

THE THIRD PART

**One hundred thirty eight Aphorisms through which
the Mystery of the Hermetic Philosophy and the
Secrets of Nature and Art are plainly set down.
(or. The Secrets of the STONE of the WISE)**

P R E F A C E

Kind, art-loving reader! The wise man *Syrach* said in Chap. 44: "Let us praise the famous people. They have wisely advised us and have left honest names and splendid writings. They were also rich and had great possessions, and their reputations will not perish. They are buried in peace, but their names will live eternally. People speak of their wisdom, and the community proclaims their praise:. It is not improper to say the same of the true philosopher-chymists, since they did speak wisely and left honest names and splendid writings. They were also rich and had great possessions, and their praise will not go under. People speak of their wisdom, and the community proclaims their praise.

Because their names are to live eternally and the community is to proclaim their praise, I have felt called upon to print the following two treatises for these reasons:

First: so that God's great wisdom and wonders might be spread further and His name be praised thereby, according to the statement of the wise man: "My lips shall praise Thee when Thou teachest me Thy wisdom. Thereafter I will proclaim Thy wonders, so that others may also be converted to Theem and they will praise They Name for ever and ever".

Secondly: for the love I bear the Sons of the teaching and wisdom. Especially and particularly, however, so that the simple be sincerely warned against the sophists and cheats, also that the philosophical rose-garden be cultivated more and more and be decorated with beautiful exotic plants. (understand: writings trans-

into our mother tongue from foreign languages).

Lastly, also as a mark of gratitude due to the famous men and in remembrance of the philosophers, our teachers and masters, so that their praise may never perish and their names remain eternally.

After God illuminated my understanding through his great love and mercy (for which I thank him with my heart and mouth), so that I learned the science of the Philosopher's Stone through assiduous reading and deep reflection on the writings of the Philosophers, I consider it my duty not to allow the books of the wise to perish but to transmit them also to our descendants in repeated printings, because books are vessels of the memory and everlasting names of the wise. If God's great wisdom and wonders are to be spread further, the writings and books of the old wise men must be sought out and given a public printing, so that their secret wisdom and truth, hidden in their writings, may be revealed and made known to the Sons of wisdom.

But because the right understanding of this high secret can hardly be obtained, or cannot be obtained at all, by the mere reading of books without the Spirit of God (in whose hands lie everything), I therefore exhort the investigators and disciples of this sacred Art and Science above all to pray frequently and earnestly. For prayer is the right master-key for acquiring God's Grace to remove the darkness and blindness of our heart, so that our understanding is illuminated and we be granted through our asking, seeking and knocking, the right physical keys that open all doors of the secrets of Nature and can show and reveal to us the fountain of health and wealth.

"For whoever bends his back unremittingly and is ready to read our books", *Baccasen* says in the *Turba*, and with utmost effort uses his understanding, puts his mind on it, and is not burdened with base and mundane, and not at all with clever thoughts, and prays God Almighty for wisdom, as Solomon did, and not for money or property (like sophists and money-greedy persons do, whose souls are thirsting much more for gold than for God and wisdom), will rule and reign in our kingdom as a king without stop until his end.

Also because, according to Brother *Basilius Valentinus*, as the doors to the age-old Philosopher's Stone and the inexhaustible fountain of health are so tightly bolted and closed that among a hundred thousand who are running after this precious jewel, hardly two or three will obtain it. It is highly necessary that prayer not be neglected, aside from the frequent and careful reading of good books and also work done in accordance with Nature.

One should also know that although the *materia* for the Philosopher's Stone is required, it is not so precious! Nevertheless, the understanding, science and art of manufacturing it are not so simple, easy and unimportant. Even if the work is called a woman's work and a child's play by many philosophers, this can only be truthfully said by one who knows the Art perfectly and has once brought it to a happy end. But whoever does not know it and must find it in the books and dark sayings of the philosophers - I will let him judge himself if he does not find it difficult to accomplish. For if it were not difficult, there would no doubt exist and be found more true professors and real masters of the Blessed Stone, especially among the highly intelligent and profoundly in-

structed.

In this Art, therefore, no one can rely solely on his ingeniousness or great intelligence, because in this Work, he will accomplish little without God's blessing.

