

Eirenaeus PHILALETHES

RIPLEY REVIVED

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Eirenaeus Philalethes. *Ripley reviv'd: or, an exposition upon Sir George Ripley's Hermetico poetical works*. Containing the plainest and most excellent discoveries of the most hidden secrets of the ancient philosophers, that were ever published. Written by Eirenaeus Philalethes an Englishman, stiling himself Citizen of the world. London: Printed by Tho. Ratcliff and Nat. Thompson, for William Cooper at the Pelican in Little-Britain, 1678.

Contents: 1. An exposition upon Sir George Ripley's Epistle to King Edward IV ... 1677. 47p.; 2. An exposition upon Sir George Ripley's Preface ... 1677. pp. 1-94; 3. An exposition upon the first six gates of Sir George Ripley's Compound of Alchymie ... 1677. pp. 95-389; 4. Experiments for the preparation of the Sophick Mercury, by Luna, and the Antimonial Stellate-Regulus of Mars, for the Philosophers Stone ... 10p.; 5. A breviary of alchemy; or a commentary upon Sir George Ripley's Recapitulation: being a paraphrastical epitome of his Twelve Gates ... 1678. 28p.; 6. An exposition upon Sir George Ripley's vision ... 1677. 25p. 5. is reprinted in de Rola (item 2260)

Author's Preface to His Expositions Upon Sir George Ripley's Compound of Alchymy, &c.

An Exposition Upon Sir George Ripley's Epistle to King Edward IV

An Exposition Upon Sir George Ripley's Preface

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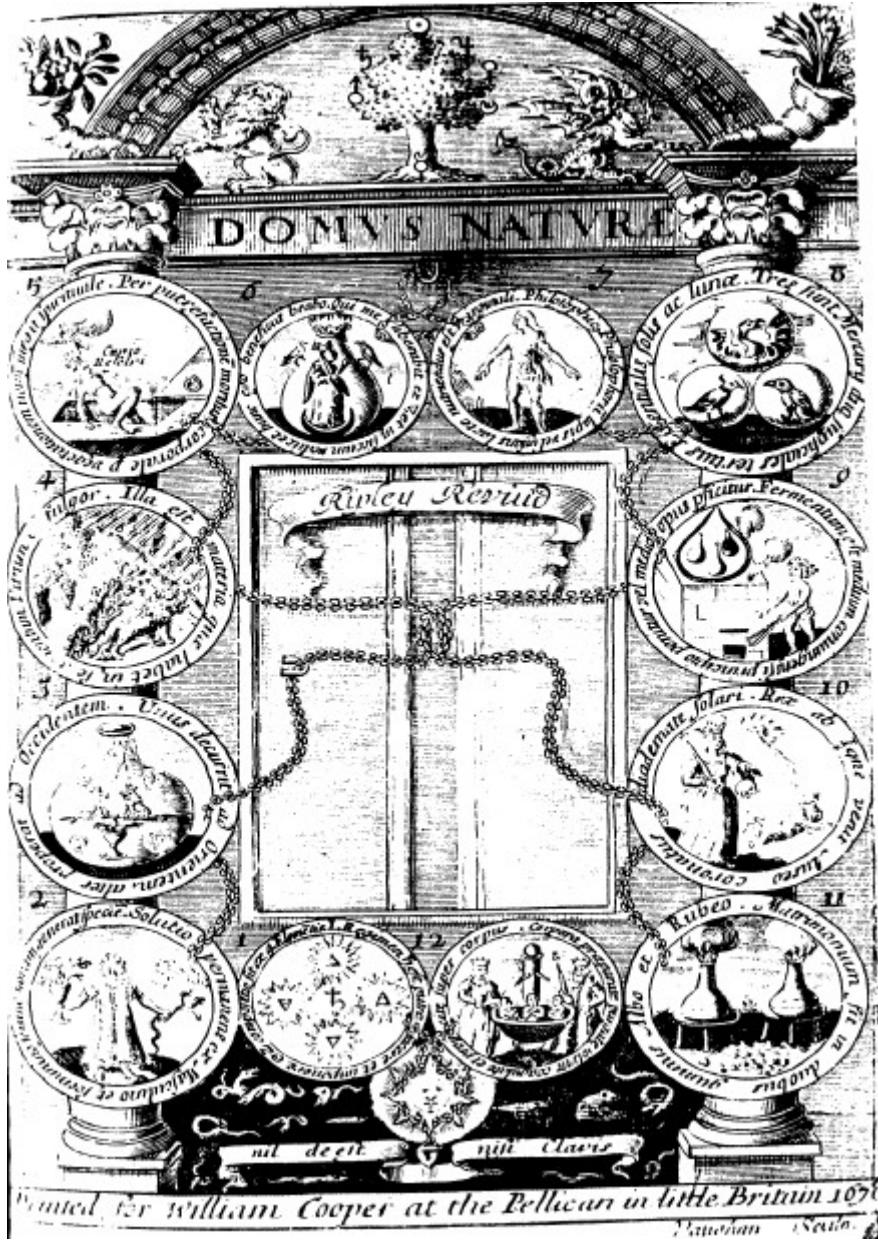
The Sixth Gate: Congelation

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A Breviary of Alchemy: A Commentary on Sir G. Ripley's Recapitulation

An Exposition upon Sir George Ripley's Vision

Porta Prima --- De Calcinatione Philosophica



Ripley Revived

Printed for William Cooper at the Pellican on Little Britain, 1677

**The
Author's Preface
To His
Expositions
Upon
Sir George Ripley's
Compound of Alchymy, &c.**

This Canon of *Bridlington* flourished in the days of *Edward* the Fourth, King of *England*, to whom he wrote an Epistle, as in the beginning of this Book appeareth: a true Artist he was, as every one who hath attained the knowledge in this Mastery can testifie. He wrote, among other writings, these *Twelve Gates of Alchymy*, which with the *Preface*, *Recapitulation*, *Erroneous Experiments* by him warned of, his *Epistle* to the King, *Vision*, and *Wheel*, I shall unfold.

For his experience herein he was eminent, yea his Writings indeed are, in my opinion, for the fullness of them, and eminent descriptions of things, to be preferred before any that I have read or seen, yet I have seen many.

I would detract from no candid well-deserving Author, but would ingenuously give them their due; yet *Ripley* to me seems to carry the Garland.

For mine own part, I have cause to honour *Bernard Trevisan*, who is very ingenious, as in all his Writings, so especially in that Epistle of his to *Thomas of Bononia*, in which let me seriously profess, I received the main Light in this hidden Secret. I shall not name the place, but read the Epistle, and read it again and again, for in it is most excellent truth, and Naked truth.

Next to him, or rather before him in some respects, is an author whom I will not name; yet truly all Chymical Writers are therein to be preferred by any man, by how far he gets good by them: one commends *Raymond Lully* before all, yet I remember not that ever I got good by reading of him: some in good sooth, who are not Professors of this Secret, write more edifyingly to the informing of a *Tyro*, then those whom skill hath made crafty, especially in such places where they intend nothing less then to discover such Secrets. I learned the Secret of the Philosophers *Magnes*, from one, of their Magical *Chalybs*, from another; the use of *Diana's Doves*, from a third; the *Air*, or rather the *Camelion* of the Philosophers. From another; the gross Preparation of their *Menstruum*, in another; the number of *Eagles*, in another: but for the operation on the true Matter, and signs of the true *Mercury*, I know none like *Ripley*, though *Flammel* be eminent. I know what I say, as knowing experimentally the truth, and what is error.

For mine own part, I have had experience of misleading Sophistical Writers, and have made many toilsome laborious Experiments, though but young; and therefore having at

length, through the undeserved mercy of God, arrived at my Haven of Rest, I shall stretch out my hand to such as are behind.

I have wrote several Treatises, some in *English*, but especially in *Latine*; one *English* treatise touching the Stone, very plainly written, but not perfected, unfortunately slipt out of my hand, and perhaps may come abroad into the World; if it do, I should be sorry. Two *Latine* Tractates, one intituled, *Brevis manuductio ad Rubinum Coelestem*, another, *Fons Chymicae Philosophiae*, I wrote, which for especial Reasons to me known I resolve to suppress. Two other *Latine* Treatises, the one intituled, *Ars metallorum Metamorphoseas*, the other, *Introitus apertus ad occlusum Regis Palatium*, I lately wrote which perhaps thou mayst enjoy. Two *English* Poems I wrote, which are lost. Also an *Enchiridion* of Experiments, together with a Diurnal of Meditations, in which were many Philosophical Receipts declaring the whole Secret, with an *Aenigma* annexed; which also fell into such hands, who I conceive will never restore it. This last was written in *English*, with many other which I wrote for mine own recreation, and afterwards burned.

But now at length studying how to profit the Sons of Art to my utmost, I have rather resolved to unfold *Ripley's* Knots, and so thou mayst have two Witnesses in one; for by the unfolding of him thou shalt both see the depth of the Man, and discern that both he and I were truly, and not Sophistically, intrusted with this Divine Science and Art; in which it is not notional, as many men conceive the Art to be, but real Experiments of Nature, taught me by the only God and master of Nature, that was my Guide; having seen and made the Secret Water of the Philosophers, and known the use of it by ocular experience, to the effecting of the admirable *Elixir*. These writings peruse, for they are not Fancies, and so with the help of the most High, thou shalt attain thy wish.

An Advertisement

The *Compound of Alchemy* which seems to be most made use of in this *Book* for Quotations, agrees for the most part with the Edition published by Ralph Rabbards, and Printed at London 1591 in quarto, in which Edition the English is not so old as is that Copy which was published by Elias Ashmole Esq.: Yet I humbly conceive that this Expositor hath thought fir to clear the sense of the old English Verse, by the change of some few words, more significant to the present speech, and yet doubtless not differing from the mind of the Author; which change of words, I durst not presume to alter, but that I ought rather in justice to the Author to let them pass; and for this reason likewise, that whomsoever shall desire to see the difference, may easily compare all three together, because they are all published in Print: and in performing this service, I hope to have done my duty faithfully, and wronged no body. I likewise make bold to acquaint the Reader, that in the *Exposition* upon Sir G. Ripley's *Preface*, in the *Learned Sophies Feast*, pag. 52. line 5. I find this word [greatest] which from what follows line 11. (I humbly conceive, with submission) should be [meanest] as may more manifestly appear from the same Author, in his *Secrets Revealed*, pag. 62, 63. and in Sir G. Ripley's *5th Gate*, Stave 40. line 6. But because I found it [greatest price] in two copies, I therefore

lest it so, and by this *Advertisement* submit it to the Readers Judgment. I have likewise found, that in the *Exposition upon Sir G. Ripley's Epistle to King Edward* the 4 th. Pag. 9. line 2. for Mercury, some copies read Antimony, which is likewise left to the Readers scrutiny, by W.C.B.

The Contents

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*An
Exposition
Upon
Sir George Ripley's
Epistle
to King Edward IV.*

Written by
Eirenaeus Philalethes Anglus,
COSMOPOLITA

London,
Printed for *William Cooper,*
at the *Pellican in Little Britain, 1677*

Sir George Ripley's
EPISTLE
TO
King Edward the Fourth,
UNFOLDED.

This Epistle as it was immediately written to a King, who was in his Generation, both wise and valiant; so it doth comprise the whole secret, both learnedly described, and yet artificially veiled. Yet as the Author testifieth, that in this Epistle he doth plainly untie the main knot; So I can, and do testifie with him, that there is nothing desirable for the true attaining of this Mystery, both in the Theory and Practick of it, which is not in this short Epistle fully taught. This then I intend as a Key to all my former writings, and assure you on my faithful word, that I shall not speak one word doubtfully or Mystically, as I have in all my other writings, seeming to aver some things, which taken without Figure, are utterly false, which we did only to conceal this Art. This Key therefore we intend not to make common; and shall intreat you to keep it secret to your self, and not to communicate it, except it be to a sure friend, who you are confident will not make it publick: And this request we make upon very good grounds, knowing that all our writings together, are nothing to this, by reason of the contradictions, which we have woven into them, which here is not done in the least measure. I shall therefore in this Epistle take up a new method, and that different from the former, and shall first draw up the substance of the Philosophy couched in this Epistle, into several conclusions, and after elucidate the same.

The first Conclusion is drawn from the ninth Stave of this Epistle, the eight first Staves being only complementall; and that is, That as all things are multiplied in their kind, so may be Metalls, which have in themselves a capacity of being transmuted, the imperfect into perfect.

The second Conclusion in the Tenth Stave is, That the main ground for the possibility of transmutation, is the possibility of reduction of all metalls, and such minerals as are of metallick principles, into their first Mercurial matter.

The third Conclusion is in the Eleventh Stave, that among so many Metaline and *Mineral Sulphurs*, and so many *Mercuries* there are but two *Sulphurs* that are related to our work; which *Sulphurs* have their *Mercuries* essentially united to them.

The fourth Conclusion from the same Stave is, That he who understands these two *Sulphurs & Mercuries* aright, shall find that the one is the most pure red *Sulphur of Gold*, which is *Sulphur in manifesto*, and *Mercurius in occulto*, and that other is most pure white *Mercury*, which in indeed true *Quicksilver in manifesto*, and *Sulphur in occulto*, these are our two Principles.

The fifth Conclusion from the Twelfth Stave is, That if a mans Principles be true, and his Operations regular, his event will be certain, which Event is no other than the true Mystery.

These Conclusions are but few in number, but of great weight or concernment; the Amplification, Illustration and Elucidation therefore of them, will make a son of Art truly glad.

STAVE IX. In the edition 1591: but in Esq. *Ashmole's Theatrum* it is Stave 8.

*But notwithstanding for peril that may befall,
If I dare not here plainly the knot unbind,
Yet in my writing I will not be so mysticall,
But that by study the true Knowledge you may find
How that each thing is multiplied in its kind,
And how the likeness of Bodies Metalline be transmutable,
I will declare, that if you feel me in your mind,
My writing you shall find true, and no fained Fable.*

For the First; Forasmuch as it is not for our purpose here to invite any to the Art, only intending to lead and guide the sons of Art; We shall not prove the possibility of *Alchymy*, by many Arguments, having done it abundantly in another Treatise. He then that will be incredulous, let him be incredulous; he that will cavil, let him cavil; but he whose mind is perswaded of the truth of this Art, and of its Dignity, let him attend to what is in the Illustration of these Five Conclusions discovered, and his heart shall certainly rejoice. We shall therefore briefly Illustrate this 1st Conclusion, and insist there more largely, where the secrets of the Art are most couched.

For this first, which concludes in effect the truth of the Art, and its validity; he that would therein be more satisfied in it, let him read the *Testimony of the Philosophers*: And he that will not believe the testimony of so many men, being most of them men of renown in their own times, he will cavil also against all other Arguments.

We shall only hold to *Ripley's* Testimony in this our Key, who in the Fourth Stave, assures the King that at *Lovain* he first saw the greatest and most perfect secrets, namely, the two *Elixirs*; and in his following verses, craved his confident credit, that he himself hath truly found the way of secret *Alchymy*, and promiseth the discovery of it to the King, only upon the condition of secrecy.

And in the Eighth Stave, though he protests never to write it by Pen, yet proffers the King at his pleasure, to shew him ocularly the Red and White *Elixir*, and the working of them, which he promiseth will be done for easie costs in time. So then, he that will doubt the truth of this Art, must account this famous Author for a most simple mad Sophister. To write and offer such things to his Prince, unless he were able in effect to do what he promised; from which imputation, his Writings, and also the History of him, of his Fame, Gravity, and Worth, will sufficiently clear him.

STAVE X

*As the Philosopher in the Book of Meteors doth write,
The likeness of Bodies Metalline be not transmutable,
But after he added these words of more delight,
Without they be reduced to their beginning materiabie,
Wherefore such Bodies which in Nature be liquefiable,
Mineral & Metalline may be mercurizate,
Conceive you may this Science is not opinionable,
But very true, by Raymond and others determinate.*

We come to the second Conclusion; the substance of which is, *that all Metalls, and Bodies of Metalline Principles, may be reduced to their first Mercurial Matter*; And this is the main and chief ground for the possibility of Transmutation. On this we must insist largely and fully, for (trust me) this is the very hinge on which our secrets hang.

First, Then know that all *Metalls*, and several *Minerals* have *Mercury* for their next matter, to which (for the most part, nay indeed always) there adheres, and is con-coagulated an external *Sulphur*, which is not *Metalline*, but distinguishable from the internal Kernel of the *Mercury*.

This *Sulphur* is not wanting even in common *Argent Vive*, by the Mediation of which, it may be precipitated into the form of a drie Powder: yea, and by a Liquor well known to us, (though nothing helping the Art of transmutation) it may be so fixed, that it may endure all Fires, the Test and Coppel. And this without the addition of any thing to it, but the Liquor (by virtue whereof it is fixed) coming away intire, both in its *Pondus* and *Virtue*. This *Sulphur* in Gold and Silver is pure; Therefore in Gold and Silver it is fixed, in others it is fugitive; in all the *Metalls* it is coagulated, in *Mercury* or *Argent Vive*, it is coagulable, in *Gold*, *Silver* and *Mercury*; this *Sulphur* is so strongly united, that the Antients did ever judge *Sulphur* and *Mercury*, to be all one; but we by the help of a Liquor, the Invention of which in these parts of the world we owe to *Paracelsus* (though among the *Moors* and *Arabians*, it hath been, and is (at this day) commonly known to the acuter sort of *Chymists*.) By this I say, we know that the *Sulphur* which is in *Mercury* coagulable, and in the *Metals* coagulated, is external to the Internal nature of *Mercury*, and may be separated in the form of a tinted Metallick Oyl, the remaining *Mercury* being then void of all *Sulphur*, save that which may be called its Inward or Central *Sulphur*. And is now incoagulable of itself (though by our *Elixir* it is to be coagulated) but of it self, it can neither be fixt nor precipitated, nor sublimed, but remains unaltered in all corrosive waters, and in all digestions of heat. One way then of *Mercury* Azating all *Metals* and *Minerals*, is by the Liquor *Alchahest*, which out of such Bodies as have *Mercury* in their Constitution, can separate a running *Argent Vive*, from which *Argent vive* all its *Sulphur* is then separated, save that only which is Internal and Central to the *Mercury*, which Internal *Sulphur* of *Mercury* no corrosive can touch: Next to this way of universal Reduction, there are also some other particular ways by which *Saturn*, *Jupiter*, *Antimony*, yea even *Venus* and *Mars* may be reduced into a running *Quick-silver*, by the help of Salts, which because (being corporeal) they pierce not so radically as the fore-

named Liquor doth; they therefore do not spoil the *Mercury* of its *Sulphur*, but that as much *Sulphur* as there in is *Common Mercury*; so much also there in is this *Mercury* of the Bodies, only this *Mercury* hath specificated qualities according to the nature of the *Metal* or *Mineral*, from which it was extracted; and for that reason, (as to our work which is to dissolve perfect Species of *Metals*,) it hath no more virtue then common *Argent Vive*. There is than but one only humidity, which is applicable unto our Work, which certainly is neither of *Saturn* nor *Venus*, nor is drawn from any thing, which nature hath formed, but from a substance compounded by the Art of the Philosopher. So then, if a *Mercury* drawn from the Bodies, have not only the same deficiency of heat and superfluity of *faeces* as *Common Mercury* hath, but also a distinct specificated form, it must (by reason of this its form) be so much the farther remote from our *Mercury*, then common *Argent Vive* is.

Our Art therefore is to compound two Principles, (one in which the *Salt*, and another in which the *Sulphur* of nature doth abound,) which are not yet perfect, nor yet totally imperfect, and (by consequence) may therefore (by our Art) be changed or exalted, which that (which is totally perfect) cannot be; and then by *Common Mercury* to extract not the *Pondus*, but the Coelestial virtue out of the compound;

Which virtue (being Fermental) begets in the common *Mercury* an Offspring more noble then it self, which is our true *Hermaphrodite*, which will congeal it self, and dissolve the Bodies: Observe but a grain of Corn, in which, scarce a discernable part is Sprout, and this Sprout, if it were out of the grain, would die in a moment; the whole grain is sown, yet the Sprout only produceth the herb: So is it in our Body, the fermental Spirit that is in it, is scarce a third part of the whole, the rest is of no value, yet all is joined, (in the composition,) and the *faeculent coporeous* parts of the Body comes away with the dregs of the *Mercury*. But beyond the example or similitude given of a grain of Corn, it may be observed that the hidden and spiritual virtue of this our Body, doth purge and purifie its Matrix of water, in which it is sown; that is, it makes it cast forth a great quantity of filthy earth, and a great deal of Hydropical Saline moisture. For instance, make thy washings (for a tryal) with pure and clean Fountain water; weigh first a Pint of the same water, and take the exact weight of it, then wash thy compound 8 or 10 Eagles (or times), save all the *faeces*, weigh thy Body and *Mercury* exactly, weigh thy *faeces* being very dry, then Distil or Sublime all that will Sublime, a very little quick *Mercury* will ascend, then put the residue of the *faeces* in a Crucible, set them on the Coals, and all the faeculency of the *Mercury* will burn like a Coal, yet without fume; when that is all consumed, weigh the remaining *faeces*, and thou shalt find them to be two thirds of thy Body, the other third being in the *Mercury*; weigh the *Mercury* which thou Sublimest, and the *Mercury* prepared by it self, and the weight of both will not recompence thy *Mercuries* weight by far: So then, boyl up thy water to a skin, in which thou madest thy Lotions, for that is a thick water; and in a cool place thou shalt have Crystals, which is the Salt of *Mercury* Crude, and no way fit for Medicines; yet it is a content for the Artists to see how the Heterogeneities of *Mercury* are discovered, which no Art save the Liquor of *Alcahest* can do, and that in a destructive, not a generative way as this is; for this operation of ours is made between male and Female, within their own kind, between which there is a Ferment which effecteth that which no other thing in the world could do. In all truth I tell you, that

if you should take our imperfect compound Body, *per se* and *Mercury per se*, and Ferment them alone, though you might bring out of the one a most pure *Sulphur*, and out of the other *Mercury* of *Mercury*, which is the Nut of Mercury, yet with these thou couldst effect nothing, for Fermental virtue is the wonder of the world, and it is by it, that water becomes Herbs, Trees and Plants, Fruits, Flesh, Blood, Stones, Minerals, and every thing; seek then for it only, and rejoice in it, as in a deservedly invaluable treasure: Now know, that Fermentation works or ferments not out of kind, neither do Salts Ferment metals. Wilt thou then know whence it is that some fixt *Alcalies* do extract a *Mercury* out of *Minerals*, and out of the more imperfect Metals? Consider then, that in all these Bodies the *Sulphur* is not so radically mixt and untied, as it is in Silver and Gold. Now *Sulphur* is of kin to divers *Alcalies*, that are extraordinarily dissolved or melted with it, and by this means the *Mercurial* parts are disjoined, and the *Argent vive* is by fire separated. The *Mercury* thus separated, is spoiled of its *Sulphur*, when as indeed there needs, or is required only a depuration of the *Sulphur* by separating the impure from the pure; but these Salts having separated the *Sulphur*, do leave the *Mercury* worse, that is, more estranged from a Metallick nature than it was before; for in its Composition that *Sulphur of Saturn* will not burn, for though it be Sublimed, Calcined, made Sugar or Vitriified, yet by Fire and Fluxes it still returns to the same it was in before; but its *Sulphur* being (as is aforesaid,) separated, will take fire if joined with Salt-peter, even as common *Sulphur* doth, so that the Salts act on the *Sulphur* of which they rob the *Mercury*, but on the *Mercury* they act not for want of Ferment, which is not to be found, but only amongst Homogeneous things. Therefore the Ferment of Bread Leavens not a Stone, nor doth the Ferment of any Animal or Vegetable, Ferment a Metal or Mineral. So then, though out of Gold thou mightest obtain a *Mercury* by help of the Liquor of the first *Ens* of Salt, yet that *Mercury* would never accomplish our work: whereas on the other side *Mercury* made out of Gold by our *Mercury*, though there be three parts of our *Mercury* to one of Gold: This *Mercury* I say, will (by continual digestion) accomplish the whole work; marvel not then, that our *Mercury* is more powerful, which is prepared by *Mercury*: For certainly the Ferment, which cometh between the compound Body and the water, causeth a death and a regeneration; it doth that, which nothing in the world can do: Besides it severs from *Mercury* a terrestreity which burns like a coal, and an Hydropical humour melting in common water, but the residue is actuated by a Spirit of Life, which is our true embryonated *Sulphur* of our water, not visible, yet working visibly. We conclude them, that all operations for our *Mercury*, but by common *Mercury*, and our Body according to our Art, are erroneous, and will never produce our Mysterie, although they might be otherwise, *Mercuries* so wonderfully made. For as the Author of the *New Light*, saith, *No Water in any Island of the Philosophers was wholsom, but that which was drawn out of the reigns of Sol and Luna*. Wilt thou know what that means, *Mercury* in its *pondus* and incombustibility is *Gold fugitive*, our Body in its purity is called the *Philosophers Luna*, being far more pure than the imperfect Metals, and its *Sulphur* also as pure as the *Sulphur of Sol*, not that it is indeed *Luna*, for it abides not in the fire. Now in the composition of these three; First our common *Mercury*, and the two Principles of our compound there intercedes the Ferment of *Luna*, out of which though it be a Body, proceeds yet a specificated odour: yea, and oft the *Pondus* of it is diminished: If the Compound be much washt, after it is sufficiently clean. So then, the Ferment of *Sol* and *Luna* intercedes in our composition, which Ferment begets an off-spring more noble then it self a thousand fold;

whereas shouldst thou work on our compound body by a violent way of Salts, thou shouldst have the *Mercury*, by far less noble then the Body, the *Sulphur* of the Body being separated, and not exalted by such a progress.

STAVE XI.

*In the said Book the Philosopher speaketh also,
Herein if it please Your Highness for to read,
Of divers Sulphurs, and especially of two,
And of two Mercuries joined to them indeed,
Whereby he doth true understanders lead,
To the knowledge of the Principles which be only true,
Both Red, Moist, Pure, and White, as I have espied,
Which be nevertheless found but of very few.*

We now come to the Third Conclusion, which is, that among all Metalline and Mineral *Sulphurs* there are only Two that belong to our Work; which Two have their *Mercuries* essentially united with them: This is the truth of our secrets, though we (to seduce the unwary) do seem to aver the contrary; for do no think that (because we do insinuate two ways, therefore) we really mean as we say, for verily (as witnesseth *Ripley*,) There is no true Principle but one, nor have we but one matter, nor but one way of working upon that matter, nor but one regimen of heat, and one linear way of proceeding.

These two *Sulphurs* as they are Principles of our Work, they ought to be Homogeneous, for it only Gold Spiritual that we seek; First White, then Red, which Gold is no other then that which the vulgar see, but they know not the hidden Spirit that is in it. This Principle wants nothing but composition, and this composition must be made with our other crude white *Sulphur*, which is nothing but *Mercury* vulgar, by frequent cohobation of it upon our Hermaphroditical body, so long till it become a fiery water.

Know therefore, that *Mercury* hath in itself a *Sulphur*, which being un-active, our Art is to multiply in it a living active *Sulphur*, which comes out of the loins of our Hermaphroditical body, whose Father is a Metal, and his Mother a Mineral; Take then the most beloved Daughter of *Saturn*, whose Arms are a *Circle Argent*, and on it a *Sable Cross on a Black Field*, which is the signal note of the great world, espouse her to the most warlike God, who dwells in the house of *Aries*, and thou shalt find the Salt Nature, with this Salt acuate thy water, as thou best knowest, and thou shalt have the Lunary bath in which the Sun will be amended.

And in all truth I assure thee, that although thou hadst our Body Mercurialized (without the addition of *Mercury*, or of the *Mercury* of any of the Metals) made *per se*, that is, without the addition of *Mercury*, it would not be in the least profitable unto thee, for it is our *Mercury* only, which hath a Celestial form and power, which it receives, not only, nor so much from the Compound Body or Principles, as from the Fermental virtue which proceeds from the composition of both the Body and the *Mercury*, by which is produced a wonderful Creature: So then let all thy care be to marry *Sulphur* with *Sulphur*, that is

our *Mercury* which is impregnated, which *Sulphur* must be espoused with our *Sol*, then hast thou two *Sulphurs* married, and two *Mercuries* of one off-spring, whose Mother is the Sun, and Moon the Mother.

The Fourth Conclusion makes all perfectly plain which hath been said before; namely, that these two *Sulphurs* are, the one most pure Red *Sulphur of Gold*, and the other of most pure clean White *Mercury*.

These are our two *Sulphurs*; the one appears a coagulated Body, & yet carries its *Mercury* in its belly: the other is in all its proportions true *Mercury*, yet very clean, and carries its *Sulphur* within its self, though hidden under the form and flexibility of *Mercury*.

Sophisters are (here) in a Labyrinth, for because they are not acquainted with Metalline love, they work in things altogether heterogeneous; or if they work upon Metalline Bodies, they yet either joyn Males with Males, or else Females with Females, or else they work on each alone; or else they make Males which are charged with natural inabilities, and Females whose Matrix is vitiated. Thus by their own inconsideration they frustrate their own hopes, and then cast the blame upon the Art, when as indeed it is only to be imputed to their own folly, in not understanding the Philosophers.

I know many pitiful Sophisters do dote on many Stones, Vegetable, Animal, and Mineral; and some to those add the fiery Angelical, Paradaical Stone, which they call a Wonder-working Essence; and because the mark they aim at is so great, the ways also by which they would attain their scope, they make also agreeable, that is a double way; One way they call *Via Humida*, the other they call *Via Sicca*, (to use their languages:) the latter way is the *Labyrinthian path*, which is fit only for the great ones of the earth to tread in; the other the *Daedalean Path*, an easie way of small cost for the poor of the world to enterprise.

But this I know, and can testifie, that there is but one way, and but only one *Regimen*, no more colours than ours; and what we say or write otherwise, is but to deceive the unwary: For if every thing in the world ought to have its proper causes, there cannot be any one end which is produced from two wayes of working on distinct Principles.

Therefore we protest, and must again admonish the Reader, that in our former writings) we have concealed much, by reason of the two ways we have insinuated, which we will briefly touch; There is one Work of ours, which is the *Play of Children, and the Work of Women*, and that is Decoction by the Fire; and we protest that the lowest degree of this our work, is, that the matter be stirred up, and may hourly circulate without fear of breaking the Vessel, which for this reason ought to be very strong; but our lineal Decoction is an Internal Work, which advances every day and hour, and is distinct from that of outward heat, and therefore is both invisible and insensible. In this our work, our *Diana* is our body when it is mixed with the water, for then all is called the Moon; for *Laton* is whitened, and the Woman bears rule: our *Diana* hath a wood, for in the first days of the Stone, our Body after it is whitened grows vegetably. In this wood are at the last found two Doves; for about the end of three weeks the Soul of the *Mercury* ascends

with the Soul of the dissolved Gold; these are infolded in the everlasting Arms of *Venus*, for in this season the confections are all tinted with a pure green colour; These Doves are circulated seven times, for in seven is perfection, and they are left dead, for they then rise and move no more; our Body is then black like to a Crow's Bill, for in this operation all is turned to Powder, blacker than the blackest. Such passages as these we do oftentimes use when we speak of the Preparation of our *Mercury*; and this we do to deceive the simple, and it is also for no other end that we confound our operations, speaking of one, when we ought to speak of another; For if this Art were but plainly set down, our operations would be contemptible even to the foolish. Therefore believe me in this, that because our works are natural, we therefore do take the liberty to confound the Philosophers work with that which purely Natures work, that so we might keep the simple in ignorance concerning our true Vinegre, which being unknown, their labour is wholly lost.

Let me then (for a close) say only thus much; Take our Body which is gold, and our *Mercury* which is seven times actuated by the marriage of it with our Hermaphroditical body which is a *Chaos*, and it is the splendor of the Soul of the God *Mars*, in the Earth and water of *Saturn*; mix these two in such a *Pondus* as Nature doth require: in this mixture you have our invisible Fires, for in the Water, or in the *Mercury* is an active *Sulphur* or Mineral Fire, and in the Gold a dead, passive, but yet actual *Sulphur*; Now when that *Sulphur* of the Gold is stirred up and quickened, there is made between the Fire of Nature which is in the Gold and the Fire against Nature, which is in the *Mercury*, a Fire partly of the one, and partly of the other, for it partakes of both; and by these two Fires thus united into one, is caused both Corruption (which is Humiliation) and Generation (which is Glorification and Perfection.) Now know that God only governs this way of the Internal Fire, Man being ignorant of the progress thereof, only by his Reason beholding its operations, he is able to discern that it is hot; that is, that it doth perform the actions of heat, which is Decoction. In this Fire there is no Sublimation, for Sublimation is an Exaltation; but this Fire is such an Exaltation, that it is perfection it self, and that beyond it is no progress.

All our Work then is only to multiply this Fire, that is, to circulate the Body, so long until the Virtue of the *Sulphur* be augmented. Again, this Fire is an invisible Spirit, and therefore not having Dimensions as neither above nor below, but every where in the Sphere of the activity of our Matter in the Vessel; So that through the material visible substance do sublime and ascend by the action of the elemental heat, yet this Spiritual Virtue is always as well in that which subsides in the bottom, as in that which is in the upper part of the Vessel. For it is as the Soul in the Body of Man, which is every where at the same time, and yet bounded or terminated in none.

This is the Ground of one Sophism of ours, (*viz.*) when we say, that in this true Philosophical Fire there is no Sublimation; for the Fire is the Life, and the Life is a Soul, which is not at all subject to the dimensions of Bodies: Hence also it is, that the opening of the Glass, or cooling of the same during the time of Working, kills the Life or Fire that is in this secret *Sulphur*, and yet not one Grain of the matter is lost. The Elemental Fire then is that which any Child knows how to kindle and govern, but it is the Philosopher

only that is able to discern the true inward Fire, for it is a wonderful thing which acts in the Body, yet is no part of the Body. Therefore the Fire is a Coelestial Virtue, it is uniformed; that is, it is always the same until the period of its Operation is come; and then being come to perfection, it acts no more, for every Agent, when the end of its action is come, then rests.

Remember then, that when we speak of our Fire which sublimes not, that thou do not mistake, and think that the moisture of the Compound which is within the Glass, ought not to Sublime, for that it must do uncessantly; but the Fire that sublimes not is the Metalline love, which is above, and below, and in all places alike. Now then for a close to all that has been said, learn, and be well advised what matter thou take in hand, for an evil Crow lays an evil Egg, as the proverb hath it; Let thy Seed be pure, and thy Matrix also pure, then shalt thou see a Noble Off-spring: Let the Fire without be such, as in which our Confections may play to and fro uncessantly, and this (in a few days) will produce that which thou most longest for, the *Crows Bill*. Continue then thy Decoction, and in an hundred and thirty days thou shalt see the *White Dove*, and in ninety days more the *Sparkling Cherubim*.

STAVE XII.

*And these Two things be best, he addeth anon,
For him that worketh the Alchymy to take:
Our Gold and our Silver therewith to make all one,
Wherefore I say, who will our Pearl and Ruby make,
The said Principles look that he not forsake:
For at the beginning, if the principles be true;
And if so be by craft he can them also take,
In th' end truly his work he shall not rue.*

Thus come we to the last Conclusion, which is, that if a Mans Operations be regular, and his Principles true, his end will be certain, (*viz.*) the Mastery.

O Fools and Blind that do not consider how each thing in the world hath his proper Cause and Progress in Operation; Think you, if a Seaman should with a gallant Coach, intend to Sail to any place beyond the Sea, he would not find his attempt gallantly furnished, he should Row at Random, he may not sooner stumble on an infortunate Rock, then arrive at the golden Coast: Such fools are they who seek our secret in trivial matters, and yet hope to find the Gold of *Ophir*.

For the more exact Guiding of your Practice, take notice of these Twenty Rules following.

Rule I.

Whatever any Sophister may suggest unto you, or you may read in any Sophistical Authors; yet let none take you from this ground, (*viz.*) That as the end you look for is Gold: so let Gold be the subject on which you work, and none other.

Rule II.

Let none deceive you with telling you, that our *Gold* is not common, but Philosophical; for *common Gold* is dead, which is true: But as we order it, there is made a quickening of it, as a grain of Corn in the Earth is quickened.

So then in our work, after six Weeks, *Gold* that was dead, becomes quick, living, and spermatical; and in our composition, it may be called *Our Gold*, because it is joined with an Agent that will certainly quicken it: So a Condemned Man, is called a Dead man, though at present living.

Rule III.

Besides *Gold*, which is the Body or male, you must have another Sperm, which is the Spirit and Soul; or Female, and this is *Mercury*, in Flux and Form like to common *Argent Vive*, yet more clean and pure.

There are many, who instead of *Mercury*, will have strange Waters or Liquors, which they stile by the name of *Philosophical Mercury*; be not deceived by them, for what a Man sows, that he must look to reap: If thou shalt sow thy Body in any Earth, but that which is Metalline and Homogeneous to it, thou shalt instead of a *Metalline Elixir*, reap an unprofitable *Calx*, which will be of no value.

Rule IV.

Our *Mercury* is in substance one with common *Argent Vive*, but far different in Form; For it hath a Form Coelestial, Fiery, and of excellent Virtue: and this is the Nature which it receives by our Artificial Preparation.

Rule V.

The whole Secret of our Preparation, is, that thou take that Mineral which is next of kin to *Gold*, and to *Mercury*; Impregnate this with Volatile *Gold*, which is found in the reins of Mars, with this purifie your *Mercury* until seven times are past, then it is fitted for the Kings Bath.

Rule VI.

Yet know, that from seven times to ten, the *Mercury* is made better and better, and is more active, being by each Preparation actuated by our true *Sulphur*; which if it exceed in number of Preparations, becomes too fiery, which instead of dissolving the Body, will Coagulate it self.

Rule VII.

This *Mercury* thus actuated, is after to be distilled in a Glass retort twice or thrice; and that for this reason, because some Atoms of the Body may be in it, which were insensibly left in the Preparation of the *Mercury*, afterwards it is to be cleansed well with Vinegar and *Sal-armoniack*, then it is fit for the work.

Rule VIII.

Chuse your Gold for this work pure and clean from any mixture: if it be not so when you buy it, make it so by Purgation; then let it be made fine, either by Filing, Malleating, Calcining with Corrosives, or any other way, by which it may be made most subtile.

Rule IX.

Now come to your mixture, in which take of the aforesaid Body so chosen and prepared, one Ounce of *Mercury*, as is above taught animated, two ounces or three at the most, mix them in a Marble which may be warmed so hot as water will heat it; grind both together till they be well incorporated, then wash the mixture with Vinegar and Salt till it be very pure; And lastly, Dulcifie it with warm water, and dry it carefully.

Rule X.

Know now, that whatever we say out of Envy, our way is none other, and we protest, and will protest, that neither We, nor any of the Antients knew any other way; for it is impossible that our secret can be wrought by any other Principles, or any other disposition than this. Our Sophism lies only in the two kinds of Fire in our work: the Internal secret Fire, which is Gods Instrument, hath no qualities perceptible to man, of that Fire we speak often, and seem yet to speak of the External heat; and hence arise among the unwary many Errours. This is our Fire which is graduated, for the External heat, is almost linear all the work, to the white work, it is one without alteration, save that in the seven first days we keep the heat a little slack for certainty and security sake, which an experienced Philosopher need not do.

But the Internal governing heat is insensibly graduated hourly, and by how much that is daily invigorated by the continuance of Decoction, the Colours are altered, and the Compound maturated: I have unfolded a main knot unto you, take heed of being insnared here again.

Rule XI.

Then you must provide a Glass Tun, in which you may perfect your work, without which you could never do any thing; let it be either Oval or Spherical, so big in reference to your Compound, that it may hold about twelve times the quantity of it within its Sphere, let your Glass be thick and strong, clear, and free of flaws, with a neck about a Span or

Foot long; In this Egg put your matter, sealing the neck carefully, without flaw, or crack, or hole, for the least vent will let out the subtile Spirit, and destroy the work.

You may know the exact Sealing of your Glass thus, when it is cold, put the neck where it is sealed, into your mouth, and suck it strongly; if there be the least vent, you will draw out the Air, that is in the Vial, into your mouth, which when you take the Glass from your mouth, is again sucked into the Glass with a hissing, so that your ear may perceive the noise; this is an undoubted tryal.

Rule XII.

You must then provide your self with a Furnace, by wise men called an *Athamor*, in which you may accomplish your work; nor will any one serve in your first work; But such a one in which you may give a heat obscurely red at your pleasure, or lesser, it may endure twelve hours at the least.

This if you would obtain; Observe, First, that your nest be no bigger then to contain your dish with about an inch vacancy at the side where the Vent-hole of your *Athamor*, is for the Fire to play.

Secondly, Let your Dish be no bigger then to hold one Glass with about an inch thickness of Ashes between the Glass and side, remembering the word of the Philosopher, One Glass, One Thing, One Furnace; for such a Dish standing with the bottom level to the vent-hole, which in such a Furnace ought to be but one, about three Inches Diameter, sloping upwards, will with the stream of Flame, which is always playing to the top of the Vessel, and round about the bottom, be kept always in a glowing heat.

Thirdly, If your Dish be bigger, your Furnace must be within a third part, or a fourth as big as your Platter is Diameter. Else it cannot be exactly, nor continually heated.

Fourthly, If your Tower be above six Inches square at the Fire-place, you are out of proportion, and can never do rightly as to the point of heat; for if you cause it (if above that proportion) to stream with flame, the heat will be too big: And if it stream not, it will not be big enough, or very hardly.

Fifthly, Let the top of your Furnace be closed to an hole which may but just serve for casting in of Coals about three Inches Diameter or Square, which will keep down the heat powerfully.

Rule XIII.

These things thus ordered, set in your Glass with your matter, and give Fire as Nature requires, easie, not too violent; beginning there where Nature left. Now know, that Nature hath left your Materials in the Mineral Kingdom; therefore though we take comparison from Vegetables and Animals; Yet you must understand a Parallel in the Kingdom, in which the Subject you would handle is placed: As for Instance, if I should Analogize,

between the Generation of a Man, and the Vegetation of a Vegetable, you must not understand, as though the heat for one, were to be measured by the other; for as we know, that in the ground Vegetables will grow, which is not without heat, which they in the earth feel, even in the beginning of the Spring; yet would not an Egg be hatched in that heat, nor could a man feel any warmth, but rather to him a numbing cold.

Since then you know that your work appertains all to the mineral Kingdom; you must know what heat is fit for Mineral Bodies, and may be called a gentle heat, and what violent; First, now consider, where Nature leaves you, not only in the Mineral Kingdom, but in it to work on Gold and *Mercury*, which are both incombustible: Yet *Mercury* being tender, will break all Vessels, if the Fire be over extreme; Therefore though it be incombustible, and so no Fire can hurt it, yet also it must be kept with the Male Sperm in one Glass, which if the Fire be too big, cannot be, and by consequence the work cannot be accomplished. So then from the degree of heat that will keep Lead or Tin constantly molten, and higher, so high as the Glass will endure without danger of breaking, is a temperate heat; and so you begin your degrees of heat according to the Kingdom in which Nature hath left you.

As then the highest degree of heat which the root of a tree feels in the bowels of the earth; is not by far comparable to the lowest degree of heat an Animal hath; So the highest degree of heat a Vegetable will endure without burning, is too low for the first degree of Mineral heat as to our Work.

Rule XIV.

Know, that all your progress in this Work is to ascend in *Bus & Nubi*, from the Moon up to the Sun; that is in *Nubibus*, or in *Clouds*: Therefore I charge thee to sublime in a continual vapour, that the Stone may take Air, and live.

Rule XV.

Nor is this enough, but for to attain our permanent Tincture, the water of our Lake must be boyled with the Ashes of *Hermes Tree*; I charge thee then to boyl night and day without ceasing, that in the troubles of the stormy Sea, the Heavenly Nature may ascend, the Earthly descend.

For verily, if we did not Boyl, we would never name our work Decoction, but Digestion; For where the Spirits only Circulate silently, and the Compound below moves not by an Ebullition, that is only properly to be named Digestion.

Rule XVI.

Be not over hasty, expecting Harvest too soon, or the end soon after the beginning : For if thou be patiently supported, in the space of fifty days at the farthest, thou shalt see the Crows Bill.

Many (saith the Philosophers) do imagine our Solution to be an easie work; but how hard it is, they can only tell, who have tried and made Experience: Seest thou not a Grain of Corn, sow it, and after three days thou shalt only see it swell'd; which being dry'd, is the Corn it was before: Yet thou canst not say it was not cast into its due matrix; for the earth is its true place, but only it wanted its due time to Vegetate.

But things of an harder Kernel lie in the ground a far longer time, as Nuts and Plum Stones, for each thing hath its season; And this is a true sign of a natural Operation, that it stays its season, and is not Precipitate: Dost think then, that Gold the most solid body in the world? will change its Form in a short time; Nay, thou must wait and wait until about the 40th day utter blackness begins to appear; when thou seest that, then conclude thy Body is destroy'd, that is, made a living Soul, and thy Spirit is dead, that is Coagulated with the Body; but till this sign of Blackness, both the Gold and the mercury retain their Forms and Natures.

Rule XVII.

Beware that thy Fire go not out, no not for a moment, so as to let thy Matter be cold, for so Ruine of the Work will certainly follow.

By what has bee said, thou mayst gather, that all our work is nothing else but an uncessant boyling of thy Compound in the first degree of liquefying heat, which is found in the Metalline Kingdom, in which the Internal Vapours shall go round about thy matter, in which fume it shall both die, and be revived.

Rule XVIII.

Know, that when the White appears, which will be about the end of Five Months, that then the accomplishment of the white Stone approacheth; Rejoyce then, for now the King hath overcome Death, and is rising in the East with great Glory.

Rule XIX.

Then continue your Fire until the Colours appear again, then at last you shall see the fair Vermillion, the Red Poppy; Glorify God then, and be thankful.

Rule XX.

Lastly, you must boyl this Stone in the same water, in the same proportion, with the same Regimen (only your Fire shall then be a little slacker) and so you shall increase Quantity and Goodness at your pleasure.

Now the only God the Father of light, bring you to see this regeneration of the light, and make to rejoyce with him for ever hereafter in light. Amen.

AN
EXPOSITION
UPON
Sir George Ripley's
PREFACE

Written by
Eyrenaeus Philalethes, ANGLUS,
COSMOPOLITA:

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An Exposition
Upon the
PREFACE
OF
Sir George Ripley,
Canon of *Bridlington.*

To pass over his Prologue which is Adhorary to the desirously studious of this Art, and the beginning of the Preface, which is his Address to God who is the only Giver of Wisdom, to bestow upon him true Understanding, that he might lead his sinful Life to the glory of him, being over-swayed from what he was naturally, by him who is the Fountain of all Goodness; I shall take up his pattern for a Precedent rather of Imitation, than a Subject of Exposition.

And first, as touching those who shall bend themselves to this Science; Let them resolve that they undertake a most admirable piece of Work, in which (though far be it that I should think that God bestows upon any of us what we enjoy for our own Merits, but of his free Grace, yet withal) let me exhort any one who shall set his Studies this way, to address himself to the Author and Fountain of Goodness for his help, that he may have grace to honour God in the use of so great a Talent: For I perswade my self, that whomever God shall appoint to be Heir of such a Talent, that he will give him a heart to improve it aright; or else he will add to his Judgment for the abuse of so great a Blessing.

For whoever shall be wanton and dissolute, and live without the fear of God, what may he not do with such an Art? Unless God restrain him, as certainly he will, hiding this Secret from him or making it to him a snare and trap to betray his Life into the hands of

covetous men of the World, as many have found it by sad experience. Therefore the Lord give both me and thee that grace, that he may be continually before our Eyes, the Alpha and Omega of our Thoughts, Words and Actions: Even so Amen.

In the Beginning, when thou madest all of nought, a globous matter, and dark, under confusion, by him the beginning, &c.

First then cast thine Eyes upon the Works of God, and behold that work of his hands: Consider how the glorious work of Creation was begun by him, even by Christ, for whose sake this very Science is communicated unto the Sons of Men, as *Bernardus Trevisan* witnesseth, who in his epistle to *Thomas of Bononia*, saith of this work, That it is done (*Christi Gratia*) for Christs sake.

Consider how out of one Mass the Lord God by his powerful Command made all things to appear that are in heaven or in earth; the heavenly Bodies with their Influences above, and the earthly Matter below; which by the Rotation of the Heavens produce all sublunary products, through the Word of his Mouth.

Above all which and in all which God is, he is the Maker and the Lord of all above all, blessed for ever, who hath purchased to himself a People, and redeemed them, and they shall reign with him for ever and ever.

For as of one Mass was made all things right so in our practice must it be.

Apply all this to the work of this Mastery Analogically and Allegorically: for as the Lord made all the works which we see, so he did lay them all under his powerful word of Command, by which they continue to be what they are, and are carried with an uniform motion to that first Pattern or Draught of things.

All our Secrets of one Image must spring.

