of the Learned Nutrients sprang from the provident Tutilage of this more than desired and without doubt Celestial Stream of aimabile food agreeable to the delightfull and sweet breast-milk, then he doth discontent and mistake in the dull discontent and mistake in the dull sound of the Ignorant sorts who are not sufficiently enabled to Judge discreetly and to apprehend the depth of so profound, grand and Occult a Mystery; their Light not being subtil enough to perceive this Subject and their Brains not Judicious enough to prize this inestimable Pearl.

But rather only nourished, elevated, comforted and satisfied with vain hope or to speak better they being held back by Bitter Juice of Ignorance, are made incapable of the more Solid food for to direct them and to return them again to their proposed

(as a mark set before their eyes) Art of the Stone of the Sages the which we call the Heaven of the Philosophers: But I do not write unto those, but rather that they do not immerse themselves in the intricate ambiguity of the Golden Fleece nor not at all to touch the Sauce with the least point of their fingers, nor that they assaile the inestimable Labourenth with their weak abilities, because these heady brainless are not at all rallied to the glorious triumph of this degree; of him only given to those that love Wisdom, by no means to all busy-brains, taken with a fantastical conceit attempting to snake the delicious honey of our judicious writings.

It were better and more fittable for these dullpates to have considered it: Lost thy charge before they began their Labour not to have any thing, how false should it be from our Divine Work but rather to have retired from the fleeting Garden of the delightfull Hesperides.

The senseless noise of their Inabilities incapable of the propositions (too subtil for their pates) of our oppollent Work in regard of the disposition of their feeble fancy's.

This Celestial Gift doth not at all amaze us in the General Canopy of the whole world in gross; but in the retail, considering and ought to be dispised, and especially favouring and making heros of others as of those that may be known to be the true Sons of this Science, calling them the Blessed of the most happy Rays of the Golden Branches from the which the others are driven away, as from thier Sacred Fires.

Profane approach not this Treasure Sacred:
For Holy Ones only Consecrated.

RASIS saith not less in the Treatise he made of the Light of Lights; now ought saith he, so to presume of him as also to run so that assured hope lest he be plainly blameable for his evil

desert for stretching his desires beyond the Imprudent Limits of his Capacity following his own will in the feeble Authority of his weak Spirit the pure and clean Essence of the admirable mixtures not with standing they have not known the perfect Elements. But to speak truth, these sort of People bray of more then they have gotten, they have principally more confusion then contention, more sorrow than Solace; a thousand times more cause to be reprehended with a sharp Chastisement, then to have fruitfull gain of their purpose which call to mind Apelles his Quip, which he gave in two sentences touching the presumption of an Arrogant fellow steadily chastiseing at that Instant when he did reprehend the malacious discourse of a simple Cobbler, to redeem the venerable censure of the line and portraiture of his oppolent picture.

Thou maist speak saith he of the pantable;
But if thy doubttest thou art not able.

Also very well to this purpose the better to avoid the evil speech and censure of a publick obligation, he hath set before us this point on modesty.

Attempt not more then thou art able;
Who boast yet knows not doth but babble.

On the other Column which he set to prepare and sustain it.

Exercise thy knowledge of thy Art
Beyond Experience do not start.

But now adays very many do set miserably, flourish and flattering, and infatuating themselves with the vain hope of their own opinions when they have found nought more than a dole of which

boldly they take in hand not one penny, they thinking in this
Iron age to get sheckles of Gold more surely than the Bean
(acorn?) in the Oak.

Gold the Alchymist so long sought
Till at length he is brought nought.

In this wise, phantastically supposing they have now got the
moisture of the moon Breaking their Brains with the concept how
to make the Moon with her influence descend upon the body of
the earth the Mother of the Elements by a way which notwithstand-
ing they have not known, only being supported by natural appear-
ances and covetous of Curiosities and desirous of Novelties.
But if it be true, IGNOTI NULLA CUPIDO, according to Philosophy
a ripe Ingenuity may conceive by applyance of transcended efforts.

Their spirits more slight than Clouds blown;
Cannot speak truth of a thing unknown.

And no more than blind men deprived of their Sight can Judge
of colours. No more can these Ignorant fellows speak of the
Heaven of the Philosophers, then their feet under the table.

Si te fata vocant aliter non
Saith AUGURELLIUS in his Chrysopeia.

They only whom the Heavens favours
With this precious Art are blest
Tis ordained for no others:
All but wise Sages have it missed.

Also I shall enlarge myself further for their better appre-
hension, so they will study to unfold the Intracateness of this

business which is not easily done by the Importunity of the rash practioners of this Science. All those who have imployed and presented their Bark to the gulf have not all arrived at the Haven, yea, the most of those who have imbarked themselves for this Port have by a thousand mishaps suffered shipwreck.

The Wise Argonauts conducted in the Waves by the insistant hand of a long desteny, after a thousand Crosses; in the end conquered this rich Fleece by their valour armed and supported by the industry of Experience and patience, the true Conduct to a quiet Haven necessary in this Work.

Paucy quos aquus amavit.

Jupiter aut ardens evescit ad aethera virtus.

God gives not this especial favour
But to them of heavens Graces savour.

Also he ought to arrive at the famous Ille without calling Colchos, the better to prevent shipwreck and to come to the points of the natural Causes one should have all his fingers and the best of the Ancient Philosophers and to unfold their Writings and to Judge of the verity by the Concordance of their several descriptions, otherwise they have lost the false guide of the Intricate Labourinth only in their books hiding it from the ignorant.

Dare ye take with Sacrilegious hand
Our chief Secret without our command.

No No retire ye have not such slight
To ensnare the bird of our delights.

The Philosophers are cautious to talk or discourse, but with their like, yea, they do not speak but to the most knowing man as it is said in the Complaint of Nature.

Whats need to thee I shew if thou art Sage
If not, not by me hast thou no advantage.

This is the cause why they command that their books should by no means contain anything that might make dull and ignorant people capable to obtain the sweet honey of so many flowers.

ROSINUS conformable to former Authors doth not approve that in any wise, men of weak Spirits, should imploy their Wits in this Assay without the knowledge of that, the Philosophers have not named in their writings. Where is concord there is verity saith the Count Trevisan in his great Rosary Concorda Philosophos and bene rily erit.

If seeming discord thou canst make concord
And concord Sages, accord some discord.

The which one ought to enter prize by this Art and principal natural not familiar, but by a secret ground and more clear then day, the corporeal things take their substance and essence of the terrestrial mass, for the earth is the mother of the Elements from the earth they proceed and to earth they return saith HERMES.

The Element of the Earth is General
Mother, and in her womb he doth nourish all.

As it were the Vessel of generation because their Philosophers accord to the order of the time, of the influence of Heaven (doth serveth for it for seed and fermentative heat to make it spring and bring forth matter) of the Planets, of the Sun, of the Moon,

or of the Stars and so of others consequently with the 4 qualities of the Elements, which serving one and the other for wombs, they move without ceasing.

And by this means all things fruitfully increasing and growing by a form and original peculiar to their proper substances according to the Almighty power and divine Will which maketh things as at the first moment of the Admirable Creation of the World.

The metals also, are according to the Course of other Created things taking their Original from the Earth, Mother of the Elements and Nurse of all things as I have afore declared with a matter proper and Individually derived full and wholly from the four properties of the Elements by the Influence agreeing to the power of the metals and the Conjunction of the Constellations of the Planets. ARISTOTLE in the 4th. of the Meteors is of the same opinion, where he saith and affirmeth that the Argent Vive is, the true matter Common to all the metals. But now nature Earth first gathered and conjoined together a matter of the 4 Elements only thereof composing a substance according to the effort and propertie of the matter which the Philosophers name MERCURY or ARGENT VIVE NOT COMMON or made by Art, but rather having a form perfected by Gold and Silver, or drawn from the Imperfect metals. The curious naturalists concerning the nature of metals have spoken clearly enough in their Books and therefore there is no need here to be over Long unless it be upon this assured solid Base, the proper ground principal, and Mastery of the Stone of the Sages. The Original of which is found in the Center and perfect Body of Nature which is not taken from any thing living and of the same only thing we have the means to obtain the perfect formed, and the most great Contentment of the final Perfection.

THE GOLDEN FLEECE

Of the Original of the
Stone of the Sages & how
it may be brought to
Perfection .

This Stone of Wise men draws the pure Elements of his Essence by the assured way of a mindfull and fundamental nature in the which also she amends herself as HALY reports when he saith of this Stone; "It makes his own influction and Imbibition of things growing and secretly conjoining themselves, congealing and resolving itself by the nature which bettereth the things and maketh it more perfect and of greater efficacy, orderly and according to the time ordained." Upon this model and such like pattern of Artifice must every man rely himself and inform himself to these natural principles. If he desires to have help and assistance in his Arts by the operation of nature which in amenities it preforms itself until the time comes that by his natural Art he perfects the true form of his Intention.

Now this Artifice is no other thing than one only operation and perfect preparation of the matter, which wise and prudent nature hath made, in the Moisture of this Foundation. To this which also agrees a Moderiety of proportion and an assured measure of this operation with a mature foundation and considerate prudence for although Art may take of itself the Sun and Moon for a new beginning, as it were to make Gold yet there is a necessity of knowing the natural Secret of matters Mineral and how in the Entrals of the earth they have the foundation of their first principals, it being most certain the Art affords another way than Nature having to this Effect another and altogether

diverse operation. It is also convenient to this Artifice producing out of those preceeding natural roots in the beginning of nature should produce exquisite things, which nature of herself could not have operated. For true it is that she hath not in her power the ability to ingender those things of her self by the which natural metals come to procreate themselves in a long time almost altogether imperfect, notwithstanding incontinently after and almost in a moment may be made perfect by the rare secret of the ingenuous Artist, this which proceeds from the temporal matter of nature. And which serves to this Artifice of men, when she comforts them with her free means and then again Art aids her by his timely operation, but in such sort that this form being complete, may afterwards hold correspondence and make itself fit to the first Intention of nature and last perfection of his design. And although with great Artifice this Stone above-mentioned should return to the proportion of his first form, that being whereof it draws from the treasure of nature (as all other the substantial form of things grow into diverse fashions like Animals, or metals) yet do they all proceed of one inward power of the matter; only excepted the Soul of man which is not so limited, nor rely as (as those other things under this terrestrial and temporal submission) But take heed also and it is very considerable that the substantial form hath no relation nor can condescend to the matter, were it not that it is done by a certain operation of some accidental form; Nor yet that this happens by his own peculiar force, but rather by means of some other operation sustained as the fire or some such heat as nearly correspondent thereunto perfectly joined that must work thereupon wherein the better to oppress ourselves and to render our position more Intelligable. We will take the Similitude of a Hens Egg. In the which subsists the substantial form, putrefaction, without the Accidental form, that is to say a mixture of red and white by the particular power of an Internal and natural heat

working therein. But although the Egg be the matter of the Chicken the form notwithstanding is neither substantially nor accidentally comprized therein but only potentially. For putrefaction which is the principal of all generation is indured by this means and with the assistance of an outward heat according to the Maxime which says: Heat working in moisture bringeth first blackness and after working upon dryness promotes whiteness.

Even so it is in the natural matter of the Stone in the which consists neither the Substantial, nor accidental form without putrefaction or decoction which brings it to be in power, which it is afterwards in effect, now it rests to demonstrate and shew of so habitude this Putrefaction is that is so necessary to generation and from whom it hath its original. Corruption or putrefaction are sometimes engendered by an optomium heat it being put in some certainly hot place, or by the warmth which is drawn from something that hath moisture in it, this putrefaction is likewise made of a superfluous coldness when natural heat decays and is dispersed weakening and corrupting by an over-abounding coldness which is properly called privation where natural heat abandons the thing and such a Corruption is assuredly made in things that are cold and moist. Philosophers speak not at all of this kind of putrefaction, but of corruption which is no other thing then humidity in Siccity by the means whereof all dry things come to be dissolved, joining the fire with the water as TREVISAN saith to return to resume their first being upon which they pretend soon after according to the property of their nature to arrive to the preference of their final form.

In this Corruption the moistness it self, with the dry (which notwithstanding is not so dry) but by the moisture is kept by intermingling it self with that which is dry. And therefore it may more properly be made an Impression of Spirits or a Plain Congealation of matters. But when the moist comes to disunite itself and make an intire Separation from the dry we must instantly

withdraw the dry part and reduce it into Ashes. So the Philosophers intend that their corruption, dryness, disruption or dissolution, and Calcination be done in such sort as the natural moisture and dryness do rejoice themselves, dissolve and reunite together by an abundance of moisture and dryness and by an equal proportion of temperature to the End that with great facility superfluous and corruptible things may be drawn and vapoured away as unprofitable and sootie Excrements.

Neither more nor less then as the meat taken into the Stomach, assimilates properly and conducts itself into the Substance of the nature it is nourished when it is seasoned by a digestion and laudable concoction, and when by the proportion, and digestion made in the Ventricle she draws unto her self a Plain substantial and convenient humidity.

Now by the means of this radical humour, nature is conserved and augmented, their sootie and superfluous parts over abounding, as a corrupted Sulphur being rejected from them. But it is remarkable that anyone of their parts will be nourished according to the property of his nature, in the which he rejoiceth and desires there to remain and to conserve his individual in the same Species which we ought also as well to understand of this Stone of wisemen as of the human body which changes into the purity of his substance the inferiour form though of a different condition by the means of this natural and well tempered fire which is the true governour and the only guide of our great Mystery as it is said; Minor Ignus omnia terit. The less fire grinds all things. This radical moisture is the Pilot that orders all those diverse natures to live peaceably together and of various contrarie Qualities, and of differing discords compasses an excellent harmony of Agreement by the Industry of a necessary concoction and a moist heat which doth actuate an equal proportion upon their metalline Bodys.

The Body alters all into his proper kind
On what so ere it feeds it nourishment doth find.
So doth our Artifice imperfect metals raise
As they are equalled unto Gold and stand as strongest Assayes.

The Second Treatise

Representing the Work of the Philosophers

by two Figures.

Here was placed the Figure:

A Sun in a Shield with a mantle, Helment and Crown upon it:
The Crest was likewise a Sun.

It is necessary saith MORIEN that our operation and the Art whereof we desire at this present to intreate, are divived into 2 principal doctrines, the extremes and the means whereof are strictly tyed together so adhering the one to the other and with such a reciprocal interchange to the immediate and of the first link itself with an indivisible chain to the beginning of the last and do mutually surround one another the cast being lovingly provoked to the Invitation of the self same actions the which may be observed and seriously considered in the precedent pattern of her that hath gone before and then is the mastery entirely done and perfected. But they cannot possibly accomodate themselves

in any other Body then their own proper matter.

