

THE  
BOSOME-BOOK  
OF  
Sir GEORGE RIPLEY,  
CANON  
OF  
BRIDLINGTON.

CONTAINING

His Philosophical Accurtations  
in the making the  
Philosophers Mercury and Elixirs.

LONDON,

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at the Pelican in Little Britain.  
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**The Bosome-Book of Sir. George Ripley.  
The whole Work of the Composition of  
the Philosophical Stone, of the great  
Elixir, and of the first Solution of the  
gross Body.**

First take 30 pound weight of Sericon<sup>1</sup> or Antimony<sup>2</sup>, which will make 21 pound weight of Gum, or near thereabouts, if it be well dissolved, and the Vinegar very good<sup>3</sup>, and dissolve each pound thereof in a Gallon of twice distilled Vinegar when cold again, and as it stands in Dissolution in a fit Glass Vessel, stir it about with a clean Stick<sup>4</sup> very often every day, the oftener the better, and when it is well molten to the bottom, then filter over the said Liquors three several times, which keep close covered, and cast away the Feces, for that is superfluous filth which must be removed, and enters not into the Work but is called *Terra damnata*<sup>5</sup>.

**The making of our Gum or green Lyon.**

Then put all these cold Liquors thus filtered<sup>6</sup> into a fit Glass Vessel, and set it into *Balneo Maria*<sup>7</sup> to evaporate<sup>8</sup> in a temperate heat, which done our Sericon will be coagulated into a green Gum called our *Green Lion*, which Gum dry well, yet beware thou burn not his Flowers<sup>9</sup> nor destroy his greenness.

**The Extraction of our Menstrue, or  
blood of our green Lion.**

Then take out the said Gum, and put it into a strong Retort of Glass very well Luted, and place it in your Furnace, and under that at the first, make sober Fire, and

anon you shall see a faint Water<sup>10</sup> issue forth, let it waste away<sup>11</sup>; but when you see a white Smoke or fume<sup>12</sup> issue forth, then put to a Receiver of Glass, which must have a very large Belly, and the mouth no wider then it may well receive into that the Neck of the Retort, which close well together that no fume<sup>13</sup> issue forth of the Receiver. Then increase your Fire by little and little till the fume which issues be reddish, then continue the greater Fire, until drops like blood<sup>14</sup> come forth, and no more fume will issue forth, and when that leaves bleeding let it cool or assuage the Fire by little and little, and when all things are cold, then take away the Receiver, and close it fast suddenly, that the Spirits vanish not away, for this Liquor is called, our blessed Liquor<sup>15</sup>, which Liquor keep close stopped in a Glass till hereafter. Then look into the Neck of the Retort, and therein you shall find a white hard Rime as it were the Congelation of a Frosty vapour or much like sublimate, which gather with diligence and keep it apart, for therein are contained great Secrets which shall be showed hereafter, after the great Work is ended.

**The Creation of our Basis.**

Then take out all the Feces which remains in the Retort, and are blackish like unto Soot, which Feces are called our Dragon, of which feces Calcyne one pound or more at your pleasure in a fervent hot Fire in a Potters<sup>16</sup> or Glass-makers Furnace, or in a Furnace of vente (or a Wind Furnace) until it become a white Calx, as white as Snow, which white Calx keep well, and clean by itself, for it is called the Basis and Foundation of the Work, and it is now called *Mars*, and our white fixed Earth or *ferrum Philosophorum*.

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<sup>1</sup> Red Lead - *Medulla alchimiae* (1476) by George Ripley. Samuel Norton in his *Key of Alchemy* (1421) mentions a 'vitriol/gum of sericon'.

<sup>2</sup> Grey in appearance.

<sup>3</sup> Strong acetic acid

<sup>4</sup> Should this be an Iron rod?

<sup>5</sup> Cursed Earth.

<sup>6</sup> Washed and filtered.

<sup>7</sup> Bain-marie (French), or water bath.