True, at all times there have been excellent people and intelligent men who were striving after this very noble Science, and as they were also wealthy, they could easily realize their concepts and ideas in the practice of the Work. But after they failed with their preconceived opinions in this, that and many other ways, they finally ended up despising and deriding the whole work and considered it futile. Yes, they also wrote off the sayings of the philosophers as mere sweet dreams or pleasant discourses, or rather, all lies! This has nevertheless not taken anything away from this splendid secret. for although this one or that one has investigated it for years, laboring very hard and also incurring much expense, and yet has not reached the desired goal, it is and remains true and certain and must justly be recognized and considered as a special gift and wonder of God.

Furthermore, this high and inexpressible secret has also aroused suspicion and contempt through the great number of alchemists, false misleading sophists, wild laboratory workers, cheats and vagrants who travel from one country to another and sell their processes and false Particulars to others for large sums of money, promise big mountains of gold and yet are farther removed from them than the Atlas or Caucasus is from us Germans.

There are also many men of little intelligence who undertake this very noble Science, such as barbers and bath attendants, bankrupts and brewers, pearl embroiderers and brasiers, cobblers

and tailors, dyers and tanners, illiterate soldiers, *etc. etc.*, who, when they have perhaps obtained a book from which they have learned about the inexhaustible usefulness of the Art both in regard to health and wealth, immediately rush into things, believing that they have picked up the work from a profound, shrewd, subtle and neat way from one book or another felt that they could not and should not fail. Therefore, they gave up their occupation, commerce and craft, begin to distill, percolate, purify, calcine, coagulate, boil, roast and cook until, at last, all their goods and chattel are boiled away, distilled off and spent, and nothing is left.

Then they take themselves to other wealthy people, boast greatly of their knowledge of alchymia and talk a great deal about the *Theophrastic Art* (as they call it), namely that they have obtained in it a solid foundation through books and various experiences - if only there were SOMEone who would give them a lift and advance so much (money) that the Work could be suitably completed, it would be repaid to the giver a hundred, yes, a THOUSAND times. It is easy to find some who are taken in by the smooth words of the swindlers and their affirmation, under oath, (as the heart of all men tends to grandeur and greed!) and they are willing to risk a good part of their wordly goods. They are given great hopes from one month to another, that the Work is about to reach the desired end, especially if the colors indicated by the philosophers appear. Then a jubilation and exultation begin, one wants to endow a church, a hospital, a poor-house, another thinks of building castles, a third resolves to recruit a body of troops to offer to this or that potentate, hoping thus to achieve great prestige.

But it happens to them as it happened to those fellows who sold the bearskin when they had not yet caught the animal. For at the end, one can see of what tune the song is, and finally everything ends in nothing. That is why those who believe in the sophists receive a good knock and not only at their reputation!

Therefore, I have been moved to pity, and aside from that, our Christian duty demands that we warn the simple and credulous against those crafty cheats and shrewd sophists, wherever they let themselves be warned.

It is indeed beyond doubt that a man who know how to make something good and profitable does not need to sell that knowledge to another for money!

That is why those act very foolishly who believe in those vagabonds and cheats. It would be better for them if they did like Pope Leo X, for when he was given a book by a supposed goldmaker; which showed how to make gold from various metals, and hoped to receive a very great award for it, the Pope arranged for him to receive no more than an empty purse, saying: "If you can make gold, you are richer than I and do not need any gold. Just keep yours in this purse".

For the rest, the true philosophers write about their highly blessed Science that it either finds a pious godly man or that it makes a godless pious and god fearing. Now look at the sophists, what kind of a life they lead - they are sooner found with wine, beer, tobacco, spirit and in improper places than with the Holy Bible, prayer-book and the beautiful books of the old wise men. Therefore, as the old wise men were at the beginning called *sophi*

afterwards *philosophi*, a swindler and a process-seller may not unjustly be called a sophist and a philotoper.

But here someone might ask: How do I know about what I have just written about the sophists? I kindly answer them that I have associated with them in my youth, sought their company and therefore occasionally treated them, only to gain their friendship, see what furnaces, instruments and vessels they were using and in what materia they were working. when I saw and experienced many strange and foolish things of which I cannot omit telling the reader this.

