

THE EPISTLE

OF

JOHN PONTANUS

Mentioned in the Preface of

Artephius his secret

Book.

Wherein he bears witness of the Book translated out of the Latin copy Extant in the third of Theatrum Chymicum at the 775th Page.

Faithfully re-typed by a meer student of
the Hermetic Art. 1976

I John Pontanus have travelled through many Countrys that I might know some certainty of the Philosophers Stone, and going through as it were all the world I found many false deceivers but no true Philosophers yet continually studing and making many doubts, at the length I found the truth, but when I knew the matter in general, I yet erred two hundred times before I could attain to the true matter with the operation and practice thereof.

First I began to work with the matter by putrefaction nine months together and I found nothing, then I put it into Balneum Mariae for a certain time and therein I likewise erred, afterwards I put it into the fire of calcination for three months space and I wrought amiss, I tried all kinds of distillations and sublimations (as the Philosophers Gibor Archolaus and all the rest either say or seem to say) and I found nothing. In short I assayed to perfect the subject of the whole Art of Alchemy by all means possible to be devised as by dung baths, ashes and other fires of divers kinds which are found in the Philosophers Books, but I found no good in them; wherefore I studied three whole years in the Books of the Philosophers, especially in Hermes, alone whose brief words do comprehend the whole Stone, though he spoke obscurely of the Superior and Inferior (of that which is above and that which is below) of heaven and earth therefore our instrument which brings the matter into being in the beginning, second and thrid work, is not the fire of a bath nor of dung, nor of ashes, nor of the other fires which the Philosophers have put in their Books. What fire is it then which perfects the whole work from the beginning to the ending? Surely the Philosophers have concealed it, but I being moved with pity will declare it unto you together with the compliment of the whole work.

The Philosophers Stone therefore is one, but it has many

names and before you know it, it will be very difficult, for it is watry, airy, fiery, earthy, phlegmatic, choleric and melancholy. For it is Sulphurous and it is likewise Argent-vive and it has many superfluties, which by the living God are turned into the true essence, our fire being the means and not separate anything from the subject thinking it to be necessary, he truly knows nothing at all in Philosophy, for that which is superfluous, unclean, filthy, feculent and in short the whole substance of the subject is perfected into a fixed spiritual body by the means of our fire, and this the wise men never revealed, and therefore few do come unto the Art thinking there is some such superfluous or unclean thing.

Now we must see and find out the properties of our fire, and whether it agree to our matter after the manner that I have said, to wit, that it may be transmuted, whereas that fire does burn the matter, it separates nothing from the matter, it divides not the pure parts from the impure, as all the Philosophers say, but it turns the whole subject into purity. It does not sublime as Geber makes his sublimations; Arnold likewise and others speaking of sublimations and distillations to be done in a short time. It is mineral, equill, continual, it vapours not except it be too much stirred up, it partakes of Sulphur, it is taken from elsewhere than from the matter, it pulls down all things, it dissolves and congeals, likewise it both congeals and calcines and it is very artificial to find out and is a compendious and near way without any cost, at least with small cost, and that firing is it with a mean firing, for with a soft fire all the whole work is perfected and it performs withall, all the divers sublimations. They that should read Geber and all the other Philosophers, tho they should live an 100,000 years, could not comprehend it, because that fire is found by deep and profound meditations only, and then it may be gathered

out of books and not before and therefore the error of this Art is not to find the fire which turns the whole matter into the true Stone of the Philosophers, and therefore study upon it, for if I had found that first, I had never erred 200 times in my practice upon the matter, wherefore I do not marvel if so many great and wise men have not attained to the work; they do err, they have erred, they will err because the Philosophers have not put the proper agent, save only one which is named Artephius, but he speaks for himself or by himself, and unless I had read Artephius and let him speak, I had never come to the compliment of the work, but the practice is this: Let it be taken and ground with a physical confusion as diligently as may be, and let it be set upon the fire, and let the proportion of the fire be known, to wit, that it only stir up the matter, and in a short time that fire without a laying on of hands will accomplish the whole work, because it will putrify, corrupt, engender and perfect and make to appear the three principle colours, black, white and red, and by the means of our fire the medicine will be multiplied if it be joined with the crude matter, not only in quality but also in virtue; with all thy strength therefore search out this fire, and you shall attain your wish, because it does the whole work and is the key of the Philosophers, which they never revealed but if thou muse well and profoundly upon these things that have been spoken concerning the properties of the fire you may know it, otherwise not.

I being moved with pity have written these things, but that I may satisfy you fully, this fire is not transmuted with the water; these things therefore I thought it to say and to warn the prudent that they spend not their money unprofitably, but know what they ought to look after, by this means they may come to the truth of the Art and not otherwise. Farewell.

FINIS

The Hermetic Philosophy.

I attract all those seeking God and the truth; those alone will find the art. I am the Magnet-Stone of divine love; attracting the iron-hard men on the road to the truth.



PRIMA MATERIA.



Bequeathed animals Run Herchenon
Spermatum. Lunda. argentum
Inveniente et coadivato Ludo
In Valle Joseph

I am the moisture which preserves everything in nature and makes it live. I pass from the upper to the lower planes; I am the heavenly dew and the fat of the land; I am the fiery water and the watery fire; nothing may live without me in time; I am close to all things yes; in and through all things, nevertheless unknown. Nevertheless I only am in the grasp of the Philosophers.

I unfold and fold up again.
Bringing contentment to the artists.
Without me thou canst do nothing
Furthering any of your affairs.
Therefore fear God, pray and work in patience, if you find me your want would cease and you have a merciful God who befriendeth thee and giveth thee whatever thy heart may desire.



This moisture must be caught, lest it should change into vapor or fumes.



The two vapors or fumes are the roots of the art.

The Prima Materia derives its existence from the Fiat, the Word of creation. And this Word comes from the Father who is the creator of all things, and the Spirit radiates from both: This is God's life giving air. Then, too, air brings to life everything within the elements. The fire warms all things, the water refreshes, delights and saturates all things; And the nitrous earth, Mother-like, nourishes and sustains all things; the air was born out of fire, and in turn makes the fire burn, that it may live, but air in the form of water is food for the fire, and the fire burns into this element: Water and dew of the ground, the grassy fat dew of the ground, the earth as keeper of nitrous salt nourishes it. For the womb of the earth is the sulphuric nitrous-salt of nature, the one good thing God has created in this visible world.

The same Salt-Mother of the elements is the nitrous, aluminous and spiritual gumonic water. Earth or crystal, which has Nature in its womb, a Son of the Sun, and a Daughter of the Moon. It is a Hermaphrodite, born out of the wind, a phoenix living in fire, a pelican, reviving his dear young ones with its blood; the young Icarus, drowned in the water, whose nurse is the earth, whose Mother is the wind; whose Father is the fire, the water her caretaker and drink, one stone and no stone, one water and no water, nevertheless a stone of living power and a water of living might; a sulphur, a mercury, a salt, hidden deep in nature, and which no fool has ever known nor seen.

Deus vendit sua dona pro labore.

ARTEPHIUS



translated out of Latin

by

WILLIAM SALMON, prof. of physick

CHAPTER III

OF THE COMPOSITION OF OUR ANTIMONIAL VINEGAR, OR SECRET WATER.