<sup>8</sup> Not distil! A gentle heat to drive off the acetate.

<sup>9</sup> Crystals of the gum

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<sup>10</sup> Residual acetic acid and hydroscopic water.

<sup>11</sup> Replace receiving flask.

<sup>12</sup> Flammable!

<sup>13</sup> Organic Acetone.

<sup>14</sup> Metallic Sulphur

<sup>15</sup> Combination of both condensed fume and red oil.

<sup>16</sup> 1000 °C. A difficult process, seek another path.

### **The Calcination of the black Feces called our black Dragon.**

Then take all the rest of the aforesaid black Feces or black Dragon<sup>17</sup>, and spread them<sup>18</sup> somewhat thin upon a clean Marble, or other fit Stone, and put into the one side thereof a burning Coal, and the Fire will glide through the Feces within half an Hour, and Calcyne them into a Citrine Colour, very glorious to behold.

### **The Solution of the said Feces.**

Then dissolve those Citrine Feces<sup>19</sup> in such distilled Vinegar, as you did before, and then filter it likewise, three times as before, and after make or evaporate it to a Gum again, and then draw out of it more of our Mensruum, called now, Dragon Blood, and iterate this Work in all points as afore, until you have either brought all, or the most part of the Feces into our Natural and blessed Liquor, all which Liquor put to the first Liquor or Menstrue called the Green Lyons Blood, and set that Liquor then altogether in one Vessel of Glass fourteen days in Putrefaction, and after proceed to the Separation of Elements, for now have you all the Fire of the Stone in this our blessed Liquor, which before lay hidden in the Feces, which Secret all the Philosophers do marvelously hide.

### **The Separation<sup>20</sup> of the Elements whereof the first is the Air, and is also counted our Ardent-Water, and our Water Attractive.**

Then put all the said putrefied *Menstruum* into a Still of fine *Venice* Glass fit for the quantity thereof, put on the *Alembic*<sup>21</sup>, and close it to the Still with a fine Linen Cloth dipped in the White of an Egg,

and then set it in *Bain-marie*, put to the *Receiver*, which must be of a great length that the Spirit respire not out again, and with very temperate heat separate the Elements one from another, and then the Element of Air will issue forth first, which is an Oil<sup>22</sup>.

### **Our Ardent Water or Water Attractive is thus made.**

When all the first Element is distilled then in another Still fit for it, rectify it, that is to say, distil it over 7 several times, and until it will burn a Linen Cloth clean up that is dipped in it<sup>23</sup>, when it is put to the flame, which then is called our *Ardent Water* rectified, and is also called our *Water Attractive*, which keep very close stopped, for otherwise the Spirit thereof which is very subtle will vanish away<sup>24</sup>.

By often rectifying the *Ardent Water*, there will come Aer in a white<sup>25</sup> Oil swimming above the Water, and there will remain behind a yellow Oil<sup>26</sup> which with a stronger Fire will also come over. Put Sublimate<sup>27</sup> beaten small upon a Plate of Iron, and in the cold it will dissolve into Water<sup>28</sup>, and filter it then, and put upon it some of the *Ardent Water*, and it will draw to itself all the *Mercury* in form of a green Oil swimming aloft, which separate and put into a Retort, and distil first a Water, and afterward will come a green thick Oil which is the Oil of *Mercury*.

### **The Flood or Water of the Stone.**

Then draw out the Flood or Water of the Stone by itself in another Receptory, which Liquor will be somewhat white, and draw it with a very gentle Fire of Balneo, until there remain in the bottom of the Still, a thick Oily substance like unto liquid

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<sup>17</sup> Highly poisonous.

<sup>18</sup> As a ground powder.

<sup>19</sup> An oxide producing a higher purified extract.

<sup>20</sup> Purification of the Water.

<sup>21</sup> Original text, Limbeck. Cap of a Still. *Lembike* (Middle English), *alembicum* (Medieval Latin),

14<sup>th</sup> Century first known usage.