Now the better to conceive and understand more absurdly, it is necessary in the first place to note the Nature according to GEBER assines out of the first Essence of metals composed of Mercury and Sulphur which opinion is seconded by the Authority of FERRARIUS in his Questions of Alchemy, 25th. Chapter, where he saith that nature proceeds from the Original and Pure Essence of metallick nature the which in the fire becomes a putrefying water which she mingles with a Stone very white and subtile rendering and resolving it as it were into a broth and certain Vapour raised out of the veins of the Earth, the which she doth churn by force of a continual motion to make her digestion, and doth vapour together with equal moisture and dryness uniting and coagulating themselves in such sort as from them is produced a slimy Substance which we commonly call MERCURY or QUICKSILVER; The which is no other thing then the Spring-head or first matter of Metals as we have heretofore affirmed. And further the same Author testifies to us in his 26th. Chapter, that those that will set as far as it is lawfull and possible to follow nature must not only help themselves with Quicksilver only, but with Quicksilver and Sulphur both together, the which notwithstanding they must not only mingle but also especially prepared, and season with Wisdom the which prudent nature hath produced and reduced into a perpetual confluxure.

Now so it is the which such a kind of Argent Vive nature begins her first operation and finisheth by the way of metals with which she contents her self for the entire perfection of her work she having thus accomplished that which belonged to her Duty and left the rest to Art to accomplish the Intention in perfecting the Philosophers Stone, and the absolute framing and forming it to his last period and incomparable Luster, whereby it is evident that we begin the Work where nature hath placed her end and the last glory of her ambition. All the Philosophers agreeing in

this Tenent that the true principal of their operation is taken from natures last End, which is the Sun of metals and freely do confess that he that pretends any thing in the knowledge of this business or desires perfectly to reach the height of this natural Art must absolutely and without doubt begin at the End and Cessation of Nature and where she reposed herself infine having arrived at the period of her Intension contenting herself with the Achievement of those ordinary operations.

We must then take the Sulphur and the Quicksilver which nature hath brought to a most neat and pure form being accomplished and endowed with a most subtill Union as none other could so ingeniously prepared by no Artifice seen; although the nature (as it is said) finally possesses this matter by the formal Generation of Metals.

Now this matter thus informed by nature doth conduct the Work to the period of perfection: And the Artifice by this means attaineth the safe Port of his design through the force she whereunto being fitly Imbided and associated to the same matter; To the which Alchymists add Sol to make him dissolve, distinguish his Elements till such time as he hath gotten a nature subtill and spiritual by the purity of Quicksilver and of the nature of Sulphur in which sort that it is become the next approaching matter thereby enabling itself to retain the pure forms of this hidden Stone which matter we call the MERCURY of the Philosophers seeing the two above said conjoined and strictly allied each to the other. The opinion of ARISTOTLE repugnes not this but holds conformity as appears by the advice he gives to King Alexander the Great; Will you (saith he to him) add Gold to the other precious things wherewith Kings are commonly adorned, richly Crowned to the Work of our Stone. I advise you that this MERCURY is alone the matter and the only thing to accomplish our Science notwithstanding it be infolded in many diversities and ambiguities that very few can assure themselves to find a safe Conduct

from the King to approach the Center of this Intricate Labyrinth without the thread of the fair and favourable Ariadine.

Now this obscure diversity shadowed with a hundred ambiguities, paths and veiled with an infinite number of thick dark Clouds is a true touch of the hand of the Philosophers of purpose to mistake it wisely from the Eyes of the Vulgar.

So speaks ROSINUS and EARLE TREVESAN, and all the rest with one Voice to this end that every man by the facility of the work should not indifferently reach to so high a degree lest thereby he despise so precious and inestimable a Jewel having so easily without difficulty gotten and attained the happy period of our work; the perfection of all works, which therefore we call a Collection as being a multitude of things compounded together and a full representation of all the kinds comprehended in nature.

Therefore the Philosophers spake so darkly (sublime the Inferiour by conjoining and distilling, make it again ascend and descend, drying it without and within) with infinite other sentences intergrated with such ambiguous and Hyperbolical figures which notwithstanding we must plienlerly follow and absolutely accomplish if we desire to reap the Notarian fruits of our golden Earth.

Although it seems that ALPHIDIUS doth in some sort oppose himself to this in these terms (we must know, saith he; that when we dissolve and congeal, we sublime also, an Alchymist without intermission of time, do by this means conjoin and purify our Work) and more clearly yet in this which follows (when the Body hath cast into Water and when it begins to calcine it, then all incontinently corrupted becomes black shadowed and obscured; after this hath vanished, he shall be like Lime which sublimed and exalts it self being thus sublimed and dissolved with the Spirit, he putrifies himself; which is a principal or original most worthy to be compared to all the things of this Universe which have life, Soul or Spirit or none be they Mineral, animal

or Vegetable Elements or their composition, things cold or hot, and briefly which good things may be found, yea, in earth or heaven is contained or may be apprehended in the possibility of our Art.

These two Doctrines above mentioned signify (according to Philosophers) this black woman and obscure which serves as a Key to all the work which must bear that these rules in our Stone that is to say in blackness, the assured foundation of all the buildings; or else this man which is the form of our matter, which we compare very properly to the Sun.

This may well suffice for the Introduction of the first Document of this Art.

The Second Figure.

A high rocky mountain, which 2 men are breaking the earth with Pick-axes, at the bottom of which a River runs, with the Moon in it; and after , at a bridge, branching it self 2 ways.

Here is declared by many similitudes figurative speeches and philosophical interpretations how we must proceed to the final perfection of the Work.

The Third Figure.

An old Philosopher holding in his hand a Vessel half full of the matter.

The Third Treatise .

The great Genius of our Science and Father of the most high

and rare Philosophy HERMES in a rapture and entertainment of his Spirit upon the operation of this philosophical Work breaks out into these speeches (this may be termed as it were an end of the world) forasmuch as the Heavens and the Earth seem to bring forth but no man can by this Heaven and this Earth, understnad our two precedent Doctrines veiled with so many Hyroglyphicks; many who have attempted this Labour have sweat much before they could attain this perfection, which when once they have gotten they oppress with such Amphibological ambiguities and so confused as they cannot be understood by their figurative and shadowed similitudes being too obscure for those that think to trace their steps and are desirous to imbrace the same fortune and be crowned with the same palm seeing they have run (as they think) the same race.

The first Similitude demonstrates unto us that God by his great power and infinite bounty hath created this earth all equal, fat and fertile without sands, without Stones, without mountains or Valleys, by the influence of the Stars and operation of nature, notwithstanding we now see that it retains nothing of the ancient Luster, but rather disfigured from his perfection, that hardly can it be known to be the same thing it was being outwardly changed into diverse forms and figures of strong Stone, of high mountains, and deep Valleys, and inwardly into wonderful things, diverse colours, diverse minerals, diverse salts and sundry metals and although those confused and contrary things are found at this present in the bowels of the Earth, yet proceed they all interiorly from the same first form, then when of a most Large, gross profound, and largeness that it had at the beginning it is brought into a grand and vast Lustre by help of the continual operation of the Sun the heat thereof being always there conserved Vehement, burning and vapourous, mingling itself confusedly even to the very Center of this gross mass with the cold and moist which is shut up in the same body from whence some times arise

cold Vapours cloudy and aierous, which some of the mixture of those 2 contrary regients, from which being stayed, and inclosed within the Earth in length of time many other vapours do brood so strong that at the last that she is constrained to make way for them to exhale by the opening of the womb, giving unto them (in spite of her power) free passage whereas she would rather have desired to retain them in the natural dens of her most profound Caves where many of them being gathered pell-mell together in long continuance of time raiseth suddenly upon heapes many parts of the earth in one place by the united force of the Exhalations and many others in other places. Yet notwithstanding the mountains and the valleys are to some purpose principally it helpeth the earth to a better temperature of the 4 qualities, heat, cold, moist and dry. Decoction in a manner decocted and diminished. Now in those places we there find the best and purest metals. This reason doth mush inforce that in low grounds where the earth is flat and plain there is not so great quantity of Vapours nor so many Sulphureous exhalations therefore it is more calm and quiet. That which is fat and slimy and where the humidity from above drains itself downward, and enters thereinto becomes more tender and soft changing itself into an extreame Whiteness by the means principally of a drought proceeding from the heat of the Sun which makes it more strong more digested and more hardened after a long time. But a corruptible, frangible sandy earth and which yet being somewhat tender hanging in Goblets as Grapes of a Vine is ordinary more wane and by consequence having less nourishment to compact the substance thereof is not so lively having retained little humidity or vigorous nourishment. So it becoming more difficult to be digested, it being dissolved in the form of Rowls or other ill-composed matter.

Now this earth cannot easily be decocted into Stone if it be not extreemely vapoured and replenished with much humidity. But it is very necessary that with the drying of the water (which

comes of the Vehement heat and continual burnings of the Sun). The earth be kept always humid, otherwise this earth should remain brittle and corruptible and would easily fall in pieces.

That which notwithstanding hath not yet been hardened, fully and perfectly may at length be brought and decocted into a hard and strong Stone by the continual operation of nature assisted with the heat of the Sun and a long and continual decoction without intermission. So the fumes and vapours aforesaid Shut up in the pores of the earth and when they come to form with the watery vapours with the substance of some very subtile earth digested and well purified by the heat and influence of the Sun, of the other planets and of all the Elements together; thus may one address and bring to Work QUICKSILVER.

But for as much as it may contract some hardness by a subtile Inflammation one may well serve himself of the Sulphur of the Philosophers and the force and vigour. Thereof the great HERMES concludes very well when he saith, that it shall receive the virtues of the superior and inferior planets and that his force surpasseth and penetrates all other forms, yea even to the very precious Stone.

The Fourth Figure.

A Tree with Birds in it, to which a young man is climbing by a Ladder: The bottom of the Tree grows out of a Crown and hence also issues a river. Two Philosophers stand and discourse and on the left side of the Tree.

Another Similitude.

HERMES the greatest workman and the first Master of this Art

saith that the water of the Air which is between the Heavens and the Earth is the life of every thing. For by the means of those two particular and natural qualities hot and moist, it unites those two contrary Elements the water and the fire as necessary mediators to agree those 2 extremes and the heaven begins to close it self as soon upon the earth as this water is infused from above as it were with a fruitfull Seed injected into the work of her Womb by which means she hath conceived a sweetness as it were of honey and a certain humidity, which causeth it to produce diverse of colours and fruits from whence there is yet risen reason and ground as it were by a lineal Succession in the trace of their Secret Ways a tree of admirable height and greatness with a silver-like body which extends itself Largely through the places and quarters of the world, Whereupon the Branches of this Tree diverse sorts of birds did repose themselves. All which flew towards the day. Afterwards there did appear great abundance of Flowers and infinite other rare properties were thereto to be found, for it did also bear diverse sorts of fruits, whereof the first were as small grains and the other is named of the Philosophers the Foliated Earth the third was of the most pure Gold intermixed with many fruits necessary for health, warming that which is cold and cooling that which is hot and that which hath contracted an extraordinary interperate, a kind of excessive heat rendring the dry moist and the moist dry. Softening that which is hard, and hardening that which is soft; now all these conditions of contrary Essences are the most Assured pilots of the hope of our Work, our operations being only a imitation of diverse natures as it is said.

The body spirit make the Spirit bodified
Kill thou the quick, quicken the which dead doth lie.

This is the Loadstone, perfect Circle upon whose Center rests

the chief mastery and the beginning of the pretended End of all our Artifice. This Maxime being true that the assurance of a good beginning is no small hope to comfortable Spirits who notwithstanding they have embargened themselves yet fearing to arrise safely at the Cape of good hope when they see themselves incountered with so many contrary Winds and dangerous Rocks they are inforced many times to abandon their undertakings, to better sailers than themselves. Yet notwithstanding if we encounter some sweet and precious Halcyon in the midst of our tempest we assure ourselves to be yet at the Least in the true course of our Intentions, and by this happy Augure we begin to know the Lyon by his Paws, breathing (as one saith) under the heavy burden of our greatest travails, and bravely surmounted by the hopeful Aspect of a happy and favourable beginning.

He is half way at his Journeys end
Whose good beginning was his friend.

The black key of the reciprocall mutations of these diverse forms opens the Cabinet of natural Secrets. Whereby we taste the sweetness and maturity of this fruit of the Isle of Colchos kept by the wakening Dragon and the devouring Lyon composed to the pursuite of our Work.

Our Sacrifices end well to attain
We must be patient and refuse no pain.

Salienus speaks sufficiently of the Variety and diversity of this fruit making also ample mention of an Herb which (according with diverse others) he calleth Lunary, having a stalk far differing from others drawing his root from an earthly metal ruddy in parts; but incompassed with a black colour, or spotted easy to corrupt and to disfigure itself, and being willing to forgo his

ordinary force to be more fair and more perfectly renovated that changing his might with Flowers in his due time, likewise after Seventy two hours, he incounters with the Angel of Mercury changing it self into a perfect white of a most pure Lune and again converted by a longer and more violent decoction into a Gold of such an Alloy as changes into his nature a hundred parts of Mercury. Yea a more pure gold then is produced out of any mine in the whole earth. Virgil affirms as much in the 63rd. of hus AEneads speaking of a tree with golden boughs which he makes his Trojan prince to incounter in his long voyage. A tree of such excellence that whensoever any branch of it was cut off, another presently supplied the place succeeding by multiplication his predecessor, or (as the Phoenix) renewing himself out of his own Ashes.

The Fifth Figure.

The same Figure as the 4th. was.

The Third Similitude.

AVICEN treating of humidity and of all the efforts thereof saith that in the beginning there must appear blackness when heat operates upon moist bodies, which is the cause that the ancient Sages without unfolding the ambiguity of their Inigmatical figures declare that they had observed from far, a tempestuous Cloud raising it self which invironed all the earth and moistened it. They say also they have forseen the great tempestuousness of the Sea and the abundant concourse of waters flowing upon the face of the earth in such sort that the form and the matter destitute of their original vigour and through complete

putrefaction shall seem to threaten with obscure darkness, the King of the earth, who cries and Laments with a putifull voice, and full of compassion. He that shall redeem me from the Ser- vitude of this corruption shall live with me in perpetual and most happy content and reign gloriously in the sparkling clear light of my royal Throne even far excelling the precious shine- ing of my golden Scepter.

The cloudy curtain of the mist shut up his complaint with a charming sleep; but at the break of the day there was seen to arise above the person of the King a most resplendent star and the darkness being chased away the bright shining Sun appeared in the Clouds adorned and beautified with diverse colours. The twinkling Stars did dazzel the sight and there was a perfume passing all the odours of balmes and out of the earth proceeded a fair translucent light with sparkling beams, In fine all which might serve to give content or delight agreeable to the majesty of a great King pleased with a rare noveltie.