I. Antimony is a Mineral participating of Saturnine parts, and has in all respects the nature thereof: This Saturnine Antimony agrees with Sol and contains in it self Argent Vive, in which no metal is swallowed up, except Gold; and Gold is truly swallowed up by this Antimonial Argent Vive.

II. Without this Argent Vive no Metal whatsoever can be whitened; it whitens Laton, i.e, Gold; and reduceth a perfect Body into its *Prima Materia* or first Matter, (viz. into Sulphur and Argent Vive) of a white Colour and out-shining a Looking-Glass.

III. It dissolves (I say) the perfect Body which is so in its own Nature, for this Water is friendly and agreeable with the Metals, whitening Sol, because it contains in itself white or pure Argent Vive.

IV. And from both these you may draw a great Arcanum, viz., a Water of Saturnine Antimony, mercurial and white; to the end that it may whiten Sol, not burning but dissolving it, and afterwards congealing to the consistence of likeness of White Cream.

V. Therefore, saith the Philosopher, this Water makes the Body to be volatile; because after it has been dissolved in it, and in frigidated, it ascends above, and swims upon the surface of the Water.

VI. Take (saith he) crude Leaf-Gold, or calcined with Mercury, and out it into our Vinegar, made of Saturnine Antimony, Mercurial, and Sal Armoniack, (as is said) in a broad Glass Vessel, and four inches high, or more; put it into a gentle heat, and in a short time you will see elevated as a Liquor, as it were Oyl, swimming a top, much like a scum.

VII. Gather this with a spoon, or a Feather, dipping it in; and in so doing often times a day, till nothing more arise; Evaporate away the Water with a gentle heat, *ie*, the superfluous humidity of the Vinegar, and there will remain the Quintessence, Potestates or Powers, of Gold, in form of a white Oyl incombustible.

VIII. In this Oyl the Philosophers have placed their greatest Secrets; it is exceeding sweet and of great virtue for easing the pains of Wounds.

CHAPTER IV

OF THE OPERATIONS OF OUR ANTIMONIAL VINEGAR OR MINERAL WATER.

I. The whole, then, of this Antimonial Secret is, That we know how by it to extract or draw forth Argent Vive, out of the Body of Magnesia, not burning, and this is Antimony, and a Mercurial Sublimate.

II. That is, you must extract a living and incombustible Water: and then congeal or coagulate it with the perfect Body of Sol, ie, fine Gold, without allay; which is done by dissolving it into a nature and white Substance, of the consistency of Cream and made thoroughly white.

III. But first this Sol by putrefaction and resolution in this Water, loseth all its light or brightness, and will grow dark and black, afterwards it will ascend above the Water, and by little and little will swim upon it, in a substance of a white colour.

IV. And this is the whitening of Red Laton, to sublime it philosophically, and to reduce it into its first matter, viz. into a white incombustible Sulphur, and into a fixed Argent Vive.

V. And so, the fixed moisture, to wit, Gold, our Body, by the reiterating of the Liquification or Dissolution in this our dissolving Water, is changed and reduced into a fixed Sulphur, and fixed Argent Vive.

VI. Thus, the perfect Body of Sol, resumeth life in this Water; it is revived, inspired, grows, and is multiplied in kind, as all other things are.

VII. For in this Water, it so happens, that the body compounded of two bodies, viz., Sol and Luna, is puffed up, swells, putrefies, is railed up, and does increase by receiving from the Vegetable and animated Nature and Substance.

VIII. Our Water also, or Vinegar aforssaid, is the Vinegar of the Mountains, ie, of Sol and Luna; and therefore it is mixed with Gold and Silver, and sticks close to them perpetually; and the Body receiveth from this Water a white Tincture, and shines with an inestimable brightness.

IX. Who so therefore knows how to convert, or change the Body into a medicinal white Gold, may easily by the same white Gold change all imperfect Metals into the best and finest Silver.

X. And this white Gold is called by the Philosophers *Luna alba Philosophorum, Argentum Vivum album fixum, Aurum Alchmyiae, and fumus albus*: And therefore without this our Antimonial Vinegar, the Aurum Album of the Philosophers cannot be made.

XI. And because in our Vinegar, there is a double substance of Argentum vivum, the one from Antimony, the other from Mercury Sublimate; it does give a double weight and substance of fixed Argent vive. and also augments therein the native colour, weight, substance and tincture thereof.

CHAPTER V

OF OTHER OPERATIONS OF OUR SECRET MINERAL WATER AND ITS TINCTURE.

I. Our dissolving Water therefore carries with it a great Tincture, and a great melting or dissolving; because that when it feels the vulgar Fire, if there be in it the pure or fire bodies of Sol or Luna, it immediately melts them, and converts them into its white Substance, such as it self is, and gives to the Body colour, weight and tincture.

II. In it also is a power of liquifying or melting all things that can be melted or dissolved; it is a Water ponderous, viscous, precious and worthy to be esteemed, resolving all crude Bodies into their *Prima Materia*, or first Matter, viz, into Earth and a viscous Powder; that is, into Sulphur and Argentum vivum.

III If therefore you put into this Water, Leaves, Filings, or Calx of any Metal, and set it in a gentle Heat for a time, the whole will be dissolved, and converted into a viscous Water, or White Oil, as aforesaid.

IV. Thus it mollifies the Body, and prepares it for fusion and liquification; yea, it makes all things fusible, viz., Stones and Metals and afterwards gives them Spirit and Life.

V. And it dissolves all things with an admirable solution, transmuting the perfect Body into a fusible Medicine, melting or liquifying, moreover fixing, and augmenting the weight and colour.

VI. Work therefore, with it, and you shall obtain what you desire, for it is the Spirit of Sol and Luna; it is the Oyl, the dissolving Water, the Fountain, the Balneum Mariae, the praeternatural Fire, the secret, hidden and Invisible Fire.

VII. It is also the most acrid Vinegar, concerning which an ancient Philosopher saith: I besought the Lord and He showed me a pure clear Water, which I knew to be the pure Vinegar, altering, penetrating and digesting.

VIII. I say a penetrating Vinegar, and the moving Instrument for purifying and reducing Gold or Silver into their *Prima Materia* of first matter.

IX. And it is the only agent in the Universe, which in this Art is able to reincrudate Metallick Bodies with the Conservation of their Species.

X. It is therefore the only apt and natural medium by which we ought to resolve the perfect Bodies of Sol and Luna, by a wonderful and solemn dissolution, with the conservation of the species, and without any destruction, unless it be to a new, more noble and better form or generation, viz., into the perfect Philosophers Stone, which is their wonderful Secret and Aracatum.

XI. Now this Water, is a certain middle substance, clear as fine Silver, which ought to receive the tinctures of Sol and Luna, so as they may be congealed and changed into a white and living Earth.

XII. For this Water needs the perfect Bodies, that with them after the dissolution, it may be congealed, fixed and coagulated into a White Earth.

XIII. But their solution is also their Coagulation, for they have one and the same operation, because one is not dissolved but the other is congealed: Nor is there any other Water which can dissolve the Bodies, but that which abideth with them in the matter and form.

XIV. It cannot be permanent unless it be of the nature of the other bodies, that they may be made one.

XV. When therefore you see the Water coagulate itself with the Bodies that be dissolved therein, be assured that thy knowledge, way of working and the Work itself are true and Philosophick, and that you have done right according to art.