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<sup>22</sup> A mixture of spirit and Sulphur.

<sup>23</sup> Flammable spirit.

<sup>24</sup> At Room Temperature.

<sup>25</sup> Clear.

<sup>26</sup> Sulphur gently transported via numerous trials.

<sup>27</sup> From the Rime, Salt of Sericon.

<sup>28</sup> Deliquescence, draw water from the air.

Pitch<sup>29</sup>, keep this Water by itself in a fit Glass very close stopped.

Note when the Liquor cometh white, you must put on another Receiver, for then all that Element is come over, two or three drops of this black Liquid Oil given in Spirit of Wine cures all Poison taken inwardly.

### **Our Mans Blood is thus made and rectified.**

Then put our *Ardent Water* upon that Matter black and liquid, stir them well together, and let it so stand well covered, for 3 Hours<sup>30</sup> then decant and filter it, put on fresh *Ardent Water* and repeat this Operation 3 times and then distil it again with a moist lent Fire of Balneo, and so do three times, and then it is called Mans blood rectified, which the Workers in the Secrets of Nature do so seek, and so hast thou the Elements exalted in the virtue of their quintessence, namely the Flood that is Water and the Air, let this Blood be kept for a season.

### **The Oil or Fire, or the Earth of the Stone.**

Then put up the Flood or Water upon the black and soft matter or Earth of the Stone, let them be well mingled together, and then distil the whole until there remain in the bottom, an Earth most dry and black which is the Earth of the Stone, save the Oil with the Water for a season close stopped in any wise.

### **The Fiery Water.**

Then beat this black Earth into Powder, and mingle it with Mans blood, and so let it stand 3 Hours, after that distil it on Ashes, with a good Fire, and Reiterate this work 3 times, and then it shall be called Water of the Fire rectified, and so hast thou three of the Elements exalted into the Virtue of the quintessence, namely, Water, Air and Fire.

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<sup>29</sup> Fixed Sulphur.

<sup>30</sup> This time may be a gross underestimate.

### **The Earth.**

Then Calcine the Earth black and dry, in Furnace of Reverberation, until it becomes very fine white Calx.

### **The Water of Life which is our Mercury and our *Lunary*.**

Then mingle with this white Calx<sup>31</sup> the Fiery Water, and distil it with a strong Fire all off as before, and Calcine the Earth again that remains in the bottom of the Still, and then distil it again with a strong Fire as before, and again Calcine it, and thus distil and Calcine 7 times<sup>32</sup> until all the Substance of the Calx be lifted up<sup>33</sup> by the Alembic, and then hast thou the Water of Life rectified and made indeed Spiritual, and so hast you the 4 Elements exalted in the Virtue of their quintessence. This Water will dissolve all Bodies and putrefy them and Purge them, and this is our Mercury and our *Lunary*, and whosoever thinks that there is any other Water then this, is Ignorant and a Fool, and shall never be able to come to the effect.

### **A grand secret or Accurtation of Sr. George Ripley, for the help of those which have made the Philosophers Mercury and whose Poverty disables them to proceed to either the Red or White Elixir**

Take the Cerus or Cream<sup>34</sup> of the finest and purest Cornish Tin molten, reduce it into fine white Calx, put it into a fit Glass Still, and thereupon pour a convenient quantity of our Mercury, when it is our *Lunary* perfect, then distil that Mercury from the Calx again, and imbibe it therewith again, and again distil and reiterate this work until the Calx is become subtle an Oily, yea and so subtle indeed, that it will flow upon a Plate of Copper Fiery hot as Wax, and not

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<sup>31</sup> Volatize the salt.

<sup>32</sup> Potentially a gross underestimate.

<sup>33</sup> Vertical arrangement of glassware?

