

A
TREATISE
OF
MERCURY

And the
PHILOSOPHERS STONE

By
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A T R E A T I S E O F M E R C U R Y

I will, my dearest Son, instruct thee in this Blessed Science, which was hid from the Wise of old, to whom God was pleased to shew so much favour: Know therefore, that our Matter is the chiefest of all things in the Earth, and of the least estimation and account, as will hereafter more plainly appear. For if Water incorporate it self with Earth, the Water will be lowest of all, and will (if it be not kept down) with Fire, ascend higher; and thus it may be seen, how Water will be the highest and lowest. Yet true it is, that it is of least estimation, for in our Earth and Water, and in that drossie Earth, you may find some very pure and clear, which is our Seed and fifth Essence, and then that foul and drossie Earth is good for nothing else, and of no estimation. But that Water, as I said, is the chiefest, will appear many ways: Know, Son, that without Water we cannot make Bread, nor any thing else, which God hath created in Nature; and hence you may easily perceive, that Water is the first Matter of all things which are born or generated in the World: for certainly 'tis manifest unto thee, that nothing grows or receiveth increase without the four Elements; therefore whatsoever is Elementated by the virtue of the four Elements, it must of necessity be, that the original of all things that are born or grow, should be of Water: Yet ought you not to understand, this before spoken of Water, but of that Water which is the Matter of all things, out of which all Natural things are produced in their kind. Know therefore, that first of all Air is engendred of Water; of Air, Fire; of Fire, Earth. Now will I more familiarly and friendly discourse with thee; I'll further manifest this Mystery unto thee by degrees, lest by too much hast it happen to us according to the Proverb, That he that makes too much hast, often-times comes home too late. Now therefore that I may satisfie thy desire, I will discourse of the first Matter, which Philosophers call, the *fifth Essence*, and many other Names they have for it, by which they may the more obscure it. In it for certain are four Elements, pure in their Exaltation: Know therefore, that if you would have the fifth Essence, Man, you must first have man, you must have nothing else of that Matter; and see that you observe this well. This I say that if you desire to have the Philosophers Stone, you must of necessity first have the fifth Essence of that same Stone, whether it be Mineral or Vegetative; Joyn therefore *Species* with *Species*, and Gems with Gems, and not the one without the other, nor any thing contrary, which may be other than the *Species* or proper Gems; beware therefore of all that is not Essential: For of Bones, Stones cannot be made, neither do Cranes beget Geese; which if

you will consider, you'll find the profit of it, by the help of Divine Grace by the assistance whereof let us farther proceed to speak of this blessed Water, which is called the Water of the Sun and Moon, hidden in the concavity of our Earth. Concerning which Earth know that all that is generated must of necessity have Male and Female from which action and passion arise, without which Generation never is. But you will certainly never receive profit from things differing in kinds. Notwithstanding, if you have this Water of the Sun and Moon, it will draw other Bodies and Humours to its own kind, by the help of the virtue and heat of the Sun and Moon, and will make them perfect. As an Infant in the womb of its Mother, decoction of temperate heat helping it, turneth the Flowers into its nature and kind, that is, into Flesh, Bloud, Bones, and Life, with the other properties of a living Body, of which 'tis needless to say any more. And hence you may understand, that our Water changeth it self into a perfect kind, with things of its own kind: For first it will congeal it self into a substance like Oyl; then it will change that Oyl, by the means of temperate heat, into Gum; and lastly, by the help of the perfect heat of the Sun, into a Stone. Now therefore know, that out of one thing you have three, that is, Oyl, Gum, and a Stone. Know also, that when the Water is turned into Oyl, then you have a perfect Spirit; when the Oyl is turned into hard Gum, then you have a perfect Spirit and Soul; and when the Spirit and Soul are turned into a Stone, then you have a perfect Body, Soul and Spirit together: which as it is called the *Philosophers Stone* and *Elixir*, and a perfect Medicine of mans Body; so also that which is leavened with its *genus*, and the *fifth Essence*. Know, Son, that *fifth Essences* are diverse, one whereof is to Humane Bodies, another to *Elixir*, and to the imperfect Bodies of Metals: For you must consider, that the generation and growth of Metals, is not as the growth of mans Body; for a *genus* agrees with its *genus*, and a *species* with its *species*. Moreover, know that the first Matter of man, which begetteth the Flesh, Bloud, Bones and Life, is a Spermatick Humour, which causeth generation, through a vital Spirit included therein: And when the Matter is generated and congealed into a Body, extract thence the *fifth Essence* of that Body, wherewith you may nourish the Body. Yet, Son, will I tell thee moreover, that Water, or Matter, or Seed whereof Man is begot, is not the augments of the Body. Know, Son, that if the Body be fed with its natural food, then its first Matter will be increased, and also the Body, (*viz.*) the first Matter in quality, and the Body in quantity; the first Matter is that which is called the *fifth Essence*. Yet know, Son, that the *fifth Essence* is one thing, and the Matter of Augmentation is another:

and, as I said before, the increase of Metals, is not like the increase of mans Body. Although the *fifth Essence*, which causeth the augmentation of Metals, may be a fit Medicine for Humane Bodies; as also the *fifth Essence*, which causeth the augmentation of mans Body, may be a fit Medicine for the Bodies of Metals: and therefore, as before is said, the *fifth Essence* is one thing, and augmentation another. You see therefore for what reason our Water is called, *the first Matter and Seed of Metals*, viz. because of it all Metals are generated. Therefore you will have need of it in the beginning, middle, and end, for as much as it is the cause of all generation, because by its Congelation it is turned into all sorts of Metals, to wit, into the first Matter of the sorts. Thence it is called, *the Seed of Metals*, and *the¹ Metallick Water of Life*: because it affords Life and Bloud to sick and dead Metals, & joyneth in Matrimony the Red man with the White woman, that is, the Sun and the Moon. It is called also *Virgins Milk*; for as long as it is not joyned with the Sun and the Moon, nor with any thing else, except only those which are of its own kind, so long it may be called a Virgin. But when it is joyned with a Male and Female, and marrieth with them, then is it no longer a Virgin, because it adhereth to them, and becomes one with them to whom it is joyned, that is, with the Sun and Moon, whom it joyns and is joyned with to generation. But as long as it remains a Virgin, it is called *Virgins Milk*, the *Blessed Water*, and the *Water of Life*, and by many other Names.

And now, my Son, that I may say something of the Philosophers *Mercury*, know that when thou hast put thy *Water of Life* to the Red man, who is our *Magnesia*, and to the White woman; whose name is *Albifica*, and they shall all have been gathered together into one, then you have the true Philosophers *Mercury*. For after that in this manner all is joyned with a Male and Female, then it is called the *Philosophers Mercury*, the *Philosophers Water of Life*, the *Bloud of Man*, his *red Flesh*, his *Body and Bones*. Know therefore, that there are many sorts of Milk, (*Viz.*) *Virgins Milk*, *Womans Milk*, and also *Mans Milk*: For when first they are joyned in one, and she is big, having conceived, then the Infant must be nourished with Milk: But then you may know that this Milk is not *Virgins Milk*, but rather the man and the womans Milk, where-with it is always to be nourished, till it is grown to that strength, that it may be brought up with stronger and fuller food. That food which I mean is the leavening of it, which gives it form, that it may perform Virile work: For until the Infant, that is, this our Stone, be formed and leavened with its like,

¹So it is in the Latine, though perhaps the words should be *Vita Metallica*, that is, the Water of Metallick Life, that is, of the Life of Metals.

the Bloud of the green Dragon, and the red Bloud of the red Dragon, whether it be the white Stone or the red, it will never do a perfect work. Know therefore, Son, that the first Water is that Water *Rebar*, which God made of Nature, and it is the cause of Generation, as I said before; but when after the conjunction which ariseth from the Marriage, it begets the Water of Life, and the Philosophers Milk, with one of which, or both, you must augment and feed your Stone perpetually.