CHAPTER VI

OF WHAT SUBSTANCE METALS ARE TO CONSIST IN ORDER TO DO THIS WORK.

I. Thus you see that Nature is to be amended by its own like Nature; that is, Gold and Silver are to be exalted in our Water, as our water also, with those Bodies, which water is called the medium of the Soul, without which nothing is to be done in this Art.

II. It is a Vegetable, Mineral and Animal fire, which conserves the fixed Spirits of *Sol* and *Luna*, but destroys and conquers their Bodies: for it destroys, overturns, and changes Bodies and Metallick forms, making them to be no Bodies but a fixed Spirit.

III. And it turns them into a humid substance, soft and fluid, which hath ingression and power to enter other imperfect bodies and to mix with them in their smallest parts, and to tinge them and make them perfect.

IV. But this they could not do while they remained in their Metallick forms or Bodies, which were dry and hard, whereby they could have no entrance into other things, so as to tinge and make perfect, what was before imperfect.

V. It is necessary therefore, to convert the Bodies of Metals into a fluid substance; for that every tincture will tinge a thousand time more in a soft and liquid substance

then when it is in a dry one, as is plainly apparent in Saffron.

VI. Therefore, the transmutation of imperfect Metals, is impossible to be done by perfect Bodies, while they are dry and hard: for which cause sake, they must be brought back into their first matter, which is soft and fluid.

VII. It appears therefore, that the moisture must be reverted, that the hidden treasure may be revealed. And this is called the reincrudation of Bodies, which is the decocting and softening them, till they lose their dry and hard substance or form; because that which is dry does not enter into, nor tinge anything besides itself.

VIII. Therefore, the dry terrene Body doth not enter into nor tinge, excepts its own body, nor can it tinge except it be tinged; because (as I said before) a thick drie earthy matter does not penetrate nor tinge, and therefore, because it cannot enter or penetrate, it can make no alteration in the matter to be altered.

IX. For this reason it is, that Gold coloureth not, until its internal or hidden Spirit be drawnforth out of its bowels by this our white water, and that it be made altogether a spir- itual substance, a white Vapour, a white Spirit and a wonder- full Soul.

CHAPTER VII

OF THE WONDERFULL THINGS DONE BY OUR WATER IN ALTERING AND CHANGING BODIES.

I. It behoves us therefore by this Water to attenuate, alter, and soften the perfect bodies, to wit Sol and Luna, that so they may be mixed with other imperfect Bodies.

II. From whence, if we had no other benefit by this our Antimonial Water, than that it rendered Bodies more subtil, soft and fluid, according to its own nature, it would suffice.

III. But more than that, it brings back Bodies to their first original of Sulphur and Mercury, that of them we may afterwards in a little time (in less than an hours time) do that above ground, which Nature was a thousand years ago a doing of underground, in the Mines of the Earth, which is a work almost miraculous.

IV. And therefore, our ultimate, our highest Secret is, by this our water, to make Bodies volatile, spiritual, and a Tincture, or tinging water, which may have ingress or entrance into other bodies.

V. For it makes bodies to be meerly Spirit, because it reduces hard and dry Bodies, and prepares them for fusion, melting, or dissolving, that is, it converts them into a permanent or fixed water. (*Aqua Permanens--hwn*)

VI. And so it makes of Bodies a most precious and desirable Oyl, which is the true Tincture, and the permanent or fixed white water, by nature soft and moist, or rather temperate, subtile, fusible as Wax, which does penetrate, sink, tinge, and make perfect the Work.

VII. And this our water immediately dissolves Bodies (as Sol and Luna) and makes them into an incombustible Oyl, which then may be mixed with other imperfect Bodies.

VIII. It also converts other Bodies into the nature of a fusible Salt, which the Philosophers call *Sal Alebrot Philosophorum*, better and more noble than any other Salt, being in its own nature fixed, and not subject to vanish in fire.

IX. It is an Oyl indeed by nature hot, subtile, penetrating, sinking through and entering into other Bodies: it is called the Perfect or Great Elixir, and the hidden Secret of the wise Searchers of Nature.

X. He therefore that knows this Salt of Sol and Luna, and its generation and preparation, and afterwards how to commix it, and make it hetrogene with other imperfect Bodies; he in truth knows one of the greatest Secrets of Nature, and the only way that leads to perfection.

CHAPTER VIII

OF THE AFFINITY OF OUR WATER, AND OTHER WONDERFULL THINGS DONE BY IT.

I. These bodies thus dissolved by our Water, are called Argent Vive, which is not without its Sulphur, nor the Sulphur without the Redness of Sol and Luna; because Gold and Silver are the particular mean, or medium in the form through which Nature passed in the perfecting and completing thereof.

II. And this Argent Vive is called our esteemed and valuable Salt, being animated and pregnant, and our fire, for that it is nothing but Fire: yet not fire, but Sulphur; and not Sulphur only but Quicksilver drawn from Sol and Luna by our water, and reduced to a Stone of Great Price.

III. That is to say, it is of the matter or substance of Sol and Luna, or Silver and Gold, altered from vileness to Nobility.

IV. Now you must note that this white Sulphur is the Father and Mother of the Metals; it is our Mercury, and the Mineral of Gold; also the Soul and the ferment; yea, the Mineral Virtue, and the living Body; our Sulphur, and our Quicksilver; that is Sulphur of Sulphur; Quicksilver of Quicksilver, and Mercury of Mercury.

V. The property therefore of our Water is, that it melts of dissolves Gold and Silver, and increases their native Tincture or Color.

VI. For it changes their Bodies from being Corporeal, into a Spirituality: and it is this Water which turns the Bodies, or corporeal substance into a white vapour, which is a Soul that is whiteness itself, subtile, hot and full of fire.

VII. This water is also called the tinging or blood-colour making stone, being the virtue of the Spiritual Tincture, without which nothing can be done: and it is the subject of all things that may be melted, and of liquification it self, which agrees perfectly, and unites closely with Sol and Luna, from which it can never be separated.

VIII. For it is joynd in affinity to the Gold and Silver, but more immediately to the Gold than to the Silver: which you are to take special notice of.

IX. It is also called the medium of conjyning the Tinctures of Sol and Luna with the inferior of imperfect Metals; for it turns the Bodies into the true Tincture, to tinge the aforesaid imperfect Metals: also it is the water which whiteneth, as it is whiteness itself; which quickeneth as it is a Soul, and therefore (as the Philosopher saith) quickly entereth into its body.

X. For it is a living water which comes to moisten the Earth, that it may spring out, and in its due season bring forth much fruit; for all things springing from the Earth, are educed through Dew or Moisture.

XI. The Earth therefore springeth not forth without watering and moisture: It is the water preceding from *May Dew*, that cleanseth the Body; and like Rain it penetrates them, and makes one new Body of two Bodies.

XII. This *Aqua Vitae*, or Water of Life, being rightly ordered and disposed with the body, it whitens it, and converts or changes it into its white colour.

XIII. For this water is a white vapour, and therefore, the Body is whitened with it.

XIV. It behoves you therefore to whiten the Body, and open its infoldings: for between these two, that is, between the Body and the Water, there is a desire and friendship, like as between the Male and Female because of the propinquity and likeness of their Natures.