The Sun with his golden rays and the Silver moon encompassing this excellent beauty rendered themselves admirable to all Spect- ators and this king rapt in the contemplation of so sweet pleas- ures made three fair magnificent Crowns to adorn the head of this great beauty, the one of Iron, the other of Silver, the third of Gold; he held in his right hand a Sun and 7 Stars about it, which gave a great Lustre, and in his left a golden apple and upon the which reposed a white pidgeon which nature had also garnished with silver and the wings of Gold.

ARISTOTLE saith that the Corruption of one thing is the life and generation of another thing which may be understood of the Art of our Mastery and the preparation of corruptible humidities renovated by this moist substance aspireing always to more and more perfection and continuation of a much longer life.

The Sixth Figure.

A King Crowned, with Scepter in right hand, and a Bird standing on a Globe in his left. A King crowned swimming in a River. The Sun appearing on the top of a Mountain.

The Seventh Figure.

A Crowned Queen in a white imbrodered Garment, with Wings full of half Moons, and a Star on her Crown.

A naked boy coming out of a brown muddy place.

The Fourth Similitude.

MENALOUS shews evidently the necessity and strict commerce the living things have with dead, in these Words: I will and look (saith he) that all those that addict themselves to our serious study and the desire to follow the same, absolute stop and order those we ourselves have kept, the better to obtain their desire, must take such a course that spiritual things may be corporated and corporeal things Spiritualized and that by a reciprocal commission and destruction of their first forms to the end to acquire a form more excellent having raised themselves from the death of putrefaction much glorious than before, by one only means and light decoction.

Many other of the best Philosophers being at Unity in this opinion do all agree in these or the like words.

Dissolve and congeal in saying.

If thou dissolve the fixt and make it fly

And fix the bird thou shalt live happily.

Or as the fountain of Learning Lovers says:

Lighten earth give weight to the fire
And thou hast that which thou canst desire.

As we have heretofore proved by diverse passages in Imitation of Senior, who invites us, as all the rest do to the necessary things of contrary natures. The Spirit saith he hath freed the body and by this deliverance the soul is extracted out of the Body and after the self same body is reduced into soul, the soul then changing itself into Spirit becomes a new body, for if it remains firm in the body, and that it hath renewed the body with his terrestrial and massive grossness spiritualized by the operation of this Spirit that is the perfection of our operation. Also if the same happen not to the metalline Bodys and if they loose not their first and natural being to resume a greater Luster and perfection by the Work, their first matter being destroyed by Corruption and another introduced by generation, our Labour and watching is all but vain and our oil but blown away with the Wind.

An unfortunate man fallen from the Sweet Zephirus of his happiness and lighting by doleful disaster, into a most filthy bay-stall, appearing as black as an absolute moore panting and quite breathless with much struggling, to free himself, attempting all possible means to save his life and deliver his fettered body from the Infected prison of this muddy Dungeon, but his too feeble power could not second this vote of his desire for his release out of this place.

And seeing himself to have in Vain importuned the heavens with Cries, to give assistance to his Industry for the disintangling of himself out of this poisonous Den.

In this misery he had leisure enough to attend the last stroke

of an exorable death out of all hope of the favourable succour of any benevolent Soul full of charity that might be drawn to a piteous compassion of his piteous estate resolving himself as out of dire constraint sorrowfully to finish the abridgement of his days fatally followed at the heels by the dismall disasters of this unclean and uncomfortable Condition, then finding every one deaf to his complaints shewing in his behalf hearts harder than a senseless work.

Of a desired health the hope now being vain
His hert expecting nought but death to rid his pain.
To purpose there appears a Lady young and fair
That gave her handy help to him in this despaire.

This Lady was exceeding beautiful, both of body and face arrayed in most precious apperall of divers Colours having fair white plumes but speckled as are the peacocks which spread themselves equally upon her back by the industry of a gracious wind and favourable Zephirous the pinions of her Wings were of pure Gold interlaced with a many fair small grains of Silver upon her head (comely supported) she had a most fair Crown of Gold in the highest part whereof there shined a Star of Silver. About her neck she had a Crecent of Gold. Wherein was richly incased a precious Ruby with excellent Artistry; the true value whereof could not have been paid by the whole revenues of a most puissant King. She had also upon her feet shoes inbrodered with Goldsmiths Work and from her proceeded a most fragrant smell of a most sweet and odiferous perfume.

As soon as did she perceive this poor desolate and abandoned Wretch with a Joyfull countenance and amiable Aspect she offered her hand and relieved his extream feebleness, now so destitute of his former strength that he could no more support himself or sustain his weak body, from sinking to the earth in this eminent

peril of life not expecting or relying upon any thing save the old proverb:

Nullam sperare Salutem.

This Lady seeing the feebleness of this Languishing Wretch advances herself towards him and graciously drawing him unto her of the infection she Washes him neatly and presents him with a fair robe of purple and carries him with her to heaven.

SENIOR intreating of the same subject speaks alike or more clearly there is (saith he) a certain thing which is no more mortal being once revived and renewed by multiplication.

The Eighth Figure.

A King stands upon the Sun and the Sun upon his Crown, his Scepter being wrapt in a Scrowle. A Queen stands on a half Moon, and the full Moon on her head with a Scrowle in her left hand.

The Fifth Similitude.

The Philosophers to leave nothing unmentioned which they might honestly discover of this Art, do attribute unto it two bodies, viz. The Sun, and the Moon, which they call earth and water; these two bodys are also called man and woman, the which ingender four Children, two little males which they call heat and cold and two little females, dryness and moisture; out of these four qualities proceedeth a quentessence which is the white Magnesia which doth not carry any face of falsity, and Senior pursuing more at Large the same figure concluding in this manner when saith he; these five are come together and are conjoined in one,

the Natural Stone is then made of all these equal mixtures which is called DIANA. AVICIN to the same purpose saith that if we can arrive to this fifth thing we shall obtain that which all the Authors call the Soul of the World. The philosophers under the bark of this similitude expound unto us the model and verity of their essence by the demonstration of an Egg because in the whole substance composed and joined together; the first of which is the Shell, signifying the earth, and the white is the Water. But the skin which is between the White and the Shell is the Air which divides the earth and the Water; the Yolk is the fire wrapped up in a most delicate film which is the most subtil Air, the which is the most interiour of the most subtile, for it is of near nature and Affinity than the fire repulsing the fire and the Water, into the midst of the yolk, which is the quintessential matter of the which is formed and ingendered the Chicken that afterwards doth increase and grow, so which an Egg is all the force and vigour together which the matter the which nature taketh to accomplish and perfect her operation; So is it likewise necessary that all these be found in perfection in this our operation.

The Ninth Figure.

A body with two heads, the right yellow and left white, and both young faces, with wings, the right red, the left white, in Black clothes, and something like a platter in his right hand.

The Sixth Similitude.

The discourse of the most discrete are altogether ambiguous

always intermingling their grand Writings with some kind of obscurity each of them so well understanding the other by this kind of discourse, so that the Secret is no more divulged by the latter then by the former.

As appears by ROSINUS conformable in the point to the old Philosophers in the Explanation of his Aenigma, concerning this matter saying that by the face which he had seen of a dead person mutilated in many pieces his body and all his limbs divided the one from the other. But the trunk of the body as yet whole, appeared as White as Salt, the head being separated from the other members, was of find Gold near unto which there was a man of very great blackness, and was composed of his limbs, of a gastly Countenance and a hideous Aspect, who stood upright, his face turned towards the dead Corpse, in his right hand a two-edged sword imbedded in blood, in the effusion whereof (like a syrup & clear) he took his chief delight, and his most pleasant Sport, was to commit willfull murder and to put all manner of persons to violent death even in cold blood. In his left hand was a scrowle containing these sayings:

I have murdered thee and cut thy body in pieces to the end so beautify thee and to make thee live a longer and happier life then thou did before did'st death conspiring against thee by the Edge of this my Sword. But I will hide thy head that thou maist not be known of men and that they may not see that in the same Equipage of mortality thou wert before, I will mingle all thy members in an earthen Vessel, where being buried and in a small time brought to Corruption that thou maist be again revived and multiplied so to produce and bring forth better fruits.

The Tenth Figure.

A man with a black face, with a sword on his right hand,

having cut off the legs, Arms and Head of a Man, from the trunk, the head (being of gold) he holds in his left hand. A River running by him, at the far end a ship, and several persons on the Shore looking after it.

The Seventh Similitude.

The Works of Ovid that excellent Poet and grand Philosopher perswadeth us to esteem well of his judgement and true knowledge and great experience he had of the miraculous effort of our Magnesia declaring to us the prudent wisdom of those Ancient Sages being desirous to renovate their sliding and decaying age, how ingeneously they did arm themselves with a soveraigne Antidote and Counter poison at the invenomed darts of the fierce Eumenides, the cruel plagues of life, sickness, and old age, and being carefull of the Conservation of mankind devised a way by the voluntary dismembering of their Bodies but cutting them in pieces, to have them boiled to a perfect and sufficient decoction, thereby to change the feeble Constitution of their aged bodies to its former natural estate of youth and vigour making themselves by dying to resurge more strong and healthfull and by disjointing their Limbs to reunite and knit them more strong, and firmly together.

What is that property of that nature
that doth bring to pass this operation.

The Fourth Treatise .

The Prince of the Peripateticke Philosophy and great Inquisitor of natural Secrets and curiosities saith in his book of Generation

and Corruption that man and Seed produceth man; it being most plain that every thing Ingenders his like by the animated force and particular secret of every Seed which give every Living form in several Essences by diverse and sundry means but principally by the operation and temperate heat of the Sun, without whose infused Aids, and immediate assistance this operation could not shew its effect. The most regular Philosophers following the perfect pattern of wise nature, are constrained to beg her succour and favour to their designs in the research of their Work which cannot be done without the mutual borrowed Aide of nature & Art.

Perfect in all points no one thing is found
Unless it take some help from other grounds.

So saith nature to Art in her Complaints.

If thou help me I will thy work assist
If either fail the other all is mist.

For if the Artist second not the Design of nature (although she be now so full of good intention) yet cannot she bring to the perfect Light, nor raise them to the highest of their absolute perfection without their pain, patience and dilligence. Neither can all our Artifice at all perfect in those vain Searches, but remain unfruitfull and unfittable without we have the favourable Assistance of Nature.

This plainly appears unto us that they are always to mutually aid one another and that our Art ought to govern the heat by the temperature of the Sun to produce this Stone. But the Event and good success of all these things ought to be extracted by our Sage Imitators in seven several manners which doth open us the door graciously to induct us to the full understanding of the perfect heats.

The Eleventh Figure.

A man stands in a Cauldren with a Bird upon his head. A young man bloweth the fire under it, at the bottom, a passage for the liquor to run into a Glass.

First we must of necessity practise such a kind of heat as may mollifie and melt the hardness of the earth, seething together the gross and the hard by a temperate fire of Corruption which is the beginning of all the Work, confirmed by the best Authors.

If it be not putrefyed it can neither dissolve nor melt and if it be not dissolved it comes to nothing saith MORIEN and PLATO. Note that without corruption there can be no putrefaction. Therefore saith he to attain to putrefaction must be the principal Aim of all our intentions. Accordingly the same philosopher declares that he had never seen any living Creature bred without putrefaction and Urging it farther in vain were the Work of Alchemy without you did first putrefy.

PARAMENIDES also exclaims the same in these Words: If the body be not destroyed, demolished, all rotted and totally corrupted by putrefaction the hidden and secret virtue of the matter could never be drawn out, nor perfectly conjoined to the Body. The great Rosary maintains the same opinion to be most assured and infalliable as appears in this metaphorical figure. We hold saith he for a most true MAXIME that the head of our Art is a Crow flying, without Wings in the obscurity of the night as well as in the light of the day. But by some means this must be done, SOCRATES gives us very good advice speaking thus of the first heat agreeable to corruption. The Vents and little holes which are the breathing places, and pores of the earth shall open and dissolves to the end she may retain into herself the force and vigour as well of the fire as of the waters.

The Twelfth Figure.

Three Birds in a Vessel, one black falling on his back, another white, and another red, both pecking at the black one, and he at them. The Vessel standing as it were upon beams, round at the top, and flames persuing throughout.

Secondly by such a heat is necessary for us by the virtue whereof the darkness may be expelled from the earth according to the proverb of SENIOR, heat saith he makes all things White and all White things do afterwards become red.

The Water likewise by his Virtue brings Whiteness which the fire shortly after illuminates. But the Center doth then peirce and shines through the subtilized earth like a Ruby by the tinging Spirit of the fire, to the which also agrees the Authority of SOCRATES: Rejoyce thy heart when thou seest an admirable light Issue from dark obscurity.

The Thirteenth Figure.

A Griffon in a Vessel; and a naked boy blowing into his mouth with a pair of Bellows. Round the bottom of the Vessel Beams.

The Vessel Crowned and flames issuing out of it.

Thirdly heat rightly disposed directs every thing in the height of his perfection by the Secret force, with the which she animates Bodies by the means of their Corruption. For which Cause MORIEN saith that nothing animates itself, but after putrefaction and that all the force of the Mastery avails not if this Corruption do not preceede as it is assuredly affirmed to us by the Turba Philosophorum; who by a common consent attribute to this heat the Jurisdiction and power to animate bodies in giving them

a living essence after this Putrefaction to fill with waterish humours that which was formerly firm and solid, or other Like, or contrary operations because heat continues this properly both to fix and to resolve and here lyeth the knot of the business. In which absolutely consists the perfection of the Workman. Therefore ought we to lay fast hold in this assured precept that rather to get the comfortable hope of being able to attain the precious prize and expected Salary of our black earth, the dissolved, and congealed, so often remembered by the best Authors and etc. and so often repeated by us. It is no small matter to know the fire that causeth this putrefaction and many other diverse and fair Effects, upon which the entrance and conclusion of our Saturne wholly depends.

If thou this work will speedily conclude
Make the fixt fly, soften the hard and rude.

Because the essence of this Mastery takes his force from contrary qualities perfectly united. RASIS in his Treatise of Lights affirms as much speaking of the necessity of this metalline mixture. No man saith he can reduce a heavy thing to Lightness without the help of a thing that is light, no more then he can transmute a light thing into a heavy, without the Intermission of a heavy Body.

The Fourteeneth Figure.

A Griffon with 2 heads inclosed in the Vessel. The Vessel Crowned at the top and stopped.

Fourthly heat purifies, driving from his heat the least object of Impurity; CALID says we must waste the matter with a hot fire,

if we will make an apparent mutation we must also know that the minerals joined and knit together easily depart from their first habitation by the reciprocal communication of their proper influence by the infusion equally disposed through the total mass of their community dispoiling themselves of a particular Vestment, to make a White; after an equal proportion and measure to all the mineral substance so quitting their evil infected savour by means of our renewed Elixir.

