



Lecture 09 Prima - Melissa ens - recipe 2

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This second recipe is from "The Compendium of Alchemical Processes"
(anon author).

The Preparation of the So-Called "Primum Ens Melissa"

Take half-a-pound of pure carbonate of potassa, and expose it to the air until it is dissolved (by attracting water from the atmosphere). Filter the liquid, and put as many fresh leaves of the plant melissa, or balm, into it as it will hold1 so that the liquid will cover the leaves. Let it stand in a well-closed glass, and in a moderately warm place, for a period of twenty-four hours. The fluid may then be removed from the leaves, and the latter thrown away. On the top of this liquid absolute alcohol is to be poured, so that it covers the former to the height of one or two inches, or until the alcohol becomes of an intensely green colour. This alcohol, or spirit of wine, is then to be taken away and preserved, fresh alcohol is put upon the alkaline liquid, and the operation is repeated until all the colouring matter is absorbed by the alcohol. This alcoholic liquid is now to be distilled, and the alcohol evaporated until it becomes of the thickness of syrup. This is the primum ens melissa. But the alcohol which has been distilled away may be used again and again.

The liquid potassa must be of great concentration, and the alcohol of great strength, else they would become mixt, and the experiment would hardly succeed.

~rubaphilos