Much more could I say to thee, Son, concerning this first Matter, but let this suffice, that setting aside impertinences of words, we may now, Divine Grace favouring us, proceed to the practice it self of the Philosophick Stone. See therefore, my Son, that thou diligently putttest all these Matters (which though they are three things, yet are they but one only) in a Glass Vessel, and letttest them quietly putrefie: then put an Alembick upon your Vessel, and by distillation draw out all the Water, which may be thence distilled. Try this first in *Maries Bath*. Then place the Vessel in Ashes, and make a gentle Fire for 12 hours: then take the Matter out of the Vessel, grind it well by it self, without the foresaid Water, then put it again into the Vessel with Water, and stop the Vessel close. Put it in the Bath for three days, and then distill the Water as before in the Bath, and the Matter will be more black than before. Do thus three times over, and then grind it no more; but afterwards as often as you distill it, so oft pour Water on the top: but between each distillation give it so much Fire for six hours or more till it become indifferent dry; then pour Water on the top again, and dissolve it again in the Bath under a blind Alembick. Also in every distillation separate the Flegm, by casting away six or seven drops of Water in the beginning of each distillation. And observing this order, cause it to drink its proper Water, till it hath drank of it seven times its weight which it had at the first. But then it will be of a white colour, and so much the whiter, by how much of the more of its own Water it hath drank. This is *White Elixir*.

Moreover, this our Water is called *Homogeneal*, and by many other names. Besides, know that this Water and Matter generate as well the Red Stone, as the White: Know also, when this first Matter is brought to its compleat whiteness, then the end of one, is the beginning of the other; that is, of the Red Stone, which is our *Red Magnesia*, and *Virgins Brass*, as we said at first: Son, see thou well understand these words. Our *Virgins Brass*, is our Gold; Yet I do not say, that all Brass is Gold: also our Brass, is our live Brimstone; but all live Brimstone, is not our live Brimstone: also Quicksilver, is *Mercury*;

but I do not say, that common Quicksilver, is our Silver: as I said before, that Water of Life which is our Seed and first Matter, is our *Mercury* and our Spirit of Life, which is extracted out of the bless Land of *Aethiopia*, which is called *Magnesia*, and by many other names. Besides, my Son, know that there is no perfect generation, without corruption; for corruption causeth cleanliness, and cleanliness corruption. Consider therefore, Son, our dying poison, which dyeth and is dyed perpetually; and this is our Body, our Soul, and our Spirit, when they are joynd together in one, and become one thing, which with its parts ariseth also out of one thing, besides which there is not any other, neither ever shall be. Wherefore, my Son, great folly it is for any one to believe, that any other Medicine can be turned into Gold or Silver; which Medicine will little profit thee of it self, except it be mingled with a Body, for then shall it perfect its work according to its form to which it is born: For it is never born that it of it self become a Body. Moreover, know that there is as much difference between the first Matter, which is called the *Seed of Metals*, and the Medicine, as between the Medicine and Gold: For the Seed will never be the Medicine without a Body, neither will the Medicine ever be a Metal without a Body. Much difference also there is between *Elixir* and the Medicine, as between Masculine and Feminine Seed, and also an Infant which is generated of those in the *Matrice*. Now you may see, that the Seed is one thing, and the Infant another; though they be one and the same in kind, one thing, one operation, the Vessel finally one, though it be called by diverse names: For of a Man and Woman, is an Infant born, when as yet the Man is one thing, and the Woman another, though they be one and the same in kind: which you ought to understand in our Stone. But what I said before, that corruption is the cause of generation, and of cleanliness, is true: For, you must know, that every thing in its first Matter is corrupt and bitter, which corruption and bitterness is called *dying poison*; which is the cause of Life in all things, as will be sufficiently manifest, if you with right reason do weigh the Natures of things. Consider well, O Son, that when *Lucifer* the Angel of Pride, first rebelled against God, and prevaricated the Command of the most High, be assured that this was made corrupt, bitter, and harsh to him: No less was the fall and prevarication of our first Parents *Adam* and *Eve*, whom death and condemnation followed, made to them corruption and bitterness, and likewise to us in whom the same corruption is propagated. Many more like examples I could recite, if need were: But setting aside these, to come to what is proper to our discourse; consider well, that of all precious Fruits which grow out of the Earth, their first Matter is bitter and harsh, as still retaining some footstep of the former corruption and putrefaction;

which bitterness, by the means of continual action of natural heat, is with great virtue turned into sweetness. Now therefore, Son, if thou wilt be ingenious, this little will suffice whereby to find out much more, and to perceive my meaning: Consider therefore well, Son, that according to the old Proverb.

He sweet deserves not, who no bitter tastes.