XV. Now this our second and living water is called *AZOTH*, the Water washing the Laten, viz., the Body compounded of Sol and Luna by our first Water: It is also called the Soul of the dissolved Bodies, which Soul we have even now tied together, for the use of the wise Philosopher.

XVI. How precious then, and great a thing is this Water! For without it the Work could never be done or perfected: it is also called the *Vas Natura*, the Belly, the Womb, the Receptacle of the Tincture, the Earth, the Nurse. (*see Hermes--hwn*)

XVII. It is the Royal Fountain in which the King and Queen

bathe themselves; and the Mother which must be put into and sealed up within the belly of her Infant; and that is Sol himself, who proceeded from her, and whom she brought forth; and therefore they have loved one another as Mother and Son, and are conjoynd together, because they come from one and the same Root, and are of the same substance and Nature.

XVIII. And because this Water is the Water of the Vegetable Life, it causes the dead body to vegetate, increase and spring forth and to rise from Death to Life, by being dissolved first and then sublimed.

XIX. And in doing this, the Body is converted into a Spirit, and the Spirit (afterwards) into a Body; and then is made the Amity, the Peace, the Concord and the Union of the Contraries, to wit, between the Body and the Spirit, which reciprocally, or mutually change their Natures which they receive, and communicate one to another through their most minute parts.

XX. So that that which is hot, is mixed with that which is cold, the dry with the moist, and the hard with the soft; by which means there is a mixture made of contrary Natures, viz. of cold with hot, and moist with dry, even a most admirable Unity between Enemies.

CHAPTER IX

OF SUBLIMATION: OR, THE SEPARATION OF THE PURE, FROM THE IMPURE, BY THIS WATER

I. Our Dissolution then of Bodies, which is made such in this first Water, is nothing else, but a destroying or overcoming of the moist with the dry, for the moist is coagulated with the dry.

II. For the moisture is contained under, terminated with, and coagulated in the dry body, to wit, in that which is Earthy.

III. Let therefore, the hard and the dry Bodies be put into our first Water in a Vessel, which close well, and there let them abide till they be dissolved, and ascend to the top; then may they be called a new Body, the white Gold made by Art, the white Stone, the white Sulphur, not inflammable, the Paradisical Stone, viz., the Stone Transmuting imperfect Metals, into fine white Silver.

IV. Then have we also, the Body, Soul and Spirit altogether; of which Spirit and Soul it is said, That they cannot be extracted from the perfect Bodies, but by the help of our dissolving Water.

V. Because it is certain That the thing fixed cannot be lifted up, or made to ascend, but by the conjunction or help of that which is volatile.

VI. The Spirit therefore by the help of the Water and the Soul, is drawn forth from the Bodies themselves, and the Body thereby is made Spiritual; for that at the same instant of time, the Spirit, with the Soul of the Bodies, ascend on high to the seuperior part, which is the perfection of the Stone, and is called Sublimation.

VII. This Sublimation saith *Florentius Cathalanus*, is made by things Acid, Spiritual, Volatile, which are in their own nature Sulphurous and Viscous, which dissolve Bodies, and make them to ascend, and be changed into Air and Spirit.

VIII. And in this Sublimation a certain part of our said first Water ascends with the Bodies, joying itself with them, ascending and subliming into one neutral or complex Substance, which contains the nature of the two, viz., the nature of the two Bodies, and of the Water.

IX. And therefore it is called the Corporeal and Spiritual Compositum, Conjust, Cambar, Ethelia, Zaardarith, Dueneck, the Good; but properly it is called the permanent or fixed Water only, because it flies not in the Fire.

X. But it perpetually adheres to the commixed or compounded Bodies, that is, to Sol and Luna, and communicates to them the Living Tincture, incombustible and most fixed, much more noble and precious than the former which those Bodies had.

XI. Because from henceforth this Tincture runs like Oil, running through and penetrating Bodies, and giving to them its

wonderfull Fixity; and this Tincture is the Spirit, and the Spirit is the Soul, and the Soul is the Body.

XII. For in this operation the Body is made a Spirit, of a most subtile nature; and agin, the Spirit is corporified and changed into the nature of the Body, with the Bodies, whereby our Stone consists of a Body, a Soul and a Spirit.

XIII. O God, how thro' Nature dost thou change a Body into a Spirit! Which could not be done, if the Spirit were not incorporated with the Bodies, and the Bodies made volatile with the Spirit, and afterwards permanent or fixed.

XIV. For this Cause sake, they have passed over into one another, and by the Influence of Wisdom are converted one into the other. O Wisdom! How thou makest the most fix'd Gold to be volatile and fugutive, yea, though by nature it is the most fixed of all things in the World!

XV. It is necessary to dissolve and liquifie these Bodies by our Water, and to make them a permanent or fixed Water, a pure golden Water, leaving in the bottom the gross, earthy, superfluous and dry Matter.

XVI. And in this subliming making thin and pure, the Fire ought to be gentle; but if in this Sublimation with a soft Fire, the bodies be not purified, and the gross or earthy parts thereof, (note this well,) be not separated from the impurities of the Dead, you shall not be able to perfect the Work.

XVII. For thou needest nothing but that thin and subtil part of the dissolved Bodies, which our Water will give thee, if thou proceedest with a slow or gentle Fire, by separating the things homogene, from the things hetrogene.

CHAPTER X

OF THE SEPARATION OF THE PURE PARTS FROM THE IMPURE.

I. This Compositum then has its mundification or cleansing by our moist Fire which (as *Azinabam* saith) by dissolving and subliming that which is pure and white, it calls forth or rejects it feces or filth, like a voluntary Vomit.

II. For in such a dissolution and natural Sublimation or lifting up, there is a loosening or untying of the Elements, and a cleansing and separation of the Pure, from the Impure.

III. So that the pure and white substance ascends upwards, and the impure and earthly remains fixed in the bottom of the Water and the Vessel.

IV. This must be taken away and removed because it is of no value, taking only the middle white substance, flowing and melted or dissolved, rejecting the foeculent Earth, which remains below in the bottom.

V. These foeces were separated partly by the Water, and are the dross and *Terra Damnata*, which is of no value, can do any such service as the clear, white, pure and clean Matter. which is wholly and only to be taken and made use of.

VI. And against this Capharean Rock, the Ship and Knowledge or Art of the young Philosopher is often (as it happened to me also sometimes) dashed together in pieces, or destroyed

because the Philosophers for the most part speak by the contraries.

VII. That is to say, That nothing must be removed or taken away, except the moisture, which is the blackness; which notwithstanding they speak and write only to the unwary, who without a Master, indefatigable Reading, or humble supplications to God Almighty, would ravish away the Golden Fleece.

VIII. It is therefore to be observed, That this separation, division, and sublimation, is (without doubt) the Key of the whole Work.

IX. After the putrefaction then and dissolution of these Bodies, our Bodies also ascend up to the top, even to the surface of the dissolving Water, in a whiteness of Colour, which whiteness is Life.

X. And in this whiteness the Antimonial and Mercurial Soul, is by a natural compact infused into, and joyned with, the Spirits of Sol and Luna, which separation the thin from the thick and the pure from the impure.

XI. That is, by lifting up, by little and little the thin and pure part of the Body, from the Foeces and Impurity, until all the pure parts are separated and ascended.