Once, three of them signed a contract which contained such a cruel and terrible oath that listening to it would make a person's hair stand on end!

I learned of this contract during their lifetime but I only learned of the terrible oath they had attached to it, namely that they would not divulge it to anyone but keep everything secret, after the death of the first man, for he did not live long after, and the other two also died one after the other within a few years.

The one, however, who was the chief and provided the means, could not attend to the Work as his trade did not permit it, but as he had large revenues and was a great lover of Alchymia, he did not mind paying for the other two who were working in the laborator

One of the three was a scholar who had a servant with whom I became acquainted, and from him I secretly learned what the others were planning and what they were doing.

Once they used a materia which had to stand continually in an open fire in front of the bellows, for three days and nights. Two of them stayed with it. When one of them went to sleep, the other rose, and they did this continually for three whole days and

night. However, they could not find a crucible that could withstand the fire and keep the materia that long.

When now this work was done, and their materia had increased in the fire as they pretended-because they had put in 20 lots and afterwards found 24 lots-they jubilated exceedingly, especially in places where the best wine and the most delicious beer was to be had, and believed-since the philosophers write that the materia grows in the fire-that they were working with the right materia and would now reach the desired goal.

Therefore, as the scholar had a cousin in Holland who was still a young fellow, they agreed to disclose the Art to him, because he was a young man and could help them a great deal with their work. They also intended to move from the locality where they were living and settle in a big city of Germany, rent a big house, and there quietly manufacture the Philosophers' Stone. However, their project came to nothing, for when they invited the cousin, in writing, to come to them, he died during the trip. Further, since the one who provided the means died first, the other two could not continue the work. The second, who had spent all his fortune in the laboratory in the course of long years, died a few years later in great poverty and debts. The scholar lived for a few years thereafter, but when one night a glass burst in the fire and he tried to collect the materia again, he was infected by many vapors, which resulted in an illness and he gave up the ghost two weeks later.

I also knew a chymist who was leading a Christian and

godly life, judging by his appearance. When he walked in the street, however, he always had one or two of his apprentices with him; and when he went to church, often so many gathered around him in his pew that it looked like a small swarm of bees. This was, no doubt, to hear from him how far he had got in the cooking and preparation of his Elixir, because, as I presume, they wished to have a share in it, having invested all their money in it.

At the time, he was also one of the guild of fools, he bought a process based on talc, with which he lost a good part of his property in the laboratory, burning it to ashes and dust. He also gave up his livelihood and business, so as not to be hindered in the Work. But since things did not go as he wished he began a new business and sold processes, promised huge mountains of gold, fed his apprentices with hope, saying that his Work was coming along fine and would now certainly reach the desired end. He confirmed this with such solemn oaths that even the wise Solomon would have believed that it was the precise truth, as otherwise such a sanctimonious man (according to worldly appearance) would not have sworn thus, by all that is sacred!

He also promised that, if God blessed him with the accomplishment of his Work, he would shower so many gifts on all that they would not lack anything for the rest of their lives.

Just this man took a walk with me one day in a church. We were speaking of the Philosophers' Stone, and he revealed to me his materia. It was common mercury, or quicksilver.

I asked him if he meant the common mercury that could be bought in a retail shop. He swore by the living God that the

chymical philosophers all meant the common mercury and he considered it the right materia. The more I contradicted him, the more he cursed and, in addition, gave me to understand that the whole Art consisted merely in knowing how to shoot down the volatile bird, Mercury, so that it would become tame and subdued and would not fly out of the glass. And God's grace had revealed this to him owing to his industry.....But far from it! Even if this man were to work with quicksilver for several years, he could not prepare the Philosophers' Stone from it.

Therefore, my friend, be on your guard against the sophists and those who deal in processes and offer them to others for money. Do not heed their oaths, because their swindle is all lies.

For *Isaac Hollandus* writes in his Mineral Work, Book 2, Chapter 3, that the Universal can be made quite easily and almost **more** easily than a Particular. In the third part of the interpretation of the Twelve Keys, *Basilius Valentinus* speaks: "His white spirit is the true Mercury of the philosophers, which had already been before me and will also come after me, without which the Stone of the philosophers and of the Great Secret can not be made either as a Universal or as a Particular, let alone a Particular transmutation. And that spirit is the key to the opening of all metals as well as their own closing".