But now to speak something more of our Brass; know, that Brass signifies continuance, or continuing Water: But what is farther to be considered in the nature of the name of Brass, you may easily gather from its *English* Tetragrammate name, that is, its name consisting of four letters, to wit, B. R. A. S. First therefore, by B. is signified the Body of our Work, which is sweet and bitter, our Olive and our Brass continuing in its form: by R. is signified the Root of our Work, and the Spring of continuing Radical Humours, which is our Red Tincture, and Red Rose which purifieth all in its kind: A. signifies our Father Adam, who was the first man, out of whom was born the first woman Eve; whence you may understand, that therein is Male and Female. Know therefore, that our Brass is the beginning of our Work, our Gold and Olive, for it is the first Matter of Metals, as Man is the first of Man and Woman. S. signifies the Soul of our Life, and Spirit of Life, which God breathed into Adam, and all the Creatures; which Spirit is called the *fifth Essence*. Moreover, Son, by these four Letters, we may understand the four Elements, without which nothing is generated in Nature. They also signify *Sol* and *Lune*, which are the causes of all Life, Generation, and augmentation of all things born in the World. In this name therefore of four Letters, consisteth our whole Work: For our Brass is Male and Female, of which ariseth he who is called *begot*. Therefore, Son, take good notice what is signified by our sweet Brass, what is called our *Sandiver*, or the Salt of our *Nitre*, or *Nitre*; what also by the Bloud of the Dragon, what *Sol* and *Lune*, our *Mercury*, and our Water of Life, and many other things, concerning which Philosophers have spoken darkly, and in Riddles. Know therefore, Son, that our first Matter is neither Gold, nor common Silver, nor is it of corrosives, or such outward things, which *Denigrators* groping in the dark now-a-days do use. Take heed therefore, Son, that by no means you admit any thing contrary in kind; for be assured, that what a man shall have sowed, the same shall he reap. Moreover, know that when our Stone is compleated in its proper kind, then it will be a hard Stone, which will not easily be dissolved; yet if you add his Wife to him, he will be dissolved into Oyl, which is called the Philosophers Oyl, incombustible Oyl, and by many other names. Know therefore, Son, that there are divers leavenings,

as well Corporal as Spiritual, (*viz.*) Corporal in quantity, and Spiritual in quality: Corporal leavening increaseth the weight and quantity of the Medicine, yet is not of so great power as the Medicine it self, as is Spiritual leavening; for it only increaseth the Medicine in quantity, not in virtue: but Spiritual leavening increaseth it in both; and where the Corporal ruleth above an hundred, the Spiritual above a thousand. Moreover, as long as the Medicine is leavened by Spiritual qualities, so long it is called the Medicine; but when it is leavened with the Corporal substance, it is called *Elixir*. There is therefore a divers manner of leavening, and a difference between the Medicine, and the *Elixir*; for the Spiritual is one thing, the Corporal another. Know also, that as long as it is Spiritual leavening, it is liquid Oyl and Gum, which cannot conveniently be carried about from one place to another; but when it is Corporal, then it will be a Stone which you may carry about in your pocket. Now therefore you see what is the difference between the Medicine, and the *Elixir*; nor is the difference less between *Elixir*, and Gold and Silver, for Gold and Silver are difficult to melt, but *Elixir* not so, for it easily dissolves at the flame of a Candle: thence you may easily perceive, how various the differences of our composition and temperament are. Lastly, that we may say something concerning their food and drink, know that their food is of airy Stones, and their drink is drawn out of two perfect Bodies, namely, out of the *Sun* and *Moon*; the drink that is drawn out of the *Sun* is called liquid Gold, (or Potable, that is, that may be drank;) but that out of the *Moon*, is called Virgins Milk, Now, Son, we have discoursed plainly enough with thee, if Divine Grace be not wanting to thee; for that drink that is drawn out of the *Sun*, is red, but that out of the *Moon*, is white; and therefore one is called liquid Gold, but the other Virgins Milk; one is Masculine, the other Feminine, though both arise out of one Image, and one kind. Son, ponder my words, otherwise if thou wanderest in the dark, that evil befalls thee from defect of light: See therefore that thou beest diligent in turning the Philosophick Wheel, that thou mayst make Water out of Earth, Air out of Water, Fire out of Air, and Earth out of Fire, and all this out of one Image and Root, that is out of its own proper kind, and natural food wherewith its Life may be cherished without end. He who hath understanding, let him understand.

Glory to God Omnipotent.

F I N I S.