As then out of one mixed confused Mass all things had an actual existence according to their several kinds, so out of one Image all these Secrets must out of one Image all these Secrets must flow: Truth doth not consist in Heterogeneity, but in Unity; for God is one, and his works uniform; and the more Noble any thing is, the nearer to Simplicity.

As in Philosophers Books, whoso list to see.

To this the Sentences of the Philosophers concur, as many as have truly understood the *Secret*, as *Morien* often and plentifully witnesseth, *Geber*, *Trevisan*, and many others: The thing is but one in kind, though two in number; and though more things are used, yet till they be all brought to an oneness of Nature, they are not fit to enter into this work.

Our Stone is called the Lesser World.

And therefore our *Stone* is resembled to Man, who although he have a Wife different for him in Sex, yet one with him in kind; in which sence it is called the *Microcosm*, or Less World: for indeed, next to Man, who is the Image of God, it is the true little System of the Great World: I shall not particularize here now, for in its place it will fall in seasonably.

One and Three.

This *Stone* is also called *Trine* or *Trinity in Unity*, from the Homogeneity of the Matter, as *Trevisan* saith: Our *Stone* is made of one Root, that is, of two Mercurial Substances, &c. This *Trinity* is discerned in the Components; for first there is the Body, which is *Sol*, and the Water of *Mercury*, in which besides its Mercuriality there is a spiritual seed of *Sulphur*, which is the secret Fire. This is the *Trinity*, these are called the Body, the Soul, and the Spirit; the Body is the dead Earth, which increaseth not without the celestial Vertue; the Spirit is the Soul of our Air or Chameleon, which is also of a two-fold composure, yet made one inseparably; the Soul is the Bond of *Mercury*, without which our Fire never appears, nor can appear, for it is naked, it inhabits the *Fiery-Dragon*, and it yields his Soul to the true *Saturnia*, and is embraced by it, and both become one together, bearing the stamp of the most High, even the Oriental *Lucifer*, the Son of the Morning: This Soul is *Chalyb's* Magical Volatile, and very tender, the true Minera of *Sol*, out of which *Sol* naturally proceeds, which I my self know to be true, and have spoken of it in my little Latin Treatise, called *Introitus apertus ad occlusum Regis palatium*: This is the true *Sulphur*, which is imbibed by the Mercuriality of *Saturnia*, and notes it with the Regal Signet, and being united and revived into a Mineral Water by the mediation of *Diana's Doves*, it is the sharp Spirit which in the Water moves the Body to putrefie. Thus is the *Trinity* proportionable, to wit, three Natures in the first Mixture, the Work is carried an end to perfect Complement distinctly, according to the Vertue of a Body, Soul, and Spirit: for the Body would be never penetrative, were it not for the *Spirit*, nor would the *Spirit* be permanent in its super-perfect Tincture, were it not for the Body; nor could these two act one upon another without the Soul, for the *Spirit* is, an invisible thing, nor doth it ever appear without another Garment, which Garment is the Soul. In this it exerciseth its vertue: this *Soul*, as it is drawn from the *Saturnia*, solid and dry, is named our Air, or rather the Chameleon, which is an airy Body, changing its hue according to every Object it beholds, so our Air is of an astonishing Nature, out of which I know all Metals may be drawn, yea even *Sol* and *Luna*, without the Transmuting Elixir, of which in my little Latine Treatise (which was the Congest of mine own experience) I spake fully.

This Air being dissolved into Water Mineral, hath in it two of our *Trinity* united so really that in a short digestion the spiritual inhabiting invisible *Sulphur* will without addition congeal the *Mercury* in which it is, and make a visible congelated substance of *Luna* and then *Sol*.

Thus this *Trinity* is indeed *Unity*, one being Gold mature, fixt, and digested in act, the other Gold volatile, white, and crude, yet (*in posse*) to be made most fixt and solid by naked digestion. It is not then a delusion that Philosophers speak and write, for trust me (*Viderunt nudam sine veste Dianam, sciens loquor*) I know I speak true, which the Sons of Art do know, and can testifie with me.

Magnesia also.

This *Stone* is by the Philosophers called their *Magnesia*, their *Adrop*, &c. with many more names, and is indeed their *Stone* in the first true mixture of the true matter; for it is the true seed, and will produce, with the co-operation of external Fire, in a patient expectation of the time of nature, which is not long to him that understands it.

Of Sulphur and Mercury.

For that which is done by Nature in many years and ages, in the bowels of the Earth, decocting *Mercury* alone, without addition; Art, to make the work short, first impregnates *Mercury* with a spiritual seed of *Sulphur*, by which it becomes powerful in the dissolution of Metals, and then adds to it mature *Sulphur*, by which the work is shortened; and out of these two Parents of one Root is brought forth a Noble Son of a Regal Off-spring, that is not simply Gold, but our *Elixir*, then thousand times more precious.

Proportionate by Nature most perfectly.

Yet all this Work of the Artist is only to help Nature; we can do no more, yea we have professed and will profess, that we do only administer unto Nature herein: for all the Works of God are intire, we can but behold them and admire them; and therefore we seek our Principals where Nature is, and amend Nature in its own Nature. Nor do we make the simple believe, which is the Trade of Sophisters, that we by our Extractions and Manual Operations upon Vegetables, Minerals, urines, Hair, or the like, intend to make our so highly prized *Elixir*; but out of such things in which Nature hath put it, we by Art do make it appear by revealing what was hidden, and hiding what was manifest.

But many one marvelleth, and marvel may, and museth on such a marvelous thing.

Whereas those who work upon other matters than the true, do betray their ignorance herein most foully, that they do not consider the possibility of Nature, but work after their Fancy; as though out of combustible substances filthy in their nature, and made up of heterogeneities, might be produc'd a pure perfect Metallick Substance, by reason of its unseverable Unity invincible, and by vertue of it transcendent Excellency cleansing and fixing all leporous and fugitive bodies in the Mineral Kingdom, and reducing them to the Anatical proportion of perfectly digested *Sol* or *Luna*, according to the quality of the Medicine. When therefore their Principles are not found, their Conclusion is always deceitful, and then they not knowing Nature in her Operation, but interpreting the words of the crafty and envious Philosophers, according to the Letter, do stand admiring at the Unconformity of their Work to the Promises of the Philosophers, at least they understand their Books; they admire what this *Stone* is, if it be a Truth, or a Conceit; and why they (as well as any) do not attain it if possible: Such meditations usually fill the minds of unsuccessful Alchemists, who though they be (as they esteeme themselves) very Judicious, yet cannot stumble upon this unhappy *Stone*.

What is our Stone, &c.

They marvel at the uncouth difficulty of the thing, nor can they almost tell what to judge of what they read; forasmuch as all Philosophers say it is a very easie thing.

For Fowls and Fishes to us do it bring, every Man it hath: And it is in every place, in thee, in me, &c.

And in very deed the Antient Wise Men have so written, and do still write the same; as to wit, That it is found in a Dunghill, according to Morien, and for the easiness of the charge, they all write plentifully; so that in respect of time and cost, *Artephius* and *Flammel* say it is but the play of Children and work of Women; and therefore one Excellent Philosopher, writing of this Mastery, titles his Treatise, *Ludus Puerorum*; that is, Childrens Play.

To this I answer, That Mercury it is I wis.

Yet trust me, though the wise men thus write, and it be true, there is notwithstanding something to be added to their Sentence, according as the author of *Novum Lumen* well observed, as namely, That this Art is easie to him that understands it, as *Artephius* plainly expresseth; but to him that is ignorant of it, there is nothing can appear so hard; *The Wise Man*, saith *Sendivogius*, *finds it in a Dunghill, but the Fool cannot believe that it is in Gold*. I for my part (through the great mercy of God to me an unworthy and unthankful Creature) I know the Art to be true, but not that only, but also very easie; and I wonder that men of so great parts have studied it so long in vain; only this I am confident of; it is the gift of God; nor is it *in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but in God that giveth mercy*: In which respect I am bold, to the glory of God, to confess that I have the Art, and have Natures Operation in these so hidden Secrets, before mine eyes at this present writing, which I see hourly with admiration of the infinite Glory, in the beholding of such a great Glory in the Creatures, which, trust me, will ravish the Beholder, to see such a despised Infant as our *Mercury* is, to grow into so strong a *Heroe*, which the World cannot purchase.

But not the Common, called Quick-silver by name.

Yet the difficulty is not over when once it is known that the whole Secret consisteth in *Mercury*; for what more frequent among the Sophisters than to cry, *Our Mercury, &c.* and yet in the Work of Nature they are as blind as Moles? The cause is, for that Nature hath produced a Mineral Juice in the bowels of the Earth, which doth answer to most of the Philosophical Descriptions of their Water; as namely, that it is mineral, quick, current, without humectation, ponderous, and the like; which when the vulgar Alchymists read, they apply it, to this naughty *Mercury*, which for inward Qualities hath nothing in it like ours.

Some there are, who trusting to the Sentence of most of the Wise Men who have written concerning this Art, do reject *Mercury* vulgar in word, when as indeed they dote as much upon it as others, whenas by their mock-purgations they handle *Mercuries* divers ways by Sublimation, Precipitation, Calcination Manual, even to a black substance, like to Soot or

Lamp-black, by distillation from sundry *Faeces*, after grinding with Vinegar, by Calcination with Waters-fort, by Lotions innumerable, changing *Mercury* into sundry forms, and after quickening him: By all which Operations they imagine themselves secure of the Secret of our *Mercury*, whenas all such ways indeed are but Sophisms; and yet *Mercury* so abused is one and the same vulgar *Mercury*.

So that upon this Rock more have stumbled than upon any other, & yet will stumble, till they know how to distinguish our *Mercury* from Common, and our preparations from that of the vulgar Sophisters, which have no likeness one to another.

But Mercury, without which nothing being is.

For our *Mercury* is Essential and Radical to our Body, and partakes of the nature of it intirely, and therefore it is said to be that *Mercury* without which nothing is; for all things are distinguished by Philosophers by three Principles (although some Simples have not three, but only by Analogy) among which the most essential is *Mercury*, for the humidity of all things concrete is called their *Mercury*, which is most intire to all things, forasmuch as all things owe their beginning unto Water.

So then as the proper specifick *Mercury* of all things is so Essential unto them that nothing is without it, so our Mercury is so co-substantial with our Body, that it is one in kind with that *Mercury* of which it was by coagulation concrete, which vulgar *Mercury* is not, and therefore the Body is incrudate by this *Mercury*, and sends forth its Seed by mixture with it, through the co-operation of requisite temperate external heat.

All Philosophers record and truly fain the same.

Truly this I could confirm by infinite Testimonies of Philosophers, since there never wrote any who was indeed a true Artist, but he hath affirmed the same: *Geber, Artephius, Haly, Rotinus, Flammel, Sendivogius*, the Author of the Rosary, *Trevisan*, with many others, which would be very tedious to name.

So that indeed this Work of mine I wrote not because enough hath not been written before; for I do but echo to the Voice of all Philosophers, who have left upon record such clear Testimonies of the co-operation of Art and Nature herein, that if Wit were capable of this attainment, the Art would have been common ere now; and I do verily admiringly adore the Wisdom of God herein, that an Art so true, so natural, so easie, so much desired and sought after, should yet be so rarely found, that the generality of Men, Learned and Unlearned, do laugh at it as a Fable: it is therefore most certainly the Gift of God, who is and ever will be the Dispenser of it, according to his good pleasure.

But simple Searchers putteth them in blame, saying they hid it.

Most injurious are they therefore to the well-deserving Philosophers, who because they cannot understand their Writings, and through the mis-understanding of the possibility of Nature, do commit foul mistakes in their operations, and therefore reap a ridiculous

Harvest, they then blame the falsity of Authors, or at least accuse their difficult writing, not considering that Philosophers owe them nothing, and whatever they write for the information of the studious, is not of debt, nor yet of Covetousness, for they possess the greatest Treasure in the World; nor lastly of Ambition, for many suppress their names: it is of Love, therefore, and of desire to be helpful to the Studious; which Love to requite with reproaches, is a token of great ingratitude.

Moreover, it is to be understood that the most wise GOD hath a ruling hand herein, and all Sons of Art have their Commission as it were given them; they write and teach according to that permission which the Creator of all things hath given them. I may speak it experimentally, that when my self have had one intent, I have been so over-swayed with unpremeditated thoughts I the very writing, that I have taken notice of the immediate hand of God therein, by which I have been carried beyond what I intended.

And truly it is not our intent to make the Art common to all kind of men, we write to the deserving only; intending our Books to be but as Way-marks to such as shall travel in these paths of Nature, and we do what we may to shut out the unworthy: Yet so plainly we write, that as many as God hath appointed to this Mastery shall certainly understand us, and have cause to be thankful unto us for our faithfulness herein. This we shall receive from the Sons of this Science, whatever we have from others: therefore our Books are intended for the former, we do not write a word to the latter.

But they be blame-worthy which be no Clerks, and meddle with Philosophy.

Moreover, we write not our Books for the information of the illiterate, as though any vulgar mechanick Distiller, Alchymist, or Sophister, should readily carry away the Golden Fleece; or as though any covetous man, who makes Gain his utmost end, should readily gather the Apples of the *Hesperides*; nor yet that any, though learned, should by once or twice overly and slight reading (as the Dogs lap the Water of *Nilus*) straight-way be made a Philosopher: Nay verily, the majesty of this Science forbids so great impiety; it is the gift of God, and not of Men: Our Books are for those who have been or intend to be conversant about the search of nature; we hint the way; prayer to God and patient persisting in the use of means, must open the Doors. Let therefore profound Meditation, accompanied with the Blessing of God, Furnaces, Coals, Glasses, and indefatigable pains, be thy Interpreters, and let them serve for Commentaries upon our Writings. So I did, so I advise thee; and the Blessing of God attend all studios virtuous Searchers in this way.

But though it Mercury be.

Yet is not the knot untied, nor difficulties overcome, when once a man hath learned to sing this thredbare Song in Philosophy, *Est in Mercurio quiequid quaerunt sapientes*: for what *Sophister* who cannot make so great a clatter in these general terms as a son of Art? The greatest difficulty is to know what this *Mercury* is, that is so desirable and effectual.

Yet wisely understand wherein it is, and where thou shalt it seek.

Therefore let me advise every studious Searcher of this hid *Science*, to consider warily with himself what he seeks and would find; nor that only, but in what he would find it: for trust me it is not in this *Science* as some do imagine, that our *Arcanum* may be made out of anything, nor yet out of any bare thing: But in the knowing of the true Principle, consists the first true step to Perfection, according to the Poet, *Dimidium facti qui bene coepit habet*.

Else I counsel thee take not this work in hand.

But he who knows not this our Ocean in which our Water hath its flux and reflux, and our Fountain out of which he may draw this Water for his use, let him forbear this, as a most dangerous *Science*, for he may only expect loss in it, but no profit.

For Philosophers flatter Fools with Faire speech.

Nor let any expect comfortable Direction in our Books, who know not the true Matter, nor the true Keys by which our matter is brought forth from darkness into the light; for verily though we write for the inlightning of a son of Art, yet also for the fatal blinding of all such Owls and Bats who cannot behold the light of the Sun, nor can induce the splendor of our Moon. To such we propound rare tricks, suiting to their sordid fancy: to the covetous, an easie way without expence, in an inconsiderable time; to the lazy Book-men, a play, without tedious toil; to the unstable, rash, hasty multiplicity of Distillations.

But listen to me, for truly I will thee teach.

But to thee, supposing thy qualifications to be Honesty, Secrecie, Studiousness and Indefatigableness, we will shew the Truth; yet so, that it may be hid from the Vulgar, yet plain enough to an industrious attentive Header.

Which is this Mercury most profitable.

Philosophers have hidden much under the *Homonymium* of *Mercury*, so that it is no hard matter for those that peruse their Books to mistake them; yea as many as God will have excluded from this Art, shall certainly mistake.

For many things are by them named by the name of *Mercury*, which are altogether useless in this mastery, and many Processes have they deciphered which themselves never did. I for my part shall not tread in their metaphorical steps, but shall herein candidly follow the path of profound *Ripley*, whose Text I annex to my Discourse as I go, because it is an elaborate Piece, I excellent method; on whom I do not merely comment, for I write mine own experimental Knowledge, but rather intend this Treatise for a Light to that excellent Light in Alchymy; these Labours of mine being intire of themselves; Only to help thee to my utmost, I have confined my Discourse to his Method, which I might (as other Philosophers have done) have scattered here and there confusedly.

Being to thee nothing deceivable.

As then I have chosen *Ripley's* Method to follow, so will I imitate his Ingenuity, and do solemnly profess not to be deceivable to thee in any thing, though I shall not so unfold the Mysteries, that bare reading shall suffice to shew the unveiled *Diana*.

Know therefore assuredly, that when the Philosophers say, That their Matter is everywhere, &c. This they speak only fo the blinding of all such who taking the Philosophers meaning according to the bare sound of their words, do reap Trifles instead of Treasures. I shall therefore let you understand that this subject of the Philosophers is considered either in reference to its Matter, or formal Vertue; in reference to the former, it is a concrete of Water, as all other Compounds are; in respect of the latter, it participates of a Celestial Vertue, and that in a high degree in both respects. It is said to be in every place: for the original matter, which is Water, passeth equally through the whole Family of Concretes: and for the celestial Influence, it is so universal that nothing is hidden from the heat of it: so that indeed in this sence it is said to be every where. Moreover, the *Stone* being the *System* of the great World, doth in some way or other represent everything which is or can be perceived by man; I mean in reference to some or other operation, colour or quality, and therefore the Wise have described it almost by all things imaginable, for to everything in some or other circumstance it hath resemblance.

It is more near in some things than in some.

Yet to speak properly for information, and not to conceal the Secret, we profess that there is but one kind in which our *Stone* is found, and in number two: understand me not as the Philosopher finds things in his first laborious preparation, for so one of the two subjects which being of one kind enter the supernatural work of Generation of our fiery *Stone*, I say our crude Sperm flows from a Trinity of Substances in one Essence, of which two are extracted out of the earth of their Nativity by the third, and then become a milky Virgin-like Nature, drawn fro the *Menstruum* of our sordid Whore.

Take heed therefore what I to thee write.

And now I call God to witness that I will shew you a great Mystery: our Stone is in some part of a perfect nature, which we would exalt into a more than most perfect, and for this end we stand in need of our true Fountain, which I have elsewhere described, and shall not now repeat: This Fountain hath three Springs, and these are three Witnesses which testifie to the Artist of the truth of his proceedings; these are the Spirit, the Water, and the Blood, and these three agree in one; the Water is a Mercurial Bond, which the Sophister s can behold so far as the outward shell reacheth, but the wise man can behold his hidden secret Centre: the Blood is of our *Green Lyon*, which is indeed the greenest or rawest of the three: for it hath no manner of Metalline *Sulphur*, no not a grain, and therefore is *Totally Volatile*, and it is more raw than common Water, and yet it is called the Blood, for a most secret reason, because it is the seat of his Life; yea the Spirit by this Soul of our *Green Lyon*, is made manifest, and is united to it, so that though it be very green or unripe, yet that inhabits it, which is both pure and ripe, and can and will digest with the Water, and make both become life with life: Now the Spirit is nothing else but a Chaos, the Wonder of the Wonders of God, which every man almost hath, and knows it not,

because as it appears to the World it is compact in a vile despised form; yet is it so useful, that in humane Affairs none can want it: to the Philosopher it appears united to the Blood, that is, of our *Green Lyon*, which truly is not a Lyon till the spirit be joined with it, and then it is made able to devour all Creatures of its kind.

And these three agree in one, they are not absolutely one, mark that; our Fire is not of the matter, and yet it is united with the matter, as if it were of one form with it; and there is an agreement in one, though not a radical union; for the spirit (which is Fire) is separated from the Water and the Blood; and then is our Lyon actually Green, but ceaseth then to be our Lyon, but is the true matter to multiply Emeraulds more glorious than natural.

*For if to thee Knowledge never come,
Therefore yet shalt thou me not twite.*

And now indeed if any be ignorant, let him be ignorant; I know not what more to say, and not transgress the silence of *Pythagoras*. I have told you that our matter is two-fold, crude and fixed; the fixed is by Nature perfected to our hands, and we need only to have it made more then most perfect, which Nature alone could never perform; nor is there any thing that can thus exalt Tinctures, but our dissolving Water, which I told you floweth from three Springs; the one is a common Well at which all draw, and of which Water many use; this Well hath in it a Saturnine drossiness, which make to Waters unuseful; these frigid superfluties are purged by two other Springs, through which the Water of this Well is artificially caused to run: these Springs make but one Well, whose Waters appear dry, the humidity being sealed; the Well it self is surrounded by an Arsenical Wall, the slimy bottom abounds with the First *Ens* of Mineral *Salt* and *Sulphur*, which acuate the Water of the first Well, whose primary quality is Coldness; being thus actuated, it becomes so powerful a *Menstruum*, and so pleasant to the Metals, that for its peculiar Vertue it is chosen for to be the Bath of the Sun and Moon.

For I will truly now thee excite to understand well Mercuries three.

But because one Book never is sufficient in this Mastery, to discover all that is to be known, and other Authors write variously of *Mercury*: Attend further what I have to say to thee concerning this point.

We have in our work properly three *Mercuries*, of which one is to be by the Philosopher prepared, of which I have spoken; and this being joynd with the perfect body, and set to digest, the Glass is shut, and then in this first Composition is the Matter called *Rebis*. That is, (two things) to wit in Number, for you may yet separate each from other in its intire nature.

These two being joined, do operate so within the Vessel till the Compound become a black Powder, which then called the Ashes of the Platter.

This Powder relenteth into a black Broth, which is called *Elixir*, or Water extracted by Elixation, which reiterate Liquefaction.

This Elixir is divided into a more subtile part, which is called *Azoth*, and the grosser part is called *Laton*, which is by *Azoth* washed and whitened.

In *Rebis* the matters are confused, in Elixir they are divided, and in *Azoth* they are conjoined with an inseparable union.

The Keys which of this Science be.

These *Menstruums* or *Mercuries* are the very Keys of this Science: the first is the Philosophers Key, the other two are Natures Keys.

Raymund his Menstrues doth them call.

They are called by the wise men *Menstrues*, in three respects: first for the secrecie of them; as those Lunary Tributes of Women are hid from common view, so these *Mercuries* from vulgar Searchers. Secondly for the Prognosticks of them; as those in Women betoken maturity to conceive, so these are called *Menstrues* because they are fit for procreation. Thirdly in regard of the office of them; as those in Women are accounted nutritive for the Embrion, so our Child is nourished by these to perfect age and strength.

Let me add a fourth reason, and that is, in respect of the time; the Philosophical preparation will hardly give thee thy first *Menstruum* fit for thy use in less than a month. And after conjunction thy first *Menstruum* will begin to hold of the nature of the Body in another month, and then thou shalt see a show of the second *Menstruum*; but wait till another month, and thou shalt see thy second *Menstruum* compleat; then yet wait a third month, and thou shalt see a show of the third *Menstruum*, which in the fourth month will perfectly exuberate, and then with it thou shalt soon see perfected *Sulphur* of Nature, for it is Fire of Nature; and in this first Exaltation is the white Stone perfected.

Without them truly no Truth is done.

He then that knoweth not the Secret of our *Menstruals*, let him forbear the practice of the Work, for verily he may expect nothing but a sophistical Delusion instead of the true Work of Nature: He is like a man that would enter an inaccessible Castle without a Key, or shoot in a Bow without a string.

But two of them be superficial.

Now that you may know our Secrets exactly, we shall faithfully discover unto you our Experience, as cordially as a Brother may declare to a Brother; and shall reveal what I never found yet revealed in any Author.

Here are in our *Mercury* three Mercurial Substances, which may well be called *Menstrues*, the one the more gross part (which though it be a Water, yet it being the most palpable part, and visible, may be termed the Body of the Water: the last is a Fiery Form, which is the Blood of *Cadmus*; this is a real invisible form, which is essentially and

formally *Sol Volatile*: the second is the mean Soul, which Philosophers without equivocation call *Saturn's* Child; the middle substance of these three, are made into one wonderful *Mercury*, which hath not its like in the world.

Now for the superficiality of the two first *Menstrues* or *Mercuries*, and the essentiality of the third, know and understand, for our speech will be very mysterious: Know I say, what it is to be superficial, and what essential: Essence you know is invisible, and more formal than material, which doth actuate the matter, and ripens it; but that which is superficial is visible, and may be seen, and is more material and passive: Now those two first are superficial, are the Water and the Blood, the essential *Menstrue* is the Spirit, which all are in one; yet distinguished in number, though not in kind.

The third Essential to Sun and Moon

So then two are material passive substances, which are united in our sophical *Mercury*; the third is an active essence which is hid in our *Mercury*, which is essential to Sun and Moon, because it is a Fire, wic is *Sol volatile*; and as the Artist may govern this *Mercury*, it will digest the passive Principles either into *Sol* or *Luna*, at the Philosophers pleasure.

Their Properties I will declare right soon.

I shall by and by in its place describe to you all the Properties of these three *Menstrues*, when I come to it; in the mean time take notice that by this *Mercury* in which are three *Mercuries*, or *Menstrues*, the perfect Bodies will be calcined, and then dissolved into *Mercury*, which is not then so properly called a *Menstrue*, for it is the Fruit it self, called *Azoth*, or Virgins Milk; which is a digestion beyond the *Menstrues*.

*And Mercury of Metals essential,
Is the Principle of our Stone material.*

The Bodies when they are dissolved do transmute the foresaid *Mercuries* by their own ferment, into their own nature, for the Fire of Nature assimilates all that nourisheth it to its own likeness; and then our *Mercury* or *Menstrue* vanisheth, that is, it is swallowed up in the Solary Nature, and all together make but one universal mercury, by intimate union, and this *Mercury* is the material Principle of the Stone; for before our *Mercury* (as it was compounded of three *Mercuries*) had in it two which were superficial, and the third essential to Sol and Luna only, not to the Stone: for Nature would produce these two out of it, by artificial decoction: but when the perfect Bodies are dissolved, they transmute the *Mercury* (that dissolved it) and then there is no more repugnancy in it, then there is no longer a distinction between superficial and essential, but all is become essential; And this is that one matter of the Stone, that one thing which is the subject of all Wonders.

In Sol and Luna our Menstrues are not seen.

When thou art come to this, then shalt thou no more discern a distinction between the Dissolver and the Dissolved; for the Water shall neither ascend nor descend, go out nor in

alone, but the Fire of nature shall accompany it, and the colour of the mature Sulphur, which is unseparably joined, shall tincture thy Water.

It appeareth not but by effect to sight.

So that thou shalt never see them severed one from the other, but shalt discern them by the effect, and by the eye of the mind more then of thy body: Therefore saith the Philosopher, *Azoth* and Fire are sufficient for then in the middle and end, but not in the beginning, for then they are not our *Mercury*, that is our universally united *Mercury*. But in the first days of the Stone, there appear four Elements, of which three are in the *Mercury* sublimed, and one in *Sol*, which is counted all for Earth till it be dissolved, and then it fermenteth the *Mercury*, and makes the three qualities of it, which it hath, drawn from three substances to unite into one *Mercury* which hath all in it one essential property, and that is Solary, which first will shew the Moon in the full and is the true one matter of all our Secrets, our one Image out of which springs white and red, not bare *Sol* and *Luna*, as will spring out of our *Mercury*, which we prepare with our hands, but the white and red Elixirs, which shew that this *Mercury* which Nature hath made in the Glass, without our help, is far beyond that *Mercury* which we prepared with a laborious toil.

*This is the Stone of which we mean,
Who so our Writing conceiveth aright.*

And verily he that hath well studied our Books shall understand that this general one *Mercury* which we call *Azoth*, is indeed our *Stone*, which wanteth only digestion, for it is inseparably united, not in a Dyptative Conjunction, which is barely a mixture of the Sun with our *Mercury*; or Triptative, which is a mixture and union of the Body, Soul, and Spirit, which is before Putrefaction; but Tetraptive, which is the Anatization of qualities, which is the first degree of the white Stone, which will then grow higher and higher, till the Moon come up to the full.

It is a Soul and Substance bright.

This Stone or Virtue multiplicative is not in relation to the matter, but the form, which doth make the matter to receive and after impress Tinctures: for who could believe that *Sol*, in which the virtue is but unary, I mean only sufficient for itself, should by the addition of our *Mercury*, which in reference to its material parts, is below the degree of *Sol*, and needs digestion, and that only to maturate it to the height of *Sol*, I say that by the mixture of those two Venerial Tinctures, should be multiplied in a manner infinitely.

Of Sol and Luna a subtile Influence.

Were it not that this Tincture which in the *Mercury* is *Sol* and *Luna*, were as a Soul, that is, a spiritual thing, it were impossible; it is therefore the very *Dos faecunditatis* which is in Minerals (which doth appear in their Lunary and Solary Tinctures) which was put and

planted on and in them, in the first Benediction of (*Crescite & Multiplicamni*) which increasing is in some things *juxta quantitatem*: This is in quality.

Whereby the earth receiveth resplendence.

So then the matter of Minerals is a dead passive thing, in which there is included a Light, which is cloathed (*vitali Aura aetheria*) as I may speak; this form of Light is it which doth actuate and specificate or determine the matter; and this splendor or Light is in all Metals, *Sol* or *Luna*, which are conspicuous more eminently in those two perfect Bodies *Gold* and *Silver*, but are in other Mineral Bodies more clouded and Eclipsed with an earthly faeculent interposition between the fulgor and the superfluities, which is the Imperfection of such Bodies; and is accompanied with a rawness and inconstancy in the *Fire*, the Impure carrying away the Pure.

*For what is Sol and Luna, saith Avicen,
But earth which is pure White & Red?*

So then *Sol* and *Luna* is more formal then material; for the mater is a gross Terrene Substance, but the form of Light purifying the Substance, is a most subtile spiritual thing which doth ennoble the grossness of the matter by a Fire-abiding Tincture.

*Take from it the Said Clearness, and then
That Earth will stand but in little stead.*

But if this Tincture could be separated from the *pondus* of the matter, the remainder would be an unprofitable Terrestriety: Our work therefore is for to advance this Light by exaltation in the matter; which as it in its simplicity is but in unity, so it may be brought to a Virtue millenary, and gradually is exalted, that the matter would seem to be quite swallowed up of the form; and yet in this exaltation it is not the *moles* or *pondus* that is the Solary or Lunary Virtue, but a Light whose multiplication is not in the increase of *pondus*, but in the circulation of Natures; till the Heavenly illuminate the Earthly with an immediate Beam, all interposition being removed out of the way.

The whole Compound is called our Lead

For to attain this admirable multiplication Philosophers have found out a most subtile yet very natural Cosmposition, which hath been not a little sought for by many: this the wise Antients, both to describe the Fountain of these Mysteries, as also to hide the Secret from the unworthy, have mystically called their Lead.

The quality of Clearness from Sol and Luna doth come.

This Lead, so called from the appearing baseness of its original, is notwithstanding of an admirable power, for it contains the Bath for *Sol* and *Luna*; that is, the *Sun* and *Moon* enter into it, and send out their Tinctures into it, which it receiveth, and like to a fertile Soil ennobleth it an hundred and an hundred fold.

These are our Menstrues, both all and some.

Thus have I in general given you a description of our *Menstrues*, which are three, *Acetum*, *Elixir*, and *Azoth*; which I shall now particularly describe.

Bodies with the first we Calcine naturally perfect.

The first *Menstrue* we call our sharp Vinegar, with infinite other names, which it will be tedious to recite, and with this is made our Magical Solution of Sol; this, saith *Sendivogius*, is (*Menstruum mundi in sphaera Lunae toties rectificatum ut posit calcinare Solem.*) In this, saith the noble Author of the Hermetical *Arcanum*, is made *Eclipsis Solis & Lunae in Cauda Draconis*: this is, as *Artephius* saith, the only Instrument in the World for our Art: for it causeth the Sun to putrefie; that is, it loseth its hard compaction, and makes it to be an impalpable Powder, as saith the truth-telling Flammel. In this Calcination, as all Authors testifie, and our own Experience hath taught us, Natures are united, Colours are mingled, and one holds of the other, and this is the period of the first *Menstruum*, which ends in this Circulation.

But none which been unclean.

This Blackness many erroneously conceive to be uncleanness, but it is not so, for it is only the Sepulcher of our King; in which, though he seem to have lost what he was, yet from hence he shall arise what he never was before

Except one.

And verily there is nothing of an unclean nature that entreth our Composition except one thing, which is the Instrument moving the *Gold* to putrefie; and in regard that it doth naturally incline the Body to putrefie, and is as it were the very grave of it, it is called by some Philosophers *Aqua foetida*, and by some *Mortis Immundities*; yet indeed it is not in its own nature unclean, but made pure, as pure as the Art of the Artist can make it with the help of Nature, joining Consanguinity with Consanguinity.

*Which is usually
Named by Philosophers their Lyon Green.*

This hidden body, or rather Chaos, the Philosophers have highly extolled and deeply concealed, but they usually call it their *Green Lyon*, which many mistaking apply to *Venus*, and some to *Vitriol*, which is all one in manner, *Vitriol* being only Copper corroded by an embryonated Salt; but Fools, saith *Ripley* (in his Errors) call it the *Green Lyon*. I shall discover this Subject to you, so far as I dare, in this following Song.

**The Learned
SOPHIES FEAST.**

*Whoso would lasting and eternal Fame
Deserve, Learn thou the Lyon Green to tame.
But this before you can by Art attain,
To study him to know thou must be fain;
Nor is it, trust me, for a stupid fool,
Nor yet for one brought up in vulgar School.
I shall him therefore lively out pourtray,
Lest from this banquet you go lean away.
This Song I stile the Learned Sophies Feast,
Prepare your self to come a worthy Guest:
With Mind attentive to my words give heed,
Lest you, instead of Meat, on Fancies feed.
This horrid Beast, which we our Lyon call,
Hath many other Names, that no man shall
The truth perceive, unless that God direct,
And on his darkened Mind a Light reflect.
Tis not because this Subject doth consist
Of Animal Components (he that list
May well conceive) that we do therefore use
The name of Beasts; nor is it to abuse
He Readers; he whoever so doth think,
With stupid Sots himself doth hereby link.
But it's because of the transcendent force
It hath, and for the rawness of its source,
Of which the like is no where to be seen,
That it of them is nam'd the Lyon Green.
Now listen, and I shall to you disclose
The Secret, which ties past hath like a Rose
Been hedged so on every side with briars,
That few could pluck it at their hears desires.
There is a substance of Metalline Race,
If you the matter view, whose louring face
A Sophister would at first sight so scare,
That he it to approach would never dare;
The form that's visible is very vile,
And doth Metalline Bodies so defile,
That none to see it could be brought to think
That thence should spring bright Phoebus Pearly Drink:
And yet, O strange! A wonder to relate,
At this same Spring naked Diana sat.*

*Who horn'd Acteon for his ventrous peeping,
This Spring two dreadful Bests have in their keeping;
Which drive away rash Searchers to their rue,
Them to inchant, the Art who do not know.
Yet further for to answer your desire,
I say this subject never felt the fire
Of Sulphur Metalline, but is more crude
Then any Mineral, which doth delude
Th' unwary, and in Fire fugitive
'Tis found th' impure away the pure doth drive;
And its Components are, A Mercury
Most pure, though tender, with a Sulphur dry
Incarcerate, which doth the flux detain.
This Sulphur with malignant qualities
Doth so the Mercury infect which with it lies
That though they have no fundamental union,
Yet hereby is debarr'd the sweet communion
Which otherwise would surely intercede
Between the Virgin-Nymph, which we call Lead
And her dear Sister which in Silver streams
Runs down abundantly, then should the beams
Of bright Apollo cause the Dews which fall
From these commixed Waters, from the tall
Aspiring Mountains, gliding through the Vales,
Fire to conceive of nature, which avails
To warm the Bath for Sol, in which he may
Descend and wash, and with fair Phebe play,
Till flesh and youth renewing, they be able
To shine with glory, aye multiplicable.
Know then this Subject, which the sure Base
Of all our Secrets is, and it uncase;
And chuse what thou shalt find of greatest price,
Leave Sophisters, and follow my advice:
Be not deluded, for the truth is one,
'Tis not in many things, this is our Stone.
At first appearing in a Garb defil'd,
And to deal plainly, it is Saturn's Child,
His price is mean, his venom very great,
His constitution cold, devoid of heat.
Although 'tis mixed with a Sulphur, yet
This Sulphur is combustible, to get
Another Sulphur Metalline and pure,
And mix with the Mercurial part be sure.
This Sulphur in the House of Aries seek,
There shall you find it, and this is the Greek
Alcides, which with Jason Journey took*

*To Colchos, this is it which never Book
As yet reveal'd, and yet I will proceed,
And greater Mysteries unfold with speed.
Our Subject it is no ways malleable,
It is Metalline, and its colour sable,
With intermixed Argent, which in veins
The sable Field with glittering Braches stains.
The pure parts from the impure, thou shalt never
With Fire or Water for this work dissever.
Nor with the hardest iron dig it thence,
For Steel 'gainst this affordeth no defence.
So easily as any little Boy
A Giant can suppress, this can destroy
Alcides Brest-plate, with his Target stout,
And put opposing Armies to the rout
Of Swords and Spears, O wondrous force, and yet
The Sages this have seen, when they did sit
In Council, how this Fury they might tame,
Which (as unparallel'd) they then did name
Their Lyon Green, they suffered him to prey
On Cadmus Sociates, and when the fray
Was over, they with Dian's Charms him ty'd
And made him under Waters to abide,
And wash'd him clean, and after gave him Wings
To fly, much like a Dragon, whose sharp Springs
Of fiery Water th' only way was found
To cause Apollo his harp-strings to sound.
This is the true Nymphs bath, which we did try,
And prov'd to be the Wise Mens Mercury.*

In this Song you have the *Lyon Green* so described, that more I dare not, more I cannot, unless I should pen you down the Receipt *verbatim*, which God and Reason forbids.

*He is the mean the Sun and Moon between,
Of joining Tinctures with perfectness.*

Learn then to know this *Green Lyon* and its preparation, which is all in all in the Art, it is the only know, untie it, and you are as good as a Master; for whatever then remains is but to know the outward Regimen of Fire, for to help on Natures internal Work.

As Geber thereunto beareth witness.

Moreover be not various, seeking that in many things which is verily but in one thing; for in all the world there is not any one subject but this: *Ripley*, after the Rehearsal of all his Errors, tells you, That he never saw true Work but one: And *Geber*, *Exacte (inquit) singula sumus experti, idque probates rationibus & nihil invenimus praeter solum*

unctusam huiditatem penetrantem & tingentem, &c. And *Artephius* saith, There is no other subject in the World for this Art, naming it, although in a Philosophick manner, wonderous subtilly. I counsel thee, with *Ripley*, to learn to know this one thing which I have faithfully declared, and I know what I have declared experimentally to be true: He that understands me will have cause to thank God and me for what Light I have given to *Ripley*: He that with me understands *Ripley* will easily discern.

*With the second which is an humidity
Vegetable reviving what earst was dead.*

Our second Water, or *Menstruum*, or Fire, is our Elixir, which is an Elixation of our Matters, or drawing forth the Tincture out of our dissolved Bodies; which doth cause our dead Body to rise, and to spring forth in Sprigs and Branches, like to the tender Grass in the Spring out of the Field; and this so long until an intire Tripartite Union be made of Body, Soul and Spirit. In this operation our Body of the Sun hath its dead moles turned into a living quick active Spirit, and our Compound after death begins to sprout, and to shew its true Vegetative nature, it is indowed with a green Colour, which is the sign of the growth of all things.

Both Principles Material must loosed be.

Here your Natures are changed, and hold one of another, and become one inseparably; that is, the Solary Nature is not to be divided from the *Mercury*, nor the Fire from the Water, but with one the other is always moved; and so though there yet be a *superius* and an *inferius*, an *ascendens* and *subsicens*, yet now *quad est superius est ficut id quod est inferius*.

And Formals, else they stand in little stead.

Now between the two Extrems of *Mercury* and *Sulphur*, you have a marvelous *medium* ingendered: now the form of *Gold* is taken quite away, and it hath at present an accidental imperfect form, which is the mean through which it passeth to its transcendent perfection.

These Menstrue therefore know, I thee reed.

Labour with all thy might to attain the skill of these two first *Menstruums* Theoretically and Practically; the first is to be by thee prepared and proportioned in the beginning, before thou attempt any thing. When thou has the true Nymphs Bath, then joyn this Spouse with her beloved Husband, and see if she will make his Body fall to sunder in impalpable Atoms: Then let *Saturn* be thy Chamberlain, and let him gather together these dissevered members, and of them make one broth, in which is blackness compleat, after which followeth greenness; and then shalt thou know that thy Compound is by the living God endowed with a vegetable Soul.

*Without the which neither true Calcination
Done may be, nor true Dissolution.*

He who knoweth not the Mystery of these two *Menstrues*, can never attain either to Calcination or Dissolution of the Philosophers: The Mystery of the first consists in the actuating of thy Vinegar with the Blood of our *Green Lyon*, and the Soul of the *Fiery Dragon*, which is by seven *Eagles*, which are seven Cohobations and Depurations of thy feminine Sperm, till it conceive a spiritual seed, or true natural heat, to animate thy young King.

The Mystery of the second *Menstrue* consists in the true proportion of thy first Water, with its own Body, and the administration of true heat external, by which the combat between the *Eagles* and the *Lyon* may be stirred up; thus shall the Duel be ended, the Lyon rent in pieces, and the Carrion of its Carcass shall kill the eagles; and out of these Atoms shall the second Water be made apparent by Dissolution.

With the third Humidity most permanent.

The third *Menstrue* is by Artephius called the second Water, for our second he doth joyn together with the first; although where he doth particularize the three Fires, he doth then distinguish three *Menstruums*.

The like course many Philosophers have used in the description of their Operations, some omitting the first, or at least confounding it with the second, for the greater obscuring of the Art.

But we have beyond what any have hitherto performed) particularly insisted upon the three in order, and have taken more pains in the discovery of the first, because the wise Antients have taken such pains to conceal that most; and after that we have made an orderly proceeding to the Second, which we have in like sort handled, and this being performed, we do now address our selves to the third.

This is called by *Ripley* a most permanent Humidity: and note by the way, that the first Water is called by Authors a permanent Water likewise; but take notice that there is a different reason for each denomination; for first of all, all *Mercury* is Water permanent, that is, the parts have no Heterogeneity, they will not leave one another in the examen of the Fire, but either all flyes and is unconstant, or else all abides and is constant in the tryal of *Vulcan*: and so is our first *Menstruum*. And in this our *Mercury* and *Common Mercury* agree, besides the identity of matter, for it is the form only that distinguisheth them. But in the next place, our Water is permanent with the Body, which *Common Mercury* is not; that is, it by digestion doth unite, not only adhere to it, so that both together do make one *Individuum*, which is done by our secret Conjunction. But lastly, when the Body is thus by our Water reduced, at last it comes that the four Elements are united in this Water. After Putrefaction and Purification, which is the last most laudable Tetraptive Conjunction, and now the Tincture is the Spirit, and the Spirit is the Sol, and the Soul is the Body, and all these are one.

Incombustible and unctuous in his Nature.

This is our true Incombustible Mercury, for it is totally purged from all its burning faeculency; *Gold* though it be a pure Metal, in respect of others which are imperfect, yet compared with our Stone it hath also its faeces; but this when it is taken away by Putrefaction and Ablution, then becomes a total separation of what is precious from what is vile, and as the Philosopher well saith, In the troubles of this our stormy Sea, all that is pure will ascend, and all that is impure descend, and will abide in the bottom of the Vessel in the form of a combust Earth; then is made the new Heaven and the new Earth, pray to God then that thou mayst see when there shall be no more Sea. Yet I say before thou hast this final Inceration, thou has this most incombustible *Menstruum*, and most permanent, in which nature and Art have conspired and made a Purification, beyond what Nature alone could ever have brought to pass.

Therefore this *Mercury*, though it be liquid and in the form of *Mercury*, it is notwithstanding Unctuous, that is, great with Child, which Child is *Sulphur*, which *Sulphur* it will in the end bring forth, and shall then be sealed up in the belly of this Infant, which is when all is fixed, and *Mercury* is then hidden under the fixity of *Sulphur*.

Hermes Tree unto Ashes is burnt.

It doth therefore naturally incline it self unto Inceration, for Earth is the Burse of our Stone, and in it its virtue attained, and its perfection intire, according to noble *Hermes* in his *Smaragdine Table*; *Vis* (saith he) *ejus est integra si versa fuerit in terram*. By vertue of this third permanent pure incombustible Water, thou shalt at last attain a total Inceration; for this Water though it be wholly *Mercurial* to sight, yet hath in it in its own Bowels its own *Sulphur*, nay it is all *Sulphur*, and that all incombustible. This work is called the burning of *Hermes Tree* to Ashes, which is done thrice; first, into a black unctuous Calx, as impalpable as Atoms, which are only to be discerned in the Sun-beams: secondly, into a fine white Calx, in which is the Moon in the full: the third, a red Calx, in which the *Sun* is Orient. Now know that the first Calcination is from the vertue of the *Sun*, in which the *Sun* seeks to rise, but by reason of the equal opposition it finds from the water, it is beclouded, and after through the interposition of the Earth, totally Eclipsed.

This Fire therefore, because of the mixture of it with the natural Fire of *Sol*, which is in it dissolved, is called unnatural; the first Fire of our Water is called Fire against nature, and the Fire of the *Sulphur* of the perfect Body is called Fire of nature. In this operation, through the power and will of the Almighty, the Body which hath been so long dead, is by this Water quickned, and actually sprouts like to a Vegetable; for when the pores of it are opened by the moistening of our Water, it straight begins to follow the Spirit upon the Fire, the Spirit then doth mount aloft; which the Body thus made tender cannot follow, but as the Poet saith, *non passibus aequis*, as a Son that is little followeth his Father. It therefore in a token of its friendship with the Water, doth bud forth like to the tender Frost upon the surface of the earth, and retains a quantity of the Water with it self, occupying a middle room between the bottom and the top; in which respects the Philosophers have called it their Soul, which to shew its union to the Body, riseth no higher then it can have a root or Basis below; and to manifest its love to the Spirit, it doth as it were climb after it higher and higher for its season, until at length it return from

whence it came: And verily this Soul is the Magnetical *Medium* between the Spirit and the Body, which doth desire the Spirit as its true drink; and therefore as it grows dry, it doth attract the greater drops of sweat, which falling to the earth, arise in a pleasant fume, and do moisten the growing virtue with a pleasant dew, by reason of which it grows every day more and more.

This Tree of ours some have compared to one thing, and some to another; some to a Cypress or Fir-Tree, which indeed may seem to resemble it; others to Haw-Thorn Trees, as *Ripley* in his *Gate of Cibation*; others to Shrubs and Bushes, others to thick Woods, and in these Woods, saith *Lambesprint*, there is a Beast all over black. I confess there is a similitude between our germination, and all these; others, because of the Humidity of the Compound, which is ever and anon returning by drops, have likened it to a Moorish low Bog, in which Rushes grow, and Toads keep; others have called it their Coral, which is indeed the fittest comparison, for in our Tree there are Shoots and Sprigs, without any thing that may be properly likened to Leaves; as then Coral is an union of a Vegetable and a Stony nature, so is it in our tree, (for Stones and Minerals are of one Imposition) our Tree is Metalline, and yet through the power of God it seems to Vegetate. 2ly. Coral grows under the water, where one would think no Vegetable could grow; ours also grows in a heat which no Vegetable but it self can grow. 3ly. Coral hath many Sprigs and Branches without Leaves; so is our tree. 4ly. Coral as it is under water hath a most exquisite biting taste, which in the Air it quickly loseth; so our Stone, or Tree Metalline, in its place is of a pontique fiery nature, but taken out, it in a short space loseth the same irrecoverably. 5ly. There are five sorts of Coral, the common Gray, the Milk White, the green, the Bloud Red, and the Black; so our Tree is at his periods all of these colours, and in this form, which Tree by the heat of the Fire is dried to a Calx, which is called the Ashes of Hermes Tree. Lastly, Coral is more heavy then any other Vegetable; and so is our tree beyond all Vegetables, yea and Coral it self, in ponderosity. It was not therefore a fortuitous comparison that Philosophers named their Mastery the Tree of the *Hesperides*, nor is it in vain that they bring in *Jason* pouring Broth at the Root of it to attain the mastery; for verily the wise Philosopher (noted by *Jason*) so governing his Fire, that the Lunaria or Water of the *Moon* may return to the Earth in which these Trees grow, the Earth will at length be so dried by the heat of the Sun, that it shall afford the Tree no more moisture; then shall the Tree it self be calcined by the prevailing heat, into a Powder impalpable, first black, then white, then red. Therefore is our little Glass by *Flammel* in his Summary named the *Philosophers Garden*, in which the *Sun* riseth and setteth, and the Philosophers Tree is moistned with the dew of Heaven day and night without intermission.

It is our natural Fire most sure.

This *Mercury* drawn out of the *Sun* is the true natural heat, in the actuating and stirring up of which is the whole Secret of the Mastery; this is the honoured Salt, when this is made to appear thy operations will be so admirable, that they will take up thy whole worldly content, and with their variety the time will seem so short, that thou wilt not take notice of any tediousness in the passing of it.