How then can the sophists, who are dealing with processes and do not know this white spirit or the true Philosophical Mercury, let alone **have** it, without which no particular tincture can be made, how can they dare to offer others a Particular for money and do business with it? Inasmuch as God must be prayed to for this Secret Science, why do the fools and the greedy

turn to the needy sophists and frauds to learn and buy wisdom from them, seeing that wisdom and understanding are not to be found anywhere except with God?

Because God has given me a sincere heart which loves justice and truth, I am deeply grieved when I hear that the simple of heart are led on a wild goosechase by the sophists and cheated out of a great deal of money. Just such a case of fraud occurred a few years ago in a big commercial city in Germany, when someone who did not reflect much was so much influenced by an old crafty, evil chemical swindler that he was cheated out of several hundred Reichsthaler (old German dollars), believing that he would get the white tincture. The cheat became flighty, leaving only his laboratory and instruments to his sponsor, so that the latter might pursue the art further.

It has also been publicly acknowledged, in print, how the Frenchman *Michael Potier* carried on a real trade with the knowledge of the Philosophers' Stone, offering it to lovers of the Art in printed books, and offering - under certain conditions and for specific sums of money, to reveal its materia and preparation both from the Light of Nature and from testimonies of the Philosophers. Yet he himself, even in his 81st year of age, knew neither its materia nor its preparation!

Nevertheless, he insulted and derided those who had been cheated by him and who complained that he had sold them nothing but lies, with a public *Apology* dedicated to the Roman Emperor - although he had neither seen the Stone in his lifetime nor learned nor heard anything definite of it. It is indeed ridiculous that in his *Veredario Hermetico* which he dedicated in the

year 1622 to the famous Philosopher-Adepts *Michael Sendivogius*, *Alexander Sedonius* and *Guglielmo Homilton*, all three of whom had given evident proof of their knowledge by the many projections that they did, calling himself in the Preface, their colleague and associate in the sacred science, and dared to say: *Video enim homini plebejo & mechanico melius este, quam mihi.* That is: I see that a workman fares better than I. By this the vanity and stupidity of this supposed philosopher can be sensed sufficiently.

I also remember a fast trick whereby, at a very distinguished place, a cunning goldmaker cheated a very artistic, but very clever, lover of the Art out of 600 Reichsthaler. To succeed in his plan, he convinced the lover of the Art, that he had been taught that Work by Divine Providence, which enabled him to gain four ducats (old gold coins) out of every silver Mark, and if this work were performed in quantity, it would yield an enormous annual income. He also offered to show his sponsor such a Work, when he would confirm the truth of what he had said by the Work itself. Thereupon, everything that was necessary was provided, the gold was eparayed, tested and was found to be genuine!

The sponsor, being a smart man, to whom the knavish tricks and jugglery of the current goldmakers and archswindlers were not unknown, did not trust his assertion and secretly set up a furnace in the cellar, where he duplicated his work and did everything exactly as the other had done the previous day. The cheat smelled a rat and noticed that his sponsor had undertaken some project and was working in secret. He therefore approached

the spnsor's servant boy and asked him what he and his master were working on. He gave him a Reichsthaler and in return the boy took him to the cellar one day when his master and mistress were at church. He showed hgim the furnace and the glass - into which the cunning swindler poured something, (no doubt some calcined gold in an amount proportional to the glass!) thereby tricking his sponsor.

When the alchemyist had refined, separated and tested his prepared silbver, the following day the sponsor also refined, separated and tested the one he had worked at in the cellar, in the presence of various good friends and lovers of the Art - and obtained good gold. Thereupon he no longer doubted that the Art was right and that he could be as rich as he wished.

In honor of his master, the sponsor arranged a big banquet, and after paying him the required 600 Reichsthaler, accompanied him, together with many of his good friends, on his way home.

After this, when he undertook the Work in great quantity, the materia in the glass was immediately ignited and flew out. Thus, of five Marks of silver, two were ruined. Nevertheless, he continued preparing, refining and separating the rest according to the process - and did not obtain anything. This did not move nor anger him, as he thought that the Art had not been applied correctly, that the fire had been too strong, and that he had to do things the right way. Thereupon he began again, preceding more cautiously, and did everything as the process demanded.