XII. And in this work is our natural and philosophical Sublimation compleated.

XIII. Now in this whitness is the Soul infused into the Body, to wit, the mineral virtue, which is more subtil than Fire, being indeed the true *Quintessence and Life*, which desires and hungers to be born again, and to put off the defilements and be spoiled of its gross and earthy foeces, which it has taken from its Menstruous Womb, and corrupt place of original.

XIV. And in this is our Philosophical Sublimation, not in the impure, corrupt, vulgar Mercury, which has no properties or qualities like to those, with which our Mercury (drawn from its vitriolick Caverns) is adorned. But let us return to our Sublimation.

CHAPTER XI

OF THE SOUL WHICH IS EXTRACTED BY OUR WATER, AND MADE TO ASCEND.

I. It is most certain therefore in this Art, That the Soul extracted from the Bodies, cannot be made to ascend, but by adding to it a volatile Matter, which is of its own kind.

II. By the which the Bodies will be made volatile and spiritual, lifting themselves up, subtilizing and subliming themselves, contrary to their own proper nature, which is corporeal, heavy and ponderous.

III. And by this means, they are unbodied, or made no bodies, to wit, incorporeal, and a Quintessence of the nature of a Spirit, which is called *Avis Hermetis* and *Mercurius Extractus*, drawn from a Red subject or Matter.

IV. And so the terrene or earthy parts remain below, or rather the grosser parts of the Bodies, which can by no Industry or Ingenuity of Man be brought to a perfect dissolution.

V. And this white Vapor, this white Gold, to wit, this Quintessence, is called also the *Compound Magnesia*, which like Man does contain, or like Man, is composed of a Body, Soul and Spirit.

VI. Now the Body is the fixed solar Earth, exceeding the most subtile Matter, which by the help of our divine Water is with difficulty lifted up or separated.

VII. The Soul is the Tincture of Sol and Luna, proceeding

from the conjunction of these two (to wit, the Bodies of Sol and Luna, and our Water).

VIII. And the Spirit is the mineral power, or virtue of the Bodies, and of the Water which carries the Soul or White Tincture in or upon the Bodies, and also out of the Bodies; like as the Tinctures or Colours in Dying Cloth are by the Water put upon, and diffused in and through the whole Cloth.

IX. And this Mercurial Spirit is the Chain or Band of the Solar Soul; and the solar Body; is that Body which contains the Spirit and Soul, having the power of fixing in itself, being joyned with Luna.

X. The Spirit therefore penetrates, the Body fixes and the Soul joyns together tinges and whitens.

XI. From these three united together, is our Stone made; to wit, of Sol, Luna and Mercury.

XII. Therefore, with this our Golden-Water, a natural substance is extracted, exceeding all natural substances; and so, except the Bodies be broken and destroyed, imbibed, made subtile and fine, thriftily and diligently managed, till they are abstracted from of lose their grossness or solid substance, and be changed into a thin and subtil Spirit all our labour will be in vain.

XIII. And unless the Bodies be made no bodies, or incorporeal, that is, be converted into the Philosophers Mercury, there

is no Rule of Art yet found out to work by.

XIV. The reason is, because it is impossible to draw out of the Bodies all that most thin and subtile Soul which has in itself the Tincture, except it be first resolved in our Water.

XV. Dissolve then the Bodies in this our Golden-water, and boil them till all the Tincture is brought forth by the Water, in a white Colour, and a white Oil; and when you see this whiteness upon the Water, then know that the Bodies are melted liquified or dissolved.

XVI. Continue then this boyling, till the dark, black, and white Cloud is brought forth, which they have conceived.

CHAPTER XII

OF DIGESTION, AND HOW THE SPIRIT IS MADE THEREBY.

I. Put therefore, the perfect Bodies of Metals, to wit, Sol and Luna, into our Water, in a Vessel, Hermetically sealed, upon a gentle Fire, and digest continually, till they are perfectly resolved into a most precious Oyl.

II. Digest (saith *Adfar*) with a gentle Fire, as it were for the hatching of Chickens, so long till the Bodies are dissolved, and their perfectly conjoynd Tincture (mark this well) is extracted.

III, But it is not extracted all at once, but it is drawn out by little and little, day by day, and hour by hour, till after a long time the Solution thereof is compleated and that which is dissolved always swims on top.

IV. And while this dissolution is in hand, let the Fire be gentle and continual, till the Bodies are dissolved into a viscous and most subtile Water, and the whole Tincture be educed, in colour first black, which is the sign of dissolution.

V. Then continue the digestion till it becomes a white fixed Water; for being digested in *Balneo (Mariae)* it will afterwards become clear, and in the end become like to common *Argent vive*, ascending above the first Water.

VI. When therefore you see the Bodies dissolved in the first viscous Water, then know that they are turned into a Vapour,

and that the Soul is separated from the dead Body, and by Sublimation, brought into the order of Spirits.

VII. Whence both of them, with a part of our Water, are made Spirits flying up into the Air; and there the compounded Body, made of the Male and Female, viz, of Sol and Luna, and of that most subtile Nature, cleansed by Sublimation, taketh Life, and it is made Spiritual by its own humidity.

VIII. That is, by its own Water; like as a Man is sustained by the Air; whereby from thenceforth it is multiplied, and increases in its own kind, as do all other things.

IX. In such an ascension therefore, and philosophical Sublimation, all are joynd with one another, and the new Body subtilized, or made living by the Spirit, miraculously liveth or springs like a Vegetable.

X. Wherefore, unless the Bodies be attenuated, or made thin, by the Fire and Water, till they ascend in a Spirit, and are made, or do become like Water and Vapour, you labour wholly in vain.

XI. But when they arise or ascend, they are born or brought forth in the Air or Spirit, and in the same they are changed and made Life with Like, so as they can never be separated, but are as Water mixt with Water.

XII. And therefore it is wisely said, That the Stone is born of the Spirit, because it is altogether Spiritual.

XIII. For the Vulture himself, flying without Wings cries upon the top of the Mountain, saying, I am the white, brought forth from the black and red, brought forth from the white, the citrine son of the red; I speak the Truth and lye not.

CHAPTER X I I I

OF THE BEGINNING OF THE WORK, AND A SUMMARY OF WHAT IS TO BE DONE.

I. It sufficeth thee then to put the Bodies in the Vessel, and into the Water once and for all, and to close the Vessel well, until a true separation be made.

II. This the Obscure Artist calls Conjunction, Sublimation, Assation, Extraction, Putrefaction, Ligation, Desponsation, Subtilization, Generation and etc.

III. Now that the whole Magistery may be perfected, Work as in the Generation of Man, and of every Vegetable; put the seed once up into the Womb, and shut it up well.

IV. Thus you may see that you need not many things, and that this our great work requires no great Charges, for that as there is but one Stone, there is but one Medicine, one Vessel, one order of working, and one successive Disposition to the White and the Red.

V. And altho we say in many places, take this, and take that; yet it behoves us to take but one thing, and put it once into the Vessel until the Work be perfected.

VI. But these things are so set down by the Obscure Philosophers, to deceive the unwary, as we have before spoken; for is not this *Ars Cabbalistica*, or a secret and hidden Art? Is it not an Art full of Secrets? And believest thou O Fool,

that we plainly teach this Secret of Secrets, taking our Words according to their literal Signification?