Our Mercury, our Sulphur, our Tincture pure.

This is our *Mercury*, which cannot be attained with money, which is nothing but *Sulphur*, and *Sulphur* which is nothing but tincture, in which all Elements are proportioned perfectly.

*Our Soul, our Stone born up with wind,
In the Earth ingendred. Bear this in mind.*

This is our Body, which is now become all Soul and all Spirit, all the pure parts are separated now totally from the uncleanness of the dead; it is our Stone, though it be as yet volatile, yet it hath all in it essential to our Stone, and therefore though it fly and sublime for the space of seven times, yet his Nurse is the earth, and therefore to it as to its Nest it returns, and in seven sublimations what was before all Heaven, will now become all Earth. And this is the period of all Rotations, and Natures consummation.

*This Stone also tell thee I dare,
Is the vapour of Metals potential.*

And now if any should demand of us what our Stone is, we shall answer him, that it is *Gold* digested to its height of purity and perfection, through the co-operation of Art and Nature; but the means to get this, is to learn to turn thy Body into a vapour, that is, into *Mercury*, which then ascends in form of a vapour.

*How thou shalt get it thou must beware,
For Invisible truly is this menstrual.
Howbeit with the second Water Philosophical,
By separation of Elements it may appear
To sight in form of Water clear.*

But the means to attain this is not a light work, it requires a profound meditation, for this is the Seed of Gold, (which as the Poet said, *recula resedit longius*) it is involved in many links, and held Prisoner as it were in a deep Dungeon; so that as the noble *Sandivow* hath it, it is the work of a very wise Philosopher to let loose *Sulphur*; he that knows not our two first *Menstruals*, is altogether shut out from attaining to the sight of this third and last *Menstrue*; yet he who knows how to prepare the first Water, and to joyn it to the Body in a just *pondus*, to shut it up in its Vessel Philosophically, until the Infant be formed, and what is the greatest of all, to govern his Fire dexterously, so as to cherish Internal heat with External, and can wait with patience till he see his signs, he shall see the first Water will work on the Body till it hath opened the pores, and extracted partly the Tincture of *Sol*, which as it comes out gradually, so it contests with the first Fire against Nature, so long till they be reconciled in an imperfect *medium*; in which they, like to weary wounded Combatants, lye gasping and panting for breath, and at length dye; and then appears the second Water of the wise, which doth ascend and descend so long till it revive the dead Carkass, and then a soul comes into it, and it vegetates and circulates, and changeth colours so long, till Blackness vanishing there be made a perfect union and

universal temperament of Elemental qualities, never more to contend together: then the whole Compound for a time appears like to a new glorious Water, glittering like Oriental Pearls, and Fish-eyes.

*Of this Menstrue by labour exuberate,
With it may be made Sulphur of Nature.*

This is it which *Raymund* calls his *Mercury* exuberate, as much as to say, *Mercury* with Child; *Artephius* calleth it, the Salt pregnant, for it hath *Sulphur* actually hidden under the *Mercurial* quickness; therefore it by digestion is easily turned into our Stone, which is *Sulphur*, or Fire of Nature.

*If it be well and kindly acuate,
And circulate into a Spirit pure,
Then to dissolve thou must be sure
Thy base with it in divers wise,
As thou shalt know by thy practise,
That point, &c.*

This *Mercury* thus renovate or new born, may by the Philosopher be diversly handled; for he may take his work from the Fire, and circulate and cohobate this *Mercury* by a peculiar operation, which partly Mechanical, till he have a most admirable pure subtile Spirit, in which he may dissolve Pearls and all Gems, and multiply them or his Red Stone, before it be united with a metal in projection for the making of *Aurum Potabile*. And in this *Mercury* thus circulated, is doubtless the Mystery of the never-fading Light, which I have actually seen, but yet not practically made. In a word, every one who hath this exuberate *Mercury*, hath indeed at command the subject of wonders, which he may imploy himself many ways in both admirably and pleasantly. And certainly he that hath this, needs no information from another; himself now standing in the Centre, he may easily view the Circumference, and then operation will be, next to the Spirit of God, his best Guide. Know then, that if thou be a Son of Art, when thou art once arrived hither, thou are so far from being at the end of thy search, (unless thou make *Gold* to be thy final object, and so thou shalt never come hither) that thou art but now come into the Mystical School of the hidden wonders of God, in which thou mayst every day see new Miracles, if thou be studious and desirous of knowledge, which all *Adepti* are; they prize skill before any earthly thing, and therefore refuse Honour and Pomp, and retire only to the beholding of God and his Works, in this admirable Looking-glass of the most hidden Mysteries of Nature.

*For so together they may be circulate,
That is, the base oyl and vegetable Menstrual,
So that it be by labour exuberate,
And made by craft a Stone celestial.*

Yet doth not wisdom come naked, but with her she brings the riches and length of days; for this exuberate *Mercury* is an hermaphrodite, and may without taking our of the glass be circulated into a fifth Essence.

Now the union between the two Principles, is the very true cause of this circulation, for though in this last *Menstruum* there is an inseparable oneness, yet the Components do give each their most noble quality to exalt the transcendency of our Medicine. The extreme Components of this third *Menstruum*, are the *Sulphur* and *Mercuriality* of the second; as the first *Menstrue*, and *Sol* our Body, were the extremes of the Second. The base oyl, our *Sulphur* is called, for he is the unctuous Dragon, or Earth which lyes at bottom without wings, and is the Basis as it were of the Work. The *Mercury* is called Vegetable, for that it flyes and returns, and makes the earth to sprout and bud with tender branches. These two (the base oyl or *Sulphur*, and the vegetable *Menstrue*) at last make one intire indivisible substance, which is of an Hermaphroditical quality, the man is the Woman, and the Woman the Man; the *Sulphur* the *Mercury*, and the *Mercury* is the *Sulphur*; in this respect the Earth flyeth as if it were Heaven, and at length the Heaven will precipitate in the form of Earth, and then is our work at an end, there is the Harvest in the South, when the glorified Soul is become a spiritual Body, which is called our Stone of Paradise.

*Of nature so Fiery that we it call,
Our Basilisk, or our Cockatrice,
Our great Elixir most of price.
For as the sight of the Basilisk his object
Killeth, so slayeth it crude Mercury,
When thereupon he is project,
In twinkling of an eye most suddenly.
That Mercury then reyneth permanently
All Metals to Gold and Silver perfite,
Thus guide thy base both red and white.*

This Heavenly earth is true Mineral Fire, which is then resembled to the Sun in its Summer Solstice; it is called Venom, because it penetrates Metals so wonderfully; it is called our Basilisk, our Cockatrice, our *Tyrian* Poison, though indeed it be an excellent Medicine, in which respect it is called our incomparable Elixir. But the denomination of Basilisk it retains from its sudden operation upon *Mercury*; for it penetrates it in projection, as warm Oyl runs into sinking Paper, even to the profundity of it. Let thy *Mercury* therefore be taken as it is crude bought at the Apothecaries, and thou shalt set it in a Crucible to the Fire, in such a heat as the *Mercury* may not fume; and when it is so hot that it is ready to fly, which you shall discern by a spurtling noise, throw upon it of your Medicine as much as will teyne it, and you see that in a moment it will enter it, and straightway the mercury loseth its flux, and stands congealed. Then it is to be melted by a Fire of fusion, and you shall find pure *Gold* or *Silver*, according to the quality of your Medicine. But if you cast your high Elixir in too great a quantity on *Mercury*, you shall find in the Crucible after projection, a brittle mass of the quality and colour of the first Medicine, only of a lower virtue, which then you may project upon any inferiour Metal,

and it will transmute it into most perfect. This operation is not apparent or to sight, as is the work of Sophisters. But it is both inward and outward, for it transmuteth into a perfect species, and not only to shew. This is the way of projection both of thy white and thy red Quintessences, first to cast them upon Sol or Luna, according as thy Medicine is, and after that to make projection on *Mercury* again and again, till you find the true extent of the virtue of your Stone.

*Aurum Potabile thus is made,
Of Gold not commonly calcinate.*

And now I come to the second reward that Wisdom doth bring with her, and that is length of days; and here I have transposed some few Verses of *Ripleys* concerning *Aurum Potabile*, that what he saith in this point may be represented in view together, method inviting me to it. Some propound the Medicine of *Aurum Potabile* to be Extracted out of *Sol* pure, by corroding with *Aqua Regia*, and afterward levigating it by reiterate Calcination in the Fire, and manual Contritions. This Calx so subtilized, some attempt to resolve by *Menstrues* (as they call them) but in vain, there being only one *Menstruum* that hath the power to resolve both Gold, and all sublunary Bodies, to their first matter. *Paracelsus* the first Author of this, did name this dissolving Water his Alkahest, his *Ignis Gehenne*, his *Corrosivum Specificum*, with many other names. This Medicine thus made of *Gold* by the Alkahest, as it is Philosophical and real, so it is very excellent, and known only to the *Adepti*.

Yet this is not our great medicine, for this being but a resolution of *Gold* in its unary simplicity, doth afford to us only the most exquisite Medicine that is in *Gold*, as it is made and left by Nature, which partly for its simple vertue, and partly for its Metallick determination, doth not enter our Constitutive Principles, and consequently cannot touch or reach long life.

*But of our Tincture which will not fade,
Out of our base drawn by our Menstrue circulate.*

But when as we have by our Art exalted *Gold* from an unary to a millenary perfection, and advanced it from its gross corpulency to a Spiritual Tincture, which is unfading, and of all Sublunary things the most durable, then out of this so glorious and triumphant in an universal virtue, we do make an Oyl so called by us, (though it be permiscible by mixture in any Liquor) which Oyl is the very Tree of Life, which prevails and triumphs over all the miseries in the world. For it is not *Metallum*, but transcending all metalline things: This Tincture is extracted out of *Gold*, not as Tinctures are drawn by the *Sal Circulatum* of *Paracelsus*, but by an universal changing of the Sickness of the Metalline off-spring, into a true posture of Health; by which means it is able to heal all Metalline Bodies from their Leprosie, and being resolved by its own Vegetable Humidity, which is our first *Menstrue*, circulated till the Water have a ferment from the Bodies, and the Bodies from the Water, it will give a Spiritual Tincture, sparkling like the flame, to taste most sweet, to smell most pleasant, the most incomparable Treasure of the whole World.

*And for thy first ground principal,
Understand thy Waters menstrual.*

Now I return to that which went before concerning this Medicine, which I passed over in that place, that I might here bring it in together; and indeed he who will know this Mystery, he must in the first place learn to know his *Menstrual Waters*, for without this knowledge he can never come to this Mastery; for without this knowledge he can never come to this Mastery; for with the third *Menstruum*, (counting three according to *Ripley*) or the second Water, (making the first and second into one, with *Artephius*) is this fragrant Balsam made: And verily the whole is but Cohobation, the first Water being cohobated so long upon the Bodies, till it receive from them a quality of natural heat; yet so as that the quality of its own Fire, which is corruptive, and so against Nature, be mingled in way of action and passion with the natural Fire. This makes a Fire innatural, and is the second Water, in which colours rise and set frequently, and then by cohobating it till Fire of nature have wholly subdued his Adversary, and made a perfect peace and union with it. Then all is Fire of nature, then the Clouds are featured and the Light appears; and this is our third Water, the subject of wonders, which being one alone, doth from that time all operations within itself, congealing, relenting, calcining, exalting, subliming and fixing all Elements, being linked here inviolably to the making up of that great *Mysterium magnum*, which *Paracelsus* described, but knew it not; we both know it, and have seen it, and what we do know and have seen, we do faithfully relate.

*And when thou hast made Calcination,
Increasing not wasting moisture radical,
Until thy base by oft subtilation,
Will lightly flow as Wax on a Metal.
Then loose it with thy Vegetable Menstrual,
Till thou have Oyl thereof in colour bright.*

Therefore labour thou to bring thy *Gold* to a Calcination, not by Corrosives, but by a *Mercury*, not into a Powder red and dry, but into a Calx black and unctuous, and multiply moisture by our true Virgins Milk; then circulate these Natures together, till they will flow like unto Wax upon a Plate of metal, which is the sign of the true Tincture of *Luna*. Continue thy Fire till the fixt again relent of its own accord, till the dry become moist again, and till a Soul return; then shall thy Tincture proceed forward to a new Germination, and shall be indowed with a Vegetative Soul. Govern thy Bath sweetly, until thou have a Tincture of Citrine, which is a sign that thy Water is now impregnated with the Oyl immarcessible.

Then is that Menstruum visible to sight.

Then shalt thou discover what before was hidden, and see what before was invisible, and shalt say with the Philosopher, O Nature, how thou makest *Gold* volatile that was most fixed! Therefore have they passed one into another.

An Oyl is drawn out in the colour of Gold.

This is our Virgins Milk of the Sun, which is yellow; with this and our perfect Tincture, we make our Blessed Oyl, which hath not its Peer among all the works of God, next to the Immortal Soul of man, the Glass of Tri-unity, the Sabbath of perfection. O happy they that attain to it!

Or like thereto out of fine red Lead.

Yet a *succedaneum* of this noble medicine is found in the loyns of *Saturn*, in the bowels of our despised Infant, which some true and loyal Sons of Nature, through the great mercy of God, have attained without knowing our great *Arcanum*, which a man would think marvelous.

This is our red Lead, our *Mercury* essencificate and coagulated into a chaos of Spiritual Gold, and after dissolved into a quintessence as red as Bloud; which because it is made out of the very Essential *Mercury* of our Stone, which is our first Water, I shall leave it undiscovered, which otherwise (if it might be explained without danger of prostituting the other Secret to unworthy people) I would for the good of Mankind proclaim it with Trumpets.

*Which Raymund said when he was old,
Much more then Gold would stand in stead.*

This Oyl or Quintessence, this Balsam of Health, we do therefore prize for its wonderful virtue, not so much for that by means of it Poverty, that great snare, may be avoided, but for its wonderful prevailing excellency against all Diseases both of body and mind, as witnesseth *Lully*, *Trevisan*, *Artephius*, with that excellent Book intituled *Aurea Hora*, or *Consurgens Aurora*.

*For when he was for Age near dead,
He made thereof Aurum Potabile,
Which him revived as men might see.*

By vertue of this Quintessence *Artephius* testifieth, that he lived above a thousand years: *Flammel* also recordeth of it, that it triumpheth over all the Miseries of the World. *Johannes de Laznioro* is more bold, and saith, that if in the Agony of death a man should taste but a Grain of it, all the mortal Pestilence would depart from him.

Since then this Knowledge is so wonderfully profitable, being the very Looking-glass of Nature, the Antidote against Poverty and Sickness, and consequently the Cut-throat of Covetousness, Pride, Ambition, and such like sordid Affections, who would not bestow a little time in the Inquiry of it? In which let me assure thee in the very words of *Trevisan*, the Art is so plain, that if it were nakedly described it would be contemptible. And yet in vulgar Mechanics, how frequent is it for men to serve seven, eight, yea ten years Apprentiship to attain them? And in some that are a little more ingenious, how frequently are considerable sums of Money bestowed to boot? Yet in this noble art, so far excelling all Humane Sciences as the Sun doth a Candle, who will imploy himself with diligence?

Unless it be some Money-minded Sots, who seek only for riches; and yet how soon are even they weary? So that few or none persist in their inquiry, save a few Roguish Sophisters who live by Cozening; by reason of such the Art is scandalized, and ill spoken of: Yet trust me, for I speak knowingly, the Art is both true and easie; yea so easie, that if you did see the Experiment, you could not believe it. I have not made five wrong Experiments in it, before I found the truth, although in some particular turnings of the *Encheiresis*, I erred oft; yet so, as I in my error knew my self a Master, and in less then full two years and a half, of a vulgar *Ignoramus*, I became a true *Adept*, and have the Secret through the goodness of God. And that this is true, there are those alive that can bear witness to this my writing, which I penn'd for the sake of the Ingenious, that they may have *Ariadne's* thread stretched out to guide them; so with the blessing of God they shall by their own Experience see and know, that I wrote nothing but what the Light of Experience (far beyond all imaginary conjectures) hath taught me to be true.

*And now my Muse, let it not irksome seem
To thee of Matures Mysteries to sing,
Those hidden Mysteries which many deem
Nought but delusions with them for to bring.
This is th' opinion of the Vulgar rude,
To whom there's hardly any selcouth thing,
But seems a Juggling trick, that would delude
Their fancies with an empty wondering;
Therefore against it they with thundering words do ring.*

*There is a fiery Stone of Paradise,
So call'd because of its Celestial hew,
Named of Ancient years by Sages wise
Elixir, made of Earth and Heaven new,
Anatically mixt; strange to relate,
Sought for by many, but found out by few;
Above vicissitudes of Nature, and by fate
Immortal, like a Body fixt to shew,
Whose penetrative vertue proves a Spirit true.*

*His property is as the Sages told,
Metals imperfect (which before would burn)
Six to transmute into most perfect Gold,
And five into the finest Silver turn,
Not equaled by metals of the Mine;
Which while some seek, they madly seem to spurn
The pricks, which proves in th' end a bad design,
And gives them cause sadly at length to mourn,
And to bewail their destiny like men forlorn.*

*For why, they do not well premeditate
The nature of the thing they would attain;*

*The only thirst of Gain doth animate
These Gold-adoring wretches, who maintain
Their mad expence with many a cursed lye,
Nor from false perjury will they refrain:
Thus they allure fools by flattery,
To trust their dotage for the hope of gain,
This last so long, till in the suds they both remain.*

*Then Covetousness wrangles with Deceit,
And curses him for all his lewd expence:
The other being conscious of his cheat,
With subtle words doth make a sly defence.
But what is past can never be recall'd,
This grieves the Churl, who vows for that offence
He'll have the Jugglers future pranks forestall'd,
Lays him in Gaol, O monstrous change! From thence
The great Stone-maker through a Grate doth beg for pence.*

*But he who will a studious Searcher be
Of truth, let him such Sophisters eschew,
And if he will but be advis'd by me,
Of false ways I'll him warn, and shew him true.
Beg humbly of thy God to be thy guide,
For thou must pass through hidden ways, by few
Traced; and that thy suit be not deny'd,
Intreat of him thy heart to renew,
Thus qualifi'd thou mayst thy Journey never rue.*

*Next learn to know the different Kingdoms three,
In which all sublunary things are wrought,
Unveil the hidden Bodies, whose degree
Is noble, though their place full low be sought;
In which respect they bear the Planets names,
And they to such a Virtue may be brought,
Which answer may the painful Chymist's aims,
And it perform, which will surpass the thought
Of the rude Vulgar, who by only sense are taught.*

*The Wise mens Books with diligence peruse,
From which, if diligent, thou mayst discern
What substance 'tis they for their matter chuse,
Also their hidden Agent thou mayst learn.
They tell thee eke what things thou shouldst refuse,
And of erroneous Works they will thee warn;
Their counsel take, so shalt thou never lose*

*Thy cost ne labour; also thou mayst earn
Riches and health, the one to other subaltern*

*Yet pains and labour see thou do not grudge,
Nor cost, although a little will suffice;
Yet truth at first to find thou may not judge;
'Tis well if faults at length will make thee wise:
Nor be thou over-heady to believe
The Shell of words, which them who are not nice
To sever Truth from Falshood, do deceive,
That they to win a shadow lose a prize:
To sever Corn from Straw I therefore you advise.*

*And if you please to take me for your Guide,
I'le you unto a goodly Castle lead,
A Castle which to hold all proof is try'd,
So that there's none within its Walls may tread
But he who favour'd with special grace,
No other title any one may plead:
And she who is Queen-Regent of the place,
Is Nature call'd, she in Jehovah's stead
Doth fit and rule, for she next under God is Head.*

*This Castle round by force Inexpugnable,
Whose Composition's Homogeneal,
Immortal ever stands, that none is able
To conquer it by force, and withal
Concur; its standing is so firmly stable,
No way to storm it, though we could recall
Great Hercules, 'tis so inviolable:
And yet withal its Beauty is so amiable.*

*Twelve Gates it hath, and yet they are but one,
And these twelve Gates have but one only Lock,
So that you either open all or none;
Nor can you force it open with a knock,
For violence cannot it break insunder,
Those who attempt it in the event doth mock;
Nay though you could call down the dreadful Thunder,
It would nothing avail; who so his stock
Shall thus imploy, may walk a length in thread-bare Cloak.*

*There is one only key, this learn to know
And make, then I will you a Master name.
This Key the entrance of the Lock will show,
And being enter'd will unlock the same:*

*Which being done, to you shall open fly
The twelve Gates of this Castle, great in fame,
Little in bulk, which once I did espy;
Also within it a most noble Game
Fought 'twixt an Eagle Volant, and a Lyon tame.*

Finis.

AN
EXPOSITION
UPON THE
First Six Gates
OF
Sir George Ripley's
Compound of Alchymie.

VIZ.

1. Calcination. 2. Dissolution. 3. Separation.
4. Conjunction. 5. Putrefaction. 6. Congelation.

Written by
Aeyrenaeus Philalethes, natu Anglus,
Habitatione Cosmopolita

London,
Printed for *William Cooper at the Pellican*
in *Little Britain, MDCLXXVII*

Sir George Ripley's
Compound of Alchymie
Expounded by a Son of Art.

The first Gate opened
Which is
CALCINATION

Calcination is the Purgation of our Stone.

We have led thee as it were by the hand through many a waste Field, and many a Desart and Thicket, and now lift up your eyes and behold where you are, and now welcome my Friend into the Garden of the Philosophers; here you may behold (like a Landskip) a very glorious Castle, walled about with a very high wall, and twelve Gates one following another hindering your entrance and possession of it at will, one being opened the rest open of themselves, and yield to the a far more renowned Conquest, then ever *Caesar* or *Alexander* won. The first Gate is as it were dug hollow into the Earth, and little to be seen above the Superficies: view well the Inscription which is written over it, which is the words of that Curse which God inflicted on *Adam*, in the day that he fell, *Dust thou art, and unto Dust thou shalt return.* Mark the Escutcheon that is set forth upon the Gate, this signifies unto thee, that some Great Person is dead within, therefore behold the

Attendants all stand in Mourning; amongst whom one with this verse of *Solomon, I am black, but comely, &c.*

This Lady the Sages have called *Juno*, or the Metallick nature, which is indeed very comely, yet black, for why the Sun hath shined upon her Another who seems to supply the room of the porter, speaks unto you in these words, *Nothing entreth hither that defileth, or that is unclean.* But enough if this, we must not here stand gazing, lest we be taken for Spyes; but we will knock for a Guide, who may go along with us; for know that this Castle is a Garrison, and must not be viewed without a Guide, who may conduct us in and out, and shew us what the places are through which we pass. And now he is come, I shall acquaint you somewhat of his conditions, that you may know how to please him, that that he may be the more willing to go along with you in the right way, and not leave you, as he hath done others, who when they have attempted this work with good success in the knowledge of matters requisite, they notwithstanding have fatally erred, not knowing how to please their Guide, who hath a humour of his own not to be equalled in the World; and if you make him either sullen, or choleric, you had as good give over the enterprise.

First of all then know, that for his parts he is a very stupid Fool, there is none more simple among all his Brethren; yet is he most faithful to his Lord, and doth all things for him most prudently, ordering all things in the Family very discreetly; which I may rather ascribe to a natural instinct, then to any quickness of parts. He is very faithful, for that cause he will never either ask or answer any question, but goes on silently: Nor will he ever go before you, but follow; you must be very wary how you lead him, if he can find an opportunity he will give you the slip, and leave you to a world of misfortune. By his countenance you shall know whether he be pleased or displeased; therefore lay bonds on him, that is, shut him close where he may not get forth, then go wisely before with heat, and ever observe his countenance as he follows; his anger you shall know, by redness in his countenance, and his sullenness by his lumpish behavior; in his good temper he is indifferent active and merry; and so you shall pass on forward, or turn, or go back, as you see his countenance and temper inclined. In the next place you are to understand, that he was born to be a drudge, and is the very Servant unto all his Brethren; and hereupon he doth as it were monopolize the whole toyl and task of labour to himself, and if you go about to do any thing, he will presently take snuff, and will leave you all the work to do, and will not do one stroke more.

Thirdly, he through long custom hath gotten a habit of perpetual working, and therefore if you allow him one hours respite, he will never work more; for in his Fathers house he committed the offence of *Cham*, and is therefore judged to be a Servant of Servants: his body is very tender and naked, yet he will have no Cloaths, nor will he endure any Consolidation of parts without exception; for in his youth he offended with *Ruben*, and went up to his Fathers Couch, and was for that doomed to a perpetual inconstancy, and is as unstable as Water. These in general are the qualifications of your Guide, and you must address your self to him accordingly, or else your labour will be in vain.

*Restoring also of his natural heat.
Of Radical humidity it loseth none,
Inducing solution into our Stone most meet.*

The first place which you come to, worthy your observation, is a large Room flored with black, the Hangings part black, bluish, and yellowish, in which, in which you may see a Carcass intombed, and very rotten; a Serpent almost dead with cold, laid to the fire, and a Fountain still flowing forth to water a Pot which is nigh to it, in which is planted an Herb much like to *Ros solis*, only I hath the Root black, the Leaves yellow, with bluish veins and black spots in them continually standing in a dew, and over it the Sun as in the Solstice, shining in its full vigour, and under it a Fire, as it were of *Aetna* burning continually. The Fountain still sends a few small streams of Pearly water to the Root of this Herb, which by insensible pores ascend and stand like drops discoloured on the Leaves of the herb, which seems as though blasted and withering, and yet always full of drops, which dropping down again, and rising continually, do resolve the Tree into a viscous Juice, which is afterwards dried up into a dry dust, yet unctuous to sight, and very black.

After Philosophy I you behight.

Then I lift up mine eyes, and behold I saw *Nature* as a Queen gloriously adorned, sitting upon her Throne, and in her hand a fair Book, which was called, *Philosophy Restored to its Primitive Purity*; whom with low submission I did obeysance to, and she graciously took notice of me, and gave me this Book to eat it up, which I did, and straight-way she had another of the same in her hand: Then was my Understanding so enlightened, that I did fully apprehend all things which I saw and heard; and when I approached any Gate or Door, straightway (as though they were acted by a sensitive Spirit) they opened of their own accord: And all in the House did fealty to me, and said that I was to be honoured as Lord of the place: *For, say they, the Queen and He are in love united, and she moreover hath plighted her troth to him.* Then I considered with my self, and behold the Book that I had devoured (like a Charm) had so commanded my Spirits, that I could think of nothing more than the enjoyment of this rare Beauty which I had beheld: And while I was full of these thoughts, behold I heard a Voice behind me, saying, *What wouldst thou in this World?* I was a little astonished at the Voice, yet boldly answered, *Nothing but that I might once more see that admirable Perfection which once I beheld in a Nymph, which not long since I saw, who with seeming affection did salute me, and gave me a Book to eat; which when I had eaten, my Intellectuals seemed as though the Candle of the Lord had been kindled in them: But since I could never see her whom my Heart longs for: Oh that I might only be so happy again!* Then said the Voice, *Thou art happy in that thou hast seen her, more happy in that she gave thee that Book, which few in an Age attain to; most happy in that thou couldest and didst eat it, which every one that hath it cannot do: She therefore whom thou seekest for, is gone into her retired Solitudes, and as a Legacy hath left the two great Treasures, the Treasure of Riches, and the Treasure of Long Life.* Then said I, *Ah Sir, this you tell me if, is nothing but an aggravation of my misery; for all the wealth in this world I count as a straw in comparison of the enjoyment of that most admirable Lady's presence, whose service I should take for a greater happiness, than if*

*were Master of all the World besides. If then I may not see her again, my Life will be to me a burden, and to what then will Long Life avail? Thus I sat bemoaning my self, and I heard a shrill Voice as it were close by me, and I looked suddenly, and behold an unspeakable Light, in comparison whereof the Sun it self seemed dark; and close by me I saw a most secret place, and in it a secret Room of Diaphanous matter, and round, and within it this lady who I formerly had seen, upon her Throne; and another in the person of a King, in most gay Raiment, as if it were a Robe of beaten Gold, which reached from his shoulders to the ground, and a Crown of pure Gold on his head; and a third person, who like a Water-bearer had a Pitcher on his shoulder, and in the midst of it there burned as it were a Lamp: The sight was excellent, yet I could not be pleased, for that I saw this Lady stark naked with this King, so in private; and while I viewed the Room, I found it was exquisitely closed on every side, so that it seemed as if it were made of one intire piece of Crystal. I marveled at what I saw: for the House was but small, the Chamber less, and the Closet of Crystal to sight no bigger than a small Egg; and the three Parties, with all the Accoutrements of them, might well have been inclosed in a Hazel Nut: Yet was their Delineaments so lively, that I might easily discern her intire shape, whom I could not but with distracted thoughtfulness and a sad countenance behold; which the perceiving, said unto me, *Friend, Why art thou sad? I am not sad, quoth I, most Noble Lady, but am pensively meditating on what I behold, which doth not a little amaze me, the sight not being to be parallell'd in John Tradescants Chamber of Rarities, which is the System of the Novel Rarities of the known World: For whom I lately beheld glorious upon a Throne in the Majesty of a Queen, I now see cloistered up in a small Diaphanous Pix, in stature so small as is scarce credible: Moreover, whom I deemed so piously virtuous a Lady, to be so retiredly naked with a man, only attended with a Water-bearer, makes me very thoughtful what this thing should be. Moreover, it was my hopes so to have ingratiated my self into your favour, as to have been a Servant unto you, who I see are otherwise provided of a Lover.* Then said she, *My Friend, what you admire in this strange Metamorphosis of me, know that it is by a Magical Vertue, which is alone given to me from GOD, my immediate Lord and Ruler; and for any Diabolical Art, which your Scruple seems to manifest your suspition of, it is because of your inexperience in these things; and this your Ignorance is no way provoking unto me, for in these Affairs (though a man) yet you are but a Child; and this liberty I allow all my Sons while they are Children, so to speak, so to think, and so to act; and I love to hear and answer their childish prattle. Know then that the Devil is but one of my Servants, and in my Kingdom he doth serve GOD, is and my Lord: And though of all my Servants he is the worst, yet he can do nothing of himself, either without me, or against me, or above me: He for the most part is a deceitful Jugler, and doth make things appear, that are not; but whatever is actually effected by him, is nothing but what is in my Power: He only applies Agents to Patients, and adds a little of his own villainous qualities, as a circumstantial aggravation of the horror of what he thus (by my virtue) brings to pass, and then his villainous mind attributes that to himself, which is my Act, that so he might arrogate the honour due to my Lord and his Master. Now I will tell you a strange thing, which yet is very true: I am obedient to all my Subjects, which are many, and they obey me; I rule them, and they do as it were inforce me, for so my Lord hath pleased to ordain it: If they call me, I am straight at hand; yea, in my Body which thou seest (which is no Body but only representative for I am all Spirit) I feel the Sympathies and Antipathies, the Actions and**

Passions of every thing in the World; and I must be always present, for nothing is or can be well done without I be present: I always work according to the subject and its disposition, which doth alter the effect wonderfully. In a word, whatever thou seest that I am, and more then thou canst see by far, though thou hadst the Eyes of Argus. My Rule is not as is the Rule of Princes among Men, but I am serviceable to all, yea to the least Worm in the World; and because I am so serviceable, therefore my Master hath appointed that nothing can or may disobey me, or offer violence to me; the Devil here hath no power, though malice enough: Therefore my Lord hath given me his own Diploma to make me the more Honourable; first, An Omniscieny of all things which are done in the World, as touching the Being, Conservation, or Mutation of them; and next, an Omnipreseney, by which I am every where present at once, and I am seated in the Will of God, which is my Centre. All my Subjects are put under Man, therefore he hath a free power to act any thing within his reach in the World; and the Soul of Man is as it were a Magnet unto me, and all my Subjects, in its Exaltation and Union, by Faith to my Lord and Master; though since Man lost his Dignity, he lost also his Knowledge, and his Will is liable to the Temptations of the Devil; and so as many as by renouncing their Creator do devote themselves to Stan, he hath by his confederacy power to exalt their Will, and to apply their Power to the effecting of things possible in Nature, and impossible for the Devil to do alone, (whose pride would scorn to crave help, if he could) and beyond the knowledge of the inthrall'd Caytiff, who mistaking the effect, and not seeing how it was done by himself and no Satan (though his power for want of knowledge to employ it, without this help were made use of by him, and applied according to his own Devilish Design) the Wretch is insnared to bind over both his Soul and Body to the Devil, as a requital of this Service, so crafty a Deceiver is he. But this being from my present scope, I shall forbear to speak further of it at present, lest I should distract, not edifie you. Now as concerning your jealousie for that you see me naked with this King, know that this place and my Kingdom are in the State of Innocency, though we are by the Fall of Adam laid subject to Vanity; and till the final Restitution of that Fall, I am forbidden to work anything of my own accord beyond the state of fading incorruptibility, though all things have an incorruptible Spirit, which when Heaven and Earth shall be renewed, shall cause an Immutable Glory in all these things. Know then that this King is my Servant, and he hath many Brethren who in their passage to him are taken Prisoners, and kept in bondage, and there is no way to Redeem them, unless he give his Flesh and Blood for their Ransom, which cannot be effectual, unless he die and arise from the Dead: This I cannot perform alone my self, nor can any help me herein but Man alone; for God hath here limited my power, I cannot bring Agents and Patients together, though he hath given me power to work on them being composed, and to effect what may serve for the Ransom of those poor Captives, and he hath given man a free power to act in subordination to him in the World, though through the Fall the Wings of this power are not clips at all, but clogged with Ignorance, that it is very uneffectual in comparison of its virtue, If thou couldest but understand and believe, thy very Soul would command all Nature in the whole Fabricken of it: for if thou didst but know things as they are, thou wouldest withal clearly see the Dignity of thy Soul, being the Image of God; and this would command Faith, and kindle Desire: Now Faith and a kindled Desire in the Soul is that extatical Passion which attracts the whole Phaenomena of Nature. This is the Dignity of a Mental man. Now then, my Friend, harken to me, and what I advise, that do; help me in what I

cannot, and I will help thee in what thou canst not; so shalt thou be (to GOD subordinate) Lord both of me and mine; and the Blood of this King, which redeems his Brethren, will give thee a Medicine to command all the Imperfections of thy Mortal Body; and though it be no Antidote against Death, the irrevocable Decree being past, yet it triumphs over all the Miseries of Life, both of Poverty and Sickness, and it possesseth a Man of the most incomparable Treasures of this World. Then full of Admiration, with Tears for very Joy trickling down abundantly, I bespake her, and said, *Lady, I thank you for your so great favour to me, as so familiarly to discourse with me; Now then, without any Complement, I am yours (ad usque aras) and whatever you please, that I will do.* Then said she, *Under this Chamber and Closet there is a Stove, put a Fire into it, for this King must sweat to death. Ah sweet Lady,* said I, *and what will become of you? Care you not for that,* said she, *do you as I bid you: But yet farther to satisfie your curious mind, let me tell you, That I indure without hurt the most violent Fires which are or can be made, for I am in them all, and no less in the most frozen places.* Then I considered, and methought my Understanding it was enlarged, and I perceived the extent of Nature, and of a sudden she appeared not to my sight; but where she was I saw a most exquisite Light, which took up an incredible small room, and methought my Head seemed as it were diaphanous: And while I considered these things, it came into my mind to wonder what was become of my Guide, for I miss'd him. While these thoughts perplexed me, an Answer was given, as if from an intelligent Spirit within the Glass, saying, *Let not thoughts fill your mind, he whom you seek is with us, for so it must be, this King is his Lord.* This straight made me view the complexion of the Water-bearer, and his countenance told me that he was my very Guide: Then I viewed his Pitcher well, and I found his Pitcher was clear as pure Silver; and what was strange, the Bearer, and the Pitcher, and the Water in it were one; and in the midst of the Water, as it were in the very center, there was a most radiant twinkling Spark, which sent forth its beams even to the very surface of the Water, and appeared as it were a Lamp burning, and yet no way distinguishable from the Water. The Voice then spake to me a second time, *Delay not to put Fire under us, and govern it as you shall hear the Voice direct you.* Then I put Fire in at the open door at the top of the high Turret, and Coals upon it, and caused my doors to be stopt both above and below, and on every side; only by a secret passage I conveyed my Immortal Fire under the Chamber in which was the Closet, and forthwith when all things were heated, the Water-bearer took his Pitcher, and through a small Pope he poured out his Water, without any particular shape, only it added a luster thereto; and no sooner was the Water poured forth, but the Water-bearer with his Pitcher popt as it were under the streams, and I saw them no more: And though the clearness of the Water did make it to appear as it were Diaphanous, yet I found by a diligent view that it was not so really, but only as to apparency, and that it was indeed very compact: And as I wistfully beheld it, I saw as it were a goodly Lady in the midst of it, which was no way resembling the former Beauty which I had discoursed withal, whose Name was *Nature*; yet indeed very beautiful, even to the parallel of *Helena*. This Lady was naked, and of an admirable fair complexioned Skin, as bright as the finest Silver; at first she appeared very small, and waxed bigger and bigger, until the Water appeared no more, but she her self had transmuted its whole substance into her shape. This sight I beheld with pity, for she (far unlike unto the first Lady) was wholly impatient of the heat which I had made, and yet was so inclosed in the Closet that she could not get out; she sweat therefore even as

though she would melt, and seemed as though continually fainting: Then the King (who seemed as it were glad of the heat) seeing her knew her to be his Sister, his Mother, and his Wife, and compassionating her estate, ran into her and took her in his Arms, and she feeling him, did so strongly embrace him, that he could not shake her off, and with her sweat partly, and partly with her tears, she so bestream his Kingly Robes, which shone like unto *Tagus* or *Pactolus*, that they were all suddenly changed into a colour Argent: the King loving her exceedingly, asked her what she desired? She answered *That her desire was to have of him Conjugal Fealty; for, said she, I cannot endure this heat, but I must die in it, and without me your Highness can have no Off-spring:* The King condescended, and granted her Request, and so soon as she conceived the Kings Seed, she said that she was better able to endure the Fire which did prevail upon her.

Therefore not contented, she had a second, a third, and fourth Benevolence, even to the eleventh time: Then said the King, *I am very faint and weak:* and trying to go, as formerly, his Legs and Feet failed him, his Flesh and Body wasted as it were to nothing, and so continued worse and worse, until at length his Body being thus wasted by Venery, began to sweat exceedingly, so long he sweated, till he was as it were wholly consumed; and his Wife seeing what fell out, wept bitterly, and her tears mingling with her Husbands sweat, grew into a large stream, in which both she and the King were drowned so far I beheld: And then when they were both wholly out of sight, I mused at the strangeness of the object, and while I wondered, methought I saw them ascend again; but considering it well, I found that there swam upon the Water a Carcass, which being wholly void of Life, did with the heat of the place draw to putrefaction more and more, so that it grew livid, black, bleuish, and yellowish, and sent up most venomous Exhalations, and with its odour did so infect the Waters, which were before of an Argent Clearness, that they did grow very thick and dark, and at last black, resembling the form of muddy slime which is found in Boggs; and at length with the heat of the Sun the moisture was wholly dried up (as Moorish low Grounds in the summer time use to be) and I sought what was become of my Bodies, and I found a horrible venomous rufefied Toad, which seemed as it were dying; and a Raven almost famished walking there to look for meat, lighted upon the Toad, and preyed upon him, and with its poison died, and made a most filthy squallid Liquor blacker than Ink, and tick like to Pitch melted, which made me wonder at the sight: And going to depart, I heard a Voice which said to me, *You must not leave us; if you do, our Persons and Kingdom is lost without recovery.* Then my Eyes were opened, and I saw *Nature* walking up and down among the Carcasses, and in her hand her unparallel'd Lamp; and taking a more serious view, I saw in those rotten Atoms the Idea's of all things natural and supernatural; and I found the dead King with his Wife were intombed in a Field Sable, and the Tomb as it were of polished Jet or Ebony; and as in that place all things were strange, so most strange was it that the Tomb and the intombed Carcass were one, and that inseparably. Also upon the Tomb I found written a Prophecy, *viz.* That they (if the Fire were kept equal and continual) should rise again, and be more glorious and powerful than ever they were before. Then said I to the Voice which is in the Glass, I must be directed both what, and how, and when to do. The voice answered me, Take no care, only do as I shall direct you, and all shall be well; in the mean time you may view the paces that are about, only be sure that you neglect not your time of attending here: And for to take away the tediousness which the length of time

would otherwise work, ask of me, and I shall inform you in whatever you desire, not shall I thing my discourse to me a burden, so you will not think your labour a trouble. Then said I, Not so; though I should be bound to serve you during my whole Life, yet should I count it a priviledge, not a burden. Then she gave unto me as it were a Ball of fine Silk, wound up as on a bottom, and said, Make this fast to a Pin of this Tower, and then go round and behold the place, it may shorten the time to you, and unwind it as you go, and by it you may return till you know the place.

But do not after the common guise.

Then I passed along, and was no sooner out of that place, but a very thick misty darkness apprehended me, so thick that I might feel it; and though my head were as it were transparent and very light, and I took also a Candle with me, which was burning there continually at the entrance of the Tower, yet the darkness was such, that it would not receive the light, for they were not homogenial, but were a little dis-joynd by the Rays fo the Light, and as it were here and there condensed into strange figures, as of Birds, Beasts, and creeping things of monstrous shapes: and by reason of this opposition the Rays of the Light extended but a little way, and the Light most clear did shoot as it were in Beams, and the darkness stood as I were in clusters by it self.

There were as it were a multitude of men, who seeing my Light in hand, which they could not discern well, they being I that dark which would not be inlightned, but as through a thick cloud they beheld my Candle, and judged I ominous, and left their stations: for their eyes with dark and smoak were so tender, that my Candle over-poured them, and they could not bear its luster; therefore they crying out, ran away. I mused much at this, how they could be in such Cimmerian Darkness; and as I wondered, I espied that the had with them Light as it were of Fox-fire, or rotten wood, and Glow-worms Tails, and with this they sat in consultation, reading *Geber*, *Rhasis*, and such whom I heard them name, and commenting on them, not without much pleasantness: Then I considered that the Light which I had brought with me, did not enlighten the place, but stood separated as it were from the darkness; and withal I remembered that once there was Light in the World, and the darkness comprehended it not, and that darkness had a false ire Light of its own, with which it seemed to its inhabitants wonderous well inlightned: I set down my Candle, and went with my Thread in hand, by which I intended to return. When I was gone out of sigh of my Candle, my head began to seem as it were opacous, and a wind had almost blown me down: Then I took my bottom of Thread, and made it fast to my Girdle, lest it might drop out of my hand; and well it was that I did so, for soon a Vertigo came upon me, and I fell and slumbered; and when I awaked, methought it was no more darkness, but day-light about me: I wondered at the very strange change, and still felt for my Tread, which by that Light I could not see, but only feel it. I began to look about me, to see where I was, and behold I was in a ruinous place of many millions of turnings, each leading several ways; and every room was so inlightned with Fox-fire and Glow-worm-Tail, that for want of a better Light is seemed as if it were day: I took out of my Pocket a small Book to see if I could read in it, it was called *Enchiridion Physicae Restitutae*, with an *Arcanum* at the end of it, and I could not read one word in it. There me met a man aged and decrepit, his Face rugged, his Eyes

bleared, his hands and Fingers corroded, and saluted me, and said merrily, *What Book have you there? It is*, said I, *Arcanum Hermeticum*. It is a good book, saith he. He and *Sendivow* are the two best that ever wrote. But, said I, I went to peruse my Book, and I can read not one word in it. That's strange, quoth he; let me see it: Then I shewed it him, and he read out of it such strange things that I never had heard of before; and *Sandivogius*, saith he, is of the same mind. Then he began to read in him, and reach such Processes that I had never heard of. I do remember well the Authors, and what they wrote, but never to my remembrance did I find what you read in them, said I. Look on them your self, said he, and you shall find it plain: I went to look on the Book, but could not distinguish any word in it; which made me wonder. Then I thought with my self, that as that Light had a peculiar difference from that Light which I saw about the Tower where I was before, so it might have its peculiar Objects: This Opinion I had confirmed by this, for that having *Geber* and *Rhasis* with me, I tried how I could read there, and all the Processes I could read very well, only some places seemed as it were left out, and a distance of white left: I knew that my Books were perfect, and some of the paces (which were, as they seemed to me, left out) I remembred very well to be those places in which the Truth was couched in few words: Then I returned by my Thread to my Candle, and straight m head returned to its former diaphanity: I took my Candle in my way, and of a sudden all my places that seemed light before, returned to be Cimmerian darkness; only with the time that I had been there, I found my Eyes were beginning to grow tender, and smarted and itched at the first glimpse of this true Light, which then in comparison of the Light I had before seen, did not seem barely Light, but the Super-Coelestial Light of Paradise. Then I demanded of her with whom in the Glass I had former converse, concerning what I had seen. She told me, That they were such who wrot in *Alchymy* according to the Light of Fancy, and not of Nature; though to them their Light seem clear enough, yet can they see nothing by it but what is phantastical, and mystically or sophisticatedly written by the Envious, for the seducing of such fanciful Doters: therefore when once the Light of Nature is brought to their station, it discovers Cimmerian darkness there, where their imaginary Light only shines, such as is Fox-fire and Glow-worms Tails, that shine only in the dark; This Light makes their Eyes so tender, that the Lamp of Nature makes them fly. Moreover, whatever is written according to this Light, they cannot see, nay they cannot endure the Light of the true *Luna* of the wise men: for any true Light discovers their Darkness, and yet their Darkness is incapable of apprehending the Light. Now in that you went in among them without your Candle, it was a bold adventure, for you had you lost your Thread, you could never have returned. Then I looked into my Tower, and did as I was directed; and again I went to view those parts of Cimmerian Darkness once more, yet with my Candle in hand, and my Thread at my Girdle; when I came the second time, at the sight of this Light all fled, so that I could not meet with any, but I entered into several turning which I saw, and found in them several works curiously erected, in which I might guess they aimed at nothing less than the Philosophers Stone.

With Sulphurs.

I found one Furnace most curiously built, in which all degrees of heat imaginable, by the Art of man, might be kept with one fire; in which was set a multitude of curious Glasses,

in which were several Matters, some digesting, others subliming, others distilling, others calcining, and about the Glasses and the Furnace was written this of *Geber, Per Deum Sulphur est omne illud illuminans quod est supra terram*. By this I knew, that Sulphur was the Subject on which was wrought; and indeed with so great cunning, that I could not but admire the ingenuity of the men: and knowing that what a man prizeth (though it be a trifle) yet to spoil or destroy that would be an injury, I meddled not with any Glass, (for indeed there were Labourers that fled not, because they knew nothing, but only wrought as they were directed :) and when I came, they could not perceive that I had any Candle in my hand, and wondred their Masters should so fly from a phansie. Moreover I found that they could not see any light from the Fox-fire and Glow-worms tails, which were there; but the place being dark, as being under ground, they wrought by Candles and Lamps, which yet could give their Masters no light, but they sought all the world over for those shining subjects: Yet I could notwithstanding both discern utter darkness, which the Rays of my Candle would not enlighten. Then said I to the Workmen, What is this that is brought in here? Oh, said they, they are Sol and Luna terrestrial, whereby our Masters can see clearly the Natures of all things in the world, and to make by their light the great Elixir; and though we can see no light in them, or very little, it is because of our Ignorance in these things, therefore we use our Lamps to work by. Where are your Masters? said I. They ran away, said they, because when you came they said you were a Devil, and brought an ominous light with you, and if they did but once see that with a full view, their Works would all vanish; they did therefore lay a few Charms, and ran away. Then I looked, and the ground under me was full of Crosses and Circles, at which I laughed, and departed into another Room.

*Or Salts preparate in divers wise,
Neither with Corrosives, nor with Fire alone,
Neither with Vinegar, nor with Waters ardent,
Nor with the vapour of Lead, our Stone
Calcined is according to our intent.
All those, to Calcining which are so bent,
From this hard Science withdraw their hand,
Till they our Calcining understand.*

And there I found in like fort rare Furnaces, with this Inscription, *Sal Metallorum est Lapis Philosophorum*: many processes I beheld, which would be tedious to relate. On I passed from thence, and in another Room I found large Furnaces, in which they were labouring about Waters fort; others were with strong reverberations calcining Lead, Tin, Copper, Iron, and all metals and Minerals; others were drawing Spirit of Vinegar with a great care, till it became exquisitely sharp, and in this they laboured to calcine several Metalline bodies; others were rectifying Spirit of Wine, so long till no Body almost or Receiver could hold it, it was so subtile, and this they said was the true Water of Life that must do the work; others were subliming of Lead, hoping after it was exquisitely sublimed, to have out of it that *Menstruum* which should effect the Stone, without any further laying on of hands. This when I had seen, I returned to my Furnace, and recruited my Fire as I was directed, and made a particular relation of what I had seen, and desired the verdict of Nature upon them all. She told me, that they could never by this way expect

any thing but loss. I asked here if they might not with trying many things, a length hit the right. She told me, No, they had not any ground of truth, nor could they expect either the great secret, or any other particular profitable truth, in that way. Then said I, Noble Lady, pray let me know the reason of their error, that I may know how to avoid the like.