Of which HERMES treats very well to the purpose saying that it is most necessary to separate the Gross from the Subtill, the earth from the fire, the thick from the thin. And it is very moot for me to report in this place the conceit of ALPHYDIUS in his Treatise which contradicts not in any thing that we have spoken. You shall know by exact reading of his learned writings the same advice given by so many renowned Authors which brought us out of doubt in this way: The earth saith he melteth itself as a water out of which proceeds a fire, yea for the earth contains in itself a fire, as the Air is contained in the Water. RASIS also adviseth us that a certain Artifice ought to precede the perfect operation, which we fitly call mundification because we must resolve, to make the matter more tractable and that it be reduced to Water which is supple and principle of all things, for of water all things are made, the which is done only by Putrefaction, for which the beginning of this mundification and may get an assured prognostick of the success of this Stone of the Sages; If the filthy and deformed parts, like Excrements hurtfull and superfluous to the purity of this fair work, be entirely separated and excluded.

The Fifteenth Figure.

An Eagle with 3 heads Crowned in a Vessel stands upon leaves (beams?). The top of the Vessel crowned out of which issues Flames.

Filthy heat is elevated by the Virtue of the fire and the hidden spirit of the earth is returned into Air as HERMES saith in the Smaragdine Table, in these words, it gently ascends, from earth to Heaven, and again descends from Heaven to earth, so obtaining the virtue of both and a power above every power and in another place subtilize the gross, and make the subtil gross, and thou shalt have the glory of the World. RIPLEY in his 12 Gates says the same in another figure.

Gate Three.

Raise saith he the birds out of their nest
And then again return them to their rest.

Which is only to draw the Spirit from the earth, and return it thither again, and to this purpose say the Philosophers that they acknowledge him for a Master of this Science that knows how to draw light from out of obscurity. MORIEN falling upon the same point (to whose sweet Concordance we strain and tune all our harmony) composed from the brains of so many Sundry and transcending agreeing Spirits concluding it for an absolute truth: He that can give Solace to the Soul by drawing it out of Putrefaction knows the greatest Secret of this Mystery, herein ALPHIDIUS agrees, cause saith he this vapour to ascend else you effect nothing.

The Sixteenth Figure.

A Peacock with a spread Tail in a Vessel, corwned at the Top and Stopped.

Sixthly that when the heat is so much multiplied in the earth

that the strongest parts be reduced and united together, and rendered more volatile, surpassing Impurity and all the other Elements. But this heat must only be augmented, to the equality and proportion of the coldness of the Swan (?). CALIDS words do proud what we say, extinguish saith he the fire of one thing with the coldness of the other things, yet advisedly, let this coldness exceed the natural heat, but one only degree for fear of an intire Suffocation as Raymond testifies in the Theory of his Testament.

The Seventeenth Figure.

A Queen Crowned, (with a Globe in her right hand, and Scepter in her left, standing upon a half moon, with a Ray round about her body) in the Vessel, the top crowned and flames issuing out thereof.

And seventhly heat mortifies the cold earth to the which the saying of SOCRATES doth well agree, in these words; then when the heat penetrates it doth cause those things that are gross, and terrestrial to become subtile, and spiritual accomodating themselves to the matter rather than to the final form, continually working by means of the aforesaid heat. And this is the which the Philosophers mean when canidly they speak of distilling 7 times, understanding by 7 Colours, applying by the continual decoction in one only Vessel without once touching the same lending all to nature which separates and mingles them together according to her own ballance and not ours.

The Eighteenth Figure.

A King Crowned in the Vessel stands upon a half moon reverse, with a Scepter in his right hand, and a Globe in his left, the top crowned and stopped.

Actor in the fourth of his Problems gives us another Instruction fittingly to temper and govern the heat of the fire necessary to the operation in these terms, than which the Sun is restrained which is as much as debilitated and returned into his first matter he shews the first degree which is unto us a true sign of infirmity, principally because of the deminution of his natural heat, being then in his blackness, then is a way by the breath of the Lyon, to corrupt this first natural heat, augmenting it to a burning fire more digesting then common fire and this excessive Ardour demonstrates the second degree, which proceeds from the admirable great heat of the fire, whereby we understand Putrefaction which is the privation of the Form. And again a Plain other posture of the Air of the 3rd. degree follows at the heels of the two others not burning but of temperate quality with a modiorcity of Air, and order more regular and changes all Violence into a tranquility; here you may behold the true means to give an End to the the Work and an assured beaten path, to the culture of the hopefull Vine and the achieving which good success the Comfort of a Delicious Air of health and prosperity.

The Fifth Treatise.

The Whole Operation comprized in four brief Articles, easy to be understood.

The First Article.

The first step established by the true Alchymists to mount the golden Scale of our happy work is called by the most expert in this Hermetical Art Solution, which requires (according to nature itself) that the body should be boiled till it comes to perfect decoction. All our Mastery being no other thing than boiling.

Seeth, Seeth, and again Seeth and let it not seem tedious unto thee for the more thou seestest the more thou dissolvest, the more thou seestest the more thou whitenest, the more thou seestest, the more thou reddest. In fine decoct at the beginning, decoct at the middle, and decoct in the End; Seeing this Art consists in nothing but decoction. But the decoction of thy material must be perfected in one only water that is in our Quicksilver which serves us as the matter and in one only Sulphur which is the form.

Hereby we must clearly understand that the vital Silver which cleaves itself, doth firmly adhere and is annexed to the dissolving Sulphur. Join the dry with the moist and then hath the Mastery; convert water into fire and the dry into moist. In brief the Elements one into another, and you have a firm passage unto all that your heart can desire in this Art. *Converte Elementa and quod quaris invenies.*

The best understandeth perfectly all happiness to be at your disposing if you know the means to join Mercury and Sulphur together. Now this Solution is no other thing in a plain order inconjoining humidity with dryness properly called Putrefaction, which it totally corrupts the matter and brings it to blackness. MORIEN attributes to it the same effect upon the same near Putrefaction, wherein we comfort our hopes in the Work, this being the key that opens all the Locks of the very Heaven of the Philosophers; If it be not (saith he) putrified and black it will not dissolve and if it dissolve not the water cannot pierce through all the body as it ought necessarily, nor penetrate nor blanch. It must therefore dye to revive as the grain of Corn which neither germinates nor bringeth forth profit, if first it do not well dye altogether.

The Nineteeneth Figure.

Two women beating and raceing Clopex near a fountain.

The Second Article.

The second step is called Coagulation which notwithstanding may be said to be one and the same thing with Solution working the same effects. The difference that is between them is only caused by a small and almost insensible distance in the perfecting the mutation of the first Essences into diverse natures qualified, which diverse names only to oppose the confusion of the first Intentions, and utterly to deprive the Ignorant from apprehending the Secret, and to lead the Children of Art by the hand to the true understanding of the same.

This Coagulation then doth again renovate the water in the Body, for in congealing it dissolves, and in dissolving it congeals, to shew us that the Quick Silver which is the dissolution of the Metallick Sulphur and (which he draws unto himself thereby to be congealed) desires again to be rejoined to the radical humidity of this Sulphur and this Sulphur as greedily seeks to be again conjoined to his Mercury by which reciprocal amity it is easily perceived that the one cannot live without the other, imbracing amiably the other as being indeed one only nature as most learnedly is published by CALID under the name of all the Philosophers, in his book of the Secrets of Alchemy, saying:

Nature rejoiceth in Nature, nature overcomes nature, nature retaineth nature, nature whiteneth nature, and nature rubifies and afterwards he addeth; Generation is fixed with Generation, and Generation is virtuous with Generation. By good right then say we that our Mercury seeks always the fellowship of the Sulphur to serve him as his formed from whom he had before him separated with so many unutterable signs and tears as not being able to suffer the dissolution of two so perfect Lovers, for this Sulphur which is the form of Mercury makes him return again to him, drawing him from the water of the earth as soon as they are disunited, to the end that of this body composed of matter

which is Mercury and of form which is Sulphur, we may extract a perfect essence in the which are to be seen a happy diversitie of Colours because the property of the Working things no sooner begins to alter, but the pure conduit and exquisite achievement of living and animated things wisely governed and learnedly disposed, by the head and hands of the expert who have already guided the Elements.

It being no small matter to find a good Pilot that can securely travel in these Seas although he be provided of an able Vessel that is to say working upon the true matter, and knowledge, or else the quantities and qualities of the operation of things, because that in Solution the Mercury is become the Agent, whereas in Coagulation, it is the patient of the operation which happens. And here we may ourselves apprehend that this Science if fitly compared to the Sport of little Children for only Art is called play, but principally that of Letters which is called LUDAS LITERARUM. In the which the best Spirits take greatest pleasure and the Learned as much content as Children delights in frivolous pastimes, not apprehending the least Inconvenience, as this present figure represents unto us.

The Twentieth Figure

The boys play, and riding on a Hoby-horse, another scourging a Top, and a girl dancing and leaping between them.

The Third Article.

The third degree of the Naturalists is Sublimation, by which the gross and massie earth changes it self into his contrary which is humidity and then may it easily be distilled, after it hath encompassed this Condition for as soon as the water is

reduced and brought to influxion into his proper earth it begins then to retain the quality of the Air lifting up itself by little and Little, and puffing up the earth, kept till then in quiet repose by the thirsty siccity like a compact body and much pressed together the which nevertheless resumes there his Spirits and extends himself more Largely by the Influence of the humour wherewith he is imbibed and entertains himself by the Infusion in this Solid Body in form of a porous Cloud, and like to the Water that swims in the upper part of a Egg that is to say the Soul of the Quintessence which we naturally call Tincture, Ferment, Soul, Oil; because it is the matter most necessary and in the nearest degree to the Stone of the Wise men, for as much as by this Sublimation, cinders are produced the which perfectly (but above all by the Assistance of God, without whose favour nothing proves fortunate) arrogates to himself the limits and measures of the fire in which it is inclosed as it were with natural compeers firmly shut up: Ripley in the same sence agrees with us, saying, make fire in thy glass, within (viz.) in the earth, where the natural fire is inclosed.

This brief method whereof we have given you liberal instruction, seems unto me to be the shortest way and the true philosophical sublimation to reach to the perfection of this grand and rare labour, aptly to the purpose compared for the purity and admirable Candor thereof, to the ordinary business of women which is their Laundry which hath this property to make things infinitely white, which before appeared to be sluttish and foul as by this figure you may perfectly perceive. But I must also advise you that I am not alone in this Allusion, there being nothing so common in the best Authors, as to call it womans work, and childrens play. Children using continually to be mire and be soiled in the ordure of their Excrements which represents unto us this blackness drawn out of the proper natural mixtures of our mineral body without any other operation or Artistry then of his fire, hot and moist

digestion, and vaporous, the which blackness and putrefaction, is afterwards cleansed by the Whiteness that comes to take place making the house neat and clean from all former Imperfections with the same lye and clear Water the woman takes to wash the Child and purify him for his more intire preservation.

The Twenty-first Figure.

A Sun rising behind the Top of a Mountain, A man going towards it, and by him runs a River.

The Fourth Article.

This last of our Articles advertizeth the reader that the water should be separated and divided from the Earth and afterwards rejoined again to the end that these two bodies being straightly united may again be one homogeneal thing, and so firmly and fast knit together, that no more they may be any separation. Such must also be the intention of the workman, otherwise his Labour vainly undertaken will now come to an end but remaining always in an estate in like to leave nothing to the Artist but a carefull and mournfull remorse to find themselves the Servants of Ignorance in not being able to reduce this work into the natural union of a body composed of diverse things, and differing in quality of the which necessarily he must serve himself to the raising of this rare edifice.

Neither more or less than the wise Architect that frames a building of diverse materials, whose Idea notwithstanding the Varieties aims at one only end, a pallace or a house and structure of diverse parts stedfastly united in one body composed of diverse Instruments.

Then the which may be said of our Composition and of the proportions

thereon to be observed, is succinctly comprized in the brief method of these four precedent Articles without otherwise Intricating the Spirits almost already amazed and confounded with the Intricate paths, doubtfull stops and hyperbolical discourses of so many Authors, which speak of it but mistically in such art as they draw into Error, such as are less advised, under the doubtfull veil of so many obscuritiès, and cause them to run headlong into the Unbottomed Pit, as soon as the Shining Sun illuminates with his rays some part of the Superficies, so that having already promised to themselves so many Golden mountains upon this smiling fortune following then all panting and out of breath, their business thinking to surprise and snatch the Moon in their teeth, whereof they are driven to repent of the sun light of their inconsiderate rashness;

Odj pupillos praecocis Ingeng.

No man doth err so much in heat or cold as doth the Artist, that is rash or bold.

Patience is a fair guide to bring a man to the end of the most hard Attempts, for most in request are the things most difficult. This is the cause that TURBA bids us so often be diligent and patient, and not to be offended, with the tediousness.

And AUGURELL;

Patience will be thy true and faithfull guide
Consule with her and thou shalt never slide.

The Twenty-second Figure.

A full Moon rising at the top of a mountain, the lower part of her face ruddy, the top part white.

Of the Order and Regiment of the Fire.

After all these Articles we are to treat of the true manner, well and methodically to govern the fire in the due proportion of his degrees, the knowledge whereof is to us so necessary, that without this Science all our operations shall prove but unprofitable.

For although we are assured of the right choice of the matter and so also understand the means to sow it in the proper earth, yet all is nothing.

He that wants one thing wanteth all the rest
Our fire unknown, our hope is quite disperst.

As the least Vice, or defect breeds more disgrace to the most generous Spirit then all his virtues can give him praise and reputation and therefore 'tis premtorily spoken of.

The wise Inquisitor must doubt of nought
All that he wants stands ready in his thought
One regimen of fire makes perfect all,
Guiding your feet so you cannot fall.
That is the faithfull Agent must dispose
The work from the beginning to the Close
He is the Guardian of our Cittadell
And saves his King by standing Sentenal.