VII. Truly, I tell thee (that as for myself, I am no ways of self-seeking or envious as others are; but) he that takes the Words of other Philosophers, according to their common Signification; he even already (having lost the thread of *Ariadnes*) wanders in the midst of the Labyrinth, multiplies errors, and casts away his Money for nought.

VIII. And I *Artephius*, after I became an Adept, and had attained to the true and compleat wisdom, by studying the books of the most faithfull *Hermes*, the speaker of Truth, was sometimes Obscure also, as the others were.

IX. But when I had for the space of a Thousand Years, or thereabouts (Which are now passed over my Head, since the time I was born to this day, through the alone goodness of God Almighty, by the use of this wonderful Quintessence)

X. When I say for so very long a time (as a Thousand Years) I found no man that had found out or obtained this Hermetick Secret, because of the obscurity of the Philosophers Words.

XI. Being moved with a Generous Mind, and the integrity of a good Man, I have determined in these latter days of my Life, to declare all things truly and sincerely, that you may not want anything for the perfecting of this Stone of the Philosophers.

XII. (Excepting one certain thing, which is not lawful for me to discover to any, because it is either revealed or made known by God himself, or taught by some Master, which notwithstanding he that can bend himself to the search of, by the help of a little Experience, may easily learn in this Book.)

XIII. And in this Book I have therefore written the naked Truth, also clothed or disguised with a few Colours; yet so that every good and wise man may happily gather those desirable Apples of the Hesperides from this our Philosophers Tree.

XIV. Wherefore praises be given to the most high God who has poured into our Soul of His Goodness, and through a good old Age, even an almost infinite number of years, has truly fill'd our Heart with His Love, in which (methinks) I embrace, cherish and truly love all Mankind together.

XV. But to return to our Business. Truly our Work is perfectly performed, for that which the heat of the Sun is an hundred Years in doing of, for the Generation of the Metal in the bowels of the Earth; our Secret Fire, that is, our Fiery and Sulphurous Water, which is called Balneum Mariae (!!--hwn), doth (as I have often seen) in a very short time.

CHAPTER XIV

OF THE EASINESS AND SIMPLICITY OF THIS WORK, AND, OF OUR PHILOSOPHICK FIRE.

I. Now this Operation or Work is a thing of no great Labour to him that knows and understands it; nor is the matter so dear (considering how small a quantity does suffice) that it may cause any Man to withdraw his hand from it.

II. It is indeed a Work so short and easie, that it may well be called a Woman's Work and the Play of Children:

III. Go to then, my Son, put up thy Supplications to God Almighty; be diligent in searching the Books of the Learned in this Science; (for one Book openeth another;) think and meditate of these things profoundly; and avoid all things which vanish in, or will not endure the Fire, because from those adustible, perishing or consuming things, you can never attain to the perfect matter, which is only found in the digesting of your Water, extracted from *Sol and Luna*.

IV. For by this Water Colour and Ponderosity or Weight, are infinitely given to the matter; and this Water is a white Vapor, which like a Soul, flows through the perfect Bodies, taking wholly from them their blackness, and impurities, uniting the two bodies in one, and increasing their Water.

V. Nor is there any other thing than *AZOTH*, to wit, this our Water, which can take from the perfect bodies of *Sol and Luna*

their natural Colour, making the red Body white, according to the Disposition thereof.

VI. Now let us speak of the Fire. Our Fire then, is Mineral, equal, continuous; it fumes not, unless it be too much stirred up, participates of Sulphur, and is taken from other things than from the Matter; it over-turns all things, dissolves, congeals, and calcines, and is to be found out by Art, or after an Artificial manner.

VII. It is a compendious thing, gotten without cost or charge, or at least without any great purchase; it is humid, vaporous, digestive, altering, penetrating, subtile, spiritous, not violent, incombustible, continent and one only thing.

VIII. It is also a *Fountain of Living Water*, which circumvolveth and contains the place in which the King and Queen bathe themselves; through the whole Work this moist Fire is sufficient; in the beginning, middle, and end, because in it the whole Art does consist.

IX. This is the natural Fire, which is yet against Nature, not natural and which burns not; and lastly, this Fire is hot, cold, dry, moist; meditate on these things and proceed directly, without anything of a foreign Nature.

X. If you understand not these Fires, give ear to what I have yet to say, never as yet written in any book, but drawn from the more abtruse and occult Riddles of the Ancients.

CHAPTER XV

OF THE THREE KINDS OF FIRES OF THE PHILOSOPHERS IN PARTICULAR.

I. We have properly three Fires, without which this our Art cannot be perfected; and whosoever works without them, takes a great deal of Labour in vain.

II. The first Fire is that of the Lamp, which is continuos, humid, vaporous, Spiritous, and found out by Art.

III. This Lamp fire ought to be proportioned to the enclosure; wherein you must use great Judgement, which none can attain to, but he that can bend to the search thereof.

IV. For, if this Fire of the Lamp be not measured, and duly proportioned or fitted (to the Fornace) it will be, that either for want of heat you will not see the expected Signs, in their limited times, whereby you will lose your hopes and expectation by a too long delay: Or else, by reason of too much heat, you will burn the *Flores Auri*, the Golden Flowers, and so foolishly bewail your lost Expence.

V. The Second Fire is *Ignis Cinerum*, and ash heat, in which the Vessel hermetically sealed is recluded, or buried; Or rather, it is that most sweet and gentle heat, which proceeding from the temperate Vapours of the Lamp does equally surround your Vessel.

VI. This Fire is not violent or forcing, except it be too much

excited or stirred up; it is a Fire digestive, alterative, and taken from another body than the matter; being but one only moist also, and not natural.

VII. The Third Fire is the natural Fire of our Water, which is also called The Fire Against Nature, because it is WATER; and yet, nevertheless, it makes a mere Spirit of Gold, which common Fire cannot do.

VIII. This Fire is Mineral, equal and participates of Sulphur; it overturns or destroys, congeals, dissolves and calcines; it is penetrating, subtil, incombustible and not burning, and is the Fountain of Living Water wherein the King and Queen bathe themselves; whose help we stand in need of throughout the entire Work, through the beginning, middle and end.

IX. But the other Two above mentioned, we have not always occasion for, but only at some times.

X. In reading, therefore, the books of Philosophers, conjoin these Three Fires in your Judgement, and without doubt, you will understand whatever they have wrote of them.

CHAPTER XVI

OF THE COLOURS OF OUR PHILOSOPHICK TINCTURE, OR STONE.

I. Now as to the Colours, that which does not make black cannot make white, because blackness is the beginning of whiteness, and a sign of putrefaction and Alteration, and that the body is now penetrated and moritified.

II. From the Putrefaction therefore in this Water, there first appears blackness, like unto Broth wherein something bloody is boiled.

III. *Secondly*, The black Earth by a continual digestion is whitened, because the Soul of the Two Bodies swims above upon the Water, like white Cream; and in this only whiteness, all the Spirits are so united, that they can never fly one from another.

IV. And therefore the Latten must be whitened, and its leaves unfolded, i.e., its body broken or opened, lest we labour in vain; for this whiteness is the perfect Stone for the white work, and a body enobled toward that end; even the Tincture of a most exuberant glory, and shining brightness, which never departs from the body it is once joyned with.