*For by such Calcination their bodies be spent,
Which minisheth the moisture of our Stone;
Therefore when bodies to powder are brent,
Dry as ashes of Tree or Bone,
Of such Calxes then will we none:
For moisture we multiply radical,
In Calcining minishing none at all.*

Then said she, besides that they work not on the true Matter, they work not in the right way, which are two most desparate errors; for our work is to make a substance fluid, penetrating and entering, that may have ingress into imperfect Metals: for which cause we do preserve humidity, without which our Stone cannot be penetrative. So then instead of purifying the crude, and ripening what is raw by these Calcinations, the tender Soul is put to flight, and the crudities are more strongly vitrified, so that all hope of fruit is wholly by this means taken away: for take this for a rule, whatever either by violence of Fire, or Corrosives, is turned into a dry Powder or Calx, it is wholly reprobate in our work: for though we Calcine, yet it is in such a Fire in which our moisture is not burnt, and in such a Vessel so closed that the Spirits are retained, and in a word so sweet is our Regimen in reference to our Matter, that moisture is advanced, and is made more unctuous, and by consequent more ingressive.

*And for a sure ground of our true Calcination,
Work wittily only kind with kind,
For kind unto kind hath appetitive inclination.*

But all this is not enough to declare our Calcination, for Operation follows Preparation, and he that doth not before he begin to work, prepare his Matters, and set true Agent and patient together, it is not his Regimen that can or will produce anything. Therefore first you must know, that we joyn kind with kind in our work, for Nature is mended and retained with its own Nature: for this cause is our King wedded to the Water-bearers Daughter, of which Water-bearer I told you that his body, his Pitcher, and the Water in it, are all one; and his Daughter was the Queen which arose out of the water, in which was seen a Lamp burning: Wonder not at it, that a Queen should spring out of a Water-bearers loins, for the King is also his Son, and he is greater than both. For know, that in this place there is nothing so hard to get as Water, which cannot be brought but by him that hath the Keys of the whole Kingdom. Take this then for a great secret, our Water-bearer is Father to the King and Queen: the King being at perfect years, is at his own dispose, and enjoys more Riches then his Father; but his Father hath the Key of a Closet, in which is Riches enough for all in the Kingdom, to make every Subject as rich as the King; but the dispose of the wealth the King only is to have, yet can he not have it in his possession till he marry his Sister, which is in the water of the pitcher invisible. This his Sister, is also his

Mother and his Father, for it is one with the Water-bearer, the Water and the Pitcher, as is said. By reason of his Consanguinity the King embraceth his Sister very desirously, and she by his embraces appears as a Queen, and then the Water-bearer, and his Water and Pitcher vanish, and the King and Queen remain alone: at length both King and Queen are drowned, after the immoderate use of Venery, and violent sweating and pissing, which sweat, tears and urine, do make one Sea, in which swim two Fishes without flesh and bones, which after resolve and make one Broth, which is called Water permanent.

*Who knoweth not this in knowledge is blind,
He may forth wander as mist in the wind,
Wotting never with profit where to light,
Because he understands not our words aright.*

Thus though I have somewhat Metaphorically deciphered our true principles, yet so plainly as that you may with diligence understand the meaning, and unless you know this, you will proceed blind-fold in your work, not knowing the causes of things, so that every puff of Sophisters will toss you, like as a Feather is tossed in the Air with a blast of wind: for our Books are full of obscurity, and Philosophers write horrid Metaphors and Riddles to them who are not upon a sure bottom, which like to a running Stream will carry them down head-long into despair and errors, which they can never escape till they so far understand our writings, as to discern the subject Matter of our secrets, which being known the rest is not so hard.

*Joyn kind therefore with kind, as good reason is,
For every Burgeon answers his own seed,
Man getteth Man, a Beast a Beast I wis,
Further to treat of this it is no need.
But understand this point if you will speed,
Each thing is first Calcin'd in his own kind,
This well conceiv'd, fruit therein shalt thou find.*

Step therefore not one step further till you have learned this Lesson, namely, to wed Consanguinity with Consanguinity, and consider well what it is you desire to produce, and according to that let be your intention. Take the last thing in your Intention, for the first thing in your Principles: this is according to Nature, and it is the true ground of all Generation, for out of kind nothing doth engender; a Man begetteth a Man, and not a Lion, nor doth a Lion beget a Sheep, a Rose doth not produce a Thorn, nor a Nettle a Gilliflower; and so, if need were, I could particularly demonstrate it throughout all Vegetable, Animal, and Mineral Bodies, but it is so plain a thing that I need say no more, but leave it with you as the Foundation-stone on which you shall build whatever you intend. Attempt nothing out of its own nature and kind, lest you reap a fancy instead of truth. Whatever you intend to increase by way of Multiplication, attempt it only in its own kind; and so in this work especially, in which Calcination is the mingling of Seminal influence, which must be done in the same way of homogeneity. If you apprehend this in its cause aright, and know how to apply this doctrine in your operation as you ought, in

this you will find great benefit, and a door hereby opened to the discovery of greater Mysteries.

And we make Calx unctuous, black, white, and red.

And now the opportunity of this discourse, leads me to handle our magical Calxes, know that we do Calcine three times in our work, of which the general principle is, that our Calxes are not combust powders, but unctuous, for in them we innoble the Sulphurs, which are the Basis of Radical Humidity, which *Raymund* calls Oyls and unguents: So then our Calxes are one in kind, and do only differ in colour and maturity. Our first is black of the blackest, and is called *Saturn*; our second white of the whitest, and is called *Luna*; our third is red of the reddest, and is called *Sol*.

Of three degrees or our Base be perfite.

These Calxes are the periods of so many Circulations, and have so many degrees allowed to each of them; our first Circulation confounds the elements, our second renews the Air, and the third exalts the Fire, and then is our Stone perfect.

Flexible as Wax, else stand they in no stead.

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Our Calxes thus graduated, are distinguishable from all the Calxes in the world; first, is that they are done without any laying on of hands: secondly, from their exquisite subtilty of parts (for they are finer then Atoms of the Sun) joined with an eminent Humidity, by Reason of which, to the astonishment of the beholders, they flow like unto melted Wax; the first in the Glass by continuance of heat, and so the second as not being come to their period of perfection, and the second and third upon a plate of hot Metal, or on a melted Metal, or on *Mercury* heated so long till it is ready to fly.

*By right long process, as Philosophers do write,
A year we take or more for our respite:
For in less space our Calxes will not be made,
Able to tyne with Tincture that will not fade.*

Which last Calxes, as they are the period of Arts skill, and Natures power in this thing, so they are a considerable time in perfecting; the former in five months, *viz.* the white, and the red in nine months and a half, which is the true time, and a month we allow for the preparing of our materials, and three months for Fermentations and Imbibitions, so that our whole Operation is above a year. For indeed it is not an ordinary thing that we expect, but a Fire-abiding Tincture, which is unfading and incorruptible, which cannot be

expected in a short time; yet verily the Industry of the Work-man may forward, or set back his Work, a month, two, or three, according to his more exquisitely preparing of his matters, and governing of his Fire, whose exact Regimen is for speed, or retarding of the Work, almost all in all.

*And for thy proportion thou must beware,
For therein mayst thou be beguil'd,
Therefore thy Work that thou no mar.*

After the knowledge of the true material Subject, and its Preparation, the next main thing to be understood is the mystery of Proportion, which is a Secret of no light concernment, for many erre therein. Thou shalt therefore understand, that our Proportion is two -fold, Internal and External; the Internal *pondus* is a Labyrinth in which all erre who know our Subject as many do, but not its Proportion. He who would effect any thing, must principally learn this which is set down in Golden words, in *Bernard Trevisan* his treatise of the Chymical Miracle: *The Sulphur*, saith he, *which is in the Mercury, and predominates not, is the Fire alone which governs the whole Work; and he therefore that in these things would be a skillful Artist, let him know how much Fire is beyond other Elements in subtility, and what a proportion of it will overcome all the rest.* These Golden words, worthy to be ingraven in Marble, are the true foundation of our *pondus*.

*With Mercury as much then so subtil'd,
One of the Sun, two of the moon,
Till all together like pap be done.*

But there is an External proportion, which is as necessary as the other, or else the Work will either for lack, or excess of moisture, be destroyed; and that is thus: Take thy Body which without any equivocation is most pure Gold, let it be exquisitely purged, then files or laminated, or calcined with Mercury, as is vulgarly known; of this take one part, and of our Water (which is without equivocation Argent-vive animated, which we then call our *Luna*) two parts, mix them together in an *Amalgama*, and grind them in a Mortar of Glass, or on a Marble, till they become very soft, and all the grettness of the Body be subtilized with the *Mercury*, that they may seem to be one pap or paste, which we call Inceration.

*Then make the Mercury four to the Sun,
Two to the Moon as it should be.*

Now pluck up your attention, for my speech will be difficult. When your Body to your Mercury in outward proportion is one to two, then must your *Mercury* in its inward proportion be just opposite, that s, four to one, else you shall never make the Harmony that is good Musick; for do not think it is all one, with one and the same proportioned *Mercury*, to put either one of the Body or two of the Water, or one to three, or two to three, or three to four; no verily, till you come to this, to measure your Lamp clibanically to your Furnace, you are yet in the dark for Practice, though you may be true in Theory. I almost tremble to speak of this point, for it is the very wilde of those who study this Art,

and cannot come to the end of their desires for want of true information in this particular. Know then, that when thy *Mercury* is to *Sol* in external pondus two to one, it must be as I said in respect to its own internal qualities, four to the *Sun* to two of the *Moon*; therefore, saith *Artephius*, that our Water is of kin to the *Sun* and to the *Moon*, but more to the *Sun* then to the *Moon*: Note this well, that is four to one, as *Ripley* hath it. This is indeed a great secret, which hath befooled many.

Know that our Eagles duly prepared are accommodated to the *Sun* from three to ten, so that four to the *Sun* will be just seven, and thy *Mercury* thus proportioned, let it be two of the *Moon* to one of its Body. Know also, that our Water is not called the *Moon*, but in, or in reference to conjunction, and so let the *Moon* be two. In reference to its one Constitution, it is called *Mercury*, (for so it ought to be in that form and flux) and so it ought to be four to the *Sun*, that is seven Eagles, which are to the *Sun* not before three, to which adding four, you make seven.

*And thus thy Work must be begun,
In figure of the Trinity,
Three of the Body, and of the Spirit three;
And for the unity of the substance spiritual,
One more then of the substance corporal.*

And thus thy Work is brought to the true Touch-stone, and that is Trinity in Unity, for in this *pondus* of your *Mercury* you have a potential Body, which is one part of three of the *Mercury*, which may by Art be made appear. This potential Body is to be reckoned to your actual Body, and that makes with it two, and so *in potentia* you have two of the Body to one of the Spirit, which is three to three, and one to one. And this potential Body is at first spiritual and volatile, (*in manifesto*) for unity sake, without which could be no unity. Thus then a potential Body, but an actual Spirit, is joined with an actual Body, by which means the actual Body, when it is actually dissolved and made no Body, but a Spirit or Spiritual Body, then this potential Spiritual Body (which was in the Water before) receives this potentialized Body, and both unite and congeal together, and is endowed with a double nature and virtue, that is, Spiritual and Corporal, heavenly and Earthly. And thus is made an union, of which the proportion of the Water in its first preparation, and its due mixing with its Body, was the moving cause, really though hiddenly enforcing the Compound by the necessity of its end, which it could not have done had it not been so proportioned.

*By Raymunds Repertory this is true
Proportion, there who list to look;
The same my Doctor to me did shew.*

This is the true meaning of our proportions, both according to the mystery of Internal and External *pondus*; this is that which Authors have so much concealed, both *Raymund*, *Arnold*, *Albert*, and all who ever have wrote of it: I have broke the Ice first in plain discovering the mystery.

Yet for all this, you stand in need either of a Master, or of more than ordinary pains, accompanied with the blessing of God, else never look to find out this mystery, which though by me revealed more plainly then any, yet it will and must remain secret even till the fullness of time.

*But three of the Spirit Bacon took
To one of the Body: For which I awoke
Many a night ere I it wist.
And both be true, take which you list.*

There is another External proportion, which is three of the Spirit to one of the Body, according to the working of Noble *Bacon*, and many others; which though it seem little to differ from the former, yet there is a wide difference: I know them both, but shall not set down the grounds of the other; if you understand the former, the rule of it may guide you in the latter; for there is an infallible rule of proportion, how the external and Internal ought to concur, to make a sweet Harmony: only let me this assure you out of *Norton*, *That if thy Body have plenty of drink, Then must thou wake when thou desir'st to wink;* it will cost thee more assiduity of boiling for to dry up three parts, then two parts of Water; and there must be necessarily a diversity of Internal *pondus*, for the Water being of one and the same Internal heat, and the external fire being the same, the difference of decoction between two parts and three will be half in half almost until blackness, though after blackness there is one and the same time to both. Yet either of these proportions are true, only you must be sure to qualifie your *Mercury* in heat, and your Regimen of your Furnace accordingly as you work with one or other of these proportions, or else your first token of the Crows head will come wonderful slowly.

*If the Water also be equal in proportion
To the Earth with heat in due measure,
Of them will spring a new Burgeon,
Both white and red in a tincture pure,
Which in the Fire shall never endure.
Kill thou the quick, the dead revive;
Make trinity Unity without any strive.
This is the surest and best proportion,
For there is least of the past Spiritual;
The better therefore shall be solution,
Then if thou didst it with Water small,
Thine Earth over-glutting which loseth all.
Take heed therefore to Potters Loam,
And make thou never too nesh thy Womb.
That Loam behold how it temper'd is,
The mean also by which it is Calcinate,
And ever in mind look thou bear this,
That never thine Earth with Water be suffocate.*

Also if your Water have its proportion qualified accordingly, you may temper it with your earth almost in an equal quality, that is, two to three, or three to four; but be sure then of your due government of external Fire, and a just size of your Vessel, and so you may expect from this mixture Conception and Generation: for in this *pondus* you shall find the death of the Spirit, and the quickening of the Body, and the exalting of your Tincture first into white, and after that into red, which will have ingress into Bodies, and tyne them permanently and radically. Though the Tincture is largest where the water is most, but the work is speediest where the Water is least, the Fire is also less hazardable; but your true proportion of your *Mercury* for such a *pondus* is hard to be found, and thou wilt not easily find it unless thou be very skilful; the middle proportion is less difficult, that of three to one is worse, for a *Tyro*, because he may very easily have his time made tedious by it. The last would be better for such a one, if it were not so hard to apprehend, for the Body would soon be made no Body, and the Spirit mortified, and so Union would follow in a short time, in comparison to other proportions. So then if thou knowest how to serve thy *Mercury* aright for its Internal proportion, the lesser thou puttest of the Spirit, the better and quicker shall be thy Calcination and Dissolution; and the more thou givest of the Water, the longer thou shalt be in attaining the mastery: but if thou glut thy Earth with Water, thou will so suffocate the active virtue, that thy moisture will not be dried up; at least it would require so tedious a decoction, that thou wouldest never see the effect. But the mediocrity is for thee the best, at least at first; be not too covetous, nor to prodigal, for over-driess and over-moisture are both enemies to Generation, and make a barren Womb. If thou be'st witty to apprehend therefore, I shall shew you the certain way of External proportion; for know, that as the Water is qualified internally, so doth it act externally, and if thou canst apprehend the sympathy that is between the inward quality, and the outward effect, thou mayst easily discern by what it apparent to sight, that which is hiddenly contained. Then for your true information take this rule: Let your Body be very well subtilized, and very pure, (which is a great matter, at the least 24 Carrats) mix this at first with twice as much of its Water, and grind it either on a clean Glass, or Marble Mortar; grind it thorowly, as Painters use to grind their Colours, and make no a light matter of this, for lack of one half hour or hours pain in thy Amalgamation, thou mayst set thy work backward 20 or 30 days; for the more subtly the *Amalgama* is mixed, the more easily and speedily it resolves into Mercury, and is wrought upon, and the signs appear. When thou hast soundly and well ground it, and washed it very clean, and dried it very thoroughly, so that there be not the least moisture in it, observe the temper; if it be plyable like to Paste, yet so as when you incline it this way or that, you see no Water run to the inclining side, which you may easily discern, it is a good and sure temper; but if it be so hard and dry, that it will not spread easily, it lacks moisture; or if that Hydropical water run as it were within a skin, to the declining side of your *Amalgama*, add more of your Body to it, till you see that sign no more; and drying it thorowly, as is said, and rather chuse to lean to the other side, then to this, for there is nothing more irksome to an Artist in his Scholarship, then to wait for his signs beyond the time.

*Dry up thy moisture with heat most temperate.
Help Dissolution with moisture of the Moon,
And Congelation with the Sun, then hast thou done.*

When thou hast done this, then be sure to decoct it in a very gentle Fire till it be dry, not by exhaling the Water, but by coagulating it with the Body, in which thy main care must be, that thy Vessel be close, and thy Fire gentle: Now the way to distinguish a gentle from a violent Fire, is a thing deeply concealed by the envious, I shall prescribe some few rules.

1. Know that it is the internal Fire of the *Sulphur* of thy Water, which doth perform the whole work.
2. That the external Fire is but an outward circumstance, which yet is so absolutely necessary, that nothing can be effected without it.
3. The Regimen of the Fire is one Linear decoction, from the beginning to the end of the Work, boiling the thick, and subliming the thin, and so dissevering both (*suaviter & cum ingenio*) according to old *Hermes*.
4. All our Mastery consists in Vapour, which cannot be done without Sublimation and Distillation; for if our Spirit ascended not in a living form, it would all ascend and hang; but ascending quick, it returns again and moistens the Body.
5. Our Distillation or Circulation, is not without a constant motion of Separation; for as the subtle is prepared from the gross by Sublimation, so the thick of that which is below is severed from the thin, which is by continual boiling and decocting, without a moments intermission: Therefore, saith *Hermes*, thou shalt sever the subtle from the gross, and the thick from the thin.
6. Our tender Spirit learns every day more and more to suffer Fire; and therefore, saith *Arnold*, boil it with a Fire daily increasing: yet is it but one degree of Fire, and that is boiling, till the Womans Empire is vanquished; and then there is another degree, and that is roasting, which hath tow periods, Fixation and Calcination: therefore say Philosophers in the beginning, *Coque*, that is, Boil, for as much as the Stone is moist; and at the end they say, *Assa*, that is, Roast, for then the Stone is dry.
7. The periods of the strength of the Fire are in this time many: every day if thou canst, augment it a little, that it may increase insensibly, and you will find the effect more sweetly and speedily.
8. The Philosophers in their descriptions of the Fire, and its degrees, did more observe their matter and its capacity, then the Fire it self.
9. They chiefly liken their Work to Man's Generation, and so they call their Compound, Man: therefore saith *Ripley*, remember Man is the most Noble Creature.
10. This is the true meaning of *Arnold's* four degrees of Fire, *Primus formetur ut sensus ei dominetur*; that is, the Stone being compared to Man, and its first moist Regimen to a Bath; the first degree makes it sweat gently, as a Bath to a Man, which is less hot then he

can suffer, doth cause a gentle sweat. *Sensibus aequato gaudet natura secundo*, is the second degree, in which sweat is exceedingly caused, as a Bath which is as hot as a man can possibly suffer, causes a most violent sweat. *Tertius excedit & cum tolerantia laedit*, is the third degree, which causeth bubbling and swelling, and answers to that heat which will blister a mans hand; for our Compound in this heat riseth in blisters, which fall and rise continually. *Destructor sensus gaudet procedere quartus*, is the fourth heat of Congelation, which takes away sense, that is, quickness, and brings in siccity, just as the cauterizing heat sears the flesh, and drys the moisture. Thus hiddenly did that subtle Sophister veil his Fires.

11. Know that after 40 or 46 days continually boiling, the moisture will begin to waste, and the Compound will begin to dry; which thou shalt know, in that the boiling will begin to turn to a swelling, like to a Puff-paste or Leavened-dough.

12. Know that in 36 days thou mayst have thy moisture begin to congeal, if thou be exact in thy fire, and Proportions both inward and outward.

13. Know that thy Glass must be thick, and very strong, and no less strongly closed, lest it break with those winds which the first decoction will raise in thy Vessel.

14. Let its neck be somewhat long, and fastned, that the motion which is in the Glass may not cause it (by reason of the length and thickness of the neck, and the Sublimation that is still in it, in drops which make it heavy) to sway the little Body one way or other; for if it incline, the Matter will be apt to grow to the inclining side, which should be avoided.

15. Let the neck be considerably cooler then the other part, that thy Vapours may condense in it, which else will burst the Glass violently; so mayst thou give thy Fire more strong then otherwise, and let thy nest be guarded from unnecessary heats and colds, which therefore would have holes at the top of the Cover, which may shut over every Glass, and let out a part of the neck, which would be very advantageous both for the fastning of the Glass, and condensing of Vapours.

16. This boiling will begin in the first three days, and if you be a good Work-man, in the first 24 hours; and from its first ebullition your time is to be reckoned.

17. When you see the Water thicken in its boiling, there is less danger of the Fire.

18. If your Fire go out, your Stone dies.

19. Every intermission of your Fire, is a wasting both of its strength and virtue; and besides the most tedious protraction of time, it makes the Stone subject to many Sicknesses, which would require a most subtle Philosopher to amend, and it lays your Stone in danger of having a return of the Crows Pullet to their nest, after they are fled, which is an ominous sign.

20. Your Gold is not totally lost before blackness perfect; yet it may be so metamorphosed, as to puzzle the best Mechanick to reduce it, and then it is never so full of Spirit as it was before.

21. Yet some of it will be lost in a short decoction, and most of it in thirty days. In a Fire then governed according to these Rules, dry up thy moisture; and that thou mayst dry up the moisture of thy Water, thou must dissolve the Compages of thy Body, so then thy Water dissolves thy Body, and thy dissolved Body re-congeals it self by a further decoction, which in dissolution was so untied as to make one with it.

*Four Natures into a fifth so shalt thou turn,
Which is a Nature most perfect and temperate.*

Thus shalt thou turn thy four qualities in which were repugnancy, into a fifth which is temperate; that is, thou shalt in this driness of Calcination, reconcile the *Mercury* with its qualities of cold and moisture, to *Sulphur* with its qualities of heat and driness, so shall thy Exhalations remain at the bottom, and thy exhalations shall cease, and the moisture being daily terminated into driness, by the ferment of the Body, as Milk by Runnit is terminated into Cheese, thou shalt have a middle product, partaking of the complexion of either Parent.

*But hard it is with thy bare foot to spurn
Against a bar of Iron, or Steel new acuate;
For many so do which be infatuate,
When they such high things take in and,
Which they in no wise understand.*

Thus we have plainly and faithfully done our duty, and by a Line as it were dissevered the Truth from Falshood; yet we know, that in the World our Writing shall prove as a curious edged Knife; to some they shall carve out Dainties, and to others it shall serve only to cut their Fingers: yet we are not to be blamed; for we do seriously profess to any that shall attempt this Work, that he attempts the highest piece of Philosophy that is in Nature; and though we write in *English*, yet our Matter will be as hard as *Greek* to some, who will think they understand us well, when they misconstrue our meaning most perversely: For is it imaginable that they who are fools in Nature, should be wise in our Books, which are testimonies unto Nature?

*In Eggs, in Vitriol, or in Blood,
What Riches ween they there to find?
If they Philosophy understood,
They would not be in working so blind,
Gold and Silver to seek out of its kind:
For like as Fire of burning principle is,
So the principle of gilding is Gold I wis.
If thou therefore intend for to make
Gold or Silver by craft of our Philosophy,*

*Thereto neither Eggs nor Blood thou take,
But Gold and Silver, which naturally
Calcined wisely, and not manually,
A new Generation will forth bring,
Increasing its kind as doth every other thing.*

Some I know will serve my Book as they have served others, out of it they will read their own fantastick processes, which I never dreamt of, nor yet are they in Nature; and whatever I write most plainly, they will Allegorize, and say it is true, for matter of Operation he wrought well, but withal very enviously and mysteriously: he calls the matter *Gold*, and *Mercury*, but that is but allusively; but he meanst Egg-shells calcined, or Vitriol, or Mans Blood, or Dew, or Rain-water, or Salt-peter, or Nitre, or Tartar, or this or that, according to their sordid fancy, and so they will proceed, nothing unsettle in their fancies by what I have candidly written. Gross Sots, thus to think that I in what I without any equivocation call *Gold* and *Mercury*, they should make to allude to such trifles: it is the sign of an Owl to blunder, by how much the Sun shines clearer; let me therefore to satisfy the Ingenious, profess and protest, that without any Allusion or Figure in speaking, our matter is Gold, even the purest that is sold, or can be bought; this is our Masculine Sperm. And our other principle is Mercury, like to that which is commonly sold, in form, in flux and colour, only it is brighter, and somewhat more ponderous; and without any Metaphor we call it *Argent vive*. In the making of this *Mercury* is all our secret, and in the Regimen of the Fire according to its capacity, consists the whole mastery. O fools and blind! Think you to gather Grapes of Thorns, or Figs of Thistles? Wherefore do you thus waste your Goods, proceeding in your Work, as an Ass to his Crib, never considering the nature of the thing you go about? If Gold and Silver be your intention to produce, in what would you find them? In Eggs, or Blood, in Salts, or such things? What a madness is this? To what end think you these operations will tend? What conformity is there between what you seek, and that which you take in hand? Do you not consider the difference of imposition between those Subjects, and Metals? How do you think that they should give weight to imperfect Bodies, when as they themselves are far more light themselves? How can you expect from them a specifick perfect Metalline Tincture, which have not any thing Metalline in them? You see not your own madness. It is no light matter to cause a Body, which perhaps is 10 or 12 parts at the least in 16 defective of the dimensions of Gold, to penetrate its own dimensions so many times, to answer your fond desires. This which you attempt is to force Nature, and to create Sperms, both which are vain to undertake, and truly impossible. Leave then this Sophistry, and imbrace true Light. To create Sperms is Gds alone property, and everything hath its own Sperm, as it hath its own Form: there is nothing that hath a feminine virtue applicable to two things, every thing hath its own Seed, and according to its own Form. Gold therefore and Silver being thine intention, let the same be thy subject to work upon; Gold is thy first Basis, for thy white must first come out of thy red, and then thy white Stone is perfect, then mayst thou use *Luna vulgar*. Now Gold must have its hidden Seed extracted, and that is done by *Mercury* in Calcination, for that operation is the Mineral Copulation, in which the Seeds are sent forth and mingled together, then shall the old Body die, and a new Body shall rise again, endowed with a multiplicative virtue, according to the nature of all things; for it favours rankly of absurdity and ignorance, to

allow all things almost a multiplicative power, and to deny it to Gold, the most perfect of all sublunary things.

*And if it true were that profit might be,
In things which are not Metalline.*

But some will say, How will you answer the Philosophers, who affirm that their Stone is in all things, though in some things nearer, and in some things at greater distance, yet in all things according to the rule of (*propinquius & remotius?*). To such I answer, I grant and know that all things originally owe all their principal material unto Water, and their formal unto Light; and according to the congress of these two principles, through the command of the Architect, this Light doth illuminate the material Water in a singular way, according to the Ideal species which were before in the Archetype; so then the Matter resides in Water, the Informing in Light, and the determination of the Form, which is as I may say the Form's formality, is in the will of the Creator, first impressed or sealed in the word (*fiat,*) and ratified in his command (*producat unumduodque juxta speciem suam.*) Now to apply this to our present purpose, in Water and Light all things agree, in the determination of Illumination they differ, This determinative sentence of the Almighty, sealed a great variety in the products of Matter and Form, which are in themselves general, and being thus sealed, not any thing can pass from its kind to mix with another kind, but it will cause a product partaking of either Parent, nor can mixture be made but in the same genus or species; as an Apple may be grafted on a Crab-tree, a Man may (though abominably) mix with a Beast (*licentia naturali*) but out of *genus* or *species* nothing can mix. There are also many particular exceptions of things in one *genus*, for many Trees I know which the Art of man cannot ingraft one in another, so as to grow, will yet grow well ingrafted elsewhere; so a Dog and a Mouse cannot mix, being one so disproportionate to another. But this by the by.

To return to our intention, we say, that as all things are by the will and power of God specificated, so with the destruction of that *species*, the Form (as to that individual) perishing, (for no intire *species* can perish) things may both by Nature and Art return to their first stable principle material, which is Water, of which Nature, if it be found in a convenient place, might (impregnating it with a Metalline Seed) produce a Metalline Sperm, or viscosity, which then might be a Metal by decoction, and yield unto our work a profitable subject.

*As in Blood, Eggs, hair, urine, or Wine,
Or in mean minerals digg'd out of the Mines,
Yet must that Element be first purified and seaparate,
And with Elements of perfect Bodies be desponsate.*

So then if thou canst (as by the Liquor *Alcahest* thou mayst) reduce a Body (be it what it will, whether Eggs, or Hair, or Urine, or a Spirit ardent, or any mean Mineral which is not of a Metalline imposition) to Water, and after knowest how to impregnate that Water with a specificated, seminal, influential Light, so that that Water may penetrate its dimensions at the least 16 times, and become a Mineral, Mercurial Juice; thou mayst then

expect as much profit from that *Mercury*, as from the best *Mercury* that is sold in the Apothecaries shops, and no more; for thou mayst so purifie it, and separate its faeces and crudities, as that it may become fit to joyn with thy perfect Bodies: but I doubt this way will be so hard, (try it when thou wilt, I fear the first will puzzle thee all thy life long, to turn all Bodies into Water, and the next would puzzle all the Devils in Hell, to bring this Water to a Metallick seminal viscosity) that thou hadst better leave musing on these Impossibilities, and take my counsel, that is, seek it there where Nature hath put it.

*But first of thine Elements make thou Rotation,
And into Water thine Earth turn first of all,
Then of thy Water make Air by levigation,
And Air make Fire; then Master I will thee call
Of all our Secrets great and small:
The wheel of Elements then hast thou turn'd about,
Truly conceiving our Writings without doubt.*

Take of they clean *Mercury*, which is animated according to what I have faithfully taught in my little Latine Treatise (*Introitus apertus*), and mix it with thy Body, as there I told you, without ambiguity; put it in a Glass, as I there advised, and govern it with a Fire, as I in that Treatise ordered, and thou shalt see thy Elements circulate; first thou shalt see thy Elements circulate; first thou shalt have thy Gold dissolved, which thou shalt know by thy first sign, which is a whiteness which will arise like a skin in boiling upon the Water. This Water will be made aerial, by subliming in a continual Vapour; for by constant and continual Sublimation, our Stone is inspired, and takes life in the Air, and lives, and shews the actions of life, and a living Water or Dew shall from the top of the Glass descend upon the lower grounds, and make them fructifie; then shall beautifie thy Vessel with changeable colours, Citrine, pale blewish and blackish: This is the Fire of Radical *Sulphur*, which when it is once stirred up, is like unto the Fiery Dragon, and *Ignis Infernalis*; by this thou mayst know that the Heaven and the Earth, the Form and the matter, the Male and the Female are now beginning Conjunction: when thou seest this sign, rejoyce, for know that now thy Bodies are made in greatest part no Bodies; and this if thou dost work well, will be in 30 or 36 days.

*This done, go backwards turning thy wheel again,
And into Water turn thy Fire anon,
Air into Earth, else labourest thou in vain.*

Now know, that all our three Circulations are so called not without great reason, for so indeed they go on as a Wheel; put a Nail in a Wheel, and turn it, and you shall see the nail will with one half of your turning ascend, and the other half descend: And then that Circulation is compleat, and you then must go on to another Circulation.

These our Circulations are Solution and Congelation, Volatilization and Fixation, opening and shutting; when once thou hast brought thy Body to the height of Subtiliation, that the Spirit by decoction can being to it, then the Spirit hath done its work, and ceaseth then to be active; then begins the dissolved Body to work after its own kind, and then the

Spirit is passive, and the Body active; thus passive Natures are made active, and active passive, which is the key of out Mastery. First then, advance the Spirit above the Body, till the Fire be discovered, which is in a yellow colour; then advance the Body over the Spirit, till the Earth again appear, which is in a colour blacker than Pitch; which first will begin with blewness, and his will decline daily more and more unto blackness. This yellow colour remember that it comes with a moisture of the Compound, otherwise what you do is all in vain: turn it then into Water, that is, let this yellowness appear *in humido*, till by opposition from the terrene qualities there be engendred a blewness, then continue this decoction till all be intirely black, for in gross moisture heat working, engenders blackness, with such like gross colours.

*For so to temperament is brought our Stone,
And Natures contractions four, are made one;
After they have three times been circulate, Also thy Base perfectly consummate.*

Thy Air must be thickned with the Body, which is terrene and gross, being not yet putrified, and by this means the Fire and the Air, and the Earth and Water will accord; for Air will agree with Water, and Earth with Fire: The Air being then tempered with Earth, doth by this reconcile the Water and the Fire. Thus our first decoction confounds the Elements, and thus our Stone which was of severed qualities, is brought to a temperateness. Thus by a natural Circulation, the Quadrangle is made a Circle, and four qualities make a fifth, which is a Neuter from the four, and yet partakes of all, This first Conjunction natural, which is made in the Glass without laying on of hands, which we call Triptative, is the ground of the last Tetraptive Conjunction, which is made in the turning round of the three Wheels, which doth perfect the Stone.

Thus under the moisture of the Moon.

Govern then thy Bath first with a moist Fire, until the Body be made no Body, but a flying Spirit; this is the time of the Womans reign, and it is attributed to the *Moon*: for our Gold till it be dissolved, all the work depends only upon the active virtue of the Water, which causeth the slow appearance of our signs.

*And under the temperate heat of the Sun,
Thy Elements shall be increate soon,
And then hast thou the Mastery won.
Thank God thy Work was so begun:
For then hast thou one token true,
Which first in blackness to thee will shew.*

When thou hast by thy first Waters Pontick virtue and firiness, so far dissolved thy Body as to set at liberty its internal *Sulphur*, then thy Operations will be speedy; for the *Sulphur* of the Water, together with the natural *Sulphur* of thy Gold, by mixture will make an unnatural Fire, which will then burn like to the Fire of Hell, first making a total end of that dissolution which was but in part made by the Water, and after that drying up and congealing its own moisture, and the moisture of the Water, uniting the *Sulphur* of the

Sun and the *Sulphur* of the Water, and the *Mercury* of the *Sun* and the *Mercury* of the Water, and the united *Sulphur* prevailing over the united Humidity, rotting it into powder as small as Atoms, black of the blackest black, thou shalt then see a total mixture of Seeds, and death of thy Compound. This rotting will begin about the 42, 46 or 50th day; and the signs of it are, the Fumes will not ascend, but the Matter will boil at the bottom of the Glass, like to melted Pitch, boiling and bubbling, swelling and puffing in a black colour, every day blacker and blacker, shewing changable rotting colours in its boiling. This will continue till it be so thick, that it boil not, but grow hard and swell; yet it will vary often, and appear sometimes as though dry, and sometimes a little moisture will appear, with fresh bubbling, but no Fumes. And this will last about 46 days, no Fumes rising at all, so that about the 84th or 90th day, after thy Matters begin to be boiled in a continual decoction, Putrefaction will be compleat, and then Sublimation or Circulation will begin again, which in 46 or 50 days will end in a white Dove.

This first token of blackness proclaims thee a Master, after which thou canst not well miss, unless thou wilt. This is the astonishment of Art, to make Gold volatile, which was so fixed: be patient then, and boyl continually till your Gold begin to dissolve, and come upon the water like a Cream. Then continue your decoction till the colour begin to change into an imperfect Citrine, with moisture, and send up yellowish vapours. This Citrine will soon be mixed with a blewish black, and yet continue your boyling, till breath fail, that is, the Clouds and Fumes arise no more; then the Compound boyl at the bottom without Fumes, and will shew dark, obscure, reddish, yellowish, blewish, gray and blackish colours; then continue your decoction till the Body and whole Compound begin to rot into Atoms, which the 50th day will give you a Harbinger or fore-runner of, with Pitchy blackness; then know that all is thorowly mingled together and will never cease till the damned Earth come, the Earth of Leaves, which is a dust impalpable.

*The Head of the Crow taken do call we,
And some do call it the Crowes Bill,
Some call it the Ashes of Hermes Tree;
And thus they name it after their will,
Our Toad of the Earth which eateth his fill.
Some call it by what is mortificate,
Our Spirit with Venom intoxicate.
But it hath names I say to thee infinite;
For after each thing that blackness is to sight
Named it is, till time it waxeth white;
Then hath it names of more delight,
After things that been full white.
And the red likewise after the same,
After all red things doth take the name,
At the first Gate, &c.*

This token then is called the Crow, the Crow's Head, and the Crow's Bill, for it is a shining blackness, like unto Printers Ink, or a solid Coal new broken, or the most black and compacted broken Pitch.

Others name it the Ashes of *Hermes* Tree, for it is Ashes out of which grows a Tree afterwards, beautiful and glorious with Sprigs and Branches, and changeable colours.

And indeed this liberty the Philosophers have taken, to call it what they list: they call it their Toad which crawleth on the ground, and feedeth upon the slime of the earth; because before it is quite black, it may resemble the colours of a Toad, and its likeness, puffing and swelling, and rugged with bunches and blisters, and knobs.

Others call it a Spirit killed with its own deadly poison, that is, *Mercury* dissolving Gold, in which dissolved Body (which then seems a Spirit) there is hidden ferment, which may recongeal the same: this fermental virtue it is that doth coagulate or thicken the Water, that to the wonder of Beholders what before was thinner and thinner, doth after 40 days thicken, till it come to a dust or powder like to impalpable Atoms.

But I shall not insist upon these denominations, there being so many given to it by the Envious, that there is nothing almost in the World that is black, or may be made black by the Fire, but they have named it by it. Also whatever is filthy or faeculent, or unsavoury either to taste or smell, they have Allusively called their Stone by, in reference to its first putridness or corruption. So likewise when by continuance of decoction the colour changeth to white, they then call it their Swan, their Dove, their white Stone of Paradise, their white Gold, their Alabaster, their white Smoak, and in a word whatever is white they do call it by. And so the Red they name their Vermillion, their red Lead, their Poppy of the Rock, their Tyre, their Basilisk, their red Lion, and in sum it borrows the names of all red things.

Now thou art entred the first five gates of the Philosophers Castle; for do not believe but that Calcination is verily Putrefaction, and is done by Dissolution, Separation and Conjunction, as if thou hast attended this discourse thou mayst easily conceive: only here is the Sophism, after this total Calcination, there is relenting again; for as I said before, our Operation is but turning as it were of a Wheel, which runs one half of its circulation directly backwards to its first progress. Thou sublimest so long, till the Body is made as volatile as it may be, this is the activity of the Spirit; then thou congealest so long, till all appear like Atoms, and then is thy bodily virtue active, and thy Spirit passive; then thy Spirit begins to be active again, and thy Compound which was apparently fixed, relents again and distils as before, till it come to its height again of volatility, which is again a Separation; then is celebrated again a Conjunction Tetractive, and from that time all ascends and descends together, and there is such an union, that there doth not then (as at first) exhale a quick Fume, and descend upon the bodily Moles, but all ascends like to a glorious tree with branches, and is not sublimed to the top, but sprouts up like the tender Frost in a fair morning, which falls and rises till all become a Powder impalpable. So then after Calcination is again a Solution, and that divides between *Azoth* and *Laton*, and a distilling Separation in which *Azoth* washeth *Laton*; and after that a Conjunction, not of the four Elemental qualities only, which was in the first Conjunction, but of the Elements themselves, the Body, Soul and Spirit; and then is made another Calcination into a white Calx, which by continual decoction relents again, and is made volatile again: for our Wheel goes round, and when it is come thither whence it set forth, it begins again. Thus

is made a third Solution, Sublimation and Calcination into a red *Elixir*, which is the Sabbath of Nature and Art; at which being arrived, there is no farther progress without a new Marriage, either by Ferment or otherwise, according to the rule of Nature and Art: so that indeed all our work is three Rotations, and every Rotation hath three Members, Solution, Sublimation, and Calcination. The first Solution is called Inceration, and Reduction or Liquefaction, the second properly Solution, the third Inceration. The first Sublimation is called Distillation, Ascension and Ablution, the third Exaltation and Sublimation. The first Calcination is called Calcination and Conjunction Tripartite, Putrefaction, &c. The second Congelation, Albification and Fixation, the Third Illumination, &c. only remember, thou in thy first Calcination attainest compleat Putrefaction, in the second the compleat White *Elixir*, and in the third the compleat Red. This I premise to undeceive thee, that thou mayst not think to have a Calcination first, a Dissolution next, a Separation thirdly, a Conjunction fourthly, a Putrefaction fifthly, &c. No verily, when thou first putteth thy Matters into the Vessel, in the first day of thy Operation, thou givest a Fire in which thy Compound boileth, swelleth, and puffeth visibly, and drops down in veins off from the Convex of thy Glass; for in this *Mercury* thy Gold will, beyond the nature of any other *Mercury*, flow in the Fire as if the whole was *Mercury*, and boyl visibly, which must never cease, not a moment, for it brings imminent damage. In the first days of your boyling, which is accompanied with a constant ascending and return of Fumes, your Compound grows more and more liquid, now and then a skin appearing in the form of a distinguishable, though not very observable, whiteness. At length a yellowish colour will appear, less at first, and more afterwards distinguishable, both in the boyling Compound below, and in the Fumes above; and when thou seest thy Glass as if it were all over gilded, where the Fumes ascend with a blewness, then know that thy Man and Wife do mix their Seeds, then shall an obscure greenness pass and continue a season, then shall thy Fumes diminish, and at length be none at all, and the Compound shall boyl and swell in the bottom of the Glass.

After that, the more you boyl, your Compound will be the more black, coming at last to the temper of melted Pitch for colour and bubbling, which shall rot with obscure colours until it come to the period of Putrefaction, which is a most exquisitely subtle, black, unctuous Powder, which about the 84th or 90th day in a good decoction will be compleat.

Take heed now, for I shall not make such another particular Systeme of the Work in all my Writings. When the fullness of compleat Calcination is perfect, then will the parts begin to liquefie together again, and you then shall see Vapours begin to arise again, first like to a Smoak, which will after return in drops condensing on the Vessel sides, which believe me is a gallant sight; for in this Operation as blackness by little wears away, such colours will appear which thou canst not imagine, that thou wilt steal from Natures due to satisfie thine eyes in the beholding of it, when thou shouldest sleep.

This Circulation with infinite variety of colours will last between 20 and 30 days, and then thou shalt see thy Matter appear pretty white, which then will grow whiter and whiter, till it become like a glittering Sword in the Sun-beams: trust me, for I have seen this shining sparkling white, which yet will be quick like a most glorious Heaven-born *Mercury*, the subject of wonders.

Then shall these Fumes begin to cease, and thou shalt see a Congelation, like to the sparkling twinkling eyes of Fishes, which moving uncessantly on the fire, will glitter incomparably and wonderfully, and thickening more and more, it will sprout like a tender Frost in a most amiable luster, and in 25 das shalt thou have it a most impalpable undiscernable Powder. Now thou needest no farther instruction, only this let me tell you, that the continuing your Glass in the Fire, and increasing it discreetly, this white will relent again, and change into a perfect green, and will again circulate and become perfect Azure, and at the length thicken, and in the end become (after a long Citrinity) in a moment a sparkling red pure impalpable powder. Understand this well, and you will not be amazed any longer with the distinction of our Operation, which is but Solution (which contains Separation or Sublimation and Volatilization) and Coagulation, which contains Conjunction, Calcination and Fixation; and all is but a successive action and passion of Gold the body and his qualities, and *Mercury* the Soul and its qualities, between which intercedes a Spirit of Life, which carries them up and down like a Wheel, which turns till it returns thither whence it proceeded, and then begins again and turns so long till it finds its rest, which is in the Fiery *Cathedra*, the red of the reddest, the great *Elixir* commanding all Metals, and reducing them to the highest period of nature, which is Gold it self, having attained a *plusquam* perfection, through the marvelous co-operation of Art and nature.

Thus Gold is thy Base of Foundation, the Centre to which all thy operations return, and in which they rest, for they are but Circulations in their own kind, and these Circulations are uncessantly carried along through the never-ceasing action of the Fire, which a little intermission would retard notably, an extinction of the heat would extinguish it irrecoverably. If any then should ask us, what our natural Operation of the Stone is; we would answer, a making of active Natures passive, and passive active, by continual decoction. We boyl continually, and when the Spirit is active there is a constant ascension and descension, and the Body is dissolved and made to fly like a Spirit; and when the Body is active, the Fumes by little and little cease, and the Compound remains below, boiling without fuming, thickning and then a length calcining: and this is without hands repeated three times, the Fire only being kept continually, and then a Sabbath of rest and perfection is attained: in the mean time divers colours come and go, which the dying Body and vegetative Soul do work and cause. Trust me, Friend and Brother, thou never hadst such a manuduct as this in thy life, the Reasons of my plainness my little Latine treatise doth clearly shew.

*The Battle's fought, the Conquest won,
The Lyon dead reviv'd;
The Eagle's dead which did him slay,
And both of sense depriv'd.
The Showrs cease, the Dews which fell
For six weeks, do not rise;
The ugly Toad that did so swell,
With swelling bursts and dies.
The Argent Field with Or is stain'd,
With Violet intermix'd,*

*The sable Black is not disdain'd,
Which shews the Spirits fix'd.
The Compound into Atoms turn'd,
The Seeds together blended;
The flying Soul to th' earth return'd,
The soaring Bird descended.
He King and Queen contumelate,
And joyn'd as one together;
That which before was two, by Fate
Is ty'd which none can sever.
The King begets the Queen with Child,
Conjunction doth allay
Their fury who before were wild,
Conception both doth slay.
The King is Brother to his Wife,
And she to him is Mother;
One Father is to both, whose life
Depends upon each other.
The one when dead, the other dyes,
And both are laid in Graves;
The Coffin's one in which both lyes,
Each doth the other save.
Yet each the other doth destroy,
And yet both are amended;
One without t'other hath no joy,
Both are of one descended.
Twice forty days do come and go,
To which twice five are added,
Those do produce a perfect Crow,
Whose blackness chears hearts sadded.
Twice fifteen more produce a Dove,
Whose wins are bright and tender;
Twice ten more make the Soul above
To need no Fire defender.
For Soul and Body so combine,
Thy Spirit interceding.
Tincture to give of Silver fine,
The Soul the Body in leading.
Also such fixity to add,
Against the Flames prevailing,
Also such fixity to add,
Against the Flames prevailing,
Which may the Chymist make full glad,
The Sophister still failing.
Who seeks in fancies for to find
Our Art so much concealed,*

*Not duly weighing in his mind
That 'tis a Fountain sealed,
Which one thing only can unlock;
This one thing learn to know,
Lest you the same event should mock,
That thing these Lines do shew.*

AN
EXPOSITION
UPON THE
Second Gate,
Which is
DISSOLUTION.

The Second Gate Opened,
Which is
DISSOLUTION

*Of Dissolution now will I speak a word or two,
Which sheweth out what erst was hid from sight,
And maketh intenuate things that were thick also,
By virtue of our first Mestruë clear and bright,
In which our Bodies eclipsed been of light,
And of their hard and dry compaction subtilate,
Into their own first Matter kindly retrograde.*

Having run through the Chapter of Calcination, I now come to handle Dissolution, which as I said before, is the first beginning of the Spirits activity, and it is the first half of the Wheel which turns up the Spirit, and down the Body; the second hath a contrary operation, for it makes the Body active, and Spirit passive: so then Calcination hides the profundity of the Body, which Solution discovereth. It is then nothing else but a boiling of hard and dry Bodies in our *Mercury*, in a convenient Fire, so long till they be dissolved and made thin; then the same Fire makes them fly and flying they condense and return in drops on the Body, and moisten it: This is Solution and Sublimation together, for the Water circulating upon the Body, doth soften it, and by often returning both at length bring it to its own nature of moisture. In this Resolution, according to *Artephius*, the *Sun* loseth its colour and is darkned, and the *Moon* doth not give her light, for all things are turned into their confused Chaos, or first Matter, in which the Elements with their qualities are hurried together.

*One in Gender they be, and in Number two,
Whose Father is the Sun, and the Moon the Mother;
The mover is Mercury: These and no more be
Our Magnesia, our Adrop, and none other
Things here be, but only Sister and Brother:*

*That is to mean, Agent and Patient,
Sulphur and Mercury co-essential to our intent.*

The cause of this is the Homogeneity of the matter, wherein they agree in essence, together with the difference which is between them in Sex, they being in the Glass as Male and Female; and in ripeness of years one being more mature, and by consequent more active, (to wit, the *Sun*, who therefore is the Father) the other more crude (in comparison of the Sun) and so more passive, viz. the Moon, which therefore is the Mother of our Stone. This Mother is our *Mercury* (which for its eminent difference from any other *Mercury*, is called the *Moon*) with its internal true *Sulphur*, which is hidden under its *Mercurial* form, doth first move; for at first our Body, which is Gold, is dead, and liveth not till it be quickned by our *Mercury*, then it lives: it behooveth thee then to put in thy Body and thy Water, and let them stand together, and add nothing to them. This Composition duly made we call our *Magnesia*, and our *Adrop*, and nothing entreth, neither Powder nor Liquor, save only these two *species*, which *species* are the perfect Body and *Argent vive*.