PONTANUS gives us good instruction to this purpose, in an Epistle of his, making us happy by his mishaps (if other mens faults may be our warnings) who by his own defect was carried quite out of the light of his designs being not able to advance his Work beyond the beginning in two hundred times that he had appempted it, notwithstanding that his building was raised upon a due and

true foundation. This Ignorance cost him deere both in time and expence, and bred much repentence though he were guarded with all the patience that is required. But the natural fire necessary to this fair business, giving him no Assistance he was disappointed of his expected desires so often as he persisted in his former Course, much power hath MERCURY the father of the family instructing and governing this rich Vessel much might here be discussed but our pen hath not permission to write plainer, when a thing is adressed to heat it ought to be in such a manner as there may not be any perceivable motion at all, but only an insensible change of his natural order; agreeable to the Sun, whose heat we ought especially to Imitate, which is as much as if we should say unto you that a terrestrial thing without Spirit, may be animated by the means of a natural heat, conformable to that of the Sun and Moon, not excessive or scorching but only moderate and according with a well tempered body. Now of what kind of qualities these two principal Celestial Luminaries be; SENIOR shews unto us when he says, that the Sun is of a moderate heat, and the Moon cold and moist, but as less perfect she mounts up desirous of better state, and borrowing from the more noble party, that which she wanteth, until in the end she appeareth of as much Vigour and virtue as he had that favourably communicated to her, So that soon after they both put equil Agents, upon Bodys with their Celestial influence and do abundantly replenish them with their fain Illuminated motion as heat and moisture, cause generation they are therefore most necessary to our design, as all Authors affirm upon which FLAMELL grounding himself in his Philosophical Summary:

 " That heat and this humidity
 is nourishment in Verity,
 To all things this world brings forth
 Having Life much or little worth,
 As Minerals and Vegetables
 Yea animals and rationals;

This heat is no burnt Coal or Wood
They do much hurt, but little good.
They are too full of violence.
Not nourishing but breed offence
But it must be a warming heat
Wherein kind moisture hath his seat,
Like to the Sun that comforts all
Else will your comfort be but small."

Thus we have sufficiently declared the Mastery of the Ancients how by the renovation of these two means, we hope to obtain the glittering beams of the radiant Sun coming to refresh his amorous ardour in the Silver Bosome of the depurated Moon, from whence we shall see the issue, a thousand little Suns, that is to say, infinite and which may be multiplied without end or number. This being now the Stone of the Sages. Scala Philosophorum to advance this excellent knowledge intirely describes what should be the fire of our Mastery and with what temperature the Soul of the Philosophers would be intertained.

We will produce as by the way some diversities of opinions, It is well said in the place above mentioned that the heat or fire requisite to this work is comprised in one only form but it is too successively spoken, because:

When I would use in Art a brevity
The sence is lost in my obscurity.

We will therefore clear ourselves of this doubt in speaking plainly that some of the Turba will that the heat of the first address, or regiment, should in some sort have relation to the heat of a hatching Hen, others will have it resemble the heat of a human body, even such as the perfect coction or digestion of meat in the Stomach changing into the substance of the body

the necessary quantity of the nourishing thing. Others will have it equal to the heat of the Sun which (according to the object wherewith it incounters) produces contrary effects although inalterable in his own nature, as doth our Stone aforesaid which without any Labour is brought to perfection, changing his first being and suffering himself to die that he may again revive by the aid of that which caused his death.

Because the fire of the Philosophers retains the effects of the Scorpion which carrys in himself Life and Death, killing by his Poison and being applied to the Wound becomes a soverigne salve. The too violent fire ruins that which it encounters, the moderate refreshes and insensibly comforts that which he would help and relieve with his humidity as Calid says the Lesser fire grinds all things, and this is the hopefull means of a praiseworthy end, from the beginning of the interprised Work, to minister a temperate heat that which without burning penetrates vigoursly into the entrails of his massive body that she softens his hardness, and makes him comply to all his pleasure as the Water which by long continuance of his dripping wears out and pierces the most Solid Rocks, which by an open form he were now able to effect the matter altered, and gently chased retains no more his Luster, but potentially and changing his fair tincture covers himself with an obscure Vail infinitely black which makes him as it were Lepreous and Corrupted in all the parts of his body. As the Fountain of Lovers calls it mesea Gold, or the lead of the philosophers.

His former state he seeks to change
His Coal black his visage strange.

But the all producing times dissipates in the Second change, the shady darkness and in due Season withdraws the body from the black dens of his long indured prison, redelivering unto him a

new form freed from this Corruption, from which being cleansed he resumes the agreeable face of his perfection.

Now this black Sun burnt Indian turned into a most white Swan.

The true heat requisite for this purpose should be neither more or less burning than of the Sun, that is moderate and temperate, because the gentle fire gives hope of health and perfects all things as the Turba affirms.

But the heat necessary in the alterative principles of our operation is in the Sign of Gemini and when the Colours are become white the multiplication doth appear with an absolute dryness in the Stone. Now to know whether this especial Sign does rule or not, we have no way so good to decide our Judgement as to examine whether our heat be the same that is in the Sun; For it is that only we desire, for the great Sympathy is in them both, and disagree most in the same, changing themselves according to the Signs which are predominant, more violent or more gentle, naturally notwithstanding and without any artifice.

But as soon as the Stone is dried and may be reduced into powder, the fire hitherto having been moderate, ought to reinforce himself and to act upon this body more foricably. To the end that by his augmented Ardour, he may be made to change his habit, to put off his white robe and to put on a robe of a higher colour, more transparent and Vermillion like which is the ordinary Rubys and right rich Vesture of our great King, now delivered from the prison (wherein so long a season he hath lived in so great and grievous an indurance) by the great diligence of his faithfull governour who hath cherished him. The degree of his heat is the same that swayeth in the Sign of the Lyon more furious and flaming than all the other Signs of the Zodiac, for then is the Sun most vehement as in his highest degree of heat and elevated into the supreme dignity of his Celestial domicile.

This is sufficiently handled compendiously (which we effect) in this our Philosophical Instruction, the way to be kept, and strictly observed in the government of the fire of the Philosophers without the which travelist in vain wheresoever thou beest, thou wouldest make an Assay of this last piece, wherein consists the whole perfection of this absolute Work; here we have Laid all before thee more clearly then if our discourse were delivered with a larger plicity of Speech. If thou understandest me I have said enough. By the paws you may know the Lyon and the workman by his description of the Work.

Of the Colours successively appearing in the preparation of the Stone.

Many Authors writing of this Herculean Labour may seem to contradict and overthrow one another in the diversities of their opinions, and if that we do not more expertly examine their common Intentions or if we are not well advised of their purpose in this ambiguity, we may sweat a long time in the extraction of the Spirit of these their curious Subtilities so intricate are their ambiguous Writings, that it is infinitely difficult to Atomize into all their parts and chiefly when they treat of the colours in the Work of the which we will Succintly say something; yet I will not adventure to bring them all to light and fetch them one another after another out of their Den's believing ourself sufficiently discharged of our undertaken promise, if we produce the most apparent and those which contain the others (the rest being guided with too slight a Consequence) as to manifest the Secret of the principal points, and which have managed the whole Economy and the most weighty business of their Lord by whose Intelligence we shall have assured knowledge of all that is hid even in the most Secret and Sacred Cabinet of this King so expedient sagefull in this business that without Inquiring after the

Inferiour offices of the Cabinet? Of the dignities and qualities the Officers may attain by means of those Colours. Miraldus one of the Turba saith to this purpose (consenting with all other good authors) that our metalline Body becomes twice black, twice White, and also twice red, which be the principal permanent Colours: changing by the more or less measure of heat, for it is most plain that there is an Infinite number of others.

But because they are only Accidental we do not rank them in the list of our Accompt, for fear of confounding light brains, as well as our Writings and that as many Colours as possibly can be Imagined do wholly depend upon these three above mentioned, and return in the End by a proportioned Symmetrye to one or other of the designated and , it is not without reason that the Authors by the Inspiration of some holy rapture or revelation do abridge this diversly, to the Divine mystical Ternary number which meets, as in a Center point the glorious termination of all Felicity. Amongst these three notwithstanding (to conceal nothing of our brief method) which are the principal and permanent of our terrestrial and metallick king of Philosophers, we may also well discern some other different and intermixed the which notwithstanding purposely and out of good reason we conclude as being but imperfect Colours and not of such nature and consistent as they should be worthy to be reckoned amongst those three that are more permanent, the black, the white, and the red. The which Immediately and absolutely comprehend all the Accidental; Therefore is it needless to write of them any further unless to content the Curious; we have now already produced the causes to the means as honestly to pass on in Silence the general number of those which successively appear the one after the other between the principal above named because the effects are of small success in regard of the least of the other (our natural Works acting nothing in Vain) and their colours of so small appearance gliding as it were insensibly out of sight we leave them more suddenly then they them quit us, for they pass by with so swift a march, that scarce the shadows of their

substance appears when they vanish in the Vessel with a pace equal to inconstance.

This is the cause wherefore we have not discoursed of each particular species and their property. These being something else to do then to take an uncertain thing for a certain. For all those Colours come with so feeble and slow a pace that they cannot be discerned, we will not write, attending more profitable designs and speak only of the yellow Colours which come next the perfect Whiteness before the last redness because it remains a long time visable in the matter in comparison of the speed of the others and for this reason the Philosophers give him a place of principality as to the others, reckoning it in the rank of other necessary Colours, not that it yet stays so long in the vessel as the three which remain permanent in the matter the space of forty days apace, but for this that after those others she makes the longest abode, with 4 Colours, are compared to the four Elements which have influence and Dominion over all bodies as well humans as Animal and mineral. The black to the earth which is the Lead of the Philosophers and the firm base to support the others; The white to the water, which serves as Sperm to the Celestial woman for Generation. The yellow to the Air which is the father of life, and the red to the fire which is the end of the work and his last perfection. The black which appears twice as well as the red is in great Credit amongst the famous, because he hath the keys to open the Door of which of the Colours he pleases, having a fire that administers to him all things, yet are needfull and upon which only he releives holding the others under his Laws, for without that there is no happy effect to be expected, of all the enterprize, this humour is not so untractable, nor hard to manage as the rest, but much more handy and easy to govern and demand no other sustenance but a gentle heat which will prepare the corrupted LATIN to good obedience through patience and humility sooner then by the vigour or violence of a rash Governour which instead of mending would marr all.

Senior gives a Law in this point to many good Authors which all approve his opinion in his Writing agreeing to it, Advise that the perfect decoction of the matter should be entertained with a temperate heat until the putrified Crow be fled, and hath yielded his place to another tincture, and seeing how it is the fire as is reported in the Complaint of Nature speaking thus:

Fire is Master of every Thing.
And causeth all things fresh to Spring;
And hath Life by heat inspired.

Which guides the work and disposes all at his pleasure as a faithfull Interpreter of the dark Language which doth direct the Work the most assured way.

I shall no more be daunted saith the Dectum of the Turba; and have announced by the mouth of Lucas one of their associates that they held in great Estimation the workman that understands the fire and seasonably to increase it.

Take heed saith he of a fire which is too strong when you begin; For if it be too violent before the time and exceed his dimensions he will burn that which he should putrefy which is the principal of Life. So our unprofitable Labour would yield us nothing but Repentence, Confusion and unspeakable displeasure, vainly expecting good by Violence caused by Rebellion and obstinacy. To which purpose Mary the Prophetress tells us; that the strong fire hinders Conjunction and the true dissolution of nature; and elsewhere she saith; the strong maketh the White red before his time. And Trevisan says, that the gentle and temperate fire perfects the Work when as the violent doth utterly destroy it. If in every thing the end of the Enterprize is to be considered at the beginning. Then in this principally we ought to be most vigilant because if we know not the Register of our fire in every Season, which is the greatest happyness to our Attempts and the only way of bringing our Work to his perfection, our labour is lost, for in the knowledge

of the orderly progression of Colours consists the main point of this Mystical Science and of the tree of HERMES so often and so Divinely celebrated in the Songs of all the Philosophers.

Know but our Brass, which if thou hittest right
Thou knowest all, whereof our pens do write
Whose power first makes black the inclosed matter
Then brings it into Water, moist as a Water
And lastly to a powder perfect red
Setting a Diademe upon thy head.

Baldus in the Turba speaking of these Colours whose Apposition we ought strictly to observe, gives us Advertisement to decoct our Composition until we see it become White, the which afterwards we must quench in Vinegar, by which means the Mineral Water, of the matter which is the fire and water philosophical, for our Water is fire burning the Sun, more then fire agreeable to the Rosary and the Turba which say that our Water is stronger then fire because it makes the body of Gold a meer Spirit, which the fire can never do, and with Geber; we must Learn (saith he) to separate the black from the White for the white is a Sign approaching neer to fixation.

Now we cannot better distinguish them then by a fire of Calcination, seeing that without Addition or Multiplication of the heat, by the gentle temperature of the which hath proceeded and procured this corrupt blackness of division of the degrees of our colours, cannot easily be performed, though in fine it may be obtained by the industry of such a fire, and then their remains to us a gross Earth (which many have called the father of the matter) in the form of an Earth black and rude which is their Saturn, a Leprous and black earth which others name the inferiour World, the which can no more mix itself with the pure and subtil matter of the Stone; for we are enjoined to separate the subtil from the gross and from the pure the impure which is by decoction without touch of hand or foot because the great Work dissolves

itself and separates itself as is affirmed by RAYMOND, TREVISAN, & HORTULANUS.

Upon the Smargidine Table saith the same, you must separate it, that is to say dissolve, for dissolution is the separation of parts; And whosoever knows the Art of dissolving is arrived to the Secret according to RASIS.

Now this is the Rendezvouz to which we are summoned by all the best Philosophers, when they so often advertize us that with the true white and the red are to be extracted from the black and then there is nothing to be found in him that is superfluous, having resigned all his power to the two foresaid Colours and he is now no longer subject to Alteration, but yields himself afterwards conformable, in all things to the compleate red. And this is the Cause why they would draw him by the vehement and force of the fire.

In the Turba it is said that when the Colours begin more and more to enter into motion and Alteration the fire ought to be more augmented, and be more Vehement than before, so that hereafter we shall not fear any danger, for the matter is fixed in the White, at which time the Soul inseprable joins itself to the body and the Spirit now descended from heaven into this earth, do never depart from thence again, which is confirmed by Lucas, when our Magnesia (saith he) is transformed White, she recalls the Spirit into her which had lost her, and thence forth they now separate themselves anymore.

The Father of the Philosophers Hermes passes you further and says, that it is not necessary to finish the white Magnesia, until all the Colours be accomplished that which sub-divide themselves into four diverse Waters, that is to say, from one into two, and three into one, the last of which parts agreeth with the heat and the 3 others with the moisture.