V. Therefore you must note here, that the Spirits are not fixed, but in the white Colour, which is more noble than the other Colours, and is more vehemently to be desired, for

that it is as it were the Complement of Perfection of the whole Work.

VI. For our Earth putrefies and becomes black, then it is putrified in lifting up or Separation; afterwards being dried, its blackness goes away from it, and then it is whitened, and the feminine dominion of the darkness and humidity perisheth; then also the white Vapour penetrates through the new Body and the Spirits are bound up or fixed in this dryness.

VII. And that which is corrupting, deformed and black, through the moisture, vanishes away; so the new body rises again, clear, pure, white and immortal, obtaining the Victory over all its enemies.

VIII. And as heat working upon that which is moist, causeth or generates blackness, which is the prime or first Colour, so always by decoction, more and more heat working upon that which is dry, begets whiteness, which is the second Colour; and then working upon that which is purely and perfectly dry, it produces Citrinity and Redness. Thus much for Colours.

IX. We must know therefore, that the thing which has its Head, red and white, but its feet white and afterwards red; and its eyes before hand black, that this thing, I say, is the only matter of our Magistery.

CHAPTER XVII

OF THE PERFECT BODIES, THEIR PUTREFACTION, CORRUPTION, DIGESTION AND TINCTURE.

I. Dissolve then Sol and Luna in our dissolving Water, which is familiar and friendly, and the next in nature unto them; and is also sweet and pleasant to them, and as it were a Womb, a Mother, and Original, the beginning and the end of their Life.

II. And that is the very reason why they are meliorated or amended in this Water, because like nature rejoiceth in like nature, and like nature retains like nature, being joined the one to the other, in a true marriage, by which they are made one nature, one new Body, raised again from the dead and immortal.

III. Thus it behoves you to join Consanguinity, or sameness of one kind, by which these natures, will meet and follow one another, purifies themselves, generate, and make one another rejoice; for that like nature, now is disposed by like nature, even that which is nearest, and most friendly to it.

IV. Our Water then (saith *Danthin*) is the most beautifull, lovely and clear Fountain, prepared only for the King and Queen, whom it knows very well, and they it.

V. For it attracts them to itself, and they abide therein for two or three days (to wit, two or three months), to wash

themselves therewith, whereby they are made young again and beautifull.

VI. And because Sol and Luna have their Original from this Water their Mother; it is necessary therefore that they enter into it again, to wit, into their Mothers Womb, that they may be regenerate or born again, and made more healthy, more noble, and more strong.

VII. If therefore, these do not die, and be converted into Water, they remain alone (or as they were) and without Fruit; but if they die, and are resolved in our Water, they bring forth Fruit, and hundred-fold; and from that very place in which they seemed to perish, from thence shall they appear to be that which they were not before.

VIII. Let therefore the Spirit of our Living Water (with all care and industry) be fixed with Sol and Luna; for that they being converted into the nature of Water become dead, and appear like to the Dead; from whence afterwards, being revived, they increase and multiply, even as do all sorts of Vegetable Substances.

IX. It suffices then to dispose the matter sufficiently without, because that within, it sufficiently disposes itself for the Perfection of its own work.

X. For it has in itself a certain inherent motion, according

to the true way and Method, and a much better order than it is possible for any man to invent or think of.

XI. For this Cause it is, that you need only to prepare the matter, Nature herself alone will perfect it, and if she be not hindered by some contrary thing, she will not overpass her own certain motion, neither in conceiving or generating nor in bringing forth.

XII. Wherefor, after the preparation of the matter, beware only. lest by too much heat or fire, you inflame the bath, or make it too hot. Secondly, take heed, lest the Spirit should exhale, lest it hurts the Operator, to wit, lest it destroys the work, and induces many infirmities, as sadness, trouble, vexation and discontent.

XIII. From these things which have been spoken, this Axiom is manifest, to wit, that he can never know the necessary course of Nature in the making or generation of Metals, who is ignorant of the way of destroying them.

XIV. You must therefore join them together that are on one consanguinity or kindred; for like natures do find out and join with their like natures, and by putrifying themselves together, are mixed together and mortifie themselves.

XV. It is needful therefore to know this Corruption and Generation, and how the natures do embrace one another, and are brought to a fixity in a slow or gentle fire; how like

nature rejoiceth with like nature; how they retain one another and are converted into a white subsistencie.

XVI. This white substance, if you will make it Red, you must continually decoct it in a dry Fire, till it is rubified, or becomes red as blood, which is then nothing but water, fire and the true tincture.

XVII. And so by a continual dry fire, the whiteness is changed, removed, perfected, made citrine, and still digested till it comes to a true red and fixed colour.

XVIII. And consequently by how much more is this red decocted in this gentle heat, by so much more it is heightened in colour, and made a true Tincture of perfect Redness.

XIX. Wherefore with a dry Fire, and a dry Calcination, (without any moisture) you must decoct this Compositum, till it be invested with a most perfect red Colour, and then it will be the true and perfect Elixir.

CHAPTER XVIII

OF THE MULTIPLICATION OF THE PHILOSOPHICK TINCTURE.

- I. Now if afterwards you would multiply your Tincture, you must again resolve that Red, in new or fresh dissolving Water, and then by decoctions first whiten, and then rubifie it again, by the degrees of Fire, reiterating the first method of operation in this Work.

- II. Dissolve, coagulate, and reiterate the closing up, the opening and multiplying in quantity and quality at your own pleasure.

- III. For by a new Corruption and Generation, there is introduced a new Motion.

- IV. Thus can we never find an end, if we do always work by reiterating the same thing over and over again, viz., by Solution and Coagulation (*Solve et Coagula--hwn*), by the help of our dissolving Water, by which we dissolve and congeal, as we formerly said, in the beginning of the work.

- V. Thus also is the virtue thereof increased and multiplied, both in quantity and quality; so that, if after the first course of Operation you obtain an hundred-fold; by a second course, you will have a thousand-fold; and by a third, ten-thousand fold.

- VI. And by persuing your work, your projection will come to infinity, tinging truly and perfectly, and fixing the greatest quantity how much soever.

VII. Thus by a thing of an easie or small price, you may have both colour, goodness and weight.

VIII. Our Fire then, and Azoth of sufficient for you. Decoct, decoct, reiterate, dissolve and congeal, and continue this course, according as you please, multiplying it as you think good, until your Medicine is made fusible as Wax, and has attained the quantity and goodness or fixity and colour as you desire.

IX. This then is the compleating of the whole work of our second stone (observe it well) that you take the perfect body, and put it into our Water in a glass Vesica or Body well closed with cement, lest the air get in, or the inclosed humidity get out.

X. Keep it in digestion in a gentle heat, as it were of a balneum, or the most temperate Horse-dung, and assiduously continue the operation or work upon the fire, till the decoction and digestion is perfect.

XI. And keep it in this digestion of a gentle heat, until it be putrified and resolved into blackness, and be drawn up and sublimed by the water, and is thereby cleansed from all blackness and impurity, that it may be white and subtil.

XII. Until it comes to the ultimate or highest purity of sublimation, and the utmost volatility, and be made white both within and without: For the Vulture flying in the air

without Wings, crys out, that it might get up upon the Mountain, that is upon the waters upon which the *Spiritus Albus*, or Spirit of whiteness is born.