<sup>34</sup> Oxide

evaporate<sup>35</sup>, which then will convert Copper into fine Silver, for the softness and meshness<sup>36</sup> of the Tin is taken away by the benefit of our Mercury confixed unto it by Virtue of which, it is made indurate and clean that it may agree with hard Bodies in fusion and in Malleation even as pure Silver. This work is very gainful and easy to be dealt withal, use it therefore until thou be Rich, and then I pray thee for our Lords sake go to the great work, which is hear truly set forth unto thee, according as by Practice I have wrought and proved the same. For the which thank God.

### **The Oil which is the Element of Fire, and our red Mercury.**

The Flood with the Oil afore reserved shall be distilled with a most lent Fire of Balneo, and the red Oil which remains in the bottom shall be diligently kept by itself, for it is the Element of Fire, and the Water shall be rectified again, and the same work iterated, until no more of our said red *Lunary* will remain in it.

### **The work of Putrification.**

When all your Elements be thus separated, then take the white Calcined *Feces* first of all reserved, called *Mars*, and put so much thereof into a Chymia<sup>37</sup> as will scarcely fill half the Glass, and thereupon pour so much of our *Ardent Water* rectified as may but well cover the Calx which done incontinent stop close the Glass with a Blind-head, and set it into a cold place, until the Calx have drank up all the Liquor, which it will do in 8 days, then imbibe it again with the like quantity of the same Water and let it stand eight days more, and so Reiterate the work, from 8 days to 8 days, until the same Calx will drink no more; but stand Liquid still then Seal up the Glass with Hermes seal and set it in Balneo Mariae in a temperate heat<sup>38</sup> to Putrefaction.

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<sup>35</sup> Not reduce mass.

<sup>36</sup> Original text distorted, possibly "freshness"

<sup>37</sup> Flask with long neck: Ostrich. Circulatory.

<sup>38</sup> 35°C

### **The digestion of the white Stone.**

Then in that temperate Balneo let your Glass stand unmoved by the space of fully 150 days, and until the Stone within the Glass become first Russet<sup>39</sup>, and after whitish green, and after that very white like unto the Eyes of Fishes, which then is Sulphur of Nature flowing, and not evaporating in Fire, and our white Stone ready to be fermented.

### **Another Secret Accurtation of Sr. George Ripley.**

Take the above said Sulphur of Nature, and project a quantity upon a Plate of Glass fiery hot, and the Glass shall be converted into a Silver Colour, and that Colour shall not be removed by any Art.

### **The digestion of the Red Stone.**

Then take out the white Stone and divide it in to two, and know the true weight of each half, the one half reserve to the white work, the other half put into the Glass, and seal it up again with Hermes Seal, and then remove the Glass into a Cinerition<sup>40</sup> which is somewhat a hotter Fire, and let it stand there likewise unmoved in that digestion, until it become Red, and of a Purple Colour, so have you the red Stone also ready to be fermented.

### **The Preparation of the Ferment to the white-Stone.**

Then take Silver well purged from all Metals, and other filth that may be joined with it, and dissolve it in as much of our *Lunary*, which is our *Mercury* as the quantity of your Silver is, and in no greater quantity as near as you may, and set it upon warm Ashes close covered, and when it is thoroughly dissolved, the whole Liquor will be green, then rectify our *Mercury*, clean from it again twice or thrice, so that no drop

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<sup>39</sup> Reddish-brown

<sup>40</sup> Ash bath

of our *Mercury* be left with it, then seal up the Oil of Luna in a *Chemia*, and set it in Balneo to putrefy, until it shows all Colours, and at the last come to be Crystalline white, which then is the white Ferment of Ferments.

### **The Fermentation of the white-Stone.**

Then put that half of the white Stone before reserved, for the white-Work into a fit Glass, and know his weight, and put so much of the foresaid *Lune* Ferment into the Glass with the Stone as may contain the 4th part of the said Stone, and in the said Glass well luted fix them together, in a fixatory Vessel under the Fire, which will be well done in 2 or 3 days.