Hold this for assured that these foresaid Waters are the

Philosophers weights, and these Weights are the colours of the matter and the 3 principal Colours are the Philosophers 3 fires, natural, not natural, and against Nature. The Comparisons that the Lovers of this Science make when they allude our Work to WINE, is not from the purpose which I might succiently propound the less to trouble the benevolent Reader, we must understand that the Savour of the Wine, within the Juice, like as the white colour of the matter shall be drawn out of this quintessence, but his nature shall be finished in the third degree according to true proportion, for it Augments itself in the decoction and forms itself in the pulivization (?) which are the sole means to conceal the beginning and of this natural seed. For the same cause diverse Authors write that their philosophical brass shall be absolutely perfect in seven days, by which we understand the seven metallical Colours whereof the perfect red is the last. Others prolong not this time of perfection further then to four days having relation to the four principal Colours which diversities do only admit, and of which especially depends the whole Work; Others allow but 3 days which are attributed to the strongest, and most necessary Colours of the matter and some others less sparing of time and delivering it by larger measure do charitably afford us a whole year to bring the business out of towtellage and to give it absolute power and after to manage his own rights, without other Governor then self discretion, now capable to entertain a world with his bounteous Liberality. And this yearly term may well be accomodated to the four Seasons and as it is by some of the four Elements, which have no small right in this great matter conformable to the judgement of Alphidius seconded with many more of the Society, determining the End of the work by the End of the four Quarters of the year: Spring, Summer, Autumn & Winter, because the year is composed of these four Seasons, many others abridge it to a day which is the time of perfect decoction speaking metaphorically, for a year philosophical is the time of

decoction, which some will have to be a Week, others a month.

ARNOLD, RAYMOND, GEBER, HORTULAN & AUGURELL, testify as with 3 years expressing for a Colour a year. All which diversities tend but to one and the same sence, by the doctrine expressed, and precepts of the most ingenious understands, which are reserved in their most secret Cabinet the exposition of the times, weights and matter, that the Ignorant might not understand therein by which means the Sages do discreetly cast a Cloud before the venerable Entry of their mysterious school, least fools should find it, As PLATO absolutely forbid the publishing of his Divine Doctrine, to those that had not the knowledge of Mathematicks. It is the general Charge of all the philosophers upon penalty that they should not deliver their mysteries, but masked with AEnigmatical and ambiguous Speeches, to the End their work should only be communicated to the Capacity of the Children of this Science and to the diligent search of transcendent Spirits, of which number, if they be not, they ought not to intermeddle, but to withdraw themselves, and not to effect, or try to set foot on the threshold of this so perilious a Port for them, least they should make a sotish stumble and measure the floor with their nose.

You foolish and prophane fly far from hence
This our art loves wisdom and diligence.

The Sixth Treatise.

The disposition of the whole work and the preparation of the Stone.

Calcination and Dealbation amongst the Philosophers, hold the place of a good father of a family in providing all things fitting the necessity of his household, so do the so hold the prime degree

in this Economy from the beginning of the work and the principal Charge of the intire Administration of metals, till that by his provident discretion the vice Governour changing them every one into his due place have reduced all to the honourableness of their perfection. Now being to treat of this Dealbation it is remarkable that the philosophers do establish in it 3 diverse fashions, whereof the two first appertain to the body and the third to the Spirit. The first is the preparation of the cold humidity, which preserves combustible matter from the injury of the fire which they call their Saturn, because Saturn is said to make Congealation of the Sperms and by that preparation duly made in the Souls we perceive the good success of a plausible beginning. The Second is an unctuous humidity, (which makes the combustible parts apt to retain the fire) which is otherwise called the viscous oil, appearing after the Corruption, this oil is that which gives tincture and is the first philosophical Menstrua and their first vessel. But the third is an Jurisdiction of the dry earth that is into White indued with a true pure fixed and subtil humidity which yields no flame forming notwithstanding himself into a body clear, transparent, shining and diaphanous like a glass which is pure and perfect Whiteness of the Pearl of the Philosophers and their white gold, and this is half of their Work, their Calcination being no other then pure blanching. As Morien says, when our Gold shall be Whitened after his blackness it is named our Gold, our Calx, our Magnesia and our permanant Water. See then the manner of Calcining Philosophically, which is by the means of a permanant Water or strong Vinegar, which is the quintessence of the matter and Soul of the Stone, but let us note as we go that the metals do participate of this radical humidity, the which is no other thing then the beginning of all other soft things. Therefore it is an assured maxime that the Calcination of Philosophers is no other thing then Whitening and the purgation, restauration of natural heat and radical humidity and the only means to expell the Superfluous humidity, and an attraction of fiery moisture

which is this pure white which we call the internal SULPHUR of Philosophy separating from itself all accidental and superfluous Sulphur which is Corruption; Otherwise a pleasant Liquor from which proceeds the animated substance of our work, the soverigne quintessence of all happiness the chiefest Spirit and the life of which is extracted the compleate redness. The glorious Crown of our Labours, not this liquid Substance is ordinarily made with the Water of the Philosophers which properly is the Solution and Sublimation of the Sages, or their Exaltation or Whitening of their permanant Water. And of such particular force that it suddenly changes the hard dryness into a supple and manuable drawing out the Quintessence which is the admirable Stone of the Wise men and the Vegetable Mercury which separates and conjoins the Elements which happens principally because the parts with the violence of the fire hath consumed and composed together is become subtil by the Spirit which is a resolving Water and a humidity of uncorrupted bodies gathered together and annexed by heat, to the Spirit and radical humid. All which thing makes one root of the philosophical Elements, the which we must renew after Corruption, which are the four perfect Colours, the red being last according to the fountain of the Lovers of Science.

Then guide by reason, thy intents
To divide the four Elements
All which thou again new shalt make
And them into thy work then take.

Now the Sublimation is named a terrene vapour gross but subtilized and brought into a humid Vapour, or moist Air, by the well tempered heat of fire which heat absolutely causes the motion and necessary mutation of the Elements, which whosoever knows these mutual Conversions of one into the other, may rest assured of his Way, whereby he may find the Quintessence extracted out of the intire Elements, not any more to be combured with superfluous

humidity or foul polutions.

But this Quintessence is an opaline humidity of excellent quality the which gives Luster to the four Elements, without restraint, transmuting into the proper nature of a quintessence and then called the Soul of the World and fire of Philosophers. This is even the true fixation that Geber mentions; Nothing (saith he) shall be made firm, but by receipt of some Light, or when it becometh a fair and penetrating Substance, for of that cometh the Sulphur and Center of the Philosophers, which cannot be extracted without the Lune which is the chief point of their Mastery and their greatest Secret for in it is the metalline Water preserved, the which he receiveth of the body he hath animated and restored to life, this is a mixture of the white and red tincture and formative Spirit.

For the moon doth covertly contain in it the tincture of the Sun, the which he doth produce in the form of a red Sulphur, at the End of the Decoction, all by the means of the Soul of the World and the fire of the Philosophers which doth all of himself.

Yet in this ablution much blackness and Corruption doth appear through the heat of the fire which doth putrefy everything, and Whiteneth the black things which once were dead and brought to nought at the same time restoring life to the matter in the which one may perceive a pure and intire heat intermingled with a kindly metallick humidity from which the matter doth receive tincture, virtue and vigour. The putrefaction so much desired of all the philosophers which is their choice Study shall be perfected and accomplished when it shall manifestly change and alter its first form and from a black colour become a white, the Secret being produced by Corruption for that, that was hid doth show itself apparently to sight and reneweth itself from death. Therefore ought one to have especial heed in our Work to the black essence of the Sulphur of the Philosophers; This is the same that Arnold de villa Nova saith in his Rosary: The perfection of this Work is in the change of natures; Of the same opinion is Raymond in

the Theorick of his Testament, The Art (saith he) of our Mastery, dependeth on Corruption, and we dissolve putting it to putrefaction at the same time, and elsewhere he saith whosoever doth know the means to destroy, that is to dissolve the Gold he hath attained the Secret, and our Stone is not found but in the bowels of Corruption. The Turba of the Philosophers saith further that Corruption is the Ascendent, and chiefest hope of all the Work, the which doth discover, and manifest the highest Mystery of this operation, which is principally a certain destruction and true Conversion of the Elements.

That which is manifest we hide from sight
And bring the hidden thing again to light.

It is of this change that the learned Turba gives us so often admonition, Saying change the Elements and make that which is moist, dry and firm, who yet passes further, answering as that the matter with all his dependance is then prepared as it ought, when all is pulverized and brought into one body, Which for this effect is most properly called of the Philosophers Conjunction. Consider also and pray you, that your Calcination, is in vain; if thereby no powder be produced, which is the water of the Philosophers. The Ashes of HERMES or powder of Mercury as AUGURELL saith in these terms:

The Water which I mean seems to the Eye
A powder and is so called properly.

Decoction is also one of the principal and necessary parts of the business whereof they ought to understand the Mystery, the means to imploy the flower of their best Decoctions in the Essence of our Mastery. Albertus Magnus concurs with all the other philosophers in the same opinion. All holding it in special esteem.

But seeing he is the first that presents himself, I will for the present repeat his speech. "Of all the Arts (saith he) yea of the most perfect we know not one, that so neatly imitates nature as that of the Alchymist, in the decoction and formation of this red and fiery Water of Metals attracting the vital qualities of the Sun, and so small a nature, also the Philosophers have an Assation and usefull dissolution, by which the humidity shall consume itself by little and little and through the fire become a body more powerfull against the flame then metal; But we in our Work must take good heed that the Spirit be not too much scorched and dryed so that he may no more hold correspondence with the Body, and not be sufficiently purified and perfected."

Distillation of the Philosophers otherwise called Clarification doth also bring a great advancement to the Conclusion of this Work, which we hold to be a Plain purification of the matter with the radical humidity, the which being found gives hope to the Sages of a desired rest to their almost tired spirits, by means of this Coagulation, the perfect alliance is made and the Corruption of the Sulphur not Vulgar and the Crow or Bird of Hermes which always flyes about the Tops of the Mountains that is to say upon the superficies of the metals, with it is a spirit black and not burning insensibly Crying; I am the White of the Black; and the Red of the Citrine, I have with a pleasant riddle expressed this bird, which I will here set down, finding it very suitable to our subject; In memory whereof it was Learnedly composed the modest Curiosity of our Mystical Work being thereon comprized.

The Riddle.

I dwell in Mountain Tops, in Valleys and in Plains
Father before a Son, my Mother was my Child,
Born in my Mothers womb, my Father first exilded
There without nourishment, I did myself sustain

Hermaphrodite I am, both sexes I maintaine
The strong I vanquish yet am by the weak beguiled,
There's nothing under heaven then I myself more vilde,
Nor ought so fair so good doth in this World remain,
In me, without me strangely one strange Bird is hatch.
Which of his bones, no bones, builds for himself a Tomb.
There without Wings he flies for swiftness never matched.
By nature and Arts Law received hath his Doom.
In fine he yet revives, and makes himself a King.
And to his brethren Six, he golden Crowns doth bring.

The Rosary speaking of this Coagulation compares it to the CROW that flies without Wings, that which is principally done by dissolution caused with heat and Congealation the effect of Cold which two, are the means of perfect Generation.

Hermes speaking with what kind of heat, the whole Work should be governed saith in his Smaragdine Table that the Sun is the Father and the Moon is the Mother and the fire the Governour saying:

All perfect and intire is then his force
When to earth again he hath recourse.

And when by degrees this Elixir comes, to settle in firm earth the which afterwards may serve for so many several operations as cannot be numbered upon any apt body, to which it shall be applied, for which reason we may compare it to a commodious Gardner which safely preserves all manner of Grains to use and profit. So our Art once perfected converteth all things that have propinquity fitting into his Viens Excellency of nature and being furnished with sufficient materials, raises admirable Structures, resembling the perfect Architecture of the Sun.

Of the diverse Operations, the Various names, frequent in the discourses of this Art.

It is a general saying amongst the philosophers, that he that can kill and fix the Volatile essence of the fugitive Mercury, shall attain the excellent operation of the metals, and know the greatest Mysteries of this Art; Yet must we not preptorily pitch upon the rude Letter but seek out some ingeneous glosse that may discover their sense and meaning; because they speak diversly of their Mercury and here we think fit to place in the frontispiece of this their innumerable controversities a Sentence of Senior for the preheminnence he hath before other Authors; Our fire saith he is a Water. But when you can fit one fire to another Fire, and one Mercury to another Mercury. This knowledge shall suffice to bring you to the glorious End of all thy Intentions. Here note that this Argent Vive is called a fire, and a Water and yet it is necessary that this fire should be made by means of another fire, he says also in another place that the Soul must be drawn out by Corruption, which is blackness and the first Colour of the perfect Elixir the which infuses itself again into the dead body to preticipate his Spirit to it, and to give it a life and resuscation and to the end that the wise philosopher may afterwards peaceably enjoy both the body and the Spirit by this perfect operation. It is the same also that is spoken in the Turba where they call their Mercury their Fire. Take (saith he) the black Spirit not burning with the which thou must dissolve and divide the Body. This Spirit is all fire dissolving all sorts of bodies by his fiery property. Others hold that this Mercury is properly named a Quintessence, Soul of the World, Spirit, Water permanent, menstrae and an infinite of other names. All which they impose upon him according to the diversity of his several efforts to whom they attribute so much power and virtue as that without the assistance of this quickening Soul, the body

of our Vessel which is the black matter called the dragon devouring his Tail, which is properly humidity, should now regain life nor demonstrate any good effect. Take say they their Quicksilver and the Body of the black Magnesia or some pure Sulphur not burned, which you must pulverize and grind in most strong Vinegar; But you shall not find any apparent Change or mutation in the Colours permanent, the black, the white and the red which are the most necessary. If the fire do not make White, nor approach this Composition. For he only takes unto himself this property and induces the perfect regiment tinging him into a perfect red, throughout. The Turba say it will become Gold and transplanting itself into an Elixir, from whence one may extract a Water serving to diverse tinctures giving life and Colour to all that are Joined with him.

For as Blackness is the first that displays himself in the Work, so doth it direct the assured march of the rest, and as it doth precede all the others, so is it the foundation containing all the rest potentially as Arnold affirms that whatsoever Colour appears after black is Laudable for whenever thou shalt see thy matter turn black, rejoice and comfort thy self because this beginning shall continue assuredly to a happy End of the whole Work; in the great Rosary it is also said that all the perfection of this Science consists in the transmutations of Natures which cannot be attained without passing over the black Stigian Lake described by the philosophical poet OVID; otherwise you are out and must begin again; though never so much against thy will. But if you can perceive in your Vessel, the black Sulphur, whereof we now intreat, It is a perfect and infallible Entrance to all the necessary ways. See thou the great Esteem that the grave and provident Turba have of this Original Colour which doth precede the Citrine and the red Colour outwardly appearing praised and exceedingly hopefull and fairly promises good success, after which comes a purple very precious and of great comfort making assured

the happy Event of the triumph and magnificence praised to our king, and this Colour is the best and most pure Mercury which furnishes us with the most exquisite tinctures of our Mastery, indued with a most Sweet odour. Now all these beautiful and excellent properties, attributed to this worthy Mercury do manifestly show the cementing power and the subtle Vivacity of this volatile Spirit.

Hermes that great Prince of Philosophers, ignorant of nothing that was natural, had his Spirit so transported with the Contemplation of the Excellency of this Mercury that he professed himself unable to give this mineral an Epithett fitting his powerfull and glorious effects, yet willing to deliver a metaphorical abridgement of the particular properties thereof than describe it.