These two sprung out of one Root, for as I told you, the Soul of thy animated *Mercury* is perfect true Gold, yet volatile, which by Art may be made to appear in a fixed form: so then we joyn Consanguinity with Consanquinity, Brother with Sister, and make them become together Man and Wife. These two by continual Fire do act and re-act, the Woman first, and then the man, several, which then are joined and make one Hermaphrodite, acting one half of each Circulation as a Woman or Spirit, and the other half as a Man or Body.

For each of the two principles have a *Sulphur* and a *Mercuriality*; the Gold or Body hath its *Sulphur* external and apparent, the *Mercury* the Spirit hath it internally hidden, yet both these are co-essential to each other, and in that respect they are the only subjects in the World for our Art.

*Between these two in quality contrarious.
Ingendred is a mean most marvelous,
Which is our Mercury and Menstrue unctuous;
Our secret Sulphur working invisibly,
More fierce then Fire burning the Body,
Dissolving Metals into Water Mineral,
Which Night for darkness in the North we do call.*

For with their Homogeneity, they have withal such a Contrareity in opposite qualities, that they do no sooner feel the Fire, but they are stirred up to Work, and boiling and circulating in a continual Ebullition or Vapour, they do mingle their homogeneal qualities together: by reason of which there is a strange *medium*, of an unnatural Fire and a putrefying Bath ingendred, then the *Sulphur* or Fire of the Gold, which is the Fire of Nature, and the *Sulphur* of the Water, do embrace one another, and these two make an unnatural Fire, in which the Humidity appears, and the *Sulphur* being hidden to the eye, appears in its effects only to sight, and that is, it burns, des troys and conquers the Bodies,

which common Fire never could do, making them to be no Bodies, but a Fume of Mineral Vapour; and in this Operation the Elements are confused, and make our Chaos which is void and dark, for here the Lights of the World are eclipsed, the Sun is darkned, and the *Moon* sheweth not its light: which watrishness of the Compositions, for its abundance of moisture, and privation of light, we call Winter, and Night, and the North Latitude of our Stone.

*But yet I trow thou understandst not utterly, the very secret of Philosophers Dissolution,
Therefore understand me, I counsel thee wittily,
For the truth I will tell thee without delusion,
Our Solution is caused of our Congelation;
For Dissolution on the one Side corporal,
Caused Congelation on the other side spiritual.*

When once thou hast the true mastery of our Dissolution, thou needest take no care for Congelation, for governing it on with thy Fire, thou shalt attain Coagulation without any laying on of hands. Therefore saith *Ricardus*, above all things it is wonderful, that in our work, Calcination, Dissolution, Sublimation, Putrefaction, Separation, Conjunction, Death and Purification, should be performed in one Vessel, and one linear decoction, without laying on of hands: for verily the Dissolution of the Body thickens the Spirit, as it is in Water in which Gum or such a thing is dissolved; for by how much the one is dissolved, the other is congealed: this proves the naturality of our Work, for as a grain of Corn is in the bowels of the Earth softened with moist Vapour, and swelleth thereby, this Vapour is also terminated by the fermental odour of the Grain, and so both grow up together into Stalks and Ears.

*And we dissolve into Water which wetteth no hand;
For when the Earth is integratly incinerate,
Then our Elements are so together concatenate,
That when thy Body from its first form is alterate,
A new form is induced immediately,
Since nothing being without all form is utterly.*

So we in our Work dissolve our body, which is Gold, in its own Water, in which it is softned as a Seed in its proper ground, and being softned it relents into Water, not diaphanous, such as is the Water of the Clouds, or of Fountains, but Mineral, even *Mercury* which wetteth no hand, nor cleaves to any thing but that which is of its own substance and essence.

So that in our Work, our two Principals work not according to their single dispositions, but as conjunct; the one, saith the Philosophers, dyeth not without its Brother: therefore when thou calcineth the Earth, thou dost in it and with it calcine the Water, and in this the Souls of both are tyed together, to the end that they may serve the wise Philosophers. Therefore let all thy study be to unite Natures, which thou canst never do, unless thou separate first their Souls by Sublimation, and afterwards unite them in blackness, which a continual Circulation of thy Water upon the Earth will produce.

Now know, that when thou seest thy Water and thy Body boil together, so as to thicken one another, and to congeal one another, that then thy science is true, and then thy Body which thus thickens, is not the same which thou putttest in, but a middle coagulate, a *terra Adamica*, a *Limus* and *Chaos*, for one form being taken away, a second necessarily follows immediately; for as no Body can at any time have more than one form, so can it never be void of all form.

*And here a secret I will to thee disclose,
Which is the ground of our secrets all,
And it is not known thou shalt but lose
Thy labour and costs both great and small:
Take heed therefore in error that thou not fall.
The more thine earth, and the less thy moisture be,
The faster and better Solution shalt thou see.*

And here take notice by the way, that that is no total Dissolution which is before Calcination, but only partial, the Water resolves as much as it can of the Body, so much that it doth sever between its Spirit and Body; but by reason of its perfection and strong compaction, it finds a great deal of difficulty before a total Resolution, and therefore it putrefies what is most gross, and thus brings it to Atoms, which when it is once subtilized beyond the exigency of its own nature, it then is dissolved, and relents, and then Dissolution is made totally, viz. after Putrefaction. Then at length it becomes all like a glorious *Argent vive*, and this immediately before the Lunary Coagulation: Know then that our first loosing is into a viscous Powder, which is brought on by Incrudation, or rather Liquefaction, for know that till after Putrefaction, our Stone and Compound is moist in the Fire, but hardens more and more by how much the colder it is, and softens more and more by how much hotter it is, and the heat slacking, the boiling will change into a seeming Vegetation, and the Fire going out, it is hard rather than soft, yet the mingling of the natures is known by the colours, and drawing to Calcination. Therefore thy first Operation is to dry up thy superfluous watrish moisture, not evaporating it, but congealing it on the Body. Think not them, as some of the envious Sophistically write, that the more you put of your Water, the sooner you dissolve, and congeal the flower: No verily, your Calcination is but the *medium* of True Solution, which is (trust me) not total nor proper till after Putrefaction. I should never have told thee this Mystery, had not the love of my Neighbor compelled me, That opening of the Body which is before, is but an opening of its pores, which lets our Water in, and then after death and resurrection the *Mercury* of *Sol* is visible to the eye, which before was but indistinguishable by its effect.

*Behold how Ice to Water doth relent,
And so it must, for Water it was before;
Right so again our Water to Earth is went,
And Water thereby congeal'd for evermore:
For after all Philosophers that ere were bore,
Each Metal once was Water Mineral,
Therefore with Water they turn to Water all.*

So then our Body hath moisture in it self, but this moisture is sealed, as Water when frozen by the Cold. But when the pores of the Body are by our Water opened, and its central Fire set at liberty. This internal Fire of Nature makes the Body to become no Body, but a very Spirit.

In this same Operation the Spirit is congealed, for the Body hath in it ore virtue then its two Sociats, that is, than the Soul and Spirit. This is the action and re-action of our Body and its Water, for our Body is in its *occulto Mercury*, and our *Mercury* in its *occulto Sol*; therefore they embrace each other, because of the nearness of their natures, and so the Body hath its profundity discovered, and the Water its altitude, and both together are glorified in one Spiritual Body together, according to *Noble Hermes, Vis ejus est integra si versa fuerit in terram*. But thou canst never have this excellent fixity, till the fixed have attained its volatility.

*In which Water of kind occasionate,
Of qualities been repugnance and diversity,
Things into things must therefore be Rotate,
Until that Trinity be brought to perfect Unity.*

This Water into which our Bodies are first liquefied, is not properly Water, but (*modo quodam*) as we may say in the Fire. During the predomination of the Woman, all appears in a moist posture, and so will do most part of the first 50 days; yet this is a gross moisture, and by consequence the more fit for Putrefaction: in which gross Humidity all the elements are in a confusion, not the Elements of the great World, but our Mineral Elements; thou must therefore work by a continual boiling, in which thy Compound will appear like unto the stormy Sea in a Tempest, raging and swelling, waves and bubbles rising one in the neck of another incessantly. The Vapour of this Bath being imprisoned, condenseth and returns every moment, until there be an union made of all the Elements, in a *terra Adamica*, or *Limus*. Then will the Body, Soul and Spirit remain below in the bottom of the Vessel, which is as a Tomb, in which they dye and rot, and are purified.

*For the Scripture recordeth when the Earth shall be
Troubled, and into the deep Sea shall be cast
Mountains and Bodies likewise at the last.*

Then will our Earth be moved, and the powers of our Heaven will be shaken, and the windows thereof opened, and an universal Deluge will come upon the face of the whole Earth, which will destroy all things, and cover the highest Mountains, so that all Flesh shall dye: these Waters will be a long time upon the face of the ground.

*Our Bodies be likened conveniently
To Mountains, which after high Planets we name;
Into the deeps therefore of Mercury
Turn them, and keep thee out of blame,
For then shalt thou see a noble game,*

*How all will become Powder as soft as Silk;
So doth our Runnit kindly curd up our milk.*

Thus have many of the envious allegorized of the Scripture, and veiled their Work under several passages and overtures which are mentioned therein, to which they have some resemblance: that have called their Metals *Sol* and *Luna*, Mountains, either for the situation sake, they being generally found in Mountains, or by opposition sake, for as Mountains are highest above ground, so they lye deepest under ground; or for that as the mountains are nearer the Sun, so those do approximate nearer to coelestial Influences than any other Bodies whatsoever: so also they have stiled them by the names of Planets, by reason of some similitude.

But it makes not so much for the name, the thing is, take the Body which is Gold, and throw it into *Mercury*, such a *Mercury* which is bottomless, that is, whose center it can never find but by discovering its own; govern them wisely with Fire, as they Matter requireth, then shall thy Gold visibly liquefie in the Fire, that is, appear thin as if it were *Mercury*, and it will swell, bubble and boil, so long till the moisture be terminated by the Body into an impalpable Powder, as naturally as Runnit doth curdle Milk into Cheese. This total reduction into Atoms, is the perfection of Putrefaction, in blackness most black, and it begins before the 50th day, and endeth before or about the 90th day, in variable colours.

*Then have thy Bodies their first form lost,
And others been indued immediately,
Then hast thou well bestowed thy cost,
When others uncunningly must go by,
Not knowing the secrets of our Philosophy.*

Then thou hast a Body, not such a one as thou puttest in, but Hermaphroditical, which yet hath but one form. Nor is it the same form it had, though an accidental imperfect one in the same kind; which imperfect form is not to be despised, for these Ashes are the Tomb of our King. Honour then the Sepulchre of him and of his Queen, if ever thou expect to see them returning from the East in power and great glory. Never grutch it then that thou hast destroyed thy Gold, for he that thus destroys it, loseth it not, but soweth good Seed in good Earth, from whence he shall receive it with an hundred-fold increase: when as he that saveth his Gold in this Work, loseth his labour, and is deceived for lack of true understanding, when as he undertakes this Work without the true knowledge of its causes.

*Yet one point more I must tell thee,
How that each Body hath dimensions three,
Altitude, I attitude, and also Profundity;
By which all Gates turn we must our Wheel.*

Having then this Mystery, which is the Stumbling-block at which thousands stumble, who cannot for all their talk destroy their Bodies, which is not to be done but by the

Alkahest, which is an unprofitable way for our Work, and by our *Mercury*, viz. in 40 days, or thereabouts: Then know which must be your next progress, for Calcination is but a term put on our Work by Authors, and it reacheth to the end of Putrefaction, our first Calcination. I told you before, that all our Work was compleat in three Circulations, and every Circulation had three periods; so now I tell you, that these three periods are Altitude, Latitude and Profundity: Altitude and Profundity being united, make Latitude, and so our Wheel is turned round: the Profundity is the Water below, the Altitude is Vapour or Waters above, and the union of these two is in a Calx, which is Latitude; which is done by Liquefaction, Sublimation and Calcination: Liquefaction dissolves and confounds, Sublimation volatizeth, separates and washeth, and Calcination unites and fixeth.

*Knowing that thine entrance in the West shall be,
Thy passage forth to the North if thou do well,
And there thy Lights will lose their lights each deal,
For there must thou abide for 90 nights,
In darkness of Purgatory without lights.*

Thou must begin in the West, and in the Autumn, which is Barren, for then Crops are gathered; take then thou Gold, which is the Harvest of Natures works, and it is batten of it self; to make it fruitful thou must bring on the Winter showers, which is the North Latitude, and by these the Earth will be made mellow, and the Seeds will rot; which Seeds are *Sol* terrestrial, in whose belly is a hidden *Luna*. These Lights will in this Operation be darkned, and by little and little a horrible Night will over-shadow the Earth and Heaven, a blackness like unto Pitch: this blackness and Eclipsation will continue until the end of thy first three months, perhaps 100 days, perhaps 120, yea sometimes 130 days, as it may fall out; think not this time long, for it must be that thy Matters must be purified, before they can or shall be glorified.

*Then take thy course up to the East anon,
By colours rising variable in manifold wise,
To the East therefore thine ascending devise,
For there the Sun with day-light doth uprise
In Summer, and there disport thee with delight.*

Then shalt thou see thy Exhalations to return again, and by the continuance of them on thy Body, light shall begin to appear, which is our Spring and East season, in which as the rising Sun saters the darkness with multitude of previous colours, especially in a misty morning; so is it with our Work, such admirable colours will appear, as never were seen by the eye of man in so little a room before. Then rejoice, for now our King hath triumphed over the miseries of death, and behold him returning in the East with the Clouds in power and great glory. Now the Night is overgone, and the Morning breaks; the Winter is past, and the Spring comes on pleasantly, with sweet showers of *April*, hastning the most beautiful Flowers of *May*. Now as the Winter is a sad time, being cold and wet, frosty and slabbery, the Countries of Pleasure being dirty to the Horse belly, but the Spring returns the year, and pleasure with its sweet season: so in our Work, the first

Operations before blackness seem tedious, for thou wilt think there will never be an end of it; so variety of colours brings delight in its daily and hourly variety, even to perfect whiteness.

*Forth from the East into the South ascend,
And set thee down there in a Chair of Fire,
For there is Harvest, that is to say, an end
Of all this Work after thine own desire,
There shineth the Sun up in his Hemisphere.
After the Eclipses in redness with glory,
As King to reign over all metals and Mercury.*

Here thou mayst light and bait, and enjoy the glory of thy white Elixir, but do not, for thou hadst better wait the end. Proceed then with a Fire a little more increased unto the Summer of South quarter, where after some colours, as green, yellow, azure, and the like, thou shalt have a sparkling red, like unto the flaming Fire. Then thou art come indeed to thy harvest, and to the end of all thy Operations; for now thou beginnest by apparent colours the uprising of the Sun, after it hath been so long beclouded and eclipsed; now hast thou mourned long enough, now the time is come that thou shalt need no more to mourn, for the Bridegroom is now come forth out of his Chamber, and the Sun comes forth as a valiant Champion to win a prize: now is the time come in which that of the Poet is fulfilled;

*Ne te poeniteat faciem lulligine pingi.
Adferet haec Phoebi nigra favilla jubar.*

Now hath our King of peace attained his Kingdom, whose Government is, *parcere subjectis & debellare superbos*; for whatever is infected our King will cure, what is lame he will heal, and what is rebellious he will suppress and subdue. *Sic Reis ad exemplum totus componitur orbis.*

*And one Glass must be done all this thing,
Like to an Egg in shape, and closed well.*

Now all these our Operations, as the Philosopher saith, are done in our secret Fire, hidden Furnace, and in one Vessel; for I thou thinkest to make any of these Operations with thy hand, thou art in a certain of error. Our Vessel then, which for similitudes sake we call an Egg, must be so closed when our Materials are set in it, that the Spirits cannot possibly get out, nor the Air get in, else our Work were spoiled.

*Then must thou know the measure of Firing,
The which unknown thy Work is lost each deal.
Let never thy Glass be hotter then thou mayst feel,
And suffer still in thy bare hand to hold,
For fear of losing, as Philosophers have told.*

This done, we then set our Vessel and Matter to the Fire, and let it stand untouched till the Work be done: so that the Philosopher hath nothing then to do but behold his Glass, and the Operation in it, and to govern his Fire artificially.

So then when once the Stone is set to work, the whole mastery is to govern the external Fire, which as the Philosopher doth either perfect or destroy all: if thy Fire be too slow for want of motion, thou wilt hardly ever see an end; and if too big, thou mayst happen to seek thy fortune in the Ashes.

Be not therefore immoderate in governing; and for better security, let not your Glass neck be under a span in length, but as much longer as you shall see good; the longer as you shall see good; the longer for a *Tyro*, the better he shall work, and with the more security. But the usual length which we use, is about 12 or 14 inches high; this height being so allowed, order so your Furnace as to let out about 3 or 4 inches of the top of your Glass, which may come forth through the cover of your *Athanor*, and if you can without hurt feel or suffer any part of that neck, fear not your Fire, but stew him without fear, your Glass being strong, and the quicker Fire the better.

Yet know, that your Furnace must be answerable, for do not believe that Philosophers did formerly use our Art of Furnaces, but made them of Brick, or Earth, with Earthen Covers, which had holes for letting out part of the necks of their Glasses, over which if they put a Cover, which they could remove and set on again at their pleasure; this Earthen Cover was not so reflective of heat, as our Iron Covers are, but that end of the Glass which came out at the hole of the Cover, they could feel without any damage, and by their being able to suffer that in their hand, they judged the temperament of their heat. Therefore in thy Furnace let thy Cover or Top be luted with good Loam everywhere, at the least half an inch thick, so shalt thou be sure not to have too scalding a heat in the concavity of thy Nest, which otherwise thou wouldst have, so mayst thou govern thy Fire at thy pleasure; the necks of thy Glasses which come forth, thou needest not cover: so shalt thou see this of *Ripley* verified, thy Work will go on very successfully, and thou wilt ever be able to endure thy Glass in thy hand; and this is the true meaning of all Philosophers, to give a certain rule by which thou shalt never exceed, and that is so long as you can endure to feel any part of thy Glass, provided thy Nest be covered, and the ends of thy Glass necks come forth.

*Yet to my Doctrine furthermore attend,
Beware thy Glass thou ever open ne meeve,
From the beginning till thou have made an end;
If thou do otherwise thy Work may never cheeve.
Thus in this Chapter which is but brief, &c.*

And that this is according to the sence of all Wise men, is evident by their testimony in general, and the following words of *Ripley*; See (saith he) that thou open not thy Glass, nor move it, from the beginning to the end of the Work. So then this feeling of the Glass, it must be such as may be without opening or moving of the same; for if the Seed be

disturb'd in its beginning to vegetate, the Work is undoubtedly spoiled, or at least it will be so notably weakned, that it will hardly afford thee thy true Signs in thy due.

Therefore when thou settest in thy Egg in thy Nest, take heed of meddling with it until the Mastery be attain'd, but with a Wyre or some such thing, or with a hole in thy Cover, stay the neck of thy Glass from jogging this way or that, which otherwise it will be very subject to.

Thus have I briefly run through this second Gate of Dissolution, which is indeed one with Calcination and Separation; for by a constant Sublimation, is made a Solution of the Body, and at length a Congelation of Spirits, for they by oft ascending, come to that pass that they will ascend no more, but remain at the bottom of the Vessel together, which is Conjunction they swell, bubble and boil, till they calcine and putrefie. The black Earth, impalpable like Atoms of the Sun, being the highest degree of Putrefaction: and this is a secret not so clearly discovered by any before.

*The Sun is set, no wonder darkest Night
Doth veil the Crystal Skie:
The Moon's eclips'd, no marvel that her light
Doth from us hidden lie.
The Sun's declined to the Northern Pole,
And O the change that's made!
The pearly drops are turned to a Coal,
All brightness quite doth fade.
In this Apollo bright, whose glory did
A luster great display?
In this fair Phoebe, who ere light was hid,
Did shine as bright as day?
Is this the King whose glory and renown
Did shine as bright as day?
Is this the King whose glory and renown
Through all the World did ring?
Is this the Queen who far and near was known?
Oh 'tis a wondrous thing,
Such glory and such beauty thus should fade!
That what before did shine
More bright then Tagus, should so soon be made
More foul then ere 'twas fine!
The Earth doth melt, the Heavens drop down rain,
The Rocks which do relent,
They seem like Water, then condense again
Till all their moisture's spent.
To Ashes they return, for Dust they were,
This Dust from Water springs;
Therefore at length they melt to Water clear,
Which all to Spirits brings.*

*The Nest is Earth, therefore they will congeal
To sparkling pearly dew,
Shining like tender Pearl, on which doth steal
A Body dry and new.
And then the parts like Atoms of the Sun
For fineness do appear:
Rejoyce, for now thou half thy course hast run,
Nor hast thou cause to fear.
Proceed until thou see the sparkling red,
Oh happy sight to see!
By which unto the Royal Palace led,
Thou shalt aye happy be.
Happy are they who shall not miss to find
The new uprising Sun:
More happy they who with renewed mind,
In God find rest alone.*

AN
EXPOSITION
UPON THE
Third Gate,
Which is
SEPARATION.

The Third Gate Opened,
Which is
SEPARATION.

*Separation doth each part from other divide,
The subtle from the gross, the thick from the thin;
But manual Separation see thou set aside,
For that pertains to Fools, which little fruit doth win.
But in our Separation Nature doth not blin,
Making division of qualities Elemental,
Into a fifth degree till they be turned all.*

Having now run through two of the twelve Gates, I am come to the third, which is Separation, which begins so soon as the Matters have been so long circulated, as to begin to hold one of another. This Operation the Ancient Sages have denominated Division of Elements, which afterwards they say must be joined with a perpetual union. This separation is by others called Extraction of natures, and the parts separated are compared to two Dragons, the one winged, and the other without wings.

Artephius, who for Age and Candor was next to *Hermes*, the most eminent, calls this Separation the Key of the Work, which according to him is a Sublimation in a continual Vapour, that what is Heavenly and subtile, may ascend aloft, that is, to the upper part of the Vessel, and there take the nature of a Body heavenly, or Spirit; and what is gross may remain below, in the nature of a Body earthly, which is the end of our mastery, to bring the Bodies which are compact and dry, to become a spiritual fume, which is only to be done by Sublimation, and Division or Separation.

So then our Separation is not to be understood, as many foolish Alchymists do interpret it, who have their Elements of which they boast much, which are indeed manual, done by handy-work, the Glass being removed, altered or renewed every time. Nor are our

Separations made by filter, or *per tritorium*, as many imagine, who know not the nature of our Work, and therefore run into such foolish fancies.

Nature then in our Work doth all in all, who as a curious Artificer maketh no confused mixtures, but first of all causeth the moisture to ascend, which because it cannot get out, it doth therefore condense in drops, and descends so long till at length it begin to be actuated from the Body, which is below; for naturally all homogeneal moisture, cohobated on a bodily substance, with which it hath affinity, is actuated by it. Gold them is a Body in which the active qualities of heat and driness, are more than in the *Mercury*, and the *Mercury* being cohobated on it, begins to be a little more Fiery or hot, and then the Exhalations are more Aerial, which before were more Watry, and by continued Cohobation the Water partakes yet more and more of the *Solary* nature, until at length this heat or *Sulphur* impregnating the *Mercury*, cause it to congeal into a new Body or quintessence, which is after the corruption of the old Body, which is called the Earth, or Ashes of *Hermes's* Tree.

*Earth is turned into Water under black and bloe,
And Water after into Air under very white,
Then Air into Fire, Elements there be no moe,
Of these is made our Stone of great delight.
But of this Separation much more I must write;
And Separation is called by Philosophers definition,
Of several qualities a Tetraptive dispersion.*

So then this is the method of our Operation, Earth, that is Sol, is boiled in our *Mercury*, in such a heat in which the *Mercury* may ascend constantly in a smoak, and descend in drops, and the Body below stand liquid and boil: then shall the Water dry up, under which is blackness hidden, which when the Water is dried up shall appear like the Crows Bill.

Then shall this Powder again relent and after 40 days rotting without fumes, shall send up a smoak again, which shall ascend and descend so long, till the whole be made volatile and Aerial; then shall the black colour vanish, and the white appear.

This white *Argent vive*, or *Mercury* animated, which appears after blackness, shall then totally congeal, and shall be then Fire, whose Nurse is the earth; then hast thou the four Elements, that is, cohobated thy Natures to the highest degree of perfection of the white Stone, then canst thou go no further, but go back and turn the same Wheel till thou hast attained the red Stone. Thus hast thou the true Principles and Operation of our great *Elixirs* both red and white, which if thou once hast, thou hast Riches enough, and needest no more in this life.

This, if no more were said of this point, might be enough to shew thee the truth of our Separation: yet because Philosophers have spoken much of it, and indeed it is all the work to cause ascension and descension of our true Water on our true Body, so long till by the Water the Body be volatilized, and after that by the Body the Water fixed; and till

that be brought to pass, there will come and go the Four Qualities in their season, and will cause change of colours suitable to their station, pleasant to the Philosopher to behold .

*Of this Separation I find a like figure thus spoken:
So out of our Stone precious if thou be witty,
Oyl incombustible and Water thou shalt draw,
And thereabout thou needest not at the Coles to blow.*

These Philosophical Operations some have had the fancy to compare with some passages of Scripture, but I had rather bound Philosophy within its own Pale, and not allegorize the Holy Scripture thereto, where Philosophy is not understood there.

To the thing in hand; by continual decoction our Work will shew, as in Circulation, a real change of the ascending Humidity; the first will be white, and so continue a long time, which is called Water or Phlegm, and after it the Water will be coloured, and ascend so on the sides of the Vessel, which is called Oyl; and this Oyl is not combustibile, for it is the true *Sulphur* of *Gold*, and therefore as permanent as the *Mercury*.

Yet be no mistaken, nor do not imagine that because we speak of incombustible Oyl, that our Work is to be performed with the Fire of a Wind, Oven , or of Bellows, (as some foolishly imagine) to burn up what is combustibile, until the very incombustible Oyl be left, for all our volatile subject is turned into incombustible fixity, with a moderate decoction in our secret *Athanor*, whose heat in its highest vigation is but very obscurely red, hardly perceptible, and in its lowest degree is not full half so strong, or half at the most.

*Do this with heat easie and nourishing,
First with moist Fire, and after that with dry,
The Flegm with patience out-drawing,
And after that the other Natures wittily:
Dry up thine Earth until it be thirsty,
By Calcination, else labourest thou in vain,
And then make it drink up the moisture again.*

This is a heat which is friendly to the Bodies, for it causeth the Spirit to ascend, and yet suffers it to return, and by reason of its ascending and returning, the Matter below stands continually moist, and boileth with a perpetual motion and exhalation, which ascends and returns day and night every hour and minute without intermission.

This moist Air, or liquid form at bottom, with Ebullition and sending forth a spiritual smoak or Vapour, (in which, saith *Artephius*, the whole Mastery consists) continues for six weeks, or thereabouts, and then the boiling will turn to a Pitchy swelling, and putting up like Leavened Dough; and from that time the Compound shall grow dryer and dryer, coming at length to Pitch-black Atoms, or Powder impalpable, and the fumes shall cease for six weeks.

Be patient therefore in decoction, and wait with a great deal of confidence, until thou seest thy Water, which at first ascends white and flegmatick, to begin to change colour, and the Exhalations to arise discoloured within the Glass. Then continue your decoction till the Cloud which is conceived be brought forth: for in this Operation be sure that the Seeds begin to mingle, and will give you a sign of the beginning of the Conjunction of Natures, and that is the gilding of the Glass about the sides within the Concave, as if it were overspread with leaves of pure Gold.

Continue still your decoction till the Earth at the bottom begin to appear, and the moisture of the Compound begin to be terminated in Dryness, in colour Black, which is a sure sign of your right progress, and without which you can never attain the Mastery.

Remember that in this Calcination thou hast a portion of Water in the upper part of thy Vessel, which did not descend; and in time of the ceasing of the fumes, the Body grows very dry, even to Calcination, which when it is intirely perfected, the Water is as it were by a Magnetical virtue drawn down, and then follows a second Liquefaction.

*Separation thus must thou oftentimes make,
Thy Waters dividing into parts two,
So that the Subtle from the gross thou take,
Till the Earth remain below in colours bloe;
That Earth is fixed to abide all woe.
The other part s spiritual and flying,
But thou must turn them all into one thing.*

But to return to our Work of Sublimation, which is as was touched before, the Key of the whole Work, by which Separation is made uncessantly each day and hour.

Thus are the Waters divided from the Waters, that is, the Waters above from them which are below; for part of the Water ascends up like a fume, and congeals and runs down the sides of the Glass in drops like veins, and part remains still below with the Body, and with it boils visibly, and that uncessantly.

By this Work thou hast the subtle or thin parts of the Body, and the thin parts of the Water, ascend and mingle; and the gross part of the Water, mixt below, the one by subliming together, and the other by boiling together: thus is thy Body below compounded of two even the most fixed parts of *Sol*, with the grosser parts of *Lunaria*; and thy Water of two parts, the Soul of *Sol*, and the Spirit of *Lunaria*, which is the true mystical ground of Fixation.

Thus by fixating in a continual Vapour whatever is spiritual and heavenly, both in the Water and in the Body lightly ascending, and in the upper part of the Glass taking the nature of a Spirit, what is more gross, earthy and corporeal, will in the bottom take the nature of a Body, whose colour, the Soul being separated, will be as Black as Pitch.

This Body is a middle substance between the Body and the Water, a *Limus*, a new Body, or *Adamica terra*, a medium between fixed and not fixed; it is not so fixed as to be equal to *Sol*, nor yet so volatile as the *Mercury*, but it is sufficiently fixed to endure a Fire requisite for this Work, and to suffer all the pain and woe of this our Purgatory, in which it abides six weeks without fumes or vapour.

But as for the Spirit, that is a tender thing, nor is it able to endure the Fire, but flies from it, and abides in the uppermost part of the Glass; only so long as the fumes arise, the ascending do still meet with them which are above, till at last making over great drops, they fall down; and when the fumes cease, as much of the Spirit as the Concave of the Glass will hold without running down, stays above until intire Calcination be perfected, and then they are drawn down by a Magnetical virtue: So that her is all the mystery of the proportion of the Glass to the matter, namely, that it be so big, and no bigger, as in its Concave will hold up a competent quantity of Water, (after Calcination to water the dry pores) while the Body below rots into Atoms.

Then shall you bring back the Water upon the earth, and circulate again so long till there be a total joining, till the Spirit become the body, and the Body become a Spirit, and all be made true Fire or Tincture; of which Conjunction this true Separation is the cause, and without it it cannot be made.

*Then Oyl and Water with Water shall distill,
And through her help receive moving:
Keep well these two, that thou not spill
Thy Work for want of due closing,
And make thy Stopple of Glass meltnng,
The top of thy Vessel together with it,
Then Philosopher lick it is up shit.*

In this second Circulation, which is after Conjunction, there shall be no more the Body below and the Spirit above, but all shall be one, and the Body which is the *Sulphur*, shall always follow the Spirit on the Fire wherever it flies. The occasional cause of all this, is our first Water which though vile, is therefore to be much valued, for it is very precious; through the virtue of which it comes to pass, that our earth yields a Water, and causeth it to fly with the Spirit aloft, and is the Soul of our *Sol*, which at length doth allure the said Spirit and Body to union, which else would never be: and then the Body beyond its own nature is lifted up, moving uncessantly with the Spirit and Soul upon the Fire, for all now are made one inseparably; and this is called the *sealing the Mother in the belly of the Infant which she bore*, that is, the earth below is so united to the Water that arose from it, that in this Operation after this true Conjunction, they are never more divided, but are together sublimes, and descend continually, moving and altering continually until perfect Complement.

Now for as much as all the Mastery consists in Vapour, which are called the great Winds, which are in the Vessel at the forming of this our *Embrio*. Therefore great care must be had lest the Spirits exhale. Which they will do, without the Glass have a strong guard; for

first, they are subtle; nor that only, but ascend with a great impetus, by reason of our Fire, which must cause the *inferiora ebullire & moveri continuo, & inferiora ciculari, quolibet momento*; and thirdly, in Putrefaction the Body and Spirits have a most subtle odour, which also must be retained.

For preventing of all, thou shalt have thy Stopple as firm as any part of thy Glass, which let it be strong, as is said, and the neck long and strong, and let the neck be melted up with a Lamp, or with Coals, and closed well without much wringing, which makes the Glass brittle; but being nipt up, and after that staying in the same heat, turning it to and fro in the clear heat, the Glass will come to as exactly close and smooth a *superficies*, as in any other place.

This is the true and sure way which Philosophers have secured their Glasses by. Let it cool by degrees, and be very wary that it get no crack in cooling, which if it do so, though never so little, you must not connive at it, lest the winds within cause it there to burst, as being a weak defective place.

*The Water wherewith thou mayst revive thy Stone,
Look thou distill before thou work with it.
Ofentimes by it self alone,
And by this sight thou shalt wit,
From faeculent faeces when it is quit:
For some men can with Saturn it multiply,
And such like substance, which we defie.*

Thus thou seest how our Work must be ordered in reference to its Regimen, but the main matter is our Water. Which Water, as saith *Artephius*, is the Vinegar of Mountains, and it is the only Instrument for our Work: its Preparation consists in Cohobation, which we will discover. In my little Treatise called *Introitus Apertus*, and in my other Tractate called *Ars Metallorum Metamorphoseas*, I speak as much of it as a man can speak, without giving a Receipt; but to the Ingenious, what there is written is far better than any Receipt.

This I say, that it must first be cohobated in a very wonderful way, (for it is such a Cohobation that hath not its like in the World) and for several times, to a determinate number, and after it may and ought to be distilled per se, without any addition, again and again, that thou mayst have the Water clean from any Exotical mixture.

When it ascends like to the pearled dew, thou mayst then know that it is sufficiently pure, which is not till all the filthiness be cast from the center, and wash'd from the superficies: Thy Water then hath so excellent a Pontick faculty, that it will dissolve *Jupiter, Saturn, or Venus*, into *Mercury* and *Sulphur*; for it commands Metals as their true Water Mineral, which no Mercury in the World is, but our Mercury, nor can be, for Reasons known to the *Adepti*, which if I should give, there would be none almost so stupid but that would easily apprehend them, for they are most demonstrable. This only I at present say of this *Mercury*, that it is the Mother of Metals, and therefore hath power to reduce them, by

dividing their principles of *Sulphur* and *Mercury*; but we count it a loss to imploy our *Mercury* to such sordid uses, for we spoil the goodness of it hereby. Gold only is drowned in it, that is, it is reduced without division of parts; but through the *Sulphur* and *Mercury* be for a time distinct, yet they will joyn with the Water, and together, and so remain perpetually; which other Metals in their dissolution will not, for their *Sulphurs* being not perfect, are rejected to the superficies, and never are received to union again, for they are Heterogeneous.

*Distill it therefore till it be clean,
And thin like Water as it should be,
Like Heaven in colour bright and sheene,
Keeping both figure and ponderosity:
There with did Hermes moisten his Tree,
In his Glass that he made it to grow upright,
With Flowers discoloured beautiful to sight.*

So then to return to what we digresses a little from, thy Water must be so long distilled, until it be very clean; for this, saith the Philosophers, is thy first work, to make clean thy *Mercury*, and then into clean *Mercury* put clean Bodies, for who can expect a pure Generation from that which is unclean?

The next property of thy Water is, that it must be thin, even as thin as any other *Mercury*; for if the external proportion be corrupted, it is an evident sign that the inward nature is confused.

It must also be of a very bright colour, even like to fine burnished Silver, as saith *Artephius*. Hence saith a certain Philosopher, that our Water to sight is like to a Coelestial Body.

Our Water must not be reduced into any limpid Diaphanous liquor, as some fondly imagine, and as I my self in my time of errours did conceit, but it must keep its *Mercurial* form pure and incorrupted. It is also very ponderous, so ponderous that it is somewhat more weighty then any other Mercury in the World.

This is the only one *Mercury*, and there is none in the whole World besides it which can do our Work: with this *Hermes* did moisten his Body, and made it to rot and putrefie.

By means of this Water the Body shall be brought to have a vegetative Soul, for it will shoot forth as with Sprigs, and Leaves, and Branches, and after it will resolve into Powder like Atoms.

In the time of this process many colours shall come and go, rise and set, which will be a pleasant spectacle to the beholder, and shorten the time wonderfully, which else would seem very tedious.

*This Water is like to the venomous Tyre,
And with it the mighty Triacle is wrought;
It is a poison most strong of ire,
A stronger poison cannot be thought,
Oft times therefore at the Pothecaries it is sought.
But no man shall thereby be intoxicate,
From time it is to Medicine Elixierate.*

This Water is by Philosophers called their Venom, and indeed it is a very strong poison, to wit, to the Body of *Sol*, to which it is mixed: but what it is to the Body of man, I never tried my self, nor gave it to another, nor do I believe did any of they. But as concerning the Medicine that is made by it, and out of it, it is certain, that of all Medicines in the World it is the highest, for it is the true *Arbor vitae*, which doth answer the universal desires of them who have it in this kind; for besides its virtue Curative, which it hath in a wonderful miraculous way, it can penetrate even to our Consitutive principles, which no other Mineral Medicine can do. Though *Paracelsus* glory much of his *Renovantia & Restaurantia*, (which we have known, as being master of his secret Alcahest, of which if I live I will write a particular Treatise) yet it is not his *Haematina*, nor yet his *Arcana*, nor his *Elixiria*, nor his *Essentiae*, nor any of his secrets, which are surely noble Medicines, that can reach the root of Life, which this can and will; for it performs all, only it cannot prevail against the appointment of God, otherwise were it not for that decree it could really keep a man immortal, for it renews Youth, retards Age, and restores to most exquisite and compleat health, encreaseth strength wonderfully; yea it will not only renew Hair to those from whom it is fallen, but it will change the hoary head into a youthful colour, which will not grow hoary again for many years, nor ever, if the use of it were fully known, and it were used as it ought to be.

Hereupon in respect of its wonderful virtue, after it is made into medicine, Philosophers have by Analogy concluded, that it was before the greatest poison, for they have a maxim (*ex summo venemo, summa Medicina*) which as I do not always hold true, so I shall not here dispute. But he who thinks, because Philosophers say it is such a deadly poison, that it is to be bought at the Apothecaries, or Druggists, he is mistaken; for as it is first bought, I confess it is very venomous, but this malignity I conceive and know is fully taken away, before it become the Philosophers *Mercury*.

But whatever it be in its Crudity, I am sure it is not so in its Perfection, for he who shall take of it then, shall be so far from receiving any damage by it, that he shall find it to be a sovereign Medicine, which hath not its like in the whole Universe.

*For then as is the Triacle true,
And in its working doth marvels shew,
Restoring many from death to life;
But see thou mingle it with no Corrosive,
But chose it pure and quick running,
If thou thereby wilt have winning.*

It is not the Triacle of Galen, nor yet of *Hippocrates*, (which yet if right made are of great efficacy) that can compare to it; for first, it kills all the venom of any disease or malady, so that those diseases which do astonish the beholders, are by this overcome even ad *miraculum*: for suppose a man dying with the Tokens of the Plague, so that he is upon the very point of departure, (and the decree not past, for then there is no recovery) if he have but a drop of this *Elixir* poured down, so that he swallow it, he shall immediately recover, and in short time he will be restored to his former health. Now that it doth immediately reach the root of Life, I shall demonstrate: Suppose one with a very languishing disease be consumed to nothing in comparison, and for want of Spirits be just going out of the World, so the decree be not past, if he have but the strength even in the Agony of death, but to take a drop of this *Elixir*, he will recover and revive, and in a few days in comparison will be doubly stronger then ever he was before. Suppose one of a very weak Constitution, and sickly, and every day ill, feeble all over, if he take of this *Elixir*, it will in a short time alter his Constitution fundamentally, so that he shall be far stronger then any other man ordinarily is.

A noble Philosopher (though I scarce believe him to be an *Adeptus* of the Stone) hath wrote of late a small Treatise of Fevers, the Lithiasis, and the Pestilence, and there he saith in one of his Tractates, That the loss of strength which is made by Venery and Bloud-letting, is wholly irrecoverable. It is true, and I verily believe that he had Medicines very noble, and it is pity but he had this secret to preserve his old age, for I seriously profess, that of all the Tractates that ever I read, they are the most Philosophical; but by this expression it is evidence, that he was ignorant of this secret.

For although by Venery, or a Tabes, or Bleeding, or by any other way a man may be debilitated, he may be restored by this Elixir, not only to perfect health, but also to such a measure of strength which he never had before. Yea and a man or woman who is born to hereditary weakness, may be changed into a more then ordinary strength by the use of our Medicine: or a man who by labour, sickness and years, is come to the Graves mouth, even to drop in it, may by use hereof be restored his hair, his teeth, and his strength, so that he shall be of greater agility then in his youth, and of greater strength, and may live many years, provided the period of the Almightyes decree be not come.

For Minerals are of all Sublunary Bodies the most perfect, and the best part of them are Metals, which when they are perfect, defend themselves fro all fear of corruption perpetually. Now the Spirit of the metal when it is exalted to a millenary perfection, it tingeth all Metals imperfect to an incorruptible purity; but then this Spirit must be made a Body, according to the saying of *Hermes*, *Vis ejus est integra si versa fuerit in terram*.

But this transcendent Tincture may be dissolved into an Oyl, or rather a pure Liquor, which then is not proper for Metals, but is only Medicinal; for it is of the nature of Light, and therefore it doth as readily concur with our formal vial principle, as one flame will enter another.

Yea and beyond this, it may be exalted beyond the nature of man, yea and of any tangible Body, to become a most radiant perpetual Light, which I have seen, though not my self

actually made. All this is done by the Divine virtue of our Water, which is to be prepared as is said, by Cohobation and Distillation, for our Water is a living Water, and not corrosive, as any do mis-interpret our Books.

These then are the circumstantial qualities of our Water, it is pure, clean, and very bright, it is quick, and very fluent, without Humectation; it is the only profitable subject that we can choose for this Art, and whatever can be taken in hand in the World besides this, is but fallacious.

*It is a marvelous thing in kind,
And without it can nothing be done,
Therefore did Hermes call it his Wind,
For it up-flying from Sun and Moon,
And maketh our Stone to fly with it soon,
Reviving the dead, and giving life
To Sun and Moon, Husband and Wife.*

It is of a wonderful Composition, yea so wonderful that if thou shouldst know it by relation only, thou couldst not believe it. Study therefore only to know it, for it is the very hinge on which turns all perfection, it is that which the Wise men never revealed but only in Figures and Metaphors.

Some have called it their sharp Vinegar, because of its dissolvent quality; others have called it a Bird, a Goose, a Pheasant, and many such names they have given it.

But because it ariseth in the form of a Wind or Vapour, the Philosophers have called it their Vapour, their Smoak, and their Wind; and for this cause command, that the Porter keep diligent watch, that it not fly away or exhale, for it would spoil the Work.

This Water then flyeth the more Spiritual part of it, and the Corporal part remaineth below in the form of an Humidity, which doth bubble and boil continually, and the smoak in the Head condenseth and returneth in drops upon the Body; and by this means the Body of Sol, which is most fixed, to the astonishment of Nature is made volatile, and sends out in the Exhalation of the Water its subtle fiery Soul.

Thus the dead Body hath infused into it a Spirit of life, and begins to be endowed with a living Soul, which moves aloft with the Spirit, and returns with the same, till the Body be wholly renewed.

And by this means the Body of the Sun retaining the more Corporeal part of the Water at the bottom, they boil together, and enter one another, and so both by decoction become more and more Corporal, and make together one Hermaphroditical Body, of which the more fixed parts of the *Sun*, and the grosser parts of the Water, are the Component principals: So that being thus mixed, the more Corporal parts below, and the more Spiritual parts in Sublimation, the Bodily part is Husband and Wife to it self, for all Conception is made at the bottom of the Vessel.

*Which if they were not by craft made quick,
And their fatness with Water drawn out,
And so the thin dissevered from the thick,
Thou shouldst never bring this Work about.
If thou wilt therefore speed without doubt,
Raise up the Birds out of their nest,
And after bring them again to rest.*

These Bodies do send forth a thin subtle fume, which may be compared to their breath; and the returning of it, and fuming continually, may be likened to the breathing in and out of Air, for saith *Artephius*, all things live by Air: and so our Stone it is inspired by the Air, which Air is the fume which ascends continually, which partakes of both Natures as well as the Body below doth. Also this makes that below to boil and swell continually, which it would not do, did not the Earth retain the moisture; and the Sublimation carries with it the subtilest part, or Soul of the Body, which easily appears by it changing of colours, for whatever coloureth is of *Sulphur*, which is unctuous, and therefore the Sublimation appears pinguous: the *medium* of this Extraction is Water, because our Water and the *Sulphur* are Homogeneous.

Wherefore in this Circulation there are two things to be considered, the bottom, and the top; the bottom is not only the Body of *Sol*, for so it would not stand liquid, and flow, and boil, and bubble as it doth: therefore it is certain, that the Body retains part of the Water, which is more thick, which thickness digestion and mixture hath caused; which grosser part of the Water is joined with the Body, but not perfectly united. The uppermost part is not only from the Water, nor yet the most whole of the Water, but a certain subtle portion of your first Vinegar, which hath in it the most pure part of your Gold, which is sublimed with it, which both together make a *medium* of much Firiness: So then by reason of the mixture both the uppermost and subsident part are reduced to a mean, which hold one of another; therefore our Body at this time, and in this Operation, is called the Body both of the *Sun* and *Moon*, and the Vapour contains both the Soul of the *Sun*, and the Spirit of the *Mercury*. Take this for your prey, for I have reveal'd what Philosophers upon penalty of an *Anathema* would never disclose.

If you have well attended to what I have said, I have said enough, and if this do not suffice you, I know not what will. Remember well what I have said, if you ever expect success.

To sum up all therefore in one word, for I have been so long that I fear I have been too prolix: Remember what you go about, and what you work on. You take in hand an Earthly Body, which you would bring to a Heavenly Tincture. This you would effect by *Mercury*, which is the only way or *medium* in the World. First then, sublime till by *Mercury* thou hast brought thy Body to the height of volatility, and thou shalt find that in this dissolved Body there will be such a ferment, which will recongeal the Spirit.

*Water with Water accord will and ascend,
And Spirit with Spirit, for they be both of one kind,*

*Which when they be exalted make to descend.
So shalt thou unloose that which Nature erst did bind,
Mercury essential turning into Wind;
Without which natural and subtle Separation,
May never be compleat profitable Generation.*

For the Body though in its *manifesto* it be *Sulphur* congealed, and dry, yet in its *occulto* it is *Mercury* liquid, and moist: Now the Water which thou mixest with it hath this vertue, to open its pores, and then the Water of the Body will as naturally agree and ascend with thy Water of Life, which thou didst put to it, as one Water will joyn with another.

Now as *Sol* hath a hidden Spirit, so hath our *Mercury*, which is in it invisible; for to sight it appears as other *Mercury*, only a little brighter, but in effect they differ wonderfully: which Spirit will as naturally unite with the Soul, or Fiery part of the Body, as Light will mix with Light, and then the gross part of the Body, and of the Water, in the bottom of the Vessel, will be brought in absence of the Soul and Spirit to putrefie. So then these two Fiery Natures being Homogeneous, will readily mix, and will sublime together in form of a white Smoak or Vapour, as saith noble *Artephius*, and there condensing in the top of the Vessel, that is, about the Sides, and in the Concave of the Glass, will return again and circulate up and down, till it have destroyed the solidity of the Body, making it no Body, but subliming what is subtle, and what is earthy and resisting turning into Ashes, or an impalpable Powder, by Calcination.

And after Putrefaction is compleat by Circulation, the most fixed part which is called the Body of Fixion, the essential and most permanent part of both Body and Water, will ponderously be lifted up and carried aloft into the Air.

And without this Separation and Division; all is nothing, for this is the very Key of the Mastery, it is the cause of Generation: therefore in vain is whatever is attempted without this, boiling the gross, and subliming what is subtle, that in the troubles of the stormy Sea, which works up and down as the Sea in the mighty Winds, what is pre may ascend, and whatever is impure may remain at the bottom; and when all that is pure is ascended, that which is left is called the Earth that remains. So *Artephius*.

*Now to help thee in at this gate,
This last secret I will disclose to thee,
Thy Water must be seven times sublimate,
Else shall no kindly Dissolution be,
Nor Putrefaction shalt thou none see;
Like liquid Pitch nor colours appearing,
For lack of heat within thy Glass working.*

Note then that Sublimation, which otherwise is called Separation, Division, Ascension and Descension, is the Key of the Work; it is placed for the third Gate, and yet it is the last and the first; the last it is called by Ripley, and I to Echo to his voice assure thee it is the first and last.