### **The Inceration of the White-stone.**

When they are thus fixed together, and become one very fine Powder, incerate, that is to say, imbibe it with the white Oil of our Stone, which is our *Lunary* by pouring on as it were drop after drop, until the Stone be Oilish, then congeal it, and again imbibe it, and in this manner iterate this work, until this Stone will flow in Fire like Wax, when it is put upon a Plate of Copper Fiery hot and not evaporate, and congeal it up until it be hard, white and transparent clear as Crystal, then it is the Medicine of the third degree, and the perfect white Stone, transmuting all Metaline Bodies, and chiefly Copper and Iron, into pure and perfect Silver.

### **The Preparation of the Red-ferment.**

Then likewise take Gold very purely, first purged from all other Metals that may be joined with it, with ten parts of Antimony, and then dissolve it in our *Mercury* or Liquor *Solutive*, as before you did the *Lune*, and when it is perfectly dissolved the Liquor will be Citrine<sup>41</sup>; then in like manner, rectify from it again our *Mercury* or Liquor *Solutive*, and then Seal up the Oil of Gold *Ferment* in a *Chemia* fit for it, and set it

in Balneo to Putrefy, which likewise, will become black, and must stand still unmoved in digestion, until it become white, which then remove into a stronger Fire without opening the Glass, and then keep it until it change Colours and become Citrine, which then is also Ferment of Ferments for the Red-work.

### **The Fermentation of the Red-stone.**

Then to the other half of the Stone before rubified, digested, and reserved for the Red-work, put so much of the foresaid Gold Ferment as may contain the 4th part of the said Stone, and then fix them as you did the white-Stone, under Fire in a fixatory Vessel which will be then very well done in two or three days.

### **The work of Inceration for the Red.**

When they are thus fixed together, and thereby become one very fine Powder, incerate, that is imbibe it with the Red Oil of our Stone, then congeal it again, and again imbibe, and congeal and iterate this work so often until it will flow in Fire as Wax but not evaporate when it is put upon a Plate of Copper Fiery hot, which then congeal up until it be clear transparent hard red in Colour like a Ruby or Jacinth, which then is the Medicine of the third Degree and the perfect Red Stone, transmuting all Bodies, and especially Mercury, Lead and Silver into pure Gold, as any of the Natural Mine.

Thus have you the making of the Philosophers Stones, both White and Red, which is the great Secret of Philosophers. These Stones must be kept by themselves in several Glasses, or fair Boxes in a warm place, or dry at the least, as you would keep Sugar, because they are of so tender and Oily Substance, as they are apt to dissolve in every moist place which therefore preserve as is here showed.

### **The Multiplication or Increase of the Vertue and Goodness of the aforesaid white and Red Stone.**

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<sup>41</sup> Orange-brown

If you list to exalt your Medicine or Stone in quantity or goodness, then put your aforesaid white or red Stone, or part of each into a several Viol<sup>42</sup> of Glass fit for the quantity, close well the Viol, then hang your Glass or Glasses in Balneo Mariae *vaporoso* so that it touch not the Water, in this warm fume or breath, the Stone which was congealed before in the Glass will now be dissolved, which then congeal again upon warm Ashes, and again thus dissolve and congeal, and so iterate this work of dissolution and congelation until at last the Stone within the Glass dissolved will be congealed, as soon as he comes out of the Pot or Balneo, and feels the cold Air, without any other manner of Congelation to be used, and note that how often in this work you do dissolve and congeal your said Medicine or Stone, so many times doth he increase his Virtue ten times<sup>43</sup> in projection, so that if at the first one ounce will convert 100 ounces, after the second Solution, the same one shall convert 1000, after the third 10000, after the fourth time 100000, and after the fifth 1000000 parts of any imperfect Metal unto pure and true Gold and Silver in all Examinations as any of the Natural Mine.