Most common, most Unknown, most precious and most vile.
Conserving and destroying, both you may him stile.
Good and milacious, beginning and the End.
Of Treasures nowe afar and nowe again a friend.

For Corruption and blackness are the beginning and end of all things, and Augurellus in his Crysopaea affirms as much of that black bird that dissolves all bodies in this Verse:

And which is more, this bird so potent is
That he dissolves the metals without miss
And naturally is in every thing
First in their birth and at their last ending.

The Axioms and principals natural assureing us that Universal Corruption is the common Sperm and proper seed of all Generations. But in fine to return to the nature of this bird in whom we may mark and perceive such a power that he is able to withstand whatsoever is contrary to him taking his flight sometimes to the Sign of Leo, sometimes to Cancer and other whiles to Capricorn, but

if after so many subtile flights thou canst stay, qualifie and correct his fickleness stopping the Swiftnesse of his course, thou maist purchase the precious Golden Loadstone of the most rich minerals, and thou maist at length enjoy many precious things whose exquisite value now came within thy Imagination.

And then thou must separate and divide him into diverse parts reserving to thy self always some part which thou shalt again reduce to his putrefied and dead Earth so long till his volatile Spirit lend his aid to set him upon his foot by his natural Strength; beautifying him with Variety of fair and pleasant Colours, most plain Evidence of his Clarification. And when all this is past it is called by all good Authors the Earth and Lead of the Philosophers which they may happily make use of having now attained the quality of heating the Vessel of Hermes, which is Mercury and when and how to distill by number or plain Distribution, qualifying this Spiritualized Earth with diversity named according the Successive Colours and diverse operations of this wingless flying Spirit subliming and rectifying even to the bottom of the mass, which decreases, purifies and renders it self more and more fair in tincture even to the perfection of the first White which must again be mortified, and afterward restored to a more glorious life, which is the red tincture; Putrefy again this body and pulverize it, till the occult and the more hidden red come forth, and be manifested to sight. After this dissolve the Elements and separate them in such sort as thou mayst again rejoin and reunite them according to the manner and again putrefie so oft until thou hast brought the corporeal and material substance to an animated and spiritual Essence, which being happily done, you must again draw the Soul from the body which you shall again rectify with his Spirit.

This gentle Messenger of the Gods Mercury full of invention and subtilty, being thus often metamorphized hath gotten to himself much Luster whereof he makes large and liberal portions to his

Associates and nearest neighbours; As to Venus on whom he bestows a rich white; he moderates the Crackling of Jupiter bringing him to Solidity; hardens, whitens and fixes Saturn; Softens Mars making him fluxible; gives unto the Moon a glorious Citrine Colour and resolves into a perfect water from whence may be extracted an Essence of admirable Virtue. Trevisan openly delivers in his practick of the natural Philosophy of Metals, to which we refer the diligent Reader, the philosophers do point us out with their finger the necessary means to attain the preparation of the black Sulphur, even to the first nature of red which they call distillation, until it comes to an oleaginous gum and waterish incombustible, very penetrating and altogether like the body.

Wherefore it is called by many the Soul, because it revives, conjoins, renders and reduces the natures into Spirit. This Sulphur thus reduced transcends in excellency all the value that can be Imagined or expressed and therefore have they highly praised it and given it a title of great honour attributing the prerogative to it of the rare name of Lac Virginis which returns in some sort to the form of a red Gum all of gold resembling the Water of the philosophers most resplendent, which ought to be coagulated, commonly called of the Sages TINCTURE SAPIENTIAE, the admirable tincture of Wisdom or the Vital Fire of the permanent colours. A Soul, a Spirit that by his virtue much more altereth himself at his pleasure becometh volatile and contracting himself when he pleaseth, of a high fixed tincture in his individual, that is his own proper homogeneal nature.

This Mercury not common is yet called red Sulphur, Gum of Gold, apparent Gold, the desired body, most precious Gold, Water of Wisdom, earth of Silver, White Earth, Air of Wisdom (note that the Child of the Philosophers is born in the Air) then principally when he is become very clear and perfect white.

All the Turba treating on these Circumstances that do appear upon the Surface and upon the intire body, of their fruit have given this Judgement: He ought say they, to know that one cannot

tinct gold into red who have not passed the white after Corruption, because there is no way between the two Extremes of the Work but through the White Work that is the midst. Therefore ought we intirely to observe these methodical rules seeing the discord and Center of Confection which he doth ever hastily run into through the way of desolution who hath over run the good Concord directed by the prudent discipline of a well advised order necessary to this work. Now all these Colours aforesaid are of the same nature and are successively found in the same subject, though they produce divers effects. For it is truth that the white shall be made black by the red, and that from a pure Christalline coloured Water, there shall citrine red appear altogether, several of the said philosophers secret virtues.

Morien treating metaphorically of the transmutation of metals, of the proportion and degrees which ought to be observed in the Composition of thy work. Cause saith he the red fume to comprehend your White fume, Also pour them down to the bottom and there conjoin them together.

The Codex of all truth saith to the same purpose, blanch the red and make the red white and then hast the whole art from the beginning to the End. Senior also speaking of the Varieties of Colours, gives us to understand in the Words following the great profit and necessity of them. It is an admirable thing to consider the wonderful operations and noble actions of this mercurial Spirit. The which if thou project upon the three imperfect planets he makes them rich in whiteness and upon the other, as rich in redness and Citrination, the first whites then the Lilly or the untouched snow, the second more orientally red then the poppy or the ruby. To which form Morien confirms his judgement though in other Words, and by another Way. Take heed saith he to the perfect Citrine which by little and little divests himself of his Citrinity to gain a more glorious robe of unspeakable redness after the dismissal of a formed blackness, strong and powerful, which

she was fain to wear in her younger years, that she might so serve as an earth, a base and assured foundation to build the rest of the work upon.

By all these inviolable Theorems fixed to the Ideas of the most famous Archetict (which have happily undertaken the industrious fabric of this excellent Stone, and framed with an Artificial hand the true Cube of Hermes) we may easily conceive that the Gold of the philosophers is absolutely another thing than common Gold, or silver which yet are indeed of the nearest neighbourhood unto it, and the chief Imitator of their Golds perfection. For although the Similitudes (which the Sages the Sons of this Science) put between them make as though there should be community and familiar Conjunction with Vulgar Gold and Silver, as also with other metals which fail in Effect the purity and perfection, therefore we must ingeniously consider that they induce such things but by way of Composition meerly.

For the profound Raymond most charitably tells us once for all that out of metals perfect or imperfect we have no need to extract a Spirit when nature herself as our handmaid hath prepared one for us which Spirit (saith he) we find only in our own (not the vulgar metals which are dead) from whence we artificially draw him, and again conjoin him to his body that so we may be masters of the vegetable Mercury of the Philosophers; An Axiome worthy to be engraven in gold. And for common metals notwithstanding that the many Authors are of opinion that the impure metals do ever remain such without reaching to any higher Luster and that Lead always retains the nature of Lead, yet we may separate for some special property of excellence even in these; and the reciprocal Affinity between them, and the Elixir that works upon them, they need not be assaulted of the Comparisions they so often use in this kind, they being (if well understood) so full of expression and demonstration. Consider that which much to this purpose Senior reports speaking of the imperfect, which notwithstanding saith he pretended one day to be equal to the most perfect, which

no way exceedeth them in nobleness of Essence but in primogeniture, only having had a longer decoction, their extraction being as Vile and abject in the natural Composition as the imperfect, the most perfect of them being originally without difference of nobleness in the common Seed and universal principle of the most abstract sordid metals. I am (saith he) speaking philosophically) more then metallick Iron hard and dry but such is my power and virtue that nothing may compare with me, for I am the Coagulation of the Argent Vive of the Philosophers. The Turba also says that prepared lead shall become a Precious Stone, qualifying the most noble and perfect Colour of the Work yea, the work itself which they name Copper.

They say also that Lead is the beginning of the true Mastery and the thing without which nothing can be done; They have expressed as much of the red lead made white, or Venus of Mars: And of white Lead (as they continue their discourse) thou shalt make white tincture, which is the Lunary Sulphur and then shall thy Labour have passed the blackness; and hath arrived at the White, the Second Lady of our kings Officers, and the proportional middle point of our Artifice. And for this cause the philosophers have taught us that there is nothing of nearer neighbourhood or that doth more approach the nature of Gold then Lead, for as much as in him consists the Life which attracteth to itself all the Secrets.

But we must not take these things only literally, nor seek in common Lead these rare phenomion, in whom these properties are not to be found, except only in that which is called the Lead of Philosophers as well for his facultie in putrefying as the infection of his stinking earth, he is advanced above other metals.

This is the reason that they all conclude with Raymond Lully that without putrefaction the Work can never be effected, it being the Water, the Fire and the absolute key of the perfect Magnesia.

And to this purpose hath Morien learnedly compaired it to Arsenick, to Orpiment, to Tutia, to rotten Earth, to stinking Sulphur, to all kinds of Venom, poison, and Corruption for the Correspondence that it hath in some quality or other with all these things.

And further to diverse bodies which are not of the number or nature of minerals, but that only retains a Commerce in Complexion as blood, hair, eggs, and many others. And finally to diverse Mineral matters as Salt, Allom, and infinite others, in all three Regions, Mineral Vegetable and Animal. All these varieties being Attributes, in regard of the apparent Conformity that it holds in effect with every particular Genius and Species of those bodies and Spirits aforesaid.

For which Cause Geber affirms that their Stone is extracted from the metalline bodys prepared with their Arsenick, that is to say their Corruption, and Calid in his Secrets saith; "Annihilate the leaf with Venom, therein denoting putrefaction".

But above all Alphidius advertises us to take great heed in the wise Government of an animated body or a mortified Stone which is the blackness. For (saith he) as by the privation of their Natural heat the which decays even to the death, being now destitute of all his first functions. So if for remedy thou thinkest to give them a greater heat then is fitting to hinder the perishing of the heat, with which they were naturally intertained and nourished in Corruption, thy matter shall become red before black, which is the privation of life and thou shall loose thy Cost and Labour. For which cause we must accomodate ourselves, with a most gentle fire and naturally well disposed to the end to revive that which this privation hath debilitated, by his offensive Violence, for as Ripley saith in his 5th. Gate.

Thou keep in temperate heat eschewing evermore that they by violent heat be not incinerate to powder dry, unprofitably rubification; but into powder black as a Crows bill with heat of Balne or else of our Dunghill.

Above all things remember to keep them in a moist heat until fourscore nights be past, and that the black Colour appear in the Vessel, which is the first Salt of the philosophers and a tincture near the quality of Sal Alcaly and other Salts, of bodies that which changing itself subtly into the nature of the things attracted becoming all one with the natural Essence of the metall-ick nature.

Now the philosophers do diversly handle these varieties as well of their Stones as of their Salts. For as much as the greater part of them do constitute three Sorts in the perfection of the entire Work. And for witness and warrant of this Thesis I will take the proposition described in the Great Rosary in this manner. There are three stones and three Salts out of which the whole Mastery existeth. Lucas Rodargirius in his book of the philosophical dissolution, where he makes an ample discourse thereof, rests himself resolutely upon this ternary number.

But we must not forget Raymond Lully that calls these three Salts, three menstrues, three Vessels, three quicksilvers, three Sulphurs, three fires, which are no other thing (to speak properly and not hiperbolically in dark philosophy) then the three Colours, black, white and red, which are only extracted from the natural essence of the true matter. The which Salts have so much power upon the perfect beings of our Mastery that Senior speaks thereof in these terms, our body shall first become Ashes, afterwards a Salt, in fine it shall arrive by his various operations, to the measure and most perfect degree of the Mercury of the Philosophers.

But amongst all the Salts, it is to be noted for the total instruction and fabrick of the Work that the Armoniack holds the prime and principal place surpassing in Excellency the impurity and Essence of the others not so noble, which for this purpose of our Work are found also prepared by many degrees. As Aristotle himself assures us in diverse particulars of his work advising us by his discreet pen only to use this Salt Armoniack in our

operations because that only hath the property to open, dissolve, soften, and animate the bodys. Now there is nothing animated or ingendered without a precedent Corruption, as Morien says which is the black Colour or this Sal Armoniack and the black Spirits dissolving the bodys.

The Turba adds abundance of these Speeches to confirm our Affirmative. We must (saith he) know and perfectly understand that the bodies will take no tincture unless the Spirit hidden in their Bellies which is this black Spirit, be not from thence with great Dexterity and difficulty extracted, which being done (as it ought) there shall come a water and a body that resembles our human nature, for it then contains body, Soul, and Spirit, the which while it is an essence of a mean Colour cannot perfectly tinge the gross Terrestrial substance, if it be not subtilized, by this Spirit and made like unto it and the Spirit of Waterish nature be tinted into Elixir, producing white and red with pure and perfect fixation, high in Colour and of a penetrating tincture mingling it self indifferently with all the metals, as the Celestial Mercury rejoining himself to every Planet becometh of their nature, be they noble or imperfect.

But yet we must know that the perfection of all the mastery depends upon this only point that we draw the Sulphur out of the perfect body having a fixed nature for this Sulphur is the most ancient and most subtil part of the Crystalline Salt, odiferous to the smell, delectable to the taste, and of an Aromatick humidity, the which being the Space of a year, in the fire shall ever stand as melted wax and because he holds some part of the nature of Quicksilver he tincteth them into a most pure Gold and being the water or humidity which is drawn from the body of metals it is called the Soul of the Stone and that which is hidden in this humidity is called Spirit and the virtue of the Spirit is called Soul and tincture which tinges and fixes all the Water into pure Gold.

But the Mercury or his force and vigour is also called Spirit when he hath attracted to himself the Sulphureous nature. And the dry earth is the Body and the body is of the Quintessence and the extreame and absolute tincture, which is the true Essence and perfect nature capable of all forms.

Now though these three proceed from one root yet hath they notwithstanding very different operations, the names of which are infinite according to the apparent Colours and if all be again reduced to one, to wit to this final redness, it serving as Links so artificially chained together yet it is a great difficulty to discern an absolute end, for the one finishing his ordinary Action the other recommences anew, because according to Raymond; the first form being destroyed there is another immediately introduced, and in his Testament he calleth it the Golden Chain which doth link together the visible to the invisible, uniteing together in an indissoluble bond the four Elements.

John Mehung saith in his complaint of nature:

This is the most rich gotten chain
Which circularly maintaine.

And in his Romance of the Rose he calleth this Mercury a whore which conjoins herself indifferently to all forms one after another.

The admirable Virtues and more than humane power of this noble Tincture; briefly and perspicuously declared in this our Instruction.