And as the Key of all our Operations is Separation, so the Key to it is our true *Mercury*, truly prepared and proportioned as it ought to be. Now the proportion of thy Water, is in reference to its internal additional *Sulphur*, which is added by the Philosopher

And as the Key of all our Operations is Separation, so the Key to it is our true *Mercury*, truly prepared and proportioned as it ought to be. Now the proportion of thy Water, is in reference to its internal additional *Sulphur*, which is added by the Philosopher; which is done by successive Eagles, which are made by our Philosophical *Arsnick*, the number of which ought to be seven. The darkness vanishing, and the light appearing, after many showers, before the flight of each Eagle, our Water being thus actuated, is by Acuation purged, and then it becomes powerful in dissolving the Body, which will be done with a fewer number of eagles, or a greater, but with 7 or 9 most desiredly.

This actuated Water is also the Instrument which doth move the Gold to putrefie, which no other Agent in the World can do; for by this the Body is ground, softened and mollified, the pores of it are softened, and the *Sulphur* invisible is set at liberty, which causeth the Body to rot, change colours, and at length become black like unto melted Pitch.

But if thou omit any of the number of Eagles, or fail in the goodness of thy *Arsnick*, or err in the preparation of the Water with thy *Arsnick*, either in Conjunction, or Purification, or Digestion, or any other error, of which experience will warn thee, do not then expect that the most exact Regimen of heat of thy external Furnace will do the Work.

*Four Fires there be, which thou must understand,
Natural, against Nature, unnatural also,
And the Elemental, which doth burn the brand;
These four Fires use we and no moe,
Fire against Nature must do thy Body woe.
It is our Dragon as I thee tell,
Fiercely burning as the Fire in Hell.*

Now to give thee a touch concerning our Fire, which he that knows may well be accounted a Master of our Secrets: We have indeed four Fires, which is one more than *Artpehius* numbred, which yet he intended to include. The most noble Fire is Natural, which is that which we seek to have multiplied, and that is the *Sulphur* of Gold, or rather its Fiery Tincture; it is that which we seek for, and we use Mercury for Sol his sake.

Our next Fire is our Fire against Nature, and that is the Fire of our Water which is to be corrupted, and by this corruption Multiplication is made.

The third Fire is unnatural, which is the mixture of these two Fires, while they are in their action and passion, and neither doth actually predominate.

Now for to give you a reason of these Fires denomination, know that Mineral Fire is *Sulphur*, which is hot and dry, and it is the death of the Mineral Tree, that is, it is the

cause of coagulating, that is, taking away the flux of the *Mercury* which is cold and moist; this in Gold is apparent, for it is a coagulated perfect Body, fixed and permanent in all trials: this it hath from its Fire or *Sulphur*, and this is natural.

But now our Water hath an actual and active *Sulphur* in it, and yet quick and fluid, a Fire in Water which yet is not burned; this *Sulphur* is true Gold, and yet it is volatile; this is a Riddle, the Philosophers Mystery, and yet true; this is contrary to Natures ordinary operation in Mineral Bodies.

Now Nature will always care and provide for her own Child, before a Stranger; Gold is her own Son, and is according to her own Rules: but this *Mercury* is the Son of the Philosopher, to whose nativity through Nature contribute her help, yet he is out of her ordinary road, and through the co-operation of Art and Nature, he is, for his qualifications an astonishment to Nature, hot and dry internally, and that actually; for it is impregnated with real *Sulphur*, and yet not coagulated, but in one word *Ignis aqua*, Gold truly called, and that most pure, yet volatile and crude, and no abortive; not perfect, and yet left in the way to perfection, and yet its virtue active, not extinguished. This subject Nature finding mixed with her Son, the King, even Gold, by it she endeavors to mend his Constitution, and to multiply his virtue; for though living Gold be a thing of admirable force, yet being out of the ordinary channel of Natures operations, Nature doth not mind its preservation, much less its propagation.

These three forenamed Fires are internal, secret and invisible, but there is one more which we use, which is not ours properly; for every Sophister hath it and useth it as well as we, and that is Culinary Fire, which yet is so necessary that without it we can do nothing, nor yet without the true knowledge of its due proportion. So then we use no Fires of Dung, nor of the *Sun*, or of baths, as some Sophisters perswade themselves and others, for these are all the Fires which we use.

With the secret *Sulphur* that is in our Water, which we proportion exactly in the beginning, we open our Body, for this Fire can do and doth that which no other Fire can do, for it destroys and conquers the Body, and makes it no Body but a Spirit.

So that whatever any Sophisters may suggest, our Fire is Mineral, it is *Sulphur*, and that pure; it is united to the Water in one form, and yet hinders not its flux, nor corrupts its form.

This is the true *Ignis Gehenne*, for it Eclipseth the light of the Bodies, and makes them become as black as Pitch; which is a symbol of Hell, and for its *Cimmerian* darkness is by many of the Wise men called Hell.

*Fire of Nature is the third Menstrual,
That Fire is natural in each thing,
But Fire occasionate we call unnatural,
As heat of Ashes and Balnes for putrefying.
Without these Fires thou mayst nought bring*

*To Putrefaction, for to be separate,
Thy Matters together proportionate.*

Our natural Fire is, as I said, the true *Sulphur* of Gold, which in the hard and dry Body is imprisoned, but by the mediation of our Water it is let loose, by rotting the moles of the Body under which it was detained, and after separation of Elements, it appears visibly in our third Menstrual.

For though Gold be a compact and dry Earthy Body, none may think that it became what it is without the virtue of a Seed, which by perfection is not extinct, but sealed up only; which Seed is a Fiery form of Light, which nothing in the World wanteth, and therefore it would be a great *Anomalum* if it should be only defective in Metals, the choice of all sublunary Bodies.

Betwixt these two Fires, in the time of their action and passion one upon another, and from another, there is made a medium which is part of both, which because it is not altogether natural, nor wholly against nature, is called unnatural.

The duration of this unnatural Fire is from the time that the Body begins to open, and colours to change, that is in a word, all the time of the rule of *Saturn* and part of the rule of *Jupiter*, the whole Regimen of Putrefaction, and so much of Ablution until the Dove begin to prevail over the Crow; which Putrefaction as it is the turning of an intire Wheel, so part of it is done in sicco, when the Body is all a discontinuous Calx or Ashes, and part *in humido*, which is called a Bath, when the subsident part is liquid and boils, and the superiour part vapours aloft and descends.

Thus you see how many Fires we have, and how they are distinguished: wherein I have written what I know, and as many as understand me will esteem my Writings highly; for without boasting let me assure thee, thou hast not such another Directory in the whole World: I may speak it without offence, being unknown to thee, and thou to me. This I say not to detract from any Philosopher, for many were deeply seen in this Mastery, but almost all were envious, and the most candid would have judged my plainness deserving an *Anathema maranatha*. I have here laid you so plain demonstration as I go, that you cannot miss, if God direct you; and without the knowledge of the Fires you are far wide, whatever whimsies you have in your head; for you shall never see the dissolution of the Body, nor shall you ever make black, and by consequence you cannot divide Elements as you ought to do, because you proportioned not your Matters wisely in the beginning of the Work; for, *Dimidium facti qui bene cepit, habet*, he who makes a good beginning, hath as good as half done.

*Therefore make Fire thy Glass within,
Which burneth the Body much more than Fire
Elemental, if thou wilt win
Our secrets according to thy desire:
Then shall thy Seed both rot and spire,*

*By help of Fire occasionate,
That kindly after they may be separate.*

Take then my counsel, be not so careful of the Fire of the Athanor, as of your Internal Fire; seek it in the house of *Aries*, and draw it from the depths of *Saturn*; let *Mercury* be the Internuncio, and your signal the Doves of *Diana*. By the River you shall find a Tree, in which is the Nest of 10 Eagles; take of them 7, 9, or all, but take them very white, which oft plunging in the River will cause: with these you may overcome the Lion.

The heat of their stomachs is far more powerful than any Fire in the World; for in it Gold will be destroyed, that thou shalt not know what is become of it; which yet loseth nothing of it self, though exposed to the greatest violence of any flame.

Thus with patience thou shalt see thy desire fulfilled, and thy heart shall rejoice; for a wide door shall be opened by which thou mayst behold the Mysteries of Nature in all her Kingdoms.

In 40 or 50 days thou shalt behold the highest sign of most perfect corruption of thy perfect Body, which of a dead lump is thus become Seed, in which though many cannot believe that there is any active virtue, yet it is now to the astonishment of Nature made living, and by its life it kills that by which it was made alive, and both being mingled make one Bath, which by continual decoction, moving the Earth and Water below, and circulating the Air and Fire above, make at last one inseparable quintessence, the Father of Wonders.

Now to God only wise, the revealer of these hidden Mysteries, be praise from all his Creatures for ever.

Of Separation the Gate must thus be won.

Thus I have run through this Gate of Separation, which might be enough, for it is all; but because the Wise men have made many Operations for to hide the secret, and have scattered their notions here and there in every Gate or Operations, sometimes being at the beginning, sometimes at the end, thereby to puzzle the unwary; I must to make this Treatise intire, run through the rest with what brevity and plainness can.

*I shall now sing a pleasant Elegy,
What did betwixt two Lovers
Fall out, seek the reason why,
This Song discovers;
A Wife
Did lose her life,
Because she did her Husband revive,
Whose death did enforce
The man to remorse,
To see her dead who gave him life.*

*Hw was a King, yet dead as dead could be,
His Sister a Queen,
Who when her Brother, she did breathless see,
The like was never seen;
She cryes
Until her eyes
With over-weeping were waxed dim,
So long till her tears
Reach'd up to her ears,
The Queen sunk, but the King did swim.*

*These Waters with the Fire which prevail'd
Did him so perplex,
That starting up, not knowing what him ail'd
He sorely did vex;
He though
That there was wrought
Some Treason, but full little did know
That it was a Queen
Him sav'd though unseen,
And dy'd her self sad white I trow.*

*At length her Carcase, when her Gall was broke,
Rose to the top,
From which fum'd up so venomous a smoak,
His breath which did stop;
He found,
Which made him sound,
The cause of his life his Sister did slay;
This made him full sad,
And grief made him mad,
Thus soon his strength fell to decay.*

*His House and Chamber were so charged with heat,
It made him to faint,
And fainting fell into a grievous sweat;
His sweat did so taint
The Room
With foul perfume,
Which did e'en almost suffocate:
So feeble he grew,
He could not eschew,
But dung'd and piss'd there where he sate.
At length with sorrows many he expires,
Full glad of the change,
That death at last should answer his desires;*

*But what is most strange,
When dead,
That it might be said
How dearly he his Sister did love,
Their Corps did unite,
That they in despight
Of Fire, would not asunder move.*

*And thus together they contumulate
A rotting did lye,
Passing thoug dismal Purgatories Gate;
Wherein they did fry
So long,
Until among the Saints for purity they might pass:
Their sins were no more
To be found on score,
They then were clear as Crystal Glass.*

*A spirit then of life from Heaven came,
In their Bodies dead,
Which now united, of renowned fame
To Heaven were led;
Where they
Abode for aye,
Enjoying pleasures for evermore,
To death not subject,
Were now the object
Of wonder, for th' had Riches store.*

AN
EXPOSITION
UPON THE
Fourth Gate,
Which is
CONJUNCTION.

The Fourth Gate Opened,
Which is
CONJUNCTION

*After the Chapter of natural Separation,
By which the Elements of our Stone dissevered be,
The Chapter here followeth of secret Conjunction,
Which Natures repugnant joyneth to perfect unity,
And so them knitteth that none from others may flee,
When they by the Fire shall be examine,
They be together so surely conjugate.*

Having run through the Chapter of Separation with a plain stile, we shall now come to the life of all, which is Conjunction; for we seek not a ting which may be capable of Separation, but which may abide in all trials, the parts being impossible to be separated one from another, for so our Tinctures ought to be, or else it will be wholly unprofitable for our purpose. For Separation is but the middle motion, by which we pass from the unary simplicity of Gold, to the millenary *plusquam* perfection of our Stone; before which can be attained, there must be a loosing of the Compages of the Body, that so the Spiritual Fire, or tincture may be set loose; which being loosed, will certainly multiply it self with that by which it was dissolved, with which it is necessary that it should Radically be mixed and united, so as that both the dissolvent and the dissolved may make one together.

This then is the benefit of our Water, that it doth not only reduce, open and mollifie our Body, and cause it to send out its Seed, but it is actually recongealed with the fermental virtue of this seminal essence of Gold, that it becomes together with the Body, one new Body perpetually united.

So that although our Water be volatile when it is first taken, yet notwithstanding after it hath first made the Body no Body, but a Spirit, in which spiritualizing the Virtue or

Tincture is augmented; after that the Body by Congelation, makes this no Spirit but a Body, by which the fixity is advanced mightily, so that both will endure all Fire.

For it is not only an apparent union that is made, but real, so real that the Spirit and the Body pass one into another, penetrating each others dimensions, the Spirit being one with the Body, and the Body being the Spirit, the Form swallowing up the Matter in unity, so that all becomes really Tincture.

*And therefore Philosophers give this definition,
Saying this Conjunction is nothing else
But of dissevered qualities a Copulation,
Or of principles a Coequation as others tells.
But some men with Mercury that Apothecaries sells,
Meddleth Bodies that cannot divide
Their Matter, and therefore they slip aside.*

Of this Operation Philosophers make a great Mystery, and speak of it very hiddenly, in respect to the *terminus* of it, which they call *the hour of the Stones Nativity*, in which they say many marvels will appear, for all the colours that can be invented in the World will be then apparent.

Some say their Conjunction is our reconciliation of Contraries, a making friendship between Enemies, because in that time the volatile is still ascending and descending upon the fixt: this by them ascribed to Contrariety.

Others measuring all sublunary things by the rules of Symmetry and Ametry, do ascribe this Operation (which they for similitude sake compare to a Duel) to the over-prevailing of one principles qualities above the qualities of the other, and therefore they define Auriety to be the Anaticalness of the four Elements in mixture, each in his quality acting proportionable to the resistance of its contrary, & *vice versa*. But this is but an Entanglement, in which the Chymist stumble upon School Academical Principles: I had rather embrace their Secret, as for Operation; but for Philosophy, jump with that noble *Bruxellian*, whose promised Treatises when the World shall enjoy, I suppose they will be the profoundest piece of Philosophy that ever was revealed to the World: which I admire not so much for his Experiments, of none of which I am ignorant, nor *Paracelsus* to boot, many, yea most of which are far harder (though sooner wrought) than the *Elixir*, and the *Alcahest* is a hundred times more difficult; but what I most honour in that noble Naturalist is, that he did search out the *Occulta Naturae*, more accurately then ever any did I the World. So that (setting aside the skill of this mastery, of which I cannot find any footsteps in what of his is extant) I am confident that he was without flattery Natures Privy-Counsellor, and for Philosophical verity might have commanded this Secret; but God doth not reveal to all men, yet who knows what he may live to be Master of in this point too.

This I speak not to flatter him, who (besides what is evident to the whole World in his Writings) have no other character of him, and to him I am like to remain a perpetual

Stranger; yet could as heartily desire his acquaintance, as any mans I know in the World, and if the Fates prevent not mine intentions, by mine or his death, I shall endeavor familiarity with him. But this by the way.

To return whence I digressed; our final secret is first to unite the Spirit and Soul of our dissolving Water, that by the mediation of the Soul, the Spirit and Body may be conjoined, and then after several Sublimations and Precipitations made for that end, that the Body may be spiritualized, and the Spirit corporalized, so fix together the Soul, Body and Spirit, the flying and the fixt, that all the Elements (to use Philosophers terms) may acquiesce and rest in this Nest of Earth, in which all the virtue of the superiours and inferiours is contained, both in power and act.

From what hath been said may appear, the strong passive delusion that hath taken many men of our Age, and formerly, who with the Chymist in *Sendivogius*, cannot dream of any other *Mercury*, then that *Mercury* which is to be bought at Druggists, which they take and sublime variously to make it clean, and then with *Hogheland* mix it with Gold, applying all the words and saying of Philosophers to this their mixture: but when the time comes that they should see the signs specified of the Philosophers, there they fail, it may be by reason of something external to the Gold (which it gets in foliating, or the *Mercury*, which it gets in washing and purging, which though it be but little, yet it is enough in heat to give a light Tincture to the Superficies) they may with *Hogheland*, see a discoloured outside, which is nothing; for our Operation is not so trivial, that a man had need of spectacles, and a most clear light to discern it: but it is so apparent, that a half blind man would be amazed at it, for our Body, even the perfect Body is divided, which common *Mercury* can never do, though a man bless himself never so much in his mock-purgations.

But when as such Work-men have waited their time out, and it may be out again, and see not blackness, then they run into another extreme, and share the fault of their error (which was only in their Mercury, or withall in their proportion for *pondus* and heat of external Fire) between both principles, and then say with *Hogheland*, our *Mercury* and our Gold are not vulgar, but they are something (no man knows what) which the Philosophers have called Gold and *Mercury*; which yet are some strange thing which man never heard of, or some common thing, or some vile thing. Thus they vanish into smook, and all for want of knowledge of our true *Mercury*.

*For until the Soul be separate,
And cleansed from its original sin
With the Water, and thoroughly spiritualize,
The true Conjunction mayst thou never begin.
Therefore the Soul first from the Body twine,
Then of the corporal part and of the Spiritual,
The Soul shall cause Conjunction perpetual.*

Remember then that thou get such a *Mercury*, which may destroy and conquer thy Body; mollify it, soften it, and draw out its Seed, and sever the Soul from it, by virtue of that

Spirit which is in thy dissolving Water; Spirits naturally uniting with Spirits, as one flame will mix with another.

The Soul being thus severed from the Body, it will dry and rot as naturally as any other thing will, that hath its Soul separated. And as by the Water (which extracts the Soul) it dies and grows putrid and black, so by the same Water it is washed from its filthy blackness; then the clean Soul having cleansed the Body, is united to it, that from that time the Body follows the Soul, and is moved always with it upon the Fire, flying and descending in the form of a Spirit, which is a wonder to behold.

This is our Secret so much esteemed, *Conjunction*, which is celebrated after the looting, putrefying and purifying of our Body. This is the true process of our Work, according to the true exigency of nature; first the Soul is to be divided from the Body, that is, grossness may be purged by corruption and rotting, and the Spirit which is a form of light, and seminal, may, being let loose, multiply it self by the Spirit of the Water, and so being allied to the Body from whence it was drawn, and to the Water from whose Spirit it receives an increase in virtue and Tincture, it may unite both the Spirit and the Body with a perpetual bond. He who works thus, shall undoubtedly attain unto perfection.

*Of two Conjunctions Philosophers mention make,
Gross when the Body is with Mercury reincrudate;
But let this pas, and to the second heed take,
Which as, as I said, after Separation celebrate,
In which the parties be left with least to colligate,
And so promoted unto most perfect temperance,
That never after may be repugnance.*

But when as the Philosophers speak of Conjunction, it is warily to be considered of what Conjunction they do mean, for as it is a term very often used, so is it very doubtfully to be taken. One Conjunction which they speak of is gross, which is properly *Amalgamation*, it is the first Operation after the preparation of the *Mercury*.

But this is not the Conjunction here to be understood, but a more secret by far, in which man worketh nothing at all, but stands by only and beholds Natures Operation. And this work is done without any laying on of hands, and very quickly, when the matters are prepared and made fit. This work is therefore called a Divine work.

This Conjunction is far more intimate than the gross, for this is an union *per minima*, or *intima*, so that the essence of the one, enters the essence of the other, so as to make it but one substance.

This maketh a temper which man by no Art could make, for even as Water mixed with Water is inseparable, so is it now with these principles. Now is concord, amity and friendship made, for now the hot and the dry, will embrace the cold and moist, and now patience is made between the Water and the Fire.

*Thus causeth true Separation true Conjunction to be had,
Of Water and Air, with Earth and Fire,
But that each Element into other may be led,
And so abide for ever at thy desire,
Do as do Dawbers with Clay or More,
Temper them thick, and make them not too thin,
This do up-drying the rather thou shalt win.*

Thus the Proverb is verified, *Amantium irae amoris redintegrato est*, for Love brought them together, Love parted them with a seeming discontent, and at last Love unites them with a perpetual tye, that they can no ore part for ever, without a new Resolution in this dissolving Water, after they are first become perfect.

Now the same thing is both moist and dry, hot and cold, according to the qualities of the Elements, (that I may speak according to the usual voice of Philosophers) for now is of two made three, and of three made four, and of four one; the Quadrangle is turned into a Circle, to the amazement of Nature.

For the essence of one Element now penetrateth the essence of another, that is, the essential properties are so thoroughly mixed, that all four now make but one partaking of all.

These are those principles which God now hath conjoined, and therefore nothing can separate: Rejoyce now, O Son of Art, for thou hast the *Sun* for thy Diadem, and the *Moon* Crescent for thy Garland.

That thou mayst the more certainly, easily and speedily attain to this, and that thy signs may the better and orderly appear, next to thy care of preparing true and purged *Mercury*, and pure Gold, first be sure of thy mixture, mix them like as a Potter mixeth his Loam.

Be sure you do not over-glut your Earth with water, nor cloy your Water with Earth, but impast them, and then grind them together as diligently as a Painter would grind his Colours; for the more exactly thou mixest them, the better and sooner will they work one upon another in heat.

Then set thy Glass in a Furnace made for thy Work, and give a convenient Fire, in which it may boyl night and day perpetually, without a minutes ceasing; order the Fire so that it may in 12 or 24 hours begin to boyl, and from that hour not to cease boyling, subliming, ascending and descending, until such time as the moisture be dried up, and all remain below (at least the greatest part) in form of a discontinuous Calx.

*But manners there be of our Conjunction three,
The first is called by Philosophers diptative,
The which between Agent and Patient must be,
Male and Female, Mercury and Sulphur vive,
Matter and Form, thin and thick to thrive.*

*This Lesson will help thee without doubt,
And our Conjunction truly bring about.*

Now to help thee thoroughly in this mystery of Philosophical Conjunction, I shall particularize all our Conjunctions. We have particularly three Conjunctions, all which must be known by him who intends to compleat this Mastery.

The first is gross, which I touched before; it is the *Amalgamation* of *Sol* with our *Mercury*, which because the mixture is made of two things, is called Conjunction diptative; and the Compound is now called *Rebis*, that is, two things, according to the verse, *Res Rebis est Vina confecta*.

In this mixture there are two Natures, the one more active, which is the *Mercury*, the other more passive, which is Gold: where note, that the activity of the *Mercury* above the Gold, is because the moving virtue of *Sol* is sealed, that is, his *Sulphur* is imprisoned. Otherwise when Dissolution is made, *Sol* then is most active, and *Mercury* more passive; *Mercury* then is as it were the Feminine Sperm, which being more crude and tender, it is sooner wrought upon by the Fire, which *Sol* the masculine Sperm feels not till it be penetrated by the Mercury, and then it is forced to send forth its Seed; for the formal principle resides mostly in the Gold, and the material chiefly in the Water; in the one, being thick of constitution, the formal part is sealed; in the other, that little which is, (in respect of the Body) is more at liberty, and so by consequence sooner active. These two then must be mixed (*ad justam exigentiam naturae*) as is elsewhere hinted and prosecuted largely. To this if thou hast attended, thou shalt know the extent and full Latitude of this Conjunction; this is a manual work, and the last manual work, next to the putting and sealing of it in the Egg, that thou hast, before thou hast attained the first degree of the Mastery.

*The second manner is called Triptative,
Which is a Conjunction of things three,
Of Body, Soul and Spirit, that they not thrive,
Which Trinity thou must bring to Unity.*

The next Conjunction that follows this in order, is when thou hast so administred and regulated thy Fire, that thy Spirits shall so ascend and circulate, until they have extracted out of the fixed Body its most digested virtue, or subtle Soul, which is Sulphureous, or of great Firiness. Then shall the Spirit and Soul descend; and shall unite it self with the Body; then shall the Air be converted into Dust, according to the process of noble *Sandivogius*, where they shall lye contumulate for six weeks without breath; and after when the Spirit of life shall enter into them, the Spirit and Soul shall by their mighty force carry aloft the Body with them, so that it shall go out and return with them, for now these three are made one.

*For as the Soul to the Spirit the bond must be,
Right so the Body the Soul to him must knit.
Out of thy mind let not this Lesson flit.*

So then by the mediation of the Soul, the Spirit is made one, and incorporate with the Body; for the Soul being by the Spirit drawn from the Body, doth naturally desire to be united with it again, and so long as it is from it, is from home as it were in a Pilgrimage. The Body also naturally doth desire its Soul, and will as forcibly attract it as a Loadstone doth attract Iron: for know, that the Soul doth not ascend, but it carries with it a fermental Odour of the Body, by which it doth so effectually affect the Spirit, that it begins to think of taking a new impression, and becomes daily by little and little more and more able to suffer Fire, and by consequence draws to the nature of a Body: observe this.

*The third manner, and also the last of all,
Four Elements together which joyns to abide,
Tetraptative certainly Philosophers do it call,
And specially Guido de Montanor, whose fame goeth wide,
And therefore in most laudable manner this tide.*

But yet this Conjunction doth not retain the volatility of the Compound, though it is so united that the parts ascend and descend together; the reason is, that though by the Soul the Spirit and Body be united, yet the Spirit sometimes doth carry the Body with it aloft, and the Body at times precipitates the Spirit, the Soul holding fast together, till at length not only these parts, but the Elemental qualities of them, are so strongly permixt, that the one doth not more in acting, then the other doth in resisting, by which means they are not only united to follow one another, but fixt to abide Fire together.

This is the last and noblest Conjunction, in which all the mysteries of this Microcosm have their Consummation. This is by the Wise called their Tetraptive Conjunction, wherein the Quadrangle is reduced to a Circle, in the which there is neither beginning nor end. He who hath arrived here, may sit down at Banquet with the *Sun* and *Moon*.

This is the so highly commended Stone of the Wise, which is without all fear of corruption; for here are by Nature all Elements Anatically mixed and united, so that it cannot suffer from any, for it agrees with all.

*In our Conjunction four Elements must aggregate
In due proportion, which first asunder were separate.*

These our Elements are not such vain trifles, which are idly imagined by Sophisters; by the primary qualities, to speak after the common phrase, though I do not think that any thing attains perfection upon an account of qualities, but so it pleased the Antients to express themselves; only this is most certain, that what was before inconstant in the Fire, now is impatient therein, and what at first in the beginning of the Work discovered two distinct Natures, is now one intirely and inseparably.

*Therefore like as the Woman hath veins fifteen,
And the Man but five to act of their fecundity,
Required in our Conjunction first I mean,
So must the Man his Son have of his Water three,*

*And nine of his Wife, which three to him must be:
Then like with like shall joy have for to dwell.
More of Conjunction me needeth not to tell.*

Our Stone is as it is called *Microcosmos*, which name unless to our Stone, hath been only appropriated unto Man; so there in the Generation of our Stone, much that may answer to the Generation of Man: for as Anatomists do allow the Woman fifteen veins conducing to the at of Venery and Procreation, and the Man from whom comes the Male Sperm but five; so our Stone in his first Composition requires three parts of the Water or Feminine Sperm, to one of *Sulphur* or the Male: so the Artist decocting, and Nature perfecting, the Mastery will be accomplished with the blessing of God.

Remember now that the more thy Water is, the more ought to be thy Internal Fire t dry it up; so then when thou shalt make the proportion of Water to the Sun three to one, remember that thy number of Eagles, which is the proportion of thy *Mercury*, ought to be nine, or at most ten.

This is the highest Acuation of the Water, which is best for such a proportion; as for seven Eagles, two to one is a very good proportion, so hast thou proportionably three Eagles to every one of the water which is added to the Body. Some are so acute as to say, that with four Eagles well cleansed, the Work may be performed, and then the proportion must be as three of the Water to two of the Body, but the decoction must needs be longer. I never yet tried it, knowing the forenamed proportions will do far better, and nine months time is a sufficient waiting for a Philosopher. Any shorter way is and would be acceptable, but more tedious are very unacceptable, since they shew nothing more than quicker ways, but protract the time of Putrefaction; for from that time the Fire of Nature is at work, and then every *pondus* hath the same period, provided the Fire be accordingly, and the Matter in the Glass not much over the other, for one ounce or two will be far sooner accomplished, than five or six ounces; therefore we advise all rather to content themselves with one ounce or two at most: if an ounce succeed, you can wish no more.

*This Chapter I will conclude right soon therefore,
Gross Conjunction chargin thee to make but one,
For seldom have Strumpets Children ybore,
And so shalt thou never come by our Stone,
Without thou let the Woman liy alone;
That after she once conceived by the man,
Her Matrix be shut up from all other than.*

I shall soon draw to an end concerning this subject, for I trow that thou understandest it fully; take heed then to my Doctrine, mix thy Water with thy Body in a due quantity, and grind them together diligently, and when thou hast mixed them, shut them up in thy Glass carefully, and there let them stand till compleat perfection.

And after thou hast mixed them, and set them to heat, be sure thou stir them not, much less open them, or add any thing to them, or rake ought from them, whatever any Author

do seem to advise: For if thou do contrary to this my Doctrine, thou dost run an extreme hazard of losing all; for as it is with Harlots, who lying with many men, conceive rarely of any: so if thou joyn crude *Mercury* after thy first Conjunction, I will not say that it is impossible, but very unlikely that ever thou shalt attain our Mastery. And what I say of putting in fresh *Mercury* is to be understood of the Body also, for if thou shalt add fresh of that, thou wilt destroy all; for after thou setteth them to the Fire, thou must expect Conception, that is, that the *Mercury* by ascending and descending will extract part of the seminal virtue out of the reins of the *Sun*, which when she hath done, there then stands a relation between the *Sun* and that *Mercury*, as between Husband and Wife. Now other *Mercury*, or other *Sol* are not as yet so related, and therefore they are as a third person, which Love abhors. Therefore mix thy Matters so judiciously at first, that thou need not afterwards to wish for any new addition, and close your Vessel well, and decoct it carefully.

*For such as evermore add crude to crude,
Opening their Vessel, letting their Matters keel,
The Sperm conceived they nourish not, but delude
Themselves, and spill their Work each deal;
If therefore thou have list to do weel
Close up thy Matrix, and nourish thy Seed
With heat continual and temperate, if thou wilt speed.*

They who shall do otherwise, as they discover themselves to be too impatient, so they certainly will destroy their Operations. For were it no other damage than this, that they cool their Seed, it is an irreparable error; but over and besides, the crude Air, will they, ill they, will get in, and being as it is a great enemy to Generation, it destroys the germinative and living virtue.

Then instead of getting profit, they rap certain loss; and instead of attaining truth, they get a delusion: for no man that understands himself would do it, but he that would open a womans Womb that is conceived, to make her bring forth sooner, or crack an Egg he would set under a Hen, to make it hatch more speedily.

Therefore as I advised before, so I do now, and shall make it the *Epiphonema* of this discourse; mix thy Seeds, and elaborate them with what pains thou canst, then shut them in a house of Glass, that is to say, an ounce in a Glass that would hold about 16 ounces, or 20, or two ounces in a Glass that would hold two ounces or thereabouts of Water distilled; set thy Glass in thy Nest, about a 4th part of it in Sand, which must be sifted from Stones. Let the neck be fastened either with a Wyre, or set into a hole which may be in the Cover of thy Nest, the Neck about 6 inches long, a longer a little. Let thy *Athanor* be so that thou mayst give in it what heat thou pleaseth, and keep it about a day, or 16 or 12 hours at least, without renewing, and yet no sensible alteration in heat.

In this Furnace thou shalt give thy Matter such a Fire, as may within the first day or two cause it to boyl, like to a Pot over the Fire, or as the stormy Sea swelleth in a mighty Wind; from the Surface of which there will exhale a Vapour which we call the Winds,

which are in the belly or womb in the forming of our *Embrio*, which will condense at the top, (the Glass being strong) and run down in drops, and this continually night and day without ceasing. Thus is verified the saying of the Philosopher, that our Stone retaineth life, and is perfected, that is, divided and united, and at last fixt and congealed, by continual boyling ad subliming. Thus are thy Waters divided, the uppermost part carry aloft the Soul with them, and the lowermost boyl and tear and soften the Body, and make it more fit for the returning Spirit and Soul to work on, in their continual descending.

*And when thy Vessel hath stood by months five,
And Clouds and Eclipses passed each one,
The light appearing increase thy heat, then believe,
Until bright and shining in whiteness be thy Stone.
Then mayst thou open thy Glass anon,
And feed thy Child which is ybore,
With Milk and Meat aye more and more.*

Thus shalt thou keep them for the space of 150 days, in which time thou shalt see a gallant Game played, the earth shall be overflown with Waters, the two great Lights eclipsed, the Heavens be clouded, the Air darkened, and all things in disorder and confusion; then shall the earth be turned into a *Limus*, and the Water by decoction continual shall be dried up, and by moderate showrs and dews shall be moistned, and by continual washing shall be cleansed; then through the good pleasure of God the day-light shall spring forth, and what was before dark, shall now become clear, and what was black of the blackest, shall now be made very white.

This when thou shalt see, rejoice, for our King is now coming from the East triumphing, he hath conquered death, and now is made immortal; strengthen then your Fire a little, prudently and with discretion continue it till such time as your Stone become white, and very clear and bright, sparkling like to a Sword new slipped, and by driness be reduced into a Powder impalpable.

Now art thou come to the end of the white, and thou hast a Stone perfect; though this be but of small virtue, yet thou mayst now take it out, and use it either by Fermentation, or Cibation, or Imbibition, or Multiplication, and make it fit for projection: so that if thou hast but an ounce, thou mayst soon have a thousand.

*For now both moist and dry is so contemperate,
That of the Water Earth hath received impression,
Which never after that asunder may be separate,
And right so Water to the Earth hath given ingression,
That both together to dwell have made profession;
And Water of the Earth hath purchased a retentive,
They four made one never more to strive.*

Now thou hast an intimate union between the moist and the dry, that one is passed into another, and of two there is a third made, which is a Neuter from both, and yet partakes

of both; and these two natures that did seem so opposite, are now conspired together to make one substance incorruptible.

For the Water which is a Spirit, hath given such an impression to the earth, that it which was corporal and dry, and uncapable of communicating Tincture, is by it become penetrative, so that it can in the very twinkling of an eye pass to the very Centre, upon an imperfect Metal on which it is project, as I have oft with unspeakable content observed.

For it is not in our union of this *Sulphur* to its *Mercury*, as it is with the union of Water to Water, though we make such comparisons; for though we call our *Sulphur* Earth, and our *Mercury* Water, yet our *Mercury* will not in the Examen of the Fire flow away as Water will exhale from Loam, how exquisitely soever it be contempered with it.

So then our Body which by our Art is renewed, is advanced into the order of Spirits, or Bodies glorified, which thought they have Bodies, yet they are not subject to those Laws of gross corporeity, which is in Bodies not regenerate: therefore our Stone is a System of Wonders, ponderous, fixt, and exquisitely compact, and yet as penetrative as hot Oyl is into soaking Paper.

So that it is not now as it was at first beginning of Operation, when the one was above, the other below, compared to two Dragons or Birds, the one winged, the other without wings; but now both are capable to resist the Fire in its utmost fury.

Now hath the Water received a fermental impression from the Earth or *Sulphur*, so that it is now made *Sulphur* with *Sulphur*, as the other is made by the Water life with life.

This is the highest perfection which any sublunary Body can be brought to, by which we know that God is one, for God is perfection; to which when ever any creature arrives, in its kind rejoyceth in unity, in which is no division or alterity, but peace and rest without contention.

*Thus in two things all our intents do hing,
In moist and dry, which be contraries two;
In dry, that it the moist to fixing bring;
In moist, that it give Liquefaction to the Earth also.*

Whatever then we seem to say or write to the contrary, all our intentional Secret consists only in two things; whatever we seem to advise more, is but only to intangle the unwary.

Our first Secret is to know our true *Sulphur*, which many do allegorize to all the absurdities in the World: This is Gold, which is to be bought pure almost in any place.

The next is to know our *Mercury*, which is not common, but artificial, drawn from three heads by the mediation of one thing, which makes the two which are dry and *Sulphurous*, to untie with one which is moist and *Mercurial*. These are different in their qualities, which difference our decoction so reconciles, as to make of them sweet harmony. For the

Sulphur in whose increase of virtue consists our final intent, it doth give consistence to the Water, yet so as that it doth not part with it from it self, but with its Fermentative virtue it doth so infuse it, that of a moist Spirit tender and volatile, it becomes a fixt dry Fire-abiding substance.

But first of all the Water doth mollifie the Body, and soak into it, and search out its profundity; for the *Sun* teyneth not, till it teyned be, for hard and dry Bodies cannot enter so as to transmute, till such time as themselves be first Radically entred, and changed from colour to colour, till they come to perfection; then it is fluid and penetrative, for it will enter to the root of the imperfect, and cause it to lose its imperfection, and become perfect, flowing upon it like Wax when it is heated by the Fire.

*Then of them thus a temperament may forth go,
A temperament not so thick as the Body is,
Neither so thin as Water withouten miss.*

Between the dry Body and the fluid Water, we make a temperament which is called Impastation, for it is made like unto Paste; and Inceration, for it brings to the temper of Wax; but most properly Amalgamation, or gross Conjunction, which is a middle consistence between *Mercury*, and a Metal not so hard as the one, for it may with a Knife or ones Finger be spread to and fro easily; nor yet is it so currant as *Mercury*, for no *Mercury* will run out of it, though it be inclined one way or other. I need say no more, for there is hardly any vulgar Chymist who is not acquainted with the notion of an *Amalgama*, and knows what temper that is, when it will spread like Butter, and yet laid declining, will let nothing run from it which is thinner then the whole Compound; for in a thin *Amalgama*, the *Mercury* if it be declined will run to the declining side, like Hydropical *intercutis* Water. But ours is not so thin, and yet so soft that it is easily plyable, yet so that it may be rouled up in Balls, and no quick *Mercury* run down or sink to the bottom, He that can miss I this direction, would hardly find the shining Sun at Noon-day.

*Loosing and knitting be principles two
Of this hard Science, & Poles most principal,
Howbeit that other principles be many moe, &c*

We have done this Chapter, and to conclude assure thee, that all our twelve Gates are nothing else but locking and unlocking, shutting and opening, dissolving and congealing, volatilizing and fixing, making the dry soft, and afterwards the soft dry, loosing and binding. Learn but this, and thou shalt be sure of the Keys of this Terrestrial Paradise.

Yet because I would be more clearly understood, I shall pass through the other Gates of the Philosophers, that running through their multiplicity, I may as I go reduce them all to unity.

*Upon a day as I abroad was walking,
The pleasant Fields to view,*

*A voice I heard in silence softly talking
Of wonders passing new.*

*Whereat I starting stood like one amazed,
Not knowing what to guess;
But when I round about a while had gazed,
This terrour it grew less.*

*The voice I heard came from a Grove, which there
At my right hand did grow,
Which considering, silently drew near
The cause of it to know*

*Where I did see a Lady finely dressed,
Sit sighing by a Spring,
She utterd words as if with grief oppressed,
And oft her hands would wring.*

*Ah me, quoth she, how is my joy departed!
Oh dismal cruel death!
Could any think the Fiend so flinty hearted,
So as to bereave him breath?*

*I then drew near, and thought to have asswaged
With pleasant words her grief:
The more I spake, the more she was enraged,
Nay she disdain'd relief.*

*Her face was Lilly white, with Purple spots
Upon her cheeks and chin;
Her Rosie lips, her feature free from blots,
T' amaze me did begin.*

*Beauty most rare, quoth I, what dost thou weeping?
What Wight most vile shall dare
To wrong thee, whom the Gods have in their keeping,
Whose face is mortals snare?*

*Good Sir, quoth she, forbear your words of sorrow,
I live, yet living dye:
I wish my life might end before the morrow,
As death I fear's not nigh.*

*I had a Husband dear, of comely feature,
A King of great renown;*

*So lovely and so loving, that in nature
There's none may put him down.*

*His Constitution was so strong, he scorned
To fly from any foe:
His Person was with grace so well adorned,
That none but him did know.*

*Great Phoebus he was nam'd, whose princely merit
'Tis death for to recite;
So Rich he was, the wealth he did inherit
Great honour did invite.*

*We walking here the pleasant Woods among,
Found this unhappy Spring,
Of which to drink for thirst my Lord did long,
Which draught his end did bring.*

*For stooping down, the Water with its stream
His head did make so light,
He could not rise, but dropt into the stream
To everlasting Night.*

*He strove to swim, but to the bottom sank,
O dismal sight to see!
Then swelling with the Water which he drank
Himself he could not free.*

*But burst, and then the Spring began to boil,
And bubbling, colour chang'd;
'Tis wonder for to see (alas the spoil!)
King dead, and Spring estrang'd.*

*So from its former state, that what then shone
Like unto glittering Skie,
Now like a stinking Puddle reaks, that none
Can it endure: yea I*

*Who in it lost a Husband dear, do loath
The vapours that ascend;
I hope one Spring will be the end of both,
'Twould be a happy end.*

*So long she spake, until the water seem'd
Like ink, so black it grew;*

*And eke the savour erst so bad esteem'd
Did far surpass the hew.*

*The Air with Clouds most dark was fill'd, that never
Such Fogs and Mists were seen,
The which a Soul from the dead Corps did sever,
Whose colour first was green,*

*Then yellow, mixt with blue; the fumes ascended,
Which bore the Soul on high,
Which when the Lady saw, here tears were ended,
She fainted by and by.*

*Into the same Stream she did swooning drop,
And never more appear'd;
She lov'd her Husband so, she would not stop,
Like one of death afear'd,*

*And straightway she of vital breath depriv'd,
Was of a Lady fair
A Carcass made, thus both in love who liv'd,
Alike in death did share.*

*Their Souls disjoined from their Bodies hov'ring
Upon the Fountain plaid,
Expecting if their Carcasses recovering,
Might have their lives repaid.*

*The Sun in Solstice stood, whose heat did dry
The Waters more and more;
And eke beneath a Central heat did fry,
And sent up vapours store.*

*Which still returned, so long till they were chang'd
The greater part to dust;
The wandring Souls which long had been estrang'd,
Were now allur'd with lust*

*Of their own Bodies, in whose Atoms lay
A strange Magnetick force;
They also though long banish'd, day by day
Awaited the dead Coarse.*

*For Souls united were Bodies combin'd,
And both to each ally'd*

*So nearly, that no sooner they can find
A way, but they are ty'd*

*With knot inviolable, that no power,
How strong it may appear,
Can part them any more, even from the hour
They thus united were.*

*Thus two one Body have, of double Sex,
Which doth no sooner live,
But is impregnated; this doth perplex
Their foes, who fain would drive*

*This tender off-spring to despair: but God
Him safely ever keeps
From all Invasion, nor permits the rod
Of them to make him weep.*

*And tough his Garments and his Skin be foul
With blackness and with stink,
He shall be purged, for both Spirit and Soul
Are clean, whate're men think.*

*A River springs amidst a Garden fair,
With Flowers many deckt,
Whose drops are Crystal like, these into Air
By Central heat are checkt.*

*This Air condenses like Pearl Orient,
Which on this Body falls,
Whose luster on its blackness being spent,
To brightness it recalls.
And both together make a Crystal Spring,
Whose Streams most strangely shine;
These after are condens'd, and with them bring
Treasures of Silver fine.*

*These Treasures if to rest untoucht a while
Upon the Fire are left,
The stealing Azure will the white beguile,
And both will be bereft*

*Of Being by the Vert, which long will dure;
The Citrine will succeed,
Which will abide full long, but then be sure
To see the sparkling red.*

*Then is the King who formerly was drown'd,
Become the whole Earth's wonder;
His Wife and he are one, and both abound
With wealth; nor they asunder*

*Will ever more depart: now all their Foes
Must their dominion know;
Who will not stoop, shall surely feel their blows,
For all are him below.*

*His brethren all who formerly were held
As Slaves in prison fast,
Are now set free; their Enemies which swell'd
With pride, full low were cast.*

*Thus by his death, the King hath now obtain'd
That Glory which before
He never had; his former state's disdain'd
His Wife now weeps no more.*

*She's one with him, his former Kingdom he
Unto his Brethren gives;
The worst of them dot now those Fortunes see
That each in plenty lives.*

*And what their Brother was before his death,
That they are now become,
For he their sickness cures with his breath,
And makes them live at home.*

*No more in bondage, bonds no place can find,
All liberty enjoy;
There's nothing here can hurt, for all one mind
Have: all that would destroy*

*Is banish'd from the Kingly Palace, where
The streets with Gold are pav'd;
The Walls are Silver fine, the Gates most clear
Intire Gems, engrav'd*

*With wondrous Art; the Windows glass most pure,
Which falls nor knocks can break;
The Drink from fear of venom still is sure,
Whose virtue none can speak.*

*Whoso comes there, it at a place arriv'd
Where neither want, nor death,
Nor any grief is known; a place contriv'd
For Saints therein to breath.*

*Whom God shall chose, and to his Palace bring,
What need e more desire
Then God himself, that he may praises sing,
Kindled with holy fire?*

*But he whose hands unclean, and heart defil'd
These Mysteries forbear,
For you th' are not; cease timely, for y' are wild
T' have neither wit nor fear.*

AN
EXPOSITION
UPON THE
Fifth Gate,
Which is
PUTREFACTION.

The Fifth Gate Opened,
Which is
PUTREFACTION

*Now we begin the Chapter of Putrefaction,
Without which Pole no Seed can multiply,
Which must be done only by continual action
Of heat in the Body, moist not manually;
For Bodies else may not be altered naturally.*

We have already run through four Gates, the first being opened, the rest stand open at will; so that thou hast need only to enter. The course and method of Philosophers now doth lead us to the Gate of Putrefaction, a horrible Gate, whose entrance is dark with *Cimmerian* night dreadful with many windings and turnings.

And yet it is a Gate so necessary, that unless you pass through it, you may never expect to reap fruit from your labour; for without it can be no Life nor Generation, much less desired Multiplication: therefore saith the Poet,

Felices atrum quotquot habere queant.

The cause of this death, or corruption or rottenness, proceeds from the action of continual heat, not so much of the external Fire of the *Athanor*, as of the Compound within it self; in which the Fire of the Water which is against Nature, doth open the perfect Body by continual contrition and decoction, and so lets loose its *Sulphur* that was incarcerated, which is Fire of Nature, that so between these two in continual action and passion, together with the external heat continually acting, the whole Compound is brought to corruption, being sometimes roasted with external heat, which doth sublime the moisture, which again of its own accord returns continually, and doth moisten the earth so long, until by reason of the heat it have drunk up the moisture wholly, and then it dyes.

And unless thou see this sign, of rotting of thy Compound, which is done in a black colour, a stinking odour, and with a discontinuity of parts, thy labour will still be in vain; for thou mayst never expect what thou desirest, to have a new form brought in, till the old form be corrupted and put off.

*Sith Christ doth witness, without the Grain of Wheat
Dye in the Ground, increase thou mayst none get.
And in like wise without the Matter putrefie,
It may in no wise truly be alterate,
Neither thy Elements may be divided kindly,
Nor the Conjunction of them perfectly celebrate:
That therefore thy labour be not frustrate,
The privity of our putrefying well understand,
Or every thou take this Work in hand.*

This is so constant to Natures constant proceedings, that the painful Husbandman, that he may have an increased harvest, commits his precious Seed to the Ground, in it to rot, and to be corrupted, that so a new Life may spring from the old dead Body; nor doth he ever expect increase, so long as it remains in his Garner.

Right so we, so long as our material principles continue in their own nature and form, they are but of a single value, for Gold and *Mercury* are two such principles, that they will for ever delude as many as proceed to work on them in a Sophistical way; for whatever the Artist may think, they will remain the same unto the end of the World, unless pure Sol being mixed with its own pure and appropriated *Mercury*, and set in a due heat of digestion, there arise a mutual action and passion between them, which without the laying on of the Artists hands, will tend to a new Generation. For in a convenient Fire, in which the Compound may perpetually and uncessantly boyl, and the subtle parts may ascend and circulate upon the gross without intermission, the most digested Virtue or Soul of the fixed Body, (which is his *basis* of Tincture) will be extracted by the Water, and this will mix with it self with the pure Spirit of the Water, and with this it will ascend and return, until a total separation be made of the pure from the impure, and the subtle from the gross.

Then shall the Body draw down its Soul again, and by the power of the most High it shall be united, and with it the Spirit of life shall be joined also, so that all three shall become one with an union indissolvable; but all this pre-supposeth a Putrefaction, or Corruption of one form, else cannot there be an Introduction of another.

Therefore since this mystery of Putrefaction is not more secret then necessary, so necessary that without it there is nothing can be done to purpose, that is to say, with profit; I shall be a little plain and full in the prosecution of this mystery: For in the knowledge of this consists all that is required to make a Philosopher. All the intentions of the Artist, must be only so to prepare and order things, that he may be sure of this *terminus*; and when he is there come, he is as sure a Master as if he had the Stone in his Cabinet. By the failing of this sign, the Operator is always to turn either backward to seek

out some other principles, or forward, or to the right, or to the left; but when he is Master of this, he then can fail in nothing but in the Regimen of the outward heat.