When the work was finished, the silver refined and separ-

ated, not a grain of gold was to be seen or ready to come out of the silver. Expenses, time and effort, all were lost. The Art was a forgery, the sponsor was cheated and the 600 Reichsthaler, let alone the other costs, had been spent in vain and put into the greedy hands of a swindler.

This is why fledgling lovers of this praiseworthy Science must take great care not to believe anyone who boasts of this Art, offering to divulge it to others for a price, for whoever **knows** the Art, does **not** offer it to everyone. Let all keep this in mind.

And it is to be noted that those who boast of the Art are not only themselves poor devils and beggars, but also try to ruin others beside themselves, by intentionally pretending to be in possession of great knowledge and art, whereby, in addition to solemn oaths, they mislead other honest persons, rob them and often reduce them to beggary. Yes, they cause them to be laughed at, derided and jeered at on account of their great stupidity of having believed such cheats and sophists.

Those cheats brag and vaunt how they can turn so much copper into silver Marks, and so much silver into gold. Likewise, how they know a precious process of augmentation, and how they have a fixed Luna and can make a right *pars cum parte*. But to tell the truth, all that they can bring about is that kind of transformation of metals that causes those who believe them to lose everything of value.

I now remember a citizen of a big city who was fairly wealthy, and had a good business. He was, in addition, an honest craftsman. Because he was very ingenious, he dared to invent a *perpetuum mobile* to calculate the hitherto unknown longitude of

the sea, by which he not only squandered much time, but also money. Nevertheless, having encountered the writings of *Sendivogius* during one of his trips, he dared to puzzle out the secret discourses of the author and also the manufacture the Philosophers' Stone. When he had produced a fairly large amount of his supposed *Spiritus Mundi* by constantly breathing into a glass curcumbite, he finally, after a long coction of it, obtained a hard materia, like borax, which served as much to the transmutation of metals as the materia of which it was made.

By this useless and worthless work he got so far he was obliged to leave his house and home and support himself abroad as a mendacious sophist and swindler, finally to die in great poverty.

From this, one can see that this valuable science cannot be found and mastered by just anyone, and it is advisable that a man who is not called to it by special inspiration of God either refrain entirely from it or give it up in good time after a few attempts.

Because I have seen, heard and experienced that so many of high and low rank have been taken in and shamefully deceived by the sophists, whereby this noble Art, whose power and virtue cannot be extolled sufficiently, has fallen into contempt, I have been moved by God and the love I owe my fellow man, to write this preface against the sophists and to warn the simple sheep against the cunning wolves in sheep's clothing.

Note well what King *Geber* wrote in his other book: *Summa Magni & Perfecti Magisterii*, Chapter 30, about the Sons of Wisdom and the sons of roguishness. His words are as follows: "Therefore, you Sons of Wisdom, seek this wonderful gift of God

with great pains. But you unwise, you sons of roguery and presumotious wickedness, avoid this Art, because it is your enemy and it is against you and will drive you into wretchedness and poverty, because this gift of God is hidden by Divine Providence and is denied and refused you by His judhgement".

Further, there are also other persons who may well have read a great deal about this Divine Art but have not worked in the laboratory or assiduously implored God to reveal it to them. They adopt another way, and travel from one country to another and from one town to another, and are like bloodhounds in inquiring and investigating, trying to ferret out and stalk some game (*i.e.*, meaning a true philosopher or teacher of the Philosophers' Stone) out of whom they might fish something by discussing, contradicting, arguing and questioning.

These highly intelligent people probably have not read what *Hermes* wrote in his little book: 7 Cap., Chapter I: "But I wish to ask all Children of Wisdom, by our benefactor Who is giving us the honor of His Grace, not to divulge the name of this Stone to any fool, ignorant or rude person".

Thomas Aquinas: "Dear Brother, By your earnest prayers you have persuaded me to tell you something understandable of our Art and great Science, and I am earnestly praying **you** to keep your mouth closed and not to talk about these things".