### **The way of Projection.**

Because it is very cumbersome<sup>44</sup> to melt a thousand thousand parts of any Body, when you will make Projection thus do. Take 100 ounces of *Mercury* first washed with Salt, and Vinegar, and put it into a Crucible, and set it over the Fire, and when that doth begin to Wax hot, put in one ounce of your Elixir or Medicine thus prepared as afore taught you, upon that hundred parts of the cleansed Mercury, and all the said Mercury shall become Medicine, project, one ounce of that Medicine upon another 100 ounce<sup>45</sup>, of other washed *Mercury*, and it shall all also be converted

into Medicine, again the 3 time project one ounce of this congealed *Mercury*, upon another 100 ounces of washed *Mercury*, and all shall be converted into Medicine, then project, the 4th time 1 ounce of this, last congealed Mercury, upon another 100 ounces of other washed *Mercury*, and all that shall be converted into Gold or Silver, according as our Stone was prepared, to the white or red, praised be God.

### **Accurtation of the great Work which saves half the Work and Labour in the Work revealed by Sr. George Ripley.**

The white Frosty Rime or Powder whereof I told you in the beginning, being found in the Neck of the Retort, after the drawing of the Menstrue is like Sublimate, and is perfect Sulphur of Nature, and therefore needs neither Putrefaction nor Digestion unto white, of this Sulphur take either the half, or the whole if you list, and also take so much of *Lune Ferment*, when it is *Firment of Ferments* as may contain the 4th part of the said Sulphur, seal them up both together in a Chemia and fix them together under the Fire in a fixatory Vessel, which will be well done in three days, and when they are become one very fine White Powder, then Incerate, that is to say, Imbibe it with the White Oil of our Stone, which is our Mercury, congealed, and imbibe and iterate this Work, and in all points do as you did in the White Work, in the great Elixir before, for this Sulphur is of the same Nature, and thus shall you have the white Work perfectly made, and the Stone in half the time, and with half the Labour; which is not only a precious Jewel, but a great secret also.

### **The like Accurtation of the Red-work done by the aforesaid Sulphur.**

Take either the one half or the whole of this above said Sulphur of Nature, and dissolve it once with our red Mercury *congeal it again*, and then Seal it up in Chymea and

<sup>42</sup> Viola da gamba? Perhaps indicative of glassware shape.

<sup>43</sup> Exponential.

<sup>44</sup> Original text, combersom.

<sup>45</sup> Symbol used in original text.

set it in Cinerition (or Ashes) till it be thoroughly digested, and until it hath put on his Purple Colour or Fiery Chariot, then put thereunto so much of the Ferment of *Sol*, when it is Ferment of Ferments, as may contain the 4th part of the said Sulphur, then fix them together under a Fire in a fixatory Vessel, which will be well done in 3 days, and when they become one very fine Red Powder, then Incerate, that is, Imbibe it with the red Oil of our Stone, which is our red Mercury and red Lunary, and Fire of the Stone, and continue in doing in all points as in the great Work aforesaid until the Stone be hard, transparent in Colour like a Ruby or Jacinth flowing in Fire, and not evaporating, then have you with less Labour and Expense of time the perfect Red-Stone for the which thank God.

This is the pleasant and dainty Garden of the Philosophers, which bears the sweet smelling Roses white and red, abbreviated out of all the Work of the Philosophers,

containing in it nothing superfluous or diminished, teaching to make infinitely Gold and Silver according as the Medicine was prepared, having Virtue to heal also all Grieves and Sicknesses as well proceeding of cold as of hot Causes through the subtlety of his Nature, above all other Medicines of Physicians, for it comforts the Healthy, strengthens the weak, and makes the Aged seem Young, and drives away all Grief, and puts venom from the Heart, it moistens the Arteries and joints it dissolves all things in the Lungs, it cleanses the Blood, it purges the Pipes, and keeps them clean, and if the Sickness be of one Month continuance, it heals it in one day, if of one Years continuance, it heals it in 12 days, and if the grief be very old, it heals it in one Month. To conclude, whosoever hath this Medicine, he hath an incomparable Medicine above all Treasures of the World, Praise God.

FINIS.