*And Putrefaction may thus defined be,
After Philosophers definition to be of Bodies the slaying,
And in our compound a division of things three,
The killed Bodies into Corruption forth leading,
And after unto Regeneration them ableing;
For things being in the Earth, without doubt
Be engendered of Rotation of the Heaven about.*

The definition that the Philosophers give of this Operation, is perpetually Allegorical, for this Gate they have named by all Metaphors almost in the World, especially from death, and dead men: therefore they allegorize the Vessel in this station, to Grave, or Tomb, and emblematically discover this Operation by the types of Skuls, dead Bones, and rotten Carcasses; according to which Metaphors they call Putrefaction, the death of the Compound.

For when they saw the Body with the Water to melt in the Fire, to flow and to boyl, they called this *Magnesia*; when they saw the Water partly to ascend, and partly to descend, and partly to remain below, so that there was both a Sublimation in vapour, and a Motion of what was below; they said that it was the Spirit of the Water that ascended, or more Airy part; and the more Fiery part, which rejoyceth most to be united to, and hidden in Earth, remained below, for that was more capable of the Fire, and did better agree with it, as with its like: which because it did so uncessantly swell and boyl, and rage at the bottom, and make the Body begin to change its colour, they said it was Fire against Nature. Again, when they saw the ascending Vapour to change colour, they said it was the Soul of the Bodies was mixed with the Spirit, which because it was green, they said it was a vegetative Soul, and Fire of nature.

Now when the Body below began to thicken, they said this was an Hermaphroditical Body, because part of the Water always remained below, and made the Body to boyl, and bubble, and flow; and therefore this they called a new Body compounded of two Bodies, the Sun and Moon, the Man and the Wife, which because it grew to a slimy consistence, they named it *Limus*, or *Limbus*, *Hyle*, and a *Chaos*, or *Terra Adamica*.

When this Body began to grow very black, and to send up foul exhalation, yellowish, blewish, and black, they said this was Death and Corruption, which followed the separation of the Soul from the Body.

Now when they see the Souls to be again united, and to remain bellows together, they knew that the Soul and Spirit were Immortal, that is, the Tincture or Vital Balsam was Incorruptible; and because they see them again unite, they knew the Soul and Spirit would renew the Bodies, and this seeming Corruption, was but a natural step to a glorious Regeneration; for if the Souls be again united to the Bodies, they will surely regenerate them, and renew them, and make them incorruptible; for if the Spirits had not returned t

this union, they might only have expected the Exhalation of them: for Spiritual Tinctures or Essences, cannot be destroyed by corruption in many Vegetals, much less in the most perfect of Minerals and Metals. The union then of the Souls with the Bodies, argues evidently a hidden purity, under the apparent rottenness, which will after Purification be exalted to transcendent Glory.

Hereupon they said, that the Spirit and Soul which were above, were the Heavenly Quintessence, and the Body below was the Earth; and this Circulation of Spirits, were but as the Circulation of the Heavens about the Earth; and the falling drops, were but as the influential dew, which did cause the Earth to fructify; and the blackness and darkness, were but the Winter Latitude, which with its Clouds and droppings do mellow and fertilize the Earth, to shoot forth with the more beautiful varieties in the Springe.

*And therefore like as I have said before,
Thine Elements commixt and wisely coequate,
Thou keep in temperate heat, eschewing evermore
That they by violent heat be not incinerate,
To powder dry unprofitably Rubificate:
But into powder black as the Crows Bill,
With heat of our bath, or else of our Dunghill.*

For this cause they looked upon this as a secret, mysterious, yet very natural Operation, whereby the most solid and perfect Minerals, are by Nature so applied one to another, and cultivated, that the very Earth or Ground should be found, in which this noble Tree of the *Hesperides* may be planted and grow; the Matrix or Womb should be prepared, in which this noble Off-spring may again enter, and be born again.

Therefore what by long Experience, and profound Meditation, Philosophers have found out and seen, that also they committed and communicated unto us; so that we also are made fellow Heirs of this great Treasure, and we shall as faithfully communicate our knowledge for thy Instruction. First then, take thy Body which is *Gold*, and thy Water which is *Mercury*, the one ready made by Nature to thy hand, the other thou must Prepare, for it is not to be found in the Land of the Living, but must be made; Nature here is at a *non-plus*, and so is Art, taken asunder, but both together effect it.

Mix these together in due proportion, so as I have often told thee; then set them to the Fire to decoct, and give them a convenient heat, in which they may boyl, ascend and descend perpetually, without any intermission night or day.

But especially and before all things be careful in your Internal heat, to wit, the proportion of your water for your *Sulphur*; that you must add and supply to it in the beginning of your Work, in its Preparation, is that which doth perform all the work within, without which your External heat is of no value, for it is of it self uneffectual.

If then thou accend this heat so much as that it predominate, it will not then dissolve the Bodies, as thou expectest, but contrariwise burn the Flowers before they are extractd

from the depths of their marrow: this thou mayst easily do, either if thy *Arsnick* be not made as it ought, or else the number of Eagles exceeded, or the proportion of thy Water to thy Body not agreeing to the number of Eagles, or thy Glass not well proportioned to thy Matter; it will easily burn, if thy Glass be too big, for so the moisture will so much be dispersed about the Concave, that it will not return before the earth below be left too dry. I have given Rules easily to avoid all these inconveniences.

And on the other hand, be sure that thou do not erre in too little heat; let thy Water have Fire enough within it, to make a true division and corruption, which if either thy *Arsnick* have sufficient Fiery virtue, or if the union of this and thy Water be not well attended, but slightly performed, or the Purgation of thy water be not thoroughly made each Eagle, for so two or three eagles may not add the virtue of one, or if thy number of eagles be not just, or thy proportion of quantity be not duly observed.

Therefore follow my advice, and be careful in both these particulars, and then let your External heat be so that your Compound may boyl and sublime, which for its similitude is called a *Balneum*, so long till the Vapours Cease, and are retained within; then will the Compound rot, which for its great likeness is called our Dunghill.

*Until the time that Nights be passed ninety,
In moist heat keep them for any thing,
Soon after by blackness thou shalt espy,
That they draw fast to putrefying.*

First then, our Operations begin *in humido*, for in the beginning moisture it prevails, and is called the Phlegmatick Constitution of our *Embrio*; and this is called the Reign of the Woman, which (according to *Flammel*) seeks to get the Domination for many months, that is to say, for three month or thereabouts, which according to our Author is ninety days and nights, to whom many other Authors agree. This time may be longer or shorter, according to the better or worse preparation of the Matter, and the Regimen of the Fire.

But when thou hast set thy Glass once, in the first place be sure that thou give a due, yet temperate heat; govern it so as that between the Waters above, and the Flouds beneath, the Earth may liquefie; then continue your decoction, and the Vessel shall be beclouded, and thy Compound shall with constant Circulation become black.

This colour shall be a sign unto you that you have not run your course in vain; this is the first Gate, into which and through which you must enter; now know for certain that thy Seeds begin to rot and engender. In this Putrefaction there is life, for this Operation is nothing else but an extracting of Natures from their profundity or root; this is that which will make thy fixt Body to become a volatile Spirit, for Putrefaction doth loose the bands of all the Elements.

*Which after many colours, thou mayst bring
To perfect whiteness, by patience easily,
And so the Seed in his nature shall multiply.*

So soon then as thou shalt have blackness, know for certain that in this blackness whiteness is really hidden, so really as a living Plant in its Seed. But before thou attain to this whiteness, thou mayst have patience and pass through many middle changing colours, which will be no small cheating to the Work-man, who must wait with a great deal of Longanimity until the Earth and Heaven be united.

Then shall thy Elements perfectly accord, and one colour shall cover thy new-married Soul and Body, and that will be like to the most pure Lilly, or sublimed Salt, sparkling like to a new-slipped Sword in the Sun beams.

In this whiteness is the Multiplicative virtue exalted, and made apparent in its first degree; by this white Soul thou mayst turn either *Mercury*, or *Saturn*, or *Jupiter*, or *Venus*, or *Mars*, into most pure refined Silver, in a short time, and that not Sophistically, to apparency, but in reality, inwardly and outwardly to abide all Essays.

*Make each the other to haies and kiss,
And like as Children play them up and down,
And when their Shirts are filled with Piss,
The let the Woman to wash be bown,
Which oft for faintness will fall in a swonn,
And die at last with her Children all,
And go to Purgatory to wash their filth Original.*

But in thy first Operation, as is said before, first look for blackness, which will appear in the first Regimen by continual decoction, which blackness shall be an *Indicium* to you that your two Natures do begin now to imbrace and kiss one another.

For so soon as they feel the Fire, they flow together within the Vessel, and boyl by continuance of decoction visibly, and the tender Nature not enduring the heat, flyeth aloft, and being inclosed so that it cannot get out, it congeals in drops in the head of the vessel, and about the sides, and again returns to its Body, which may well be called Childrens play, running round as it were in a Circular motion: This play continues so long, till the Water begins to leave its thicker parts, with the thicker parts of the Body, which in the bottom of the Vessel is called *Urina puerorum*; and the thinner parts of the Water, mixed with the thinner parts of the Body, which is dissolved in it, flies still and circulates until it have made a more full dissolution of the Body, which here by the odour of its *Sulphur* doth penetrate the Spirit and Soul, and makes them faint at last, and remain as it were breathless in the bottom of the Glass.

Then shall the Body be destroyed, and both the Water and it rot into small Atoms, which will lie without motion, growing every day more and more black, until at length *Cimmerian* darkness cover the whole Sky.

This is called the North Latitude of our Stone, and it is Winter, cold and dirty; here are the Elements brought to rest for a time, until a Generation be made in the bottom of the

Glass, when though the will and power of God, a clean thing shall be brought out of this uncleanness and black venosity.

*When they be there, by little and little increase
Their pains with heat aye more and more,
The Fire from them let never cease,
And see that thy Furnace be surely apt therefore,
Which wise men call an Athanor:
Concerning heat required most temperately,
By which thy Matter doth kindly putrefie.*

Now thy Bath will begin to be a little more heated and stirred up, to wash this young King, which though noble, is yet conceived in a Stable; for at this time thou hast the *Sulphur* of thy dissolved Body let loose, which mixing with the *Sulphur* of the Water, doth acuate it exceedingly; the one being a natural, the other a Fire against Nature, both together make an unnatural Fire, burning like to the Fire of Hell, comparable to nothing but the *Alcahest*.

Nor must thou think that this increase of Fire consists in the blowing of the Coal, no verily, it is a more subtle internal Fire that we have, and yet that also must be kept constant, and in due order.

For this cause see that thy Furnace be trusty, else thou mayst and wilt fail; for though the Fire of Coals do not effect anything, yet it excites, and the Water though it be of a wonderful nature, yet it acts no further then it is stirred up, and intermission in this Work when once begun, will in the end prove fatal extinction.

Therefore the Wise men have named the Furnace in which they work their Secrets, an Athanor, that is, Immortal, shewing that from the beginning to the end the Fire must not go out, for the extinction of it destroys the Work; and as death includes all sicknesses, which are steps to it, so an Immortal Furnace or *Athanor*, must not only preserve the Fire from going out, but also from exorbitancy either on one hand or other, for whatever swerves from the temperate mean, hinders the kind operation of the Matter, which is Putrefaction, by which means the Work is notably retarded and weakned, and by continuance of any extremity it will be destroyed, but with its due heat it doth putrefie kindly.

*Of this principle speaketh sapient Guido,
And saith by rotting dyeth the Compound corporal,
And then after Morien and others moe,
Up riseth again regenerate, simple and spiritual.
And were not heat and moisture continual,
Sperm in the Womb might have none abiding,
And so there should no fruit thereof up spring.*

This according to the intention of all Philosophers, *Guido, Turba, Arnaldus*, and others, but especially noble *Trevisan*, whom I chiefly honor; so *Flammel, Artephius, Morien*, and all Philosophers testify this much, namely, that the heat must be so adequated to the Compound, as that in it the Body, through the Pontick virtue of the Water, may have its *Sulphur* let loose, and so these two *Sulphurs* mixing together, may bring the whole to rotting or Putrefaction.

By which putridness a Ferment is engendred, which as it doth volatilize all things naturally, so it doth quicken this gross dead Body, in so much that it mounts aloft upon the Fire with the Water, and riseth a new glorious Body mixed with the Water, so that both being become one together, the Spirit borrows from the Body permanency, and the Body from the Spirit obtaineth penetrativeness, so that both make one coelestial and terrestrial Compound, named the Regenerate Body and Stone of Paradise incombustible. All which is occasioned by the continuance and not failing of heat, both inwardly and outwardly, by which the moisture is circulated and depurated, without which the seminal virtue would be extinct, which only vegetates by heat and moisture.

And if once the seminal virtue were kill'd, the remaining Compound would be no better then a dead unprofitable thing, which could never be recoverd; so that if either moisture or heat within, or convenient heat without should fail, there is nothing to be expected, but according to the Poet,

Cuncta rent, quae non ulla reparaveris Arte.

*Therefore at the beginning our Stone thou take,
And bury each in other with their Grave,
Then equal between them a marriage make,
To lig together six weeks let them have.
Their Seed conceived, kindly nourish and save,
From the ground of their Grave not rising the while,
Which secret point doth many one beguile.*

This then is the process of our Work; take at first our Stone, that is, the true Material principles thereof, which are one in kind, and two in number: mix these together in a due proportion, then shalt thou see as follows. First, thy Feminine nature will so embrace thy Masculine, as to extract from him his Seed, that is, the most digested virtue, so shall the Body dye, and the water shall intomb it.

The Water by Cohabitation shall contract amity and friendship with the Body, for it is nothing else but a Feminine Body of the same Stock, which when they are united and joined, this is called the marriage of *Gabritius* with *Beya*.

Then shall the Vapours cease, and all Exhalation shall be withheld from ascending or descending during the space of 40 days, or 42 at most, in which time though thou see not the former Circulation, rejoice, for now the Body begins to retain his Soul in a black colour.

Now the Queen hath conceived the Kingly Seed, which must be nourished with gentle convenient Fire, till it wax strong, and becomes a puissant triumphant Champion, whom no earthly force is able to withstand.

Thou must of necessity then let them have this prefixed time for their solitude and retirement, in which time the fixt and the volatile, the cold and the moist, the hot and the dry, do learn to agree each with other, being reconciled in this Head of the Crow, which is the conversion of natures into a discontinuous Calx, finer then Atoms of the Sun.

This Operation as it is the Wyld and Labyrinth of all who seek this Art in vain, so it is the *Capo di Bone speranza* to as many as attain to the perfect sight hereof; for now most of the difficulties are passed, which they are like to meet withal in this their Voyage to the *Oriental Indies*.

*This time of Conception with easie heat abide,
The blackness appearing shall tell thee when they die,
For they together like liquid Pitch that tide
Shall swell and bubble, settle and putrefie;
Shining colours therein thou shalt espy,
Like to the Rainbow, marvelous to sight,
The Water then beginneth to dry upright.*

Thou must then be very carefull that thy over-heat do not now hinder their Conjunction, for now is the main fear of burning thy Flowers, which thou mayst easily do, and makes these Natures become a half Red, or Orange colour, instead of the true Crows Bill.

Whereas if thy external heat be so gentle, as not to extinguish motion, thou shalt find that in this period thy Natures shall both of them die together, for one is not killed, nor dieth without the other; which death in its approach thou shalt discover by the appearing blackness.

And when once the Crow shall begin to shew itself, know that thou shalt see a terrile day, for thou must expect to be in the heat of the shore, and in the storm of the enraged Sea, which now the Winds are abated, after a long and strong blowing of them, doth arise in waves, raging and taking on, and raising the filth from the very bottom, so that all becomes like to a troubled Glass of ink, or melting boiling Pitch.

After this blackness, which shall endure for a long and tedious time, thou shalt see various and glorious colours to succeed, such as thou never hast seen; for all the colours that the mind of man possibly can imagine, shall then present themselves to view, which shall be an evident token to thee, that the moist and dark Dominion of the Woman doth now begin to vanish, and instead thereof the Man beginneth to rule, who first dryeth up the moisture of the Woman, with which there will vanish blackness, and the changeable colours, and after all shall be fixed in a sparkling dry white Powder, which is the Stone of Paradise.

*For in moist Bodies heat working temperate,
Engendreth blackness first of all, which is
Of kindly Conjunction the token assignate,
And of true putrefying; remember this,
For then perfectly to alter thou canst not miss.
And thus by the gate of blackness thou must come in
To the light of paradise in whiteness, if thou wilt win.*

In the beginning therefore of our Work, through the Co-operation of heat both internal and external, and the moisture of the Matter concurring, our Body gives a blackness like unto Pitch, which for the most part happens in 40, or at the most in 50 days.

This colour discovers plainly that the two Natures are united, and if they are united, they will certainly operate one upon another, and alter and change each other from thing to thing, and from state to state, until all come to one Nature and substance Regenerate, which is a new Heavenly Body.

But before there can be this renovation, the Old man necessarily must be destroyed, that is, thy first Body must rot and be corrupted, and lose its form, that it may have it repaid with a new form, which is a thousand times more noble. So then our Work is not a forced and apparent, but a natural and radical Operation, in which our Natures are altered perfectly, in so much that the one and the other having fully lost what they were before, yet without change of any kind, they become a third thing, Homogeneous to both the former.

Thus they who sow in tears, shall reap in joy; and he who goeth forth mourning, and carrying precious Seed, shall return with an abundance of increase, with their hands filled with sheaves, and their mouths with the praises of the Lord: thus the chosen or redeemed of the Lord shall return with Songs, and everlasting Joy shall be upon their heads, and sighing and sorrows shall fly away.

*For first the Sun in his uprising obscureate
Shall be, and pass the Waters of Noah's Flood,
On Earth which were a hundred days continueate
And fifty, away ere all these Waters god,
Right so our Waters, as Wife men understood,
Shall pass, that thou with David may say,
Abierunt in sicco flumina; bear this away.*

Remember then this Chymical Maxim, namely that a sad cloudy morning, begins a fair day, and a chearfull noontide; for our Work is properly to be compared to a day, in which he morning is dark and cloudy, so that the Sun appears not.

After that, the Sky is over-clouded, and the Air cold with Northerly winds, and much Rain falls, which endures for its season; but after that, the Sun breaks out, and shines

hotter and hotter, till all become dry, and then at Noon-day not a Cloud appearing, but all clear from one end of the Heaven to the other.

But our Waters may more fitly be compared to Noah's Floud, or Deluge, then to a day-showr, by reason of their continuance; for before our Waters shall all be overcome, and dried up by prevailing siccity, it will be about 5 months, in which time the Artist shall be held in constant horror, according as the Allegory of *Aristeus* hath it;

*Sed ne poeniteat faciem fuligine pingi,
Adferet haec Phoebi nigra favilla jubar.*

Wait patiently, for thou shalt see the Day-star arising with deliverance, and these Waters shall through the command of the Almighty abate; *Jupiter* then shall rule, in whose reign all things shall be restored: for by constant decoction, thy Body shall have virtue to receive Tincture, and to retain it, and to increase it, by which it shall be renewed, and shall by little and little digest all the moisture, which then shall be unto it as nourishment, Milk of Life, which we call Virgins milk.

Then shalt thou have leisure to contemplate these wonders of the most High, which if they do not ravish and astonish thee in the beholding of them, it is because God hath not intended this Science to thee in Mercy, but in Judgment, to wit, that it should be unto thee a snare and trap, and a stumbling-block at which thou shalt stumble and fall, and never rise again. Remember then when once thou shalt see the renewing of these Natures, that with humble heart and bended knees thou praise and extol, and magnifie that gracious God, who hath been nigh unto thee, and heard thee, and directed thine Operations, enlightned thy Judgment; for certainly flesh and blood never taught thee this, but it was the free gift of that God who giveth to whom he pleaseth.

*Soon after that Noah planted this Vineyard,
Which Royally flourished, and brought forth Grapes anon,
After which space thou shalt not be afeard.*

Now as the Earth when the Waters of the Floud were abated, was as it were renewed; even so thy Earth is made new, and the Rain-bow is to thee a sign that there shall never again happen such another Deluge, as thou hast now passed. Thy Earth then being renewed, behold how it is decked with an admirable green colour, which is then named the Philosophers Vineyard.

This greenness, after the perfect whiteness, is to thee a token that thy Matter hath re-attained, through the will and power of the Almighty, a new vegetative life: observe then how this Philosophical Vine doth seem to flower, and to bring forth tender green Clusters; know then that thou art now preparing for a rich Vintage.

Thy Stone hath already passed through many hazards, and yet the danger is not quite over, although it be not great, for thy former experience may bow guide thee, if rash joy do not make thee mad.

For in like wise shall follow the flourishing of our Stone.

Consider now that thou art in process to a new Work, and though in perfect whiteness thy Stone was incombustible, yet in continuing it on the Fire without moving, it is now become tender again; therefore though it be not in so great danger of Fire now as heretofore, yet immoderacy now may and will certainly spoil all, and undo thy hopes: Govern with prudence therefore during the while that these colours shall come and go, and be not either over-hasty, nor despondent, but wait the end with patience.

*And soon that after thirty are gone,
Thou shalt have Grapes right as Ruby red,
Which is our Adrop, our Usifur, and our red Lead.*

For in a short time thou shalt find, that this green will be overcome by the Azure, and that by the pale wan colour, which will a length come to a Citrine, which Citrine shall endure for the space of 46 days.

Then shall the heavenly Fire descend, and illuminate the Earth with inconceivable Glory; the Crown of thy Labours shall be brought unto thee, when our Sol shall sit in the South, shining with redness incomparable.

This is our Tyre, our Basilisk, our red Poppy of the Rock, our Adrop, our Usifur, our red Lead, our Lion devouring all things: This is our true Light, our Earth glorified; rejoice now, for our King hath passed from death to life, and now possesseth the Keys of both Death and Hell, and over him nothing now hath power.

*For like as Souls after pains transitory,
Be brought to Paradise where ever is joyful life;
So shall our Stone after his darkness in Purgatory,
Be purged and joined in Elements withouten strife.*

As then it is with those who are Redeemed, their Old man is crucified, in which is sorrow, anguish, grief, heart-breaking, and many tears; after that the New man is restored, and then is joy, shouting, clapping of hands, singing, and the like, for the ransomed of the Lord shall return with Songs, and everlasting Joy shall be on their heads: even so it is after a sort in our Operation, for first of all our old Body dyeth, rots, and is as it were corrupted, yielding a most loathsome stink, and engendering squallid and filthy colours, and most venomous exhalations, which is as it were the Purgatory of his old Body, in which its corruption is overcome by a long and gentle decoction.

And when it once is purged, and made clean and pure, then are the elements joined, and are of four contraries made one perfect, perpetual, indissolvable unity; so that henceforth there is nothing but concord and amity to be found in all our habitations.

Rejoyce the whiteness and beauty of his Wife.

Our Man then to shew his singular love to his Wife, and to give an evident token that they will never fall out any more, is content to attain the degree of its perfection in her colour; so that the first stable colour of thy renovate Body, after its Eclipsation in blackness, is the sparkling white, which is a luster hardly imaginable.

*And pass from darkness of Purgatory to light
Of Paradise, in whiteness Elixir of great might.*

This is a noble step, from Hell to Heaven; from the bottom of the Grave, to the top of Power and Glory; from obscurity in blackness, to resplendent whiteness; from the height of venenosity, to the height of Medicine. Oh Nature! How dost thou alter things into things, casting down the high and mighty, and again exalting them being base and lowly! Oh Death! How art thou vanquished when thy Prisoners are taken from thee, and carried to a state and place of Immortality! This is the Lords doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.

*And that thou mayst the rather to Putrefaction,
Win this example, thou take, &c.
The heart of an Oak which hath of Water continual infusion;
For though it in Water lay an hundred years and more,
Yet shouldest thou find it found as ever it was before.*

O happy Gate of blackness, which art the passage to this so glorious a change! Study therefore, whoever applyest thy self to this Art, only to know this Secret; for know this, and know all, and contrariwise be ignorant of this, and be ignorant of all.

Therefore if that possible thou mayst attain the depth of this Mystery, I shall endeavor to unfold it to thy capacity by similitudes and examples.

Thou knowest that if a solid piece of Wood lie in water perpetually, it will tire the patience of the most patient expecter to see it rot, for it will abide many Generation, and in the end be as found as when it was first laid in, Yea some contend, that in our days Pine-Trees are dug up in their intire proportion, which have been buried ever since the Floud, being found in such places in which no Histories ever mentioned that such Trees grew, and so deep under ground as it is almost incredible; which certainly have layn at lest many hundred years, and yet the Wood a found as any other Tree of that sort, which hath not been cut down above a year or two: such is the force of constant Humefaction, to prevent the ordinary corruption of Timber.

*But and thou keep it sometimes wet and sometimes dry,
As thou mayst see in Timber,
And so even likewise, &c.
Sometimes our Tree must with the Sun be brent.*

But contrariwise, Timber which is kept wet sometimes, and dry sometimes, as usually the foundations of Timber Houses are, if not secured by the Masons Art, it would tire the

Householders patience to see how soon such Timber will rot, and molder away, and become fit for nothing; which is a thing so well known, that the experience of every Rustick almost can teach it him.

So resolve our Stone must be used, I thou intend to have it putrefie kindly; our Wheel for Putrefaction must go round, in a constant Elevation or Extraction of the Water or Humidity from the Body, by which Operation our Man the Sun is helped in his acting; and this Water must as constantly return to the Earth, to moisten it, by which the Woman the Moon is helped in her acting.

And then with Water we must it keel,
That so to rotting we may being it weel.

Between these two various Operations which one and the same Fire produceth, our Body is both heated and cooled, his sweat is drawn forth and returned upon him again, by the which means it is trituated, ground, softned, and made weak even unto death; and dying, it rots and putrefies, changing colours from one into another, until at the length it becomes black as Ink or Pitch, which is our Toad, our Crow, our Tomb filled with rottenness, our *Golgotha* or place of dead bones, our *Terra foliata* or Earth of Leaves.

For now in wet, &c.

To be shall cause it soon to putrefie.

And so shall thou bring to rotting thy Gold,

Intreat thy Bodies, &c.

And in thy putrefying with heat be not too swift,

Lest in the Ashes thou seek after thy thrift.

Our Operation then, saith *Morien*, is noting else but extracting Water from the Earth, and returning it again upon the Earth, and returning it again upon the earth, so long and so often till the Earth putrefie; for by elevation of the moisture the Body is heated and dried, and by returning it again it is cooled and moistned, by the continuation of which successive Operation, it is brought to corrupt and rot, to lose its form, and for a season to remain as dead.

This is the true intention and manner of our working, and there is no other manner of working that can be invented, that can give thee the effect of this our Operation; for this is the true way and means by which thy Body of Gold will be destroyed, and no other way profitable for our Art: Proceed therefore as I have directed thee, and swerve not either to the right hand or to the left. Take this Body which I have shewed thee, and joyn it with the Spirit which is proper to it, which the Wise men have called their *Venus*, or Goddess of Love, and circulate these two Natures one upon the other, until the one have conceived by the other.

But beware you urge not the Spirit too much, but remember that he is a volatile substance, and if he be over-provoked, he will certainly break the Vessel, and fly, and leave thee the ruines of thy Glass for a recompence of thy over-speedy rashness; which

trust me will make thee fetch a deep Philosophical sigh, and say when it is too late, I would I had been content to wait Natures time. Let the Fire then be such in which thy Spirit may be so stirred up, as to return to its Body in the Glass, and not so irritated as to break the Vessel, and return to the Ashes or Sand of the nest, or stick about the sides of the Cover of your Nest, or else fly about in the Room wherein the Artist is, and lodge in his Head, and so make it far more unconstant then it was before, by adding to his rash giddiness a Paralytical shaking.

*Therefore the Water out of the Earth thou draw,
And make the Soul therewith for to ascend,
Then down again into the Earth it throw,
That they oft-times so ascend and descend.*

Proceed therefore not as a Fool, but as a Wise man; make the Water of thy Compound to arise and circulate, so long and often until the Soul, that is to say, the most subtle virtue of the Body, arise with it, circulating with the Spirit in manner of a fiery form, by which both the Spirit and Body are enforced to change their colour and complexion: for it is this Soul of the dissolved Bodies, which is the subject of Wonders; it is the life, and therefore quickens the dead; it is the Vegetative Soul, and therefore it makes the dead and sealed Bodies, which in their own Nature are barren to fructifie exceedingly.

Therefore if this return unto the earth for which it first took its flight, it will make it for to fructifie, and to increase in Tincture, and in the earth it self will multiply as a grain of Wheat doth in the ground.

Be sure then that so fast as thou makest thy ascension, so fast also thy descension by; this is agreeable both to Nature, and the intent of all Philosophers, especially *Trevisan* in his Chymical Miracle; *Authors*, saith he, *differ especially in the documents of the Fire, but in this all agree, that the volatile ascend not higher then it may return.* This is the true temperament of the fire.

*From violent heat and sudden cold defend
Thy Glass, and make thy Fire so temperate,
That by the sides the Matter be not vitrificate.*

Take diligent heed then that thou exceed not this measure, especially have a care that your Furnace be not apt to exceed, but that you may govern it at your pleasure, without uncertain increasing or slacking of heat, but that your Fire be equal and continually vaporous and boyling, for such a degree is altogether agreeable to the intention of Nature.

Whereas if thou be too hasty, with *Vulcan* thou art always subject to error; for even then when a discreet Work-man is past fear, I mean in the fourth Operation, in which the Elements are fixed and incerated, a hasty rash *Vulcanist* shall make his Medicines to grow hard at the first, and with a stronger and continue degree of heat, to melt into a vitrificate substance, without any hope of future profit.

Now then that Vitrification is an error which is incident in the last Operation, as burning of the Flowers is in the first Operation; for if in Calcination the Fire be too violent, instead of black thou shalt have a Citrine, or half red unprofitable Calx: so in the fourth Operation, by too violent Fire thy *Elixir* will melt being vitrified, instead of a natural flowing or Inceration.

*And be thou wise in choosing of the Matter,
Meddle with no Salts, &c
But whatsoever any Worker to thee chatter,
Our Sulphur and our Mercury been only in Metals,
Which Oyls and Waters some men them calls,
Fowls and Birds, &c.
Because that Fools should never know our Stone.*

If thou hast attended well to what hath been told thee in these five Gates, thou art secure; make sure of thy true Matter, which is no small thing to know, and though we have named it, yet we have done it so cunningly that if thou wilt be heedless, thou mayst sooner stumble at our Books, then at any thou ever didst read in thy life.

Meddle with nothing out of kind, whether *Salts*, or *Sulphur*, or whatever is of the like Imposition; and whatever is Alien from the perfect Metals, is reprobate in our Mastery. Be not deceived wither with Receipt or Discourse, for we verily do not intend to deceive you, but if you will be deceived, be deceived.

Our principal know that it is but one, and that is in Metals, even those metals which you may buy commonly, to wit, the perfectest of them: but before you can command it out of them, you must be a Master, and not a Scholar, namely as is wisely said in *Norton*;

*To know to destroy their whole Composition,
That some of their Components may help in conclusion.*

But trust me this is not for a *Tyro*, nor for every one of us, unless he have the Secret from his own Studies, and not by Tradition from a Master or Guide. Know then that this fore-recited way is true, but involved with a thousand broileries.

But our way which is an easie way, and in which no man may erre, our broad way, our *Linear* way, we have vowed never to reveal it but in Metaphors; I being moved with pity, will hint it to you. Take that which is not yet perfect, nor yet wholly imperfect, but in a way to perfection and out of it make what is most noble and most perfect: This you may conceive to be an easier Receipt, then to take that which is already perfect, and extract out of it what is imperfect, and then make it perfect, and after out of that perfection to draw a *plusquam* perfection: and yet this is true, and we have wrought it, And because it is an immense Labour for any to undertake, we describe that way; but this last discovery which I hinted in few words, is it which no man ever did so plainly lay open, nor may any man make it more plain, upon pain of an *Anathema*.

*For of this World our Stone is called the Cement,
Which moved by craft as Nature doth require,
In his increase shall be full opulent,
And multiply his kind after thy own desire:
Therefore if God vouchsafe thee to inspire,
Like unto thee in Riches shall be but few.*

Our Stone it is the Representative of the great World, and hath the Virtues of that great Fabrick, comprised or collected in this little System; in it is the virtue Magnetical, attractive of its like in the whole World: it is the Coelestial Virtue, expounded universally in the whole Creation, but Epitomized in this small Map or Abridgment.

This Virtue or Power is in it self barren, sluggish, dead and unactive, and for this cause it remaineth without fruit; but being loosed by Art, it doth through the co-operation of Nature, produce that *Arcanum* which hath not its like in the whole World; for it doth heal the imperfections of all Creatures and Metals, taking away their sickness, and restoring them to perfect health.

The reward which his Mastery will bring to the Artist, is indeed inestimable; for having it, he needs want no worldly blessing, for wealth he need take no care, and from all frailties of Body he hath a most sure Antidote.

Pray then to God, that he would be propitious unto your studies and labours, in giving thee the true knowledge of this secret Mystery; it is the gift of God, I have holpen thee what I can, but venture not to practice barely upon my words, for know that what I have only hinted, is far more then what I have discovered; and what I have declared to thy first apprehension most openly, hath yet its lurking Serpent under the green Grass, I mean some hidden thing which thou oughtest to understand, which thou being Cock-sure at first blush wilt neglect; but yet it will bite thee by the heel when thou approachest to practice, and make thee begin again, and it may be at last throw away all as a man desperate: for know that this is an Art very Cabalistical, and we do study expression such as we know will suit almost with any mans fancy, in one place or other; but be sure to take this Maxim from one who knows best the sence of what he hath written: Where we speak most plainly, there be most circumspect, for we do not go about to betray the Secrets of Nature; especially then in those places which seem to give Receipts so plain as you would desire, suspect either a Metaphor, or else be sure that something or other is supprest, which thou wilt hardly without Inspiration ever find of thy self, which in tryal will make all thy confident knowledge vanish; yet to a Son of Art, we have written that which never heretofore was by any revealed.

*Now for a close of this most secret Gate,
Whereat few enter, none but they who are
By Gods grace favour'd; its not luck ne fate
That in disclosing this can claim a share:
It is a portion which is very rare,
Bestowe'd on those whom the most High shall chuse,*

*To such the Truth freely I shall declare,
Nor ought through Envy to them shall refuse,
Nor with unwonted Riddles shall their hopes abuse.*

*Of uncouth subjects now shall be my Song,
My mind intends high Wonders to reveal,
Which have lain hidden heretofore full long,
Each Artist striving them how to conceal,
Lest wretched Caitiffs should these Treasures steal:
Nor Villains should their Villanies maintain
By this rare Art; which danger they to heal,
In horrid metaphors veil'd an Art most plain,
Lest each Fool knowing it, should it when known disdain.*

*Remember Man how he produced was,
How formed from a lump of abject Clay,
From whence Created; he each thing doth pass,
Which next to Angels ever saw the day:
For God in him infus'd so bright a Ray
Of his own Image, which the Body joyn'd
To it, ennobled so that both pourtray
Their maker, as though Heaven with earth combin'd
A little System of the Universe to find.*

*But yet though he of Soul and Body both
Was made, and of the two the nobler part doth
The subject nominate; yet that same Art
That made so rare a piece, dot from the part
Less noble name the whole, Adam, or Dust,
Wherein a Mystery was couch'd, whose heart
Of life the Centre, to Earth's bowels must
Return, the Earth it self for man's sake being cursed.*

*Right so our Stone containeth Natures two,
One hidden, subtle Soul, Heavens Progeny,
The other gross, compact, terrene also,
Earth's product must to Earth by destiny;
Which when resolv'd is made a feculency
To sight, but the Coelestial part is still
(Though over-clouded) most pure inwardly,
And shall at last most Pearlie drops distill,
Which shall the barren Earth with fruit in plenty fill.*

*Thus all our Secrets from the Eath do flow,
'Tis Earth which for our base at first we take,
Our Wate also unto Earth must go,*

*And both together must a Limus make,
Which we with respite by our Art must bake,
Ill all become a Spirit glorify'd,
Whose firmness wasting, time shall never shake;
By perfect union th' are so surely ty'd,
Each Element the other three within it self doth hide.*

*Take then that thing which Gold we please to call,
But 'tis not Gold, yet Gold it is in truth;
Metalline 'tis, yet from a Mineral
It flows, which Art by Nature help renew'th,
And to a Fool an ugly face it sheweth;
Yet to a Son of Art it lovely seems,
'Tis Stellar white, and tender in his youth,
And vile appears in many mens esteems,
Yea the most part of men it for a trifle deems.*

*From it is made a subject of great price,
Shew it the Goldsmith and he'l swear 'tis Gold;
But look you sell it not, if you be wise,
The Basis 'tis of secrets manifold,
This for their secret main the Sages hold:
The like is in Gold digged from the Mine,
But to procure it is scarce to be told,
That you may understand, though every line
Were plainly wrote, yet might your practice oft decline.*

*For 'tis a Labour hardly to be borne,
So many tricks and turnings in it be,
And he that tryeth it is surely forlorne,
Unless a crafty Master, credit me;
For I have tried both, yet could not see
How any in this way can be secure:
I therefore who have vowed secrecy
Have writ this way, which we can scarce endure
For knowledge-sake to try, its ease will none allure.*

*Our Kingly road I also hinted have,
Our way in which a Fool can hardly erre,
Our secret way, which much mad toyl will save,
Which is so easie, that I may aver,
If thou shouldst see it, thou wouldst it prefer
To any earthly pleasure; yet beware
That you mistake not, for I do aver,
A mingled Doctrine these lines do declare,
I or both ways in this Book of mine do claim a share.*

*Learn to distinguish every sentence well,
And know to what Work it doth appertain;
This is great skill, which few as I can tell
By all their reading yet could ere attain,
And yet of Theory this is the main:
Also to know accordingly to give
Due heat, which in one way thou must be fain
T' increase ten-fold, thou mayst me well believe,
For what we decoct, t'other away will drive.*

*Also their Operations different
Appear, the one thou must sublime and boyl,
O tedious way! In which much time is spent,
And many errours, which the Work will spoyle:
The other silently doth make no toyl,
Like the still voice which to Eliah came,
About which Work thou needest not to broyl,
Nor wantst thou fiery Vulcan's parching flame,
A far more gentle heat begins and ends this Game.*

*But if thou canst each Work perform apart,
And knowst them afterward to reconcile,
Then art thou Master of a Princely Art,
The very success will thy hopes beguile;
Thou hast all Natures Works ranks in a File,
And all her Treasures at command dost keep,
On thee the Fate shall never dare but smile,
No Mystery is now for thee too deep,
Th' art Natures Darling, whether thou dost wake or sleep.*

*Pardon my plainness, if the Art thou knowst,
'Twas the fruit of my untamed desire
To profit many; and without a boast,
No man above my Candour shall aspire:
My zeal was kindled with Minerva's Fire,
And thou who to this Art wilt now apply,
My Book in Natures way shall lead thee higher,
Then ever thou alone mayst hope to fly,
If only thou shalt favour'd be by Destiny.*

*Peruse these lines, and being read, review
And read again, and on them meditate,
Each reading shall fresh Mysteries and new
Discover, which are scatter'd in each Gate;
For they so linked are, that all relate
To each, and we our words have woven so,*

*That thou mayst soon erre by misleading Fate,
Unless for to distinguish thou do know;
Remember that 'mongst Briars thick, sweet Roses grow.*

AN
EXPOSITION
UPON THE
Sixth Gate,
Which is
CONGELATION.

The Sixth Gate Opened,
Which is
CONGELATION

Congelatio, &c.

It is of soft things in duration of colour white, &c.

How to congeal he needeth not much to care for Elements:

But Congelations be made in divers wise of Spirits, &c.

Of Salts dissolved, &c. and the congeal'd,

And some dissolveth congealing manually, &c.

But such congealing is not, &c.

Having largely run through the first five Gates, in which is all the difficulty, re-supposing now that you have passed the shades of the night, and are now come to the approaching of the Day, whose dawning is to be seen soon after the darkness of the Night, and is discovered by variety of gay Clouds, which run before the Sun in its up-rising.

The first remarkable way mark that you are to meet with, is the whiteness of the Compound, for the Peacocks tail though with its gayness it refresheth and delights the beholder, and it is thy first Harvest, in which the moisture is vanquished, and volatile Natures are fixed.

The Work as it is the long-wished Haven, so it is performed without any help of the Artist, any more then to continue a due degree of outward heat; for now that thou hast not so great a desire after this sight, but Nature hath as great an appetite to obtain it, for it the end of all her former Operations, from the attaining whereof thou canst not hinder her, if the external heat be continued as it ought.

Yet about this the whole company of Alchymists do mightily busie themselves, who have nothing more in their hopes then to make out great *Elixir*; do mainly labour after

Congelation, though in their solution, in which the Key of our Coagulation resteth, they are as stupid as Blocks.

Some dissolve Metals with Corrosives, others Salts, and afterwards filter them, which they think graduates them, with which trumpery they intend no less a Coagulate, then the true permanent Tincture: but alas they are deceived, for they work not upon the right Matter.

Others although they happen to stumble in part upon the right Matter, yet herein they erre, that they understand our Operations preposterously, and interpret our meaning contrary to our true intent; for all that they dream of, is such Operations which are to be performed by hand: thus they dissolve and congeal, but stumble *in operandi modo*.

For our Congelation is no such thing as this, but in every point it is contrary as this; for in our Operation Nature only works, who therefore doth bring forth a true, and not a Sophistical Operation.

*Our Congelation dreadeth not the Fire,
For it must ever in it stand unctuous;
And it is also a Tincture so bounteous,
Which in the Air, &c.
Moreover congeal not, &c.
But that like Wax it will melt anon withouten blast,
For such congealing accordeth not, &c.
Which Congelation availeth us not.*

For as in our Solution we do not make our Gold volatile as to shew, as Fools may do, but actually it is made fugitive, so as that by no Art of man it can ever be fixt again, but only by that Nature which made it volatile; so also our Fixation doth make our flying Spirits so Fire-abiding, that they by no Art of ma can ever be burnt away, yet it will flow like Wax.

Nor is it fixed in manner of flying Spirits in Vegetables, which are fixed by burning into an *Alcali*, for it will never relent in the Air nor Water, like to a congealed Salt.

Nor yet is our Congelation a formal Transmutation of a thing by another seminal virtue, for then it would become of a Stony, Flinty, or Adamantine nature; but by its own internal virtue, the *Mercury* is changed into *Sulphur* incombustible, yet so as that the *Mercuriality* retains some of its qualities in a very noble remarkable way, furnishing the Compound with a fusible unctuousity, when at the same time the *Sulphur* retains that flexibility with a most noble incombustibility.

So then take this for the Touch-stone of all thy Alchymical endeavors, if ever thou intend any thing commendable in our Art; see that thy Medicine be of an easie fusion, so that when it is cast on a plate of Metal heated, it may enter it, and flow in it like Wax or melted Pitch; yea let the flux be so easie, that it may flow upon *Mercury*, and enter it

before its flight, otherwise brag not of thy skill, for thou art yet in a way of Sophistry, out of which thou shalt never escape, without a more then ordinary providence of God.

*If thou therefore list to do weel,
Sit the Medicine shall never else flow kindly,
Neither congeal without thou first it putrefie,
First purge, then fix the Elements of our Stone,
Till they together congeal and flow anon.*

That thou therefore mayst be sure of thy Work, and not repent thy cost and pains, as many do when it is too late, take my counsel, and know that thy Medicine never can nor shall flow as it ought, except thy Solution be Philosophical.

Know then that our Solution is not an ordinary vulgar dissolving of Bodies, either by Corrosives, or any other way; but our true dissolving is nothing else then putrefying, that is, a destroying of the Compaction wholly with a preservation of the Species. This Operation be sure to make before thou dream of Congelation, for then thy Spirits will naturally fix and flow together, congealing and relenting so long until they come to a perfect Powder impalpable, which then hath ingress into all Metals, penetrating their very profundity, and altering them radically.

*For when the matter is made perfectly white,
Then, &c.
But of such time thou mayst have long respite,
Ere it congeal, &c.
And after into grains red as bloud,
Richer, &c.*

So then our Congelation is nothing else but the whitening of the Bodies, of which the Philosopher speaketh, when he saith, *Whiten thy Body, and burn thy Books, lest our hearts be broken.*

This is the haven at which after many a nights watching, and days labour, thou mayst with Gods blessing hope at length to arrive; but in the mean season be patient, and expect the harvest in its season.

First thou shalt have thy Body whitened, and all become a white living Water, which being moved on the Fire continually, will turn first into greater, and after that into smaller grains, till all at length become a Calx of an exquisite fineness, and transcendent brightness, which is our Lilly Candent, which in the end of thy Operation by continual decoction will be turned into a purple redness, which is our wonderful Secret.

*The Earthly grossness therefore first mortified in moisture, &c.
This principle may not be denied, &c.
Which had. Of whiteness thou mayst not miss, &c.
And if, &c.*

The cause of all these strange alterations in one Glass, on one subject, with one decoction, without laying on of hands, is from the internal disposition of the Compound, which at the first is gross and earthy, therefore in decoction it becomes very black, it being the nature of all moist gross things, by the Fire to acquire such a colour. And this is according to the intention of all Philosophers, that although thou seekest white and red, yet thou must at first make black, before thou canst make white profitably.

But when once thy Matter is become truly black, rejoice, for this death of the Body will be the quickning of the Spirit, and then both Soul and Body will unite into a perfect whiteness, which is our Kingly Diadem.

The end of the sixth Gate.

**EXPERIMENTS
FOR THE
PREPARATION
OF THE
Sophic Mercury;
By Luna, and the Antimonial-Stellate-Regulus of Mars,
FOR THE
Philosophers Stone.**

Written by *Eirenaeus Philalethes*, an
Englishman, and a Cosmopolite.

**EXPERIMENTS
*For the Preparation of the Sophick Mercury,
by Luna and the Antimonial-Stellate-Regulus of Mars,
for the Philosophers Stone.***

1. The Secret of the Philosophick Arsnick

I took one part of the Fiery Dragon, and of the Magnetical Body two parts, I prepared them together by a strong Fire, and in the first fusion there was made about eight ounces of the true *Arsnick*.

2. The Secret of Preparing the Mercury with His Arsnick, for the Separating its Faeces

I did take one part of the best *Arsnick*, and I made a marriage with two parts of the Virgin *Diana* into one Body; I ground it very fine, and with this I have prepared my *Mercury*, working them all together in heat, until that they were most exquisitely incorporated: then I purged it with the Salt of Urine, that the Faeces did separate, which I put away.

3. The Purification of the Sophick Mercury.

The *Mercury* thus prepared, is yet infected with an external uncleanness, wherefore distill it three or four times in its proper *Alembick*, with its Steel *Cucurbit*, then wash it with the Salt of Urine, until that it be clear and bright, and in its motion leaves no tayl behind it.

4. Another most excellent Purgation.

Take of decrepit Salt, and of the *Scoria of Mars*, of each ten ounces, of prepared *Mercury* one ounce and an half, grind the Salt and the *Scoriae* very fine together, in a Marble Mortar; then put in the mercury, and grind it with Vinegar, so long until no more of the *Mercury* appears: put it into a Glass Body, and distill it by Sand in a Glass Alembick, until all the *Mercury* be ascended, pure, clear, and splendidly bright; reiterate this three times, and you will have the *Mercury* excellently well prepared for the Magistry.

5. The Secret of the just Preparation of the Sophic Mercury

Every single preparation of the *Mercury* with its *Arsnick* is one Eagle, the Feathers of the Eagle being purged from their Crow-like blackness, make it to fly the seventh flight, and it is prepared even until the tenth flight.

6. The Secret of the Sophic Mercury

I have taken the proper quantity of the *Mercury*, and I mixed it with its true *Arsnick*, to wit, about four ounces of *Mercury*, and I made a thin commixed consistence; I purged it after a due manner, and I distilled it, and I had a pure Body of *Lune*, whence I knew that I had rightly prepared it: afterwards I added to its weight of *Arsnick*, and I increased its former weight of *Mercury*, in so much that the mercury might prevail to a thin flux, and so I purged it, to the wasting of the blackness almost to a Lunary whiteness: then I took half an ounce of the *Arsnick* of which I made a due Marriage, and there was made a temperature like Potters Loam, but a little thinner; I purged it again, after a due manner, the Purgation was laborious: I made it with the Salt of Urine, which I have found to be the best in this Work.

7. Another Purgation, but yet better.

I have found out a better way of putting it, with Vinegar and pure Sea-Salt, so that in the space of half a day I can prepare one Eagle: I made the first Eagle to fly, and *Diana* is left, with a little Tincture of Brass; I began the second Eagle by removing the superfluties, and then I made it fly, and again the Doves of *Diana* are left, with the Tincture of Brass; I conjoined the third Eagle, and I purged the superfluties, by removing them, even to a whiteness, then I made it fly, and there was left a great part of Brass, with the Doves of *Diana*; then I made it fly away by it self, to the whole extraction of all the body; then I joined the fourth Eagle, by adding more and more of it own humour by degrees, and there was made a very temperate consistence, in which there was no *Hydrops*, (or superfluous moisture) as there was in the three former Eagles.