Arnold of Villanova in the Rosarium Philosophorum: Book 2, Chapter 32: "But you who obtain this book must faithfully preserve it and not rveal it to anyone, much let it fall into the hands of the godless, because it contains the complete secret of secrets of the philosophers and it is not proper that such

a noble pearl be cast before the sows and the unworthy, since it is an exceedingly great gift of God, which God alone gives and witholds from whomever He wishes".

That is why those people go to a great deal of trouble and expense in a futile attempt to track down and find a true philosopher in order to learn the Art from him. For whoever knows something that is good and real will probably not reveal it to them. Naturally, from him who knows nothing, they cannot learn anything either.

They may obtain one advantage from it, namely that they will have an opportunity to see many a beautiful philosophical book, hieroglyphic figures and various furnaces in the houses of those who know this sacred Science and Art.

But that they could find out about the subject of the materia, the Philosophical Fire, the Work of the Art, the composition and what else pertains to it, upon **that** those fellows cannot count at all. Even if they traveled through the whole world with *Bernard of Treviso* and *Johannes Pontano*, they would yet find only just as much as these two philosophers found and tracked down, by their own admission.

Hermes, *Geber*, and other philosophers write that they received this Art solely from God. *Geber*, Book I, Chapter 7: "Our Art stands within the power of God. He gives it to whomever He wishes, and witholds it from whomever He wishes. He who is on High, full of glory, goodness and justice." *Basilius Valentinus*: "the sophists will remain asses and stupid fools till the illumination follows, which does not happen without Gods' Will". *Theophrastus Paracelsus* writes in his divine booklet Manual of

the Philosophers' Stone: "Nobody can undersnad that Divine Arcanum without the Divine Will". *Johann de Fontina*: "He replied to me that the Science is a gift of God, given through and inspired into, man."

Therefore, this Science must be acquired solely from God by praying, seeking and knocking.

Because some of these men also correspond with great Lords, seeking to acquire high honors and great prestige with them, I am of the opinion that they must imagine that if they could hunt out such a high arcanum and super-abundant gift of God, and would communicate it to such a great lord, they would receive great gifts from him in addition to a gold chain and an allowance. I sincerely warn the bloodhounds who are holding such views to desist from their preconceived opinions, lest by God's ordainment they obtain a chain such as Judas Iscariot received in reward fro betraying the heavenly and annoited cornerstone Jesus Christ, to the high priests.

For God the Lord does not wish at all that such a deeply hidden and Divine Secret be revealed and known to the whole world. Although, in the words of *Bernard of Treviso*, Book 4, it lies nbefore the eyes of the wqho;le wporld; the whole world, nevertheless, does not know it. From this we may easily conclude that God communicates it and reveals it only through His Grace and Mercy to those whom He deems worthy of it and has destined for it in His Divine Providence, as we learn from the verses of *Johannes Ticino*:

LAPIS CANDENS FIT EX TRIBUS
NULLI DATR, NISI QUIBUS
DEI FIT SPIRAMINE:
EX MATRIS VENTRE QUOS BEAVIT
ET HANC AD ARTEM DESTINAVIT
SACROQ; SPIRAMINE.

But from those who are possessed of avarice and greed, the Lord hides it, so that they are blind with seeing eyes. If they only first sought the Kingdom of God and the Lord, their eyes would be opened and the Lord would do them the favor of illuminating their understanding, so as to enable them to comprehend the writings of the old wise men, as is attested to by the most wise King Solomon, Proverbs 28, : "Those who seek the Lord understand all things". And the 34th Psalm says: "Those who seek the Lord do not lack anything".

With what eagerness and evotion the old philosopher *Nicolas Flamell* sought the Lord God may be seen from his book where he writes that once he obtained an old gilt book, not made of parchment or paper but, so it seemed, of the tender bark of a young tree. On the first page there stood, in large gilt letters: Abraham the Jew , Prince, Priest and Levite, astrologer and philosopher, wishes luck and prosperity to the Jews scattered in France through the wrath of God". This was followed by curses and imprecations with the often repeated word "Maranath" over anyone who would cast his eyes upon that book, unless he were a priest or scribe.