XIII. Continue still a fitting fire, and that Spirit, which is the subtil being of the Body, and of the Mercury will ascend upon the top of the water, which quintessence is more white than the driven snow.

XIV. Continue yet still, and toward the end, encrease the fire, till the whole spiritual substance ascend to the top.

XV. And know well that whatsoever is clear, pure, and spiritual ascends in the air to the top of the Water in the substance of a white vapor which the Philosophers call their *Virgins Milk*.

CHAPTER XIX

OF SUBLIMATION IN PARTICULAR, AND SEPARATION OF THE PURE FROM THE IMPURE.

I. It ought to be therefore (as one of the *Sybillis* said) that the Son of the Virgin be exalted from the Earth, and that the white Quintessence afters its rising out of the dead Earth, be raised up towards Heaven; the gross and thick remaining in the bottom of the Vessel and of the water.

II. Afterwards, the Vessel being cooled, you will find in the bottom the black Faeces, scorcht and burnt, which separate from the Spirit and Quintessence of Whiteness and cast them away.

III. Then will the Argent vive fall down from our Air or Spirit upon the new Earth which is called Argent vive sublimed by the Air or Spirit, whereof is made a viscous Water, pure and white.

IV. This Water is the true Tincture separated from all its black Faeces, and our Bras or Latten is prepared with our Water, purified and brough to a white Colour.

V. Which white Colour is not obtained but by decoction, and coagulation of the Water: Decoct therefore continually, wash away the blackness from the Latten, not with your Hands, but with the Stone, or the Fire, or our second Mercurial Water which is the true Tincture.

VI. This separation of the pure from the impure is not done

with hands; but Nature herself does it, and brings it to perfection by a circular Operation.

VII. It appears then, that this Composition is not a work of the Hands, but a change of the Natures; because Nature dissolves and joyns itself, sublimes and lifts itself up, and grows white, being separate from the Faeces.

VIII. And in such a Sublimation, the more subtil, pure, and essential parts are conjoyned; for that with the fiery nature or property lifts up the subtil parts, it separates alwaies the more pure leaving the grosser at the bottom.

IX. Wherefore your Fire ought to be a gentle and a continual Vapour, with which you sublime, that the matter may be filled with Spirit from the Air, and live.

X. For naturally all things take Life from the inbreathing of the Air; and also our Magistery receives in the Vapour or Spirit, by the sublimation of the Water.

XI. Our Bras or Laten then, is to be made to ascend by the degrees of Fire, but of its own accord, freely, and without violence; except the body therefore be by the Fire and the Water broken or dissolved, and attenuated, until it ascends as a Spirit or climbs like Argent vive, or rather as the White Soul, separated from the Body, and by sublimation delated or brought into a Spirit, nothing is or can be done.

XII. But when it ascends on high, it is born in the Air or

or Spirit, and is changed into Spirit; and becomes Life with Life, being only SPIRITUAL and incorruptible.

XIII. And by such an Operation it is, that the Body is made Spirit, of a subtil nature, and the Spirit is incorporated with the Body, and made one with it; and by such a sublimation, conjunction, and raising up, the whole, both Body and Spirit are made white.

CHAPTER XX

OF DIGESTION, SUBLIMATION, AND SEPARATION OF THE BODIES, FOR THE PERFECTION OF THE WORK,

I. This Philosophical and Natural Sublimation therefore is necessary, which makes peace between (or fixes) the Body and Spirit, which is impossible to be done otherwise, than in the separation of these parts.

II. Therefore it behoves you to sublime both, that the pure may ascend, and the impure and earthy may descend, or be left at bottom, in the perplexity of a troubled Sea.

III. And for this reason it must be continually Decocted, that it may be brought to a subtil property, and the Body may assume and draw to itself the white Mercurial Soul, which it naturally holds, and suffers not to be separated from it because it is like to it in the nereness of the first, pure and simple nature.

IV. From these things it is necessary to make a separation by Decoction, till no more remains of the purity of the Soul, which is not ascended and exalted to the highest part, whereby they will both be reduced to an equality of properties, and a simple or pure Whiteness.

V. The Vulture flying through the Air, and the Toad creeping upon the Ground, are the Emblems of our Magistry.

VI. When therefore gently and with much care, you separate the

Earth from the Water, that is, from the Fire, and the thin from the thick, then that which is pure will separate itself from the Earth, and ascend to the upper part, as it were to Heaven, and the impure will descend beneath, as to the Earth.

VII. And the more subtil part in the superior place will take upon it the nature of a Spirit, and that in the lower place, the nature of an earthy body.

VIII. Wherefore let the white property with the more subtil parts of the body, be by this operation, made to ascend, leaving the faeces behind, which is done in a short time.

IX. For the Soul is aided by her associate and fellow, and perfected by it.

X. My mother (saith the body), has begotten me, and by me, she herself is begotten: now after I have taken from her her flying, she, after an admirable manner becomes kind, nourishing, and cherishing the Son whom she has begotten, till he comes to be of a ripe or perfect age.

CHAPTER XXI

OF THE SECRET OPERATION OF THE WATER AND SPIRIT UPON THE BODY.

I. Hear now this Secret: keep the Body in Mercurial Water, till it ascends with the white Soul, and the Earthy part descends to the bottom, which is called the residing Earth.

II. Then you shall see the water to coagulate itself with its Body, and be assured that the Art is true; because the Body coagulates the moisture into dryness, like as the rennet of a Lamb or Calf turns Milk into Cheese.

III. In the same manner, the Spirit penetrates the Body, and is perfectly commixed with it in its smallest Atoms, and the body draws to itself his moisture, to wit, its white Soul, like as the Loadstone draws Iron, because of its nature; and then the one contains the other.

IV. And this is our sublimation and Coagulation, which retaineth every volatile thing, making it fixt forever.

V. This Compositum then, is not a mechanical things, or a work of the Hands, but (as I have said), a changing of Natures; and a wonderful connection of their cold with hot, and the moist with dry: The hot is also mixed with cold, and the dry with the moist.

VI. By this means is also made the mixtion and conjunction of body and spirit, which is called a conversion of contrary Natures; because by such a dissolution and sublimation, the

spirit is converted into a body and the body into a spirit.

VII. So that the natures being mingled together, and reduced into one, do change from one another: And as the Body corporifies the Spirit, or changes it into a Body: So also does the Spirit convert the Body into a tinging and white spirit.

VIII. Wherefore (as the last time I say) decoct the body in our white water viz. MERCURY, till it is dissolved into blackness, and then by a continual decoction, let it be deprived of the same blackness, and the body so dissolved, will at length ascend or rise with a white Soul.

IX. And then the one will be mixed with the other, and so embrace one another, that it shall not be possible any more to separate them, but the Spirit (with a real agreement) will be united with the body, and make one permanent or fixed substance.

X. And this is the solution of the Body, and coagulation of the Spirit which have one and the same operation.

XI. Whoso therefore, knows how to conjoyn the principles, or direct the work, to impregnate, to mortifie, to putrifie, to generate, to quicken the species, to make white, to cleanse the Vulture from its blackness and darkness, till he is purged by the fire, and tinged, and purified from all his spots, shall be possessor of a treasure so great, that even Kings themselves shall venerate him.