8. I have found the best way of preparing the Sophick Mercury, viz. such as follows.

The Amalgamated Mass, espoused or joined very intimately by a due Marriage, I put into a Crucible, and into a Furnace of Sand for half an hour, but so that it might not sublime; then I take it out, and strongly grind it; then I put it again in a Crucible, and in the

Furnace, and after a quarter of an hour or thereabouts. I grind it again, and I make the Mortar hot, by this means the Amalgama begins to be clean, and to cast forth a great deal of Powder: then I put it in the Crucible again, and to the Fire as before, for a convenient time, so that it be not sublimed, otherwise the greater the Fire is, the better it is; so continually grinding it, till almost all the Powder doth wholly disappear, then I wash it, and the Faeces are easily cast out, and the *Amalgama* becomes intire without any Heterogeneity; then I wash it with Salt, and again do heat and grind it: this I repeat to the full cleansing it from all manner of Faeces.

9. A Threefold Tryal of the Goodness of the Prepared Mercury

Take thy *Mercury* prepared with its *Arsnick* of seven, eight, nine or ten eagles, put it into a Phial, and thou shalt lute it with the *Lutum Sapientiae*: place it in a Furnace of Sand, and let it stand in an heat of Sublimation, so that it may ascend and descend in the Glass, until it be coagulated a little thicker than Butter: continue it unto a perfect Coagulation, until it be as white as Silver.

10. Another tryal.

If by shaking it in a Glass with the Salt of Urine, it be turned into an impalpable Powder of its own accord, so that it doth not appear as *Mercury*, and of its own accord in an hot and dry place it coagulates again into a thin *Mercury*, it is enough; but yet better if being agitated in Fountain-water, it runs into small heads or particles, for if the grain be in the Body, it will not be thus converted and separated into small minute parts.

11. The third tryal.

Distill it in a Glass Alembick, from a Glass Cucurbit; if it passes over and leaves nothing behind it, it is a good Mineral Water.

12. The extraction of the Sulphur from the living Mercury by Separation.

Take thy mixed corporal and spiritual Compound, the Body of which is coagulated of the volatile by digestion, and separate the *Mercury* from its *Sulphur* by a Glass Still, and thou shalt have a white *Luna* fixed and resisting Aqua fortis, and more ponderous than common Silver.

13. The Magical Sol out of this Luna.

Out of this white *Sulphur* by Fire thou shalt have a yellow *Sulphur*, by a manual Operation, which *Sol* is the red Lead of the Philosophers.

14. Out of this Sulphur, Aurum potable.

Thou mayst turn this yellow *Sulphur* into an Oyl as red as Blood, by circulating it with the Volatile-Mercurial-Philosophical *Menstruum*, so thou shalt have an admirable *Panacea*, or Universal Medicine.

15. The gross conjunction of the menstruum with its Sulphur, for the formation of the Off-spring of the Fire.

Take of thy purged, best prepared and choicest *Mercury*, of seven, eight, or at most ten Eagles, mix it with the prepared *Laton*, or is red *Sulphur*, that is to say, two parts of the Water, or at the most three, with one of the pure *Sulphur*, ground and purged; *N.B.* but it is better that thou takest two parts to one.

16. The working of the mixture by a manual Operation.

This thy mixture thou shalt grind very well upon a Marble, then thou shalt wash it with Vinegar and *Sal Armoniac*, until it hath put off all its black Faeces; then thou shalt wash off all its saltness and acrimony with clear Fountain-water, then shalt thou dry it upon clean white Paper, by turning of it from place to place with the point of a Knife, even unto an exquisite dryness.

17. The putting in of the Foetus into the Philosophical Egg.

Now thy mixture being dried, put it into an Oval Glass, of the best and most transparent Glass, of the bigness of an Hens Egg; in such a Glass let not thy Matter exceed two ounces, seal it Hermetically.

18. The Government of the Fire.

Then you must have a Furnace built, in which you may keep an immortal Fire; in it you shall make an heat of Sand of the first degree, in which the dew of our Compound may be elevated and circulated continually day and night, without any intermission, &c. And in such a Fire the Body will die, and the Spirit will be renewed, and at length the Soul will be glorified and united with a new immortal and incorruptible Body: Thus is made a new Heaven.

FINIS.

A
Breviary of ALCHEMY;
OR A
COMMENTARY
UPON
Sir GEORGE RIPLEY'S
RECAPITULATION:
BEING
A Paraphractical Epitome
Of his Twelve GATES.

Written by
Aeyrenaeus Philalethes ANGLUS,
COSMOPOLITA.

LONDON,
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In *Little Britain*, MDCLXXVIII.

Sir *George Ripley's*
RECAPITULATION.

I.

*For to bring this Treatise to a final end;
And briefly here to conclude these secrets all:
Diligently look thou, and to thy Figure attend,
Which doth in it contain these secrets great and small:
And if thou it conceive, both Theoretical and Practical,
By Figures and Colours, and by Scripture plain,
Which wittily conceived, thou mayest not work in vain.*

II.

*Consider first the Latitude of this precious Stone,
Beginning in the first side noted in the West,
Where the red Man, and white Woman be made one,
Spoused with the Spirit of life to live in love and rest:
Earth and water equally proportion'd, that is best;*

*And one of the Earth is good, and of the Spirit Three,
Which Twelve to Four also of the earth may be.*

III.

*Three of the Wife, and one of the man thou must take;
And the less of the Spirit there is in this Dispensation,
The rather thy Calcination for certain shalt thou make:
Then forth into the north proceed by obscuration
Of the red man and his white Wife called Eclypsation;
Loosing them, and altering them betwixt Winter and Vere,
Into Water turning Earth, dark, and nothing clear.*

IV.

*From thence by Colours many one into the East ascend,
Then shall the Moon be full, appearing by day-light:
Then is she passed Purgatory, and her course at an end:
There is the uprising of the Sun appearing white and bright;
There is Summer after Vere, and Day after Night:
Then Earth and Water which were black, be turned into Air,
And clouds of darkness over-blown, and all appeareth fair.*

V.

*And as in the West was the beginning of thy practice,
And the North the perfect mean of profound alteration:
So in the East after them is the beginning of speculation.
But of this course up in the South the Sun maketh consummation.
There be the Elements turned into Fire by Circulation,
Then to win to thy desire, thou needst not be in doubt,
For the Wheel of our Philosophy thou hast turn'd about.*

VI.

*But yet about again 2 times turn thy wheel,
In which be comprehended all the secrets of our Philosophy
In Chapters Twelve, made plain to thee, if thou conceive them well;
And all the secrets by and by of our lower Astronomy.
How thou shalt Calcine Bodies, perfect, dissolve, divide, and putrifie,
With perfect knowledge of all the Poles which in our Heaven been
Shining with Colours inexplicable, never were gayer seen.*

VII.

*And this one secret conclusion know withouten fail,
Our Red Man teyneth not, nor his Wife, until they teyned be;
Therefore if thou lift thy self by this craft to avail,
The Altitude of the bodies hide, and shew out their profundity,
In every of thy Materials destroying the first Quality,
And secondary Qualities more glorious in them repair anon;
And in one Glass, with one Reg'ment Four Natures turn to One.*

VIII.

*Pale and black with false Citrine, unperfect White and Red,
The Peacock's Feathers in Colours gay, the Rainbow, which shall over-go
The spotted Panther, the Lyon green, the Crow's Bill blew as Lead;
These shall appear before the perfect White, and many other moe
Colours; And after the perfect white, gray and false Citrine also:
And after these, then shall appear the bloody red invariable;
Then hast thou a Medicine of the third order of his own kind multiplicable.*

IX.

*Thou must divide thy white Elixir into parts Two,
Before thou Rubifie, and into Glasses Two let them be done,
If thou wilt have the elixirs for Sun and Moon, so do,
With Mercury then them multiply unto great quantity soon:
And if thou hadst not at the beginning enough to fill a Spoon,
Yet thou mayst them so multiply, both the White, and the Red,
That if thou liv'st a Thousand years, they will stand thee in stead.*

X.

*Have thou recourse unto thy Wheel therefore, I counsel thee,
And study him well to know in each Chapter truly;
Meddle with no Fantastical Multipliers; but let them be,
Which will thee flatter, and falsly say they are cunning in Philosophy:
Do as I bid thee, then dissolve those foresaid Bases wittily,
And turn them into perfect Oyls with our true Water ardent
By Circulation, that must be done according to our intent.*

XI.

*These Oyls will fix crude Mercury, and convert Bodies all
Into perfect Sol and Lune when thou shalt make Projection:
That Oily Substance pure & fixt, Reymond Lully did call
His Basilisk, of which he never made so plain detection:*

*Pray for me to God, that I may be one of his Election;
And that he will for one of his at Doomsday me ken,
And grant me in his Bliss to Reign with him for ever, Amen.*

A Breviary of Alchemy;
OR A
COMMENTARY
UPON
Sir GEORGE RIPLEY'S
RECAPITULATION:
BEING A
Paraphrastical Epitome of his XII Gates.

Stanza I. Position I.

That the Art is most certainly true.

Which wittily conceiv'd, thou mayest not Work in vain. Whence observe the Truth and Certainty of the Art; so Father *Hermes*, *it is true* (saith he,) *without falshood, certain, and most true, That which is above, is like that which is beneath; and that which is beneath, is like that which is above, to bring about the Miracles of one thing.* So *Trevisan*, *Flammel*, *Dionys*, *Zachary*, and others, affirm upon their own Experience: And so this our Author in his Epistle to King *Edward*; his Conclusion of the Admonition concerning erroneous Experiments, and other places of these his *Twelve Gates*, that I need not enlarge on this Subject.

Stanza II. Position II.

Our Work is made of Three Principles.

Where the Red Man and the White Woman are made one, &c. Thence it is evident, that our Operations are made of Three Principles, yet of one Essence; the *Red Man*, the *White Wife*, and the *Spirit of Life*: By the latter, the two former are Espoused or made One. This is that which *Trevisan* calls his One Root, and Two Mercurial Substances, crude at their taking, and extracted out of their *Minera's*: This our Author else-where calls his *Trinity* and *Unity*; the *Trinity* respecting the Substances as they are severall; the *Unity* respecting their Essence, which is intirely Homogenial; Therefore it is added, that they live in love and rest without repugnancy, which could not be were they not Essentially and Radically the same; For likeness of Nature is the Cause of Love, and Oneness of Essence the true ground of Union; among different Substances can only be expected Confusion, if not Destruction.

Position III.

Three Substance make only Two Natures, Earth and Water.

Earth and Water equally proportion'd, that is best. Here it is evident, that these Three Substances make up but Two Natures of Earth and Water: The Man and Wife are both Bodies or Earths; the one fixed and ripe; the other Volatile and unripe, and b Mixture make a brittle black Hermaphroditical Body or Earth called the *Philosophers Lead*, as *Ripley* in his *Preface* expresseth it. The *White Woman*, or Female, is otherwise called the *Moon* by all Philosophers; and by this Author in his Doctrine of Proportions; One of the *Sun*, and Two of the *Moon*, till altogether like Pap be done.

Position IV.

From equal Pondus of Earth and Water, Three of Water to One of the earth is good, but equal is best.

Then make the Mercury Four to the Sun, Two to the Moon, &c. as it should be in Figure of the Trinity. And so we come to take notice of the Doctrine of Proportion between the Earth and water, equal that is best; the same saith our Author in his Chapter of *Calcination*. *This is the surest and best proportion*, speaking of equal *Pondus of Earth and Water*; and gives the Reason, because Solution will be sooner made, *viz.*

The more thy Earth, the less thy Water be, The sooner and better Solution shalt thou see.

And here he affirms the same of *Calcination*, which goes before *Solution*. Yet Three of the Water to One of the Earth, will do well, lest the Tincture should not have room to be sufficiently dilated in the Water, and the Body opened by it; and this is the *Pondus of Roger Bacon*, which requires a longer time before the quick be kil'd; and by consequence, the reviving of the dead must be longer in doings; For *Calcination* is nothing else, but a killing the moist with the dry; till which be done, there is no reviving of the dry by the moist, but they have one and the same Operation and Period of time; for one dies not, but the other revives: nor doth the *Dragon* die, but with its Sister.

Position V.

The White Wife in the first Conjunction is to be Three to One of the Red Man.

Three of the Wise, and one of the man thou take, &c. From the *Pondus* between the *Earth* and *Water*, come we to view the Proportion between the *Man* and his *Wife*; here the *Pondus* is laid down Three to One, and so there are Four parts of *Earth* to Four of *Water*, or more, until Twelve; that is, Three of *Water* to One of the *Earth*. This also is clear from the Chapter of *Conjunction*, where the *Woman* is allow'd 15 Veins to 5 of the *Man*, as to the Act of their Foecundity, which is interpreted of the first Conjunction by himself, that the *Man* must have but 3 of *Water*, and his *Wife* 9, which is 12 of *Water* to 4 of the *Earth*;

by which it is evident, that the *Woman* is to exceed her *Husband* in a three-fold Proportion.

Or Two to one after Reymund: Or Four to one according to Alanus; but Three to One is best.

However, in *Reymund's Doctrine of Proportions* cited by our Author in his *Gate of Calcination*, One of the *Sun* is joyn'd with Two of the *Moon*, which make Three of the Body; and to these are added Four of *Mercury*, which is One more of the Spiritual than of the Corporal part; and this the Author compares to *Trinity* and *Unity*, both are good, Yea, and *Alanus* prescribes Four parts to One, which may be done, but Three to One is best and equal *Pondus* of *Spirit* and *Life*, for compleating of the marriage between this Royal Pair, the *Sun* the *Husband*, and the *Moon* the *Wife*; Of this speaks this Author in his *Gate of Solution*; One in Gender they be, but in Number not so; The Father is the *Sun*, and the *Moon* the Mother, the Mover is *Mercury*.

This Compound according to its various Considerations, hath many Relations, and as many Denominations; *Sun* and *Moon*, *Man* and *Wife*, *Body*, *Soul* and *Spirit*, *Earth* and *Water*, *Sister* and *Brother*, *Mother* and *Son*, with many others; but its Proper Name is *Magnesia*.

Quest. *What is the Red Man? What his White Wife? What is the Spirit of Life?*

It may be questioned here what this *Red Man* is? What his *White Wife*? And what the *Spirit of Life*? For that is the only knot in understanding the Writings of Philosophers, whose various Expressions, and seeming Contradictions herein, do obscure the Art wonderfully: Yet however they seem to differ in their Writings, they mean all one thing, if well or rightly understood.

Answer 1st. *What the Red Man is?*

The *Red Man* betokens the perfect Body of the *Sun*, or his Shadow the *Moon*; For *Lune* the Body, which is one of the Seven, is a Male, and a perfect Body, and fixed, only wants a little Digestion; and therefore the Red is hid under its visible White, as White is hid under the visible Red of *Sol*: Therefore our Author in his Work of *Albification*, saith, that the Sun appeareth White and Bright: And *Trevisan* saith, our King, who is cloathed in Garments of pure Gold, after he is once in the Bath, appears no more till after *one hundred and thirty days*; and then he appears White, and wonderfully bright and sining. And an old Philosopher saith, *Honour our King at his return from the east in Glory and admirable bright whiteness*. Therefore saith *Artefius*, *Our Water is of kin to the perfect Bodies, to the Sun, and to the moon; but more to the Sun then to the Moon*; (Note this well.) And in all his Books he joyns the Sun and Moon the perfect Bodies Gold and Silver for the work. So doth *Ripley*, and so all Philosophers, by which it is evident, that either of the perfect Metals or Luminaries with our *Aqua Vitae*, will compleat the work; as *Arnold* expressly saith in his *Questions & Answers to Boniface*; and *Jodocus Greverus* in his Treatise, confirms the same in these words; *If so be (saith he) thou be so poor that*

thou canst not take Gold, then take so much Silver; yet Gold is the better, as being nearer of kin to our Water and Mercury.

Answer 2. *What is the White Wife?*

Secondly, The White Wife, otherwise called the Moon, is a Female; it is a Coagulated Mercury, but not fixt: A spiritual Body, flexible in nature of a Body, yet Volatile, in nature of a Spirit; it is called therefore Mercury of the Philosophers; Our Green Lyon; Our immature or unripe Gold: It is Pontanus's Fire, Artepheus's middle substance, clear like pure Silver, which ought to receive the Tinctures of the Sun and moon, his sharp Vinegar, his Antimonial-Saturnine-Mercurial Argent Vive, without which Laton cannot be whitened; of which an old Philosopher saith, whiten the red Laton, by a white, tepid, and suffocated Water; of which testimony Trevisanus affirms, that nothing could be said better or clearer. This is that which is intimated in the Vision of Arislaus, who found a People that were Married, yet had no Children, because they married two Males together: Such are they who mix Sol and Lune, both Corporal and fixt together, whom the Spirit will never revive, because there is not conjugal Love. Joyn therefore Gabritius to is beloved Sister Beya, which is a tender Damsel, and straight-way Gabritius will die; that is, will lose what he was; and from that place where he appeared to have lost what he was, s shall appear what he was not before.

Answ. 3. *What is the Spirit of Life?*

Thirdly, The Spirit of Life is Mercury; the Mover saith this Author is Mercury, with which the Stone is to be multiplied when it is made: And it must be true Mineral Mercury, without any foreign mixture, as Arnold resolves expressly in his Answer to Boniface: And so Ripley saith, some can multiply Mercury with Saturn, and other substances, which we desire; Distill it therefore till it be clean, &c. It moreover must have all the proportions of Mercury its ponderosity, otherwise it could not be Metalline; its Humidity, otherwise the Feminine Sperm would be deficient, and its siccity, not to wet the hand; which it can no sooner lose by Corrosives or otherwise; but it straightway loseth its first Mineral Proportion, and so is no longer an Ingredient of our true Tincture.

Position VI.

As the West Latitude is the entrance, so in the North is the first alteration.

Proceed then forth to the North by obscuration, &c. Loosing them, and altering them, &c. The Materials being found, and mixt according to the Proportions taught before, is called the West Latitude; because in it the Sun sets, and afterwards appears no more in his Red Robes, till he first be cloathed with a White glittering Robe, and be Crowned with a very bright Oriental Diadem. Now the progress into the North, is a discovery of the Profundity of the Stone, and is compared to the Winter, which is in the North, (chiefly) long, tedious, cold and slobbery; so will it be in this Work; the Signs are Capricorn, Pisces, and Aquarius; In this there is a retrogradation of Sol into its first matter, in which

alteration the old Form dies, the Matter rots and putrifies; and is after renewed in the East.

This Operation (saith Flammel) is not perfected in less then Five Months; and the Colours of the Compound are dark, obscure, waterish, and a length black like Pitch; in which blackness the Body is rotted into Atoms; which intire blackness, and height of corruption last but 2 or 3 days; and therefore saith Ripley in his Epistle, the third day he shall arise; the same saith Dastin in his Rosary, where he allows four days for Putrefaction: The same saith Efferarius the Monk in his intire Treatise published with Dastin; However, the whole time of blackness, in coming, continuing, and going away, is 150 days, although the Sun begins to appear in 130 days, if you work aright. This I have added for the sake of many who expect black of the blackest in 40 or 50 days, mistaking Flammel herein; who saith, the colour must be black of the blackest, and like to the colour of the Dragons in 40 days, which Dragons were blackish, blewish, and yellowish, which colours shew that the Matter begins to rot into Atoms; which rottenness is not perfected in less than 150 days. (so as to let the Sun appear in its Rays;) First in a small Circle of Heir of a whitish Citrine; which increaseth, and changeth hue day by day, till whiteness be fully completed.

Position VII.

The East denoting Whiteness, is the beginning of the Stones Altitude.

Thence by Colours many into the East ascend, &c. In the Work are three Dimensions; Altitude, Latitude, and Profundity: The Altitude is the Perfection of the Bodies which is Inchoate in Whiteness, and compleat in Redness. The Profundity is the first Matter into which they are resolved; For Multiplication and the Latitude is the means through which it passeth from its Perfection to be abased; and from its abasement to its Glorification.

In this passage are infinite gay colours like unto those as appeared before Blackness, but more glorious; For note, the Stone hath but three colours, Black, White and Red: in the first when completed, it stays three, or four days at most; in the second as long; in the last it repositeth it self for ever, between these Periods as the Matter is moister or dryer, purer or impurer, many intermediate colours appear, more than can be numbered; But Two, (*viz.*) Green and Yellow, are of long continuance, before White and the Red: But many colours appear between the beginning of that Work, and the first colour of Blackness: And although several colours appear, yet are they dark, foggy, and foul coloured; by which it appears, that Blackness is the predominant, which for a space will appear like the *Aegyptian darkness*, and is much about the same continuance: so between Blackness and the White, although infinite colours appear; yet the Basis of them being Whiteness, they are bright, and very glorious, which being only transient, pass, and go, and others come in their place, until the White be perfected.

Position VIII.

The South or Redness is the complement of this mastery.

Of this course in the South the Sun maketh Consummation. After the White, the Fire being continued, the Compound will become Azure, Gray, and then Citrine, which will last a long time; and at last end in a bloody Redness.

Position IX.

He that supposeth his Work ended when the Stone is brought to its redness, is mistaken.

But yet again Two times turn about thy Wheel, &c. The Stone being by constant and long Decoction brought to this pass; he who thinketh the race quite run, reckons without his Host, and must reckon again: It is Medicine of the first Order, and must be brought to the third Order by Imbibitions and Cibation, which is a second turning round the Wheel; and by Fermentation, which is a third running round the Wheel, and brings the Medicine to the third Order, and makes it then fit for Projection, which at first it is not; For till the medicine flow like Wax, it cannot enter *Mercury* before its flight; but the Powder as it is made at first, is like Grains or Atoms, and is congealed in a far greater heat, then will make it to fume, yet it abides in its form of Dust or Powder, which must be otherwise before it be fitted for Projection; therefore the Stone tingeth *Mercury* into a Metalline Mass in the twinkling of an eye, as our Author saith in his Preface, even as the *Basilisk* kills by sight: But the Red *Sulphur* converteth *Mercury* by a digestion of time into its own Nature, (*viz.*) Powder, if it be joyn'd in a due proportion, and digested in a due heat: Therefore saith our Author, if you give it too much, it must have a Vomit, or it will be sick too long, but the Stone will never part with any *Mercury* that is joined to it in heat; our *Sulphur* then is a Royal infant, which doth both hunger and thirst; and if you can but be a Nurse to it as you ought, it will repay both your pains and cost: Leave not then where you should begin; but go on till you bring it to the third Order, which *Raymond* calls his Oyls and Unguents; and so our Author likewise.

Three Properties there are in which the White and Red *Sulphurs* of the first Order, differ from those of the third Order.

One flows as easily as any Wax in heat, or on a hot Metal: the other in a strong heat abides a Powder.

The one is like to glass, brittle, ponderous and shining; the other a powder like to Atoms.

The one enters *Mercury* like an Oyl, and Coagulates it in an instant: the other drinks up *Mercury* only, as the Calx of a Metal would do, but will not retain it, if the Fire be increased strong, nor turn it into Metal; but if the heat and proportion be both as they ought, by a digestion of Time, it turns it into its own Nature: And so, (as *Ripley* saith truly,) you may Multiply both White and Red with *Mercury*; That if at first you had not

enough to fill a spoon, yet in short time you may be stored for your whole life, were it ten times as long as it is like to be.

Position X.

Our Stone must have a Specification to Metals before it will Project.

Our Red Man teyneth not until he teyned be, &c. Our *Red Man* or King must be teyned by Ferment, before it will tinge imperfect metals: the Ferments are only *Sol* and *Luna*, the Proportion a fourth part to the Compound let the *Sulphurs* be, and three parts of *Sol* or *Luna* according as the *Sulphur* is: or four parts *Sol* and *Luna*, and the *Sulphur* a fifth part; then with *Mercury* digest and putrifie your Ferment, and congeal it, and again Ferment it, till it flow like Wax or Oyl; then will that Oyl fix *Mercury*, and turn any Metal into perfection; which you may then Multiply at your pleasure, or you may multiply it before Fermentation: Then take the perfect Stone for your Body, and mix him with the White Wife in proportion as at first, and add the Spirit of Life, as at first, and digest it till it pass the three colours, Black, White, and Red.

Thus doth our Author conclude his Erroneous Experiments also: *I never saw true work but one*, saith he. One he did, but it was after infinite Errours, and other work no Philosopher ever yet saw, which he briefly describes.

Remember Man the most Noble Creature, &c. that is Gold; It is an errour to write it, (Remember that Man is the most Noble Creature of Earthly Composition;) For Man is not of Earthly Composition, but Stones, Metals, and Clays, &c. are. Now because we seek the Noblest of Creatures of Earthly Composition, we must be so wise as to take it for our Principle: For as he saith elsewhere; *as Fire of burning the Principle is, so the Principle of Gilding is Gold I wis*. In this noblest Creature he saith, are the four Elements proportioned by nature, which makes it incombustible, for were any predominant, it would not abide; but as *Trevisan* saith, the Anatical proportioning the elements in a metalline matter, is the very form of Gold: or that rather which gives it its form. He adds a natural Mercuriality, which costeth right nought; that is a pure, sincere Mineral Water: without adulteration, not Artificial out of *Saturn*, *Jupiter*, &c. But natural not a dear *Mercury*: but that which is common and cheap. He adds one of his *Minera*'s by Art is brought, that is our green *Lyon*, for with our first Menstrue, we Calcine only perfect bodies; but none which are unclean, except one, which is usually call'd by Pilosophers the *Lyon-Green*, into this the clearness of the Sun or of the Moon, secretly descends: that is, by this the Mercuriality, or profundity of the Sun and Moon are manifested by exuberation, but is hidden from sight a long time; till after putrefaction, it exuberates and appears openly, bleeding and changing colours, and at first being cloathed in a glorious Green: of which saith the Rosary, O happy Greenness, without which nothing can spring? This exuberate-*Mercury* is our hidden Stone, that is, Potentially, for when that appears; repugnant natures are tyed to unity, that is our *Green-Lyon*, or *Minera*, or vegetable humidity, or Mercuriality natural, which costeth right naught, or our first Menstrue, and the noblest Creature of Earthly composition, which is either the Sun, or Moon, but especially the Sun: In each of which the Mercuriality is invisible, and appears not to

sight; but by effect, that is, in the quality of clearness, with Whiteness in one, and with redness in the other, these three being United, the *Mercury* of the Sun exuberates and appears at first green, then is the Eclipse near, and the Northern progress, the process after all this is short; this one thing putrifies, then wash hi in his own broth, till he become White, then Ferment him wisely; there is the beginning, middle and end. *Glory be to God.*

FINIS.

AN
EXPOSITION
UPON
Sir *GEORGE RIPLEY*'s
VISION

Written by
Aeyrenaeus Philalethes, ANGLUS.
COSMOPOLITA

LONDON,
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THE
VISION
OF
Sir *GEORGE RIPLEY*,
Canon of *Bridlington*, Unfolded.

*When busie at my Book I was upon a certain Night,
This Vision here exprest appear'd unto my dimmed sight:
A Toad full Ruddy I saw, did drink the juice of Grapes so fast,
Till over-charged with the broth, his Bowels all to brast:
And after that, from poyson'd Bulk he cast his Venom fell.
For Grief and pain whereof his Members all began to swell;
With drops of Poysoned sweat approaching this his secret Den,
His Cave with blast of fumous Air he all bewhited then:
And from the which in space a Golden Humour did ensue,
Whose falling drops from high did stain the soyl with ruddy hue.
And when his Corps the force of vital breath began to lack,
This dying Toad became forthwith like Coal for colour Black:
Thus drowned in his proper veins of poisoned flood;
For term of Eighty days and Four he rotting stood
By Tryal then this Venom to expel I did desire;
For which I did commit his Carkass to a gentle Fire:
Which done, a Wonder to the sight, but more to be rehearst;
The Toad with Colours rare through every side was pierc'd;
Which after being tinted Ruddy, for evermore did last.*

*Then of the Venom handled thus a Medicine I did make;
Which Venom kills, and saveth such as Venom chance to take:
Glory be to him the granter of such secret ways,
Dominion, and Honour both, with Worship, and with Praise. Amen.*

**THE
VISION
OF
Sir GEORGE RIPLEY,
Canon of *Bridlington*, Unfolded.**

This Vision is a Parable rather or Enigm, which the Ancient Wise Philosophers have been wont to use often in setting out their secrets; this Liberty is granted to all men for to make use of Enigmatical expressions, to decipher that which is indeed mysterious. The Ancient *Egyptians* taught much by Hieroglyphicks, which way many Fathers of this Science have followed; but most especially they have made use of Mystical or Cabalistical descriptions; such is this. But to the thing in hand.

A Toad full ruddy I saw. ---

Here we have a Toad described, and in it the whole secret of Philosophers: The Toad is Gold; so called, because it is an earthly Body, but most especially for the black stinking venomosity which this operation comes to in the first days of its preparation, before the whiteness appear; during the Rule of *Saturn*, therefore it is called the ruddy Toad.

To this Authors assent with one accord; when they say our stone is nothing else but Gold digested unto the highest degree, to which Nature and Art, can bring it; and again the first work, saith another Philosopher, is to sublime *Mercury*, and then into clean Mercury to put clean bodies: many witnesses I could bring, yea the whole current of writers run this way: And what if some subtle *Philosophers* seem to deny this, on purpose to deceive the unwary? We shall not make it our work to reconcile them; (though we might) for many of them wrote very enviously, on purpose to ensnare; all of them wrote mysteriously, as much as they could to darken the truth: and at the best none of them were but men, and described things according to their apprehensions in Philosophy, none of them wrote in every thing the naked truth; for then the Art would become so easie, that it would be contemned. But what needs words? We know the Truth, and we know by a secret Character, true Writers from Sophisters; and we need no Arguments being eye-witnesses our selves, and know that there is but one truth; nor but one path, even the beaten path in which all who ever have attained this Art have trodden, nor can we be deceived our selves; nor would we deceive others.

Did drink the juice of Grapes.

This Toad is said to drink the juice of Grapes according to the Philosopher, the body, saith he, is not nobler than Gold, nor yet the water more precious than wine. This water they call sometimes *Aqua Ardens*, sometimes *Acetum Acerrimum*, but most commonly they call it their *Mercury*; this denomination I shall not insist upon; but shall assure you that it only decipheres *Mercury*, even that *Mercury*, of which I writ in my little Latine Treatise, called *Intritus apertus ad occlusum Regis palatium*; in that I discovered the whole Truth fully and nakedly, and if not too plainly, I am sure plain enough. I shall not here repeat; to that I remit the Reader.

This juice of Grapes this Toad is said to drink; that is not only in the gross Conjunction, which is an Impastation of the Body, with the Water to the temper of *Dough* or *Leaven*, which the Water readily doth: such affinity there is between the Water and the Body; as the Philosopher saith, this Water is friendly and pleasant to the metals. But over, and besides the Water soaks Radically into our Body; being circulated upon it, according as the Philosopher saith, When its own sweat is returned to the Body, it perforates to marvelously. Thus the Body drinks I the Water, or Juice of Grapes, not so much then when they are first mingled: but most especially, when by decoction it pierceth radically to the very profundity of it; and makes it to alter its Form; This is the Water which reareth the Bodies, and makes them no Bodies, but flying Spirits like a Smoak, Wind of Fume, as *Artephius* speaketh plentifully.

This operation is performed in a short while, in comparison of Subterranean operations of Nature, which are done in a very long time; therefore I is that so many Philosophers say, that it is done in a very short time, and yet it is not without cause, that so many of the Philosophers have complained of the length of this decoction.

Therefore the same *Artephius* who had said, that this fire of the Water of our *Mercury*, doth that in a short time above ground, what Nature was performing in a 1000 years, doth in another place say, that the tincture doth not come out at once, but little and little each day, and hour, till after a long time the decoction be compleat, according to the saying of the Philosopher: *Boyl, boyl, and again boyl, and accompt not tedious our long decoction.*

So fast.

So then this expression here, that the Toad doth drink in the Juice of Grapes *so fast*, doth not imply but that this work must have the true time of Nature; which is indeed a long time, and so is every decoction at least: so they will seem to the Artist who attends the fire day by day, and yet mist wait for the fruit with Patience, till the Heaven have showred down upon the Earth, the former and latter Rain: yet be not out of heart, but attend until the compleatment, for then a large Harvest will abundantly recompence all thy toyl.

Till over-charged with the Broth, his Bowels all to brast.

It follows in the Vision, that at length the Toad (over-charged with the broth) did burst asunder; This broth is the same which the fair *Medea* did prepare, and pour upon the two Serpents which did keep the Golden Apples, which grew in the hidden Garden of the Virgins *Hesperides*.

For the Vinegre of the Philosophers being circulated upon the Body, doth engender a substance like unto bloody Broth, and makes Colours of the Rainbow, to appear in the ascension and descension of your *Lyon*, until the *Eagles* have at length devoured the *Lyon*, and all together being killed with the Carion of the Carcasses become a venomous Toad, creeping on the Earth, and a Crow swimming in the midst of the dead Sea.

The Juice of Grapes then, which is our *Mercury*, drawn from the Chameleon or Air of our Physical *Magnesia*, and *Chalybs* Magical, being circulated upon our true *Terra Lemnia*; after it is grosly mixed with it by Incorporation, and set to our fire to digest, doth still enter in and upon our Body, and searcheth the profundity of it; and makes the occult to become manifest by continual ascension and descension: till all together become a Broth; which is a mean substance of dissevered qualities, between the Water and the Body, till at length the Body burst asunder and be reduced into a Powder, like to the Atoms of the Sun, black of the blackest and of a viscous matter.

And after that, from poisoned bulk he cast his venom fell.

This Reduction of the Body, thus in this water ingenders so venomous a Nature, that truly in the whole World there is not a ranker Poyson, or stink, according as Philosophers witness: and therefore he is said to cast his fell venom from his poisoned bulk; in as much as the exhalation are compared to the Invenomed Fume of Dragons, as *Flamell* in his Summary hath such an Allusion. But the Philosopher (as he adds in his *Hieroglyphicks* of the two Dragons,) never feels his sink, unless he break his Vessels, but only he judgeth it by the colours proceeding from the rottenness of the Confections.

And indeed it is a wonder to consider, (which some Sons of Art are eye-witnesses of) that the fixed and most digested Body of Gold; should so rot and putrifie, as if it were a Carcass, which is done by the admirable Divine virtue of our dissolving Water, which no Money can purchase. All these operations, which are so enlarged by variety of expressions, center in one, which killing the quick, and reviving the dead.

For grief and pain whereof his members all began to swell.

This venomous fume of exhalations returning upon the Body, cause it to swell all over according to the saying of the Philosopher; The Body in this Water puffet up, swelleth and putrifieth as a Grain of Corn, taking the nature living and vegetable, therefore for this cause this Water is in this sense called by the Philosophers their Leaven, for as Leaven causeth Past to swell, so this fermenteth the body, and causeth it to tumefie and puff up; it is also called venom, for as venom causeth swelling, so this Water by its reiteration uncessantly upon our body.

This operation is uncessant from the first incitation of the matter, even until compleat putrefaction; for the Toad doth always send forth his exhalations (being rather called the *Lyon*.) till he be over-come in part: and then when the Body begins a little to put on the Nature of the Water, and the Water of the Body, ten it is compared to two Dragons, one winged, and the other without wings: and lastly when that stinking Earth appears, which *Hermes* calls his *Terra Foliata*, or Earth of Leaves, then it is most properly called the Toad of the Earth; from the first excitation, even to the last of this putrefaction: which exhalations are at the beginning for a time White, and afterwards become Yellowish, Blewish, and Blackish, (from the virulency of the matter) which exhalation hourly condensing, and ever and anon running down like little veins in drops, do enter the Body marvelously, and the more it is entred; the more it swells and puffs up, till at length it be completely putrefied.

With drops of poisoned sweat, approaching thus his secret Den.

The following two Verses then are but a more ample description of this work; of volatilization which is an ascension, and descension, or circulation of the confections within the Glass. Which Glass here called the secret Den, is else-where called by the same Author, a little Glassen-tun, and is an oval Vessel; of the purest White Glass, about the bigness of an ordinary Hen-Egg, in the which about the quantity of an ounce of 8 drachms of the confection, in all mixed is a convenient proportion to be set, which being Seal'd up with *Hermes* Seal, the Glass having a neck about 6 fingers high, or thereabouts, which being thin and narrow; is melted together Artificially, that no Spirits can get out, nor no Air can come in, in which respect it is named a secret Den.

Also it is called a secret Den, because of the secretness of Ashes or Sand, in which in a Philosophical Athanor it is set, the doores being firmly shut up, and a prospect left to look I by a Window, either to open a little, as much as s convenient sometimes, as occasion requires, or else with Glass put into it, to admit the view of the Artist; together with a light at hand to shew the colours.

His Cave with blasts of fumous Air, he all bewhited then.

Which Glass, Nest, and Furnace being thus secretly ordered, the Artist must in the first place expect to be in Prison a long time, as *Bernard Trevisan* saith, for the Concave of this secret place, will be so whitened with the fumes which ascend, that an Artist rules his work more by skill and reason, or the eye of the mind, then of the Body, for the Spirits arising like a smoak or Wind, sticketh to the Concave of the Glass, which is above the Sand or Ashes, and there by degrees, there grow drops which run down and moisten the Body below, and reduce as much as they can of the fixed, and so the Body by the Water, and the Water by the Body alter their colours.

And from the which in space a Golden Humour did ensue.

In so much that at length, the whole Vessel will seem as though it were over gilded with Gold, for the exhalations will be Yellow, which is a sign of true Copulation of our Man &

Woman together, but before this Yellow, and with it there will be an obscuring of the White brightness of the Fume, with the mixture of colours, Dark, obscure and Blewish.

The space is not long, for all the several passages are conspicuous before 40 days; for in that space from these Colours, are demonstrating Signs of Corruption and Generation, which is given us by the biting, and fiery Nature of our pontick Waters, and the resistance of our Bodies; in which Fight the Body is over-come, and killed, and dying yields these Colours: which is a Sign that the Eagles now are getting the Mastery, and that our Lyon hath also a little infected them with his Carcass, which they begin to prey upon. This Operation is by Ingenious Artists called Extraction of Natures, and Separation, for the Tincture begins now to be separated from the Body. Also Reduction to the first matter; which is Sperm or Seed, which by reason of its double Nature, is compared to two Dragons. I shall not enlarge in this Vision, but briefly unfold what is briefly laid down.

Whose falling drops from high did stain the soyl with ruddy hue.

These colours of the Mercury, do affect the subsident fixed Body, with suitable colours and the Bodies from these exhalation, be Tincted with a ruddy colour, which *Flamel* expresseth to this purpose, that these two Natures, or Dragons do bite one another very cruelly; and never leave from the time they have seised one upon another; till by their slaving Venom, and mortal hurts, they be all of a gore blood, and then being stewed in their own Venom, are changed into a fifth Essence.

And when his Corps the force of vital breath began to lack.

But before the renovation of these Natures, they must in the first place pass through the Eclipse, both of the Sun and Moon and the darkness of Purgatory, which is the gate of Blackness, and after that they shall be renovated with the light of Paradise.

This Allegorically is called Death, for as a man will resist violence, which entrencheth upon his life as long as he can, but if his enemies are many and mighty, at length they grow too mighty for him, and he begins to fail both in strength and courage, and so Paleness, the Harbinger of Death, doth stand as it were upon his lips, so our Body or Man the *Sun*, like a strong Champion, doth resist long, till he be wounded, and bleed as it were all over, and then dies, at whose death blackness doth begin to appear, as of old the Ravens were foretellers of Mans death approaching: for this Reiteration of Rotation of the Influences of the Heaven of it, together with Heat still drying up and soaking in the Moisture as fast as it falls, brings it at last naturally to die and corrupt, as any other thing doth.

And then the Corps begin to lack breath; that is, the Fumes begin to cease: for with oft ascending and descending the Spirits are somewhat fixed, and turned into Powder or Dust, and are now in the bottom of the Vessel, drawing fast to Putrefaction: Nor do they for a time ascend, but remain below.

Wherefore govern your Fire, that your Spirits be no so exalted, and climb so high that the Earth want them, and they return no more: For this Operation is, as *Morien* saith, a drawing out of Water from the earth, and again a returning of the same to the earth, so often and so long till the Earth putrefie.

This dying Toad became forthwith like Coal for colour black.

This is the final end of the Combat, for herein in this Earth of Leaves all are reconciled, and final Peace is made; and now one nature embraceth another, in no other form but in the form of a Powder impalpable, and in no other colour but black of the blackest.

From henceforth Natures are united, and boil and bubble together like melted Pitch, and change their forms one into another. Take heed therefore lest instead of Powder Black of the Blackest, which is the Crows Bill, you have an unprofitable dry half red Precipitate, Orange-coloured, which is a certain sign of the Combustion of Flowers, or Vertue of the Vegetative Seed, On this very Rock I have stumbled, and do therefore warn you.

Thus drowned in his proper Veins of poisoned Flood.

It appears by all that hath been said, and by the undoubted Testimony of all Philosophers who have been Eye-witnesses to this truth, that the work is not so tedious, nor chargeable, but that in the simplest way of Nature the mastery is to be attained: for when once the true body is impacted with its true Leven, it doth calcine it self, and dissolve it self for the dissolution of the Body into a black and changeable coloured Water, which is the sign of egretion of the Tincture, is the Congelation of the Spirits into this lowest Period of Obscurity, which is this black Powder like unto Lamp-Black, this is the Complement of Eclipsation, which Contrition begins soon after the Colours, Yellowish, Blewish, &c.

For term of Eighty Days and Four he rotting stood.

This Calcination begins with these Variations in Colour about the two and fortieth day, or fiftieth at the farthest, in a good Regimen: After which comes putrefying Corruption, like to the Scum of boiling bloody Broath or melted Pitch; but Blackness in part, *to wit, Superficial*, begins about the fortieth day after the stirring up of the matter, in case of right Progress and Regimen of the Fire, or about the fiftieth at farthest. But this drowning of him in his own Poyson, and stewing him in his own Broath, is the intire Blackness and Cimmerian utter Darkness of compleat Rottenness, which according to the Author, is for the space of eighty four days. This time is not certainly agreed upon by Authors: But in this they all agree, they prescribe so long time until the Complement. One writes, *That this blackest Black indures a long time, and is not destroyed in less than five months*. Another writes, *That the King when he enters into his Bath pulls of his Robe, and gives it to Saturn, from whom he receives a Black Shirt, which he keeps forty two days*: And indeed it is two and forty days before he put on this Black Shirt instead of his Golden Robe, that is, be destroyed as touching his Solary Qualities, and become instead of Fixt, Citrine, Terrene, and Solid, a Fugitive, Black, Spiritual, Watery, and Flegmatick Substance: But Putridness begins not till the first Forms be put off; for so long as the

Body may be reduced into its former Nature, it is not yet well ground and imbibed; grind therefore and imbibe, till thou see the Bodies to become no Bodies, but a Fume and Wind, and then circulating for a season, thou shalt see them settle and putrifie.

Saturn then will hold the Earth, which is Occidental, Retentive and Autumnal, in the West; then proceed to the North, where *Mercury* holdeth the Water, where the Matter is Watery and Flegmatick, and it is Winter, and the North expulsive. But they who divide the Operation into *Saturn's* Rule, and after him succeeding *Jupiter*, ascribe to *Saturn* the whole of Putridness, and to *Jupiter* the time of variety of Colours. After *Jupiter*, who holds but twenty or two and twenty days, comes *Luna*, the third Person, bright and fair, and she holds twenty good days, sometimes two over and above: In this Computation it is good to count from the fortieth or fiftieth day of the first beginning of the Stone, to the fourteenth or sixteenth day of *Jupiter's* Reign, wherein in the washing of *Laton* there is still Blackness, though mixed with variety of gay Colours, which amounteth to the sum of days allowed by the Author in Putrefaction, to wit, Eighty four days. Accounting intire Blackness, with *Augurellus*, after four time eleven days and nights, which make four and forty: Or, according to another Philosopher, which saith, *In the first Fifty Days here appears the True Crow, and after it in Threescore and Ten Days the White Dove; and after in Fourscore and Ten days the Tyrian Colour.*

*By Tryal then this Venom to expel I did desire;
For which I did commit his Carcass to a gentle Fire.*

*Which done, a Wonder to the sight, but more to be rehearst;
The Toad with Colours rare through every side was pierc'd.*

*And white appear'd when all the sundry hews were past;
Which after being tinted, ruddy for evermore did last.*

I shall add my own Sentence: Mix thy two Natures well, and if thy matter be pure, both the Body, and the Water, and the internal Heat of thy Bath as it ought to be, and the external Fire gentle, and not violent; yet so that the Matter may circulate, and Spiritual Nature on the Corporal, in six and forty or fifty days expect the beginning of intire Blackness; and after six and fifty days more, or sixty, expect the Peacocks Tayl, and Colours of the Rainbow; and after two and twenty days more, or four and twenty, expect *Luna* perfect, the Whitest White, which will grow more and more glorious for the space of twenty days, or two and twenty at the most: After which, in a little more increased Fire, expect the Rule of *Venus* for the space of forty days, or two and forty; and after it the Rule of *Mars* two and forty days more; and after him the Rule of *Sol flavus* forty days, or two and forty: And then in a moment comes the Tyrian Colour, the sparkling Red, the fiery Vermillion, and Red Poppy of the Rock.

*Then of the Venom handled thus a Medicine I did make,
Which Venom kills, and saveth such a Venom chance to take.*

Thus onely by Deccoction these Natures are changed and altered so wonderfully to this blessed Tincture. Which expelleth all Poyson, though it self were a deadly Poyson before the Preparation, yet after it is the Balsam of Nature, expelling all Diseases, and cutting them of as it were with one Hook, all that are accidental to Humane frail Body, which is wonderful.

*Glory be to Him the Grantor of such secret Ways;
Dominion and Honour both, with Worship and with Praise. Amen.*

Now God only is the Dispenser of these glorious Mysteries: I have been a true Witness of nature unto thee, and I know that I write true, and all Sons of Art shall by my Writings know that I am a Fellow heir with them of this Divine Skill. To the ignorant I have wrote so plain as may be, and more I had written if the Creator of all things had give me larger Commission. Now to Him alone, as is due, be all Honour, and Power, and Glory, who made all things, and giveth knowledge to whom he listeth of his Servants, and conceals where he pleaseth: To Him be ascribed, as due is, all Service and Honour. And no, Brother, whoever enjoyeth this rare Blessing of God, improve all thy strength to do him service with it, for he is worthy of it, who hath created all things, and for whose sake they were and are created.

The End of Sir George Ripley's Vision, Canon of Bridlington.

Porta Prima

De Calcinatione Philosophica

Calcination lapidem nostrum purgat, calorem naturalem restituit, humoris nihil radicalis destruit, debitam Lapidi solutionem inducit; cautio est ut Philosophice. Non vulgarieter fiat, Slaibu aut Sulpure varie preparatis, &c. Quicumque itaque Calcinare cupiunt, tantisper ab hoc opere desistant usque quo nostram melius Calcinationem intelligent. Destruit siquidem Corpora Calcination omnis, lapidis humorem minuens, nos quoque calces omnes arida reprobamus; humiditatem liquidem radicalem calcinando angemus, nullam minuimus. Nos vero in calcinando naturam natura (sua) conjungimus; utpote simile simili gaudet, oc siquis negant Philosophi nomine dignus non erit, nec ullam unquam ex scriptis nostris (nam eanon intelligit) fructum percipiet. Natura itaque Naturam applices uti ratio postulat: omnia siquidem hoc a natura habent, ut simile sibi generet simile. Ex Homine Homo, ex Leone Leo generatur, ita quiduis propria sua natura primo Calcinetur. Hoc discas, & frutum inde percipere ne bubites.

Calces itaque unctuosas facimus, cam albas, tum rubras, qua non nisiaribus gradibus perficiuntur; cere ad instar fluidae sunt, aliter reprobande; nec nisi anno persiciuntur, u sine fuco tinguent. De pondere vero imprimis cavendum, utpote in quo hallucinari sat contingens: ni ergo operam perdas, & oleum, Calcinetur Corpus Mercurio ita subtili faco, in quo sit pars una qualitatis Solaris, bina Lunaris usque dum rorum cera liquidae istar simul finat.

Ageas de in Solarem in Mercurio qualitatem ut sint quatuor ejus partes dua Lunaris; sic ad Tinitatis figuram opus incipias. Tres partes corporis tres spiritus, & ad unitatem complendam, pars una sit substantiae spiritualis plus substancia corporali. Raymundi Testimonio hoc complabatur siquis ibi proportionem quarat idem mihi demonstravit Doctor. Baconiu autem tres Spiritus partes ad unam Corporis accepit, multas noctes insomnes agebam: sed veram utrumque elige quom veils, odum.