The Jew Abraham cursed all those who would look upon his book, from which they could not learn anything anyhow without God's Providence and inspiration, because the Art was described therein in hieroglyphics and veiled words, as *Nicolas Flamell* bears witness to.

He says that although he was in possession of the book and had discussed it with learned persons, he could not learn anything from it in 21 years until God finally granted his re-

quest after his return from St. Jacob where he had fulfilled his vow with great devotion and then studied and worked in the laboratory for fully three more years.

That this highly praiseworthy Art can in no way be sold for money is attested to by many philosophers. *John de Fortina* writes as follows: "It is almost a divine miracle and nothing is found under heaven that has the same effect, which is experienced by the prophets and natural scientists. Only, it is difficult to look for it because of the potentates and great lords, although it may be sought in good conscience. That is why the wise loved it so much that they cursed those who divulged it".

The *Waterstone of the Wise*: "In addition, you should remember and well consider that you must not, by your body, yes, by the loss of your eternal welfare and salvation, reveal that secret to anyone unworthy or godless, much less communicate it and let him benefit from it; in short, that you will not abuse it but apply it only to the honor of God and in no way for your own fame."

John of Padua: "Hide it also as I have kept it secret, and do not reveal it indiscreetly, to prevent it by all means from getting into the hands of powerful and hardhearted men, so that you may not incur eternal damnation. Also: it is not God's Will that this great treasure should be imparted to the high powerful lords and potentates".

Fra. Basilius Valentinus in his preface to the Twelfth Key: "And even if I wished to reveal to you more, out of love, the Creator has forbidden me to do so. Therefore it is not proper for me to speak more about this, so that the gift of the Supreme not be mis-used and I not be the cause of (someone's)

committing a mortal sin, and I draw upon me God's wrath and with the others incur an eternal, unending punishment".

Rosarium: "In the art of our masterpiece, the philosophers have not hidden anything except the secret piece of the Art which no one must divulge. For whoever would do so, would be accursed and draw upon himself God's wrath and die of a stroke".

Basilius Valentinus in *The Triumphal Chariot of Antimony*: "For it is certain and true, forsooth, that no godless can obtain the true medicine, much less taste the right unchangeable bread of Heaven of eternity".

Aristotle says in his *Secretis Secretorum* that he is a breaker of the Heavenly Seal who divulges the secrecy of Nature and the Art.

The reason why I have presented so many arguments, why I have shown and proven that all true philosophers have laid a curse on all who think of divulging and vulgarizing the sacred Science, is so that the magnates should no longer allow themselves to be fooled by the sophists and crooks, that the simpletons and fools should become wiser, and that the bloodhounds should refrain from tracking down this secret Science, because no philosopher is permitted to make a gift of this precious jewel or golden crown with a purple cap to the unworthy and to crown them with it, and they leave it to God to reveal it to whomever He wishes, as we may read in *Flamell*, Chapter 2.

As I also know, that not all disciples and lovers of this very praiseworthy Science know Latin, in which most books written about it are published, I have copied this treat-

by Johan Ticinensis, who is supposed to have been a priest in the kingdom of Bohemia, having lived about 300 years ago, a very learned man, experienced in the Art. I have had it copied as well and clearly as could be by an experienced chymist from an old manuscript dated 1412, written quite illegibly in Munich writing, and translated from the Latin verses into understandable German. Seeing as how that book or process agreed with the old true philosophers but had never been put into print, I wished to have it printed for the use and benefit of the Sons of the Doctrine.

The second booklet has been written by a learned monk experienced in the Art, *Antonius de Abbatia*, who lived - approximately - after the death of *Lully*. He applied himself to the Art by steady reflection and work in the laboratory and he finally reached the desired end of his quest by constant praying, meditating and working. He wished to leave to the other monks the information contained in his book, the like of which can only be found in the writings of a true philosopher, which has to be especially noted here. (NB: Anton Abbatia can be translated as "Anthony the Churchgoer". The same can be said for Anton Kirchweger. Interesting! - HWN)

I, for my part, consider it a writing such as few can be seen, fewer are written and still fewer understood or remembered. When I received it from a good friend who is experienced in the reading of these Art-books, I did not wish to keep it for myself alone but wanted to communicate it, translated from Latin into German, to other students of the Art who do not know Latin (Just