The exacter the tinctures are, the more acceptable are they according to the usual fashion, that bears rule and sway amongst men through a desire not unworthy but rather most commedable in Ingenious Spirits curious of the inestimable Value of any rare

novelty so well for the benefits that doth almost equal this Curiosity, as for the desired honest and perogative befitting their noble disposition happily, at last attained through the absolute possession of this pleasant fruitfull of felicitie.

This is the directest and most apparent means to perswade even the Soul with Sweet hope and with a calm Gale of a pleasant Aire and very seasonable to satisfie the most earnest wishes by the gain and full contentment of aforesaid proposed object within the Idea of our fancies premeditated before the happy effecting and fruitation of this Delightfull possession. Seeing that naturally we woeth (reach) after things which are amiable deservedly beleaved and desired, for the cause principally heretofore mentioned, of greater reason ought we desire the Injoyment of our marvellous tincture. But because we can hardly indure the painfull search of an unknown thing principally seeing that the real and actual knowledge ought first to be apprehended within the subtil veritie of a quick apprehension, which he may potentially attain, and be assured of by the forms sincere, friendly descriptions and that the general intention do first aim to know the lovely thing before it be beloved; I have handled in brief Words according to our fashion, the intricate Course of the pleasant operation of our natural Science; issued and drawn from the pure and perfect testimony of the Ancient Sages, which I may call the chief Judges graciously advanced to such Authority by the Supreme Licence of the Divinity and by the Sacred Conceptions of the mysterious tree which they have admired for his Sovereign balm, to the end that by the true knowledge of this rare virtues and particular qualities, every virtuous Soul perswaded by sound reasons, grounded upon the excellent Luster of this glorious tincture suddenly yeilding their Spirits amorously surprized with great admiration lay hold of the Skirts, of some benevolent virtuous man, as the ordinary gages of their fidelity and to announce to all the Sages, the esteem they have of this same excellent subject altogether vererable

most transparent to the Eyes and by his sweet odour better apprehended to be of such a harmony. The delight of which changeth, the over whelming waves of so doubtfull a shipwreck subject to the mercy of many bearfull Irresolutions as a small boat is directed by the safe proposed Sea Snake and the help of the nautick needle, rather maintain the vessel at the End arriveth happily in the safe port of Comfort with joulfull sails through the skillfull Conduct of famous pilots and by the ensign HALCYONS of the Jasonicke Hands, who shall do this, Let their hearts be even ravished at the Sepulcher of some Saint Anthony. Let them be firmly delighted in the sweet Register of such a remembrance, Let them perfume the alters of their ardent devotion within the temple of honour and knowledge, with some being art of pious humility in sign of their compleat Joy and Extasie of heavenly Contentment surpassing the superficial appearance of human contemplation, of which the grave Ideas only are in possibility to ascend the Supream top of the most lofty mountains approaching heaven. In their intelligence of formed Essences by the Lively Effigies and natural representation of a terrestrial Sun shining here below as well as the Celestial after the same sparkling brightness somewhat illumination mens hearts making them more Zealously to acknowledge the Soverign duty they owe to him manifesting their ardent affections by the sweat of earning bowells of universal Atoms of the image of his Glory within the delightsome Angles of the terrestrial minerals by the profound inspection and sublime preparation of a mysterious philosophical and most admirable Art.

I will speak now of our tincture wherewith the animated spirit is after a sort made perfect which doth intirely perfect the most perfect Colours.

Nought else like him is found
Of his alloy so sound
In his proper Essence

By sole Actioitie,
Surpassing happily
The purest Excellences.

The ancient Sages prudently observed four remarkable points in this vital power extracted from the great number of his proper virtues when that the properties are fortified by infalliable maximes which the same nature shewing disdain seems almost discontented by the difficulty of his assurance for the approbation of obtaining so great qualities.

By agreement free and voluntary
This power is all in all ordinary.

It is true the greater part of his Virtues are more than can be Imagined, esteemed of some as a thing impossible and contrary to natural reason, which gross, Ignorant Dulcates will not willingly acknowledge that any other hath that which they understand not with Jelious vaunting as though they could fathome the depth of these more than human perfections and determine of so great prerogatives by the rash Sentence of a shallow Incrudulity.

The fond conceite of vain appearance
Of chanced act, without Experience
Demonstrated, shows but presumption.

Thus not stretching their Conceits further then these biased fancy's filled with vain Scruples and with a more then panick and apprehend Errors or great Contempt of our Mystery. But what have I said, yea are they not much rather taken with a confused fanatick Censure of extreame shallow brains hammered on the unpolished Anvil of an absolute carping Zoylus.

A discovery of the marvelous Effects of the true medicine of the Philosophers reduced into four especial and remarkable points.

The first point of his perfection is to preserve the person of man in his intire ability and strength free from any accidental mallady that may assault him and to confer upon him a perfect Constitution and healthful, and vigerous disposition with a merry Spirit till he may be a competant member of his posterity chasing absolutely by the Virtue of his operation the threatning causes of our evils which otherwise would daily corrupt and overwhelme us with frail Infirmities without the aid and help of this soverigne Antidote. Calid in his mirror of the Secrets of Alchemy writes that it mundifies the body of all diseases and conserves the well tempered Substance and the Vitals in their intire prosperitie exempt from any Imperfect alteration.

The Second accomplishes and makes perfect the bodys of metals according to the Colour of the Medicine, which if it be white it transmutes them all into fine Silver; If red into most perfect Gold.

The Third changes all sorts of Stones into precious Stones, after the measure of the decoction that the medicine hath gotten.

The Fourth works upon Glass reducing it also to the nature of precious Stones of which Colour you desire the medicine having been first decocted more or less to the purpose as shall appear by the following paraphrases upon these four points.

The Mystical Work of our Stone being perfect and wholly compleat is a gift of God so precious that it surpasses all the marvels and most admired Secrets of all the Sciences in this world for which cause we call it (in imitation of many excellent Authors) the incomparable treasure of Treasures.

Plato hath so highly prized it, that whosoever hath acquired (saith he) this Gift of heaven he holds the best of this world in his possession being mounted to the height of riches, and the

most soverign phisick.

The Philosophers ascribe unto it the virtue of healing all sorts of persons detained in the Languishment of any disease whatsoever, by taking in drink a little warmed or mingled with wine or in the Water extracted from any simple that hath Sympathy with the part offended or infected receiving in one day a disease of a month; or continuance in Twelve days that of a year and in one month the most invenerate and Chronick.

The dose being no more than the weight of a grain, a greater quantity not to be given without the prejudice of the party, Let the mallady be, dropsy, Gout, Leprosie, Apoplexy, Collick, Headache, Frensie trembling of the heart, fever, falling sickness, defluctions of all sorts inward and outward this medicine makes a quick hearing, and it fortifies the heart, recoborates the imperfect members, chasing out of the body all fistilas, Ulcers, and imposthumes; And in fine it is the true balm for any ill, and a singular preservative against all corporal infirmities, poison, or other reviveing the Spirit, augmenting the strength, conserving youth, prolonging old age and chasing away evil Spirits; And so qualifying the temperatures that no humour gets predominance of others, to alter the complexion and condition of the body otherwise then for the bettering thereof.

Briefly in this Work is fully seen the great Secret and Incomparable Treasure of the most rare mysteries of all the Philosophers. Which Senior confirms, saying that this projection renews a mans youth, renders him Joyfull and merry, conserves him in health, to the end of ten ages.

Our famous Roger Bacon affirmes Artephious to have Lived by virtue of this medicine 1025 years.

Wherefore not without great reason Hypocrates, Avicen, Galen, Constantine, Alexander and many other physicans (whose memory the World celebrates) prefer the Elixir before all their medicaments, who so terming it the most perfect and absolute medicine and the universal balm of the World.

For the Second it is held for an undoubted maxim by the experience of divers authors without all compass of extremes that it transmutes the Imperfect metals in a moment into pure Silver and Gold most perfect, and far exceeding in Colour, Weight and substance and constancy of trial all mineral Gold and Silver whatsoever and so high in value as no refiner in the world can make a just report of his Carrats.

For the third it is most certain that this powder by projection upon other common Stones (being first liguified) doth make and produce most precious Stones as Jaspers, Amethyst, Hyacynthes, Topaz, Chrysoliphs, Saphires, Emeralds, Rubys, Diamonds and flaming Carbuncles, much better and far excelling in Luster and virtue, those that nature doth produce; all the which this medicine can liquifie.

And for the fourth and last property of our Mastery it hath the virtue to communicate itself to vegetables and Animals and to every inferiour body to make them perfect; Yea there is not the most Simple creeping Creature in or upon the face of the Earth that serves not as a sounding trumpet to announce the glory of his excellent prize. Even of that which if you project a little upon molten glass you make it malliable and of what Colours you please and as he proceeds to his purification in his decoction when he is green you may make Emeralds when he is like the rainbow (which appeareth in the vessel before the White) he makes opals in his Ash Colour he produces Diamonds, and in his red Rubies, and the invaluable Carbuncle. But for fear the Sages should envy my pen for having so punctually and perhaps too boldly pointed upon this Table to the open view the Secrets which they have with much care and Cunning shadowed with so many obscurities and vailed under so many Hieroglyphical figures as it can not be discovered but by the ripe judgement of some prudent Oedipus.

I will here make an End excusing that fault, with the feeling I have of the sufferings patiently borne by the virtuous Children

of Art which this World makes miserable whom I confess I have a Will to help. And for the sottish Ignorant I now doubt their approaches, for where there hath been so much Art used in hiding as they that are of the notion and understand the Language failed in the finding, it is not for Idiots, nor vain glorious Empty Thrasos to hope it being to them a gordian knot which whosoever will untye must be furnished with knowledge, patience, dilligence and virtue.

Now upon whom should so great a blessing be conferred if not on those Eglets which ran with open Eyes behold the glorious Sun of Philosophy (that strikes blind all others that unworthily stare upon it) and for you and their deliverance out of the Iron-fetters of Contempt and misery, I have written this plain and true discovery of a kingdom that far transcends Arabia foolix or the East and West Indies happily and peaceably may they find it and enjoy it: that we may so Plato's plot accomplished which was to produce a Government wherein the King should be Philosophers and Philosophers kings; and not as now adays when fools ride on horseback in state and pomp and wise men larkly by them on foot by them, as despised Attendants.

The Conclusion.

The Work most perfect, most commendable and most in request is that which brings to the workmaster the fruitation of whatsoever he can wish for his Commodity or pleasure and which defends him from all the importune streaks of Judgement, the publick plague and conspiring Enemy of all humanity and especially to the best Spirits the worst Tyrants.

Now if by the powerful Antidote of this murdering poison, man may dissipate and happily blow away the noisome vapours of his sufferings to savour and taste all leasure the comfortable and

profitable fruits of his industrious and diligent hand and ingenious Spirit that is desirous to give testimony of his good Will and Charity towards the necessity of his Companion and by some Charitable Art, to relieve him and release him out of the loathsome dungeon of carefull necessity.

No man that hath any sense of Virtue, seeing the Effects of so wonderful a workmanship can forbear to admire the Authors Love and honesty the Art that thus doth conserve the comfortable society of mans life, in a fair, free and flourishing estate.

Shall we then remain brutish without consecrating the famous Sacrifice from the Altar of our hearts, to the lively memory of our admirable tincture which without Comparison places the professor above all other men, advancing him to the highest stop of human felicity. Shall we now in this happiness become Stupid and insensible of the honour due to so sublime a business, seeing the unfitting and too ingrateful Silence of mouths undescreetly mute would have but in this respect but small Grace; If we cannot excuse this fault with the dread we have that we cannot sufficiently extoll the subject furnishing so ample a matter of discourse.

In such a Case insufficiency might have a place in our writings. Whereas a rude neglect in not acknowledging of such an Artifice so absolutely excellent, as nothing in this sublunary vail can equal were gross and absurd in the Eyes of the judicious who could not but condemn with a publick Curse, such, as should by contemplation or denyall, blaspheme against the true Essence, and real nature of this inestimable work of philosophy.

The most perfect divine Image where,
The glass wherein all natures works appear,
Giving us whatsoever we hold dear.

But although the Work of itself be plain conspicuous and easy

the base being true SIMPLICITY BEING THE SEAL OF TRUTH, yet because it should not be prophaned nor so precious a pearl cast before Swine the best advised Philosophers have treated thereof in figures, riddles, obscure parables, Circumlocutions, hyperbolical Dialogues, and shadowed Similitudes, to the End it should not be contaminated by impure and unsanctified hearts and hands of abject and vile persons as is requisite in so Sacred a Mystery.

Cease therefore pusallanimous souls, Cease to sweat any more in vain undertaking to beat out the path of virtue. It is to you of difficult Access and full of hazard and ruin; but to generous, patient, painfull and ingeneous Spirits the new soul at the apprehension of so dangerous a passage having health, wealth and a mature apprehension of their proposed Labours. It is but Childrens Sport and Womans Work, honour also taking pleasure in this their bold and brave attempt conducts them by the hand through all crosses and never forsakes them till they be arrived at their desire and felicitie, and tryumph happily in the plentiful harvest of the seed sown in the fertile Globe of their perserverance which grows in the End to the palm of glorious victory. The valorous Argonauts could not be diverted from their Enterprize by the pillous Sands nor threatning rocks, but made all good into the point of their Constancy and gathered the sweet fruits of their expected glory, which a timerous Soul durst never endeavour to attain nor expose his Sail to the Wind in the violence of unmindfull Waves for the honourable Spoil of so rich a bootie. So may we say of our Work whose navigators are selected and elected by the Councel of Heaven neither stricking Sail nor making Shore, nor taking prize, but indure a long painfull and perilous Voyage.

For our Stone suffers itself to be overcome only by the perserverance of those Sage Caviliers of the Golden Fleece, which understand the peculiar State and general Ceremony of this Large business.

To these Sages and no other she communicates herself, yet not indifferently to all, nor always, but in a certain Season which

Nature and she agrees upon things conserving in maturity the Corn
being now ready to reap and the reapers solid heads coloured as
the Corn and made capable of the dowry according to Gebers saying:

Philosophers that found and had this Stone,
Obtained it not till all hot blood was gone
And yet when all men thought them weak and old,
They could embrace their loves as Lovers should.

To which Age principally prudence and solidity are familiar
or new which have in this time of ripeness banished all the Levity
and rashness of youth, and brought all their passions to stand
bare headed before them for which Cause Senior says; That a man of
Spirit and long experience may easily prick his Voyage to arrive
happily through this Art at the Cape of Good Hope, if he give him-
self wholly without discontinuance to read good Authors by whose
means he shall be illuminated, and find an easy entrance to the
true knowledge of this divine Secret, as is Affirmed by these
Verses wherewith I will make an End.

Grey heads are they that free those Egletets
That Saturn catches in our glassy nets,
The winged feet of nimble Mercury,
Are only lim'd by grace Sobrietie.

H A L L E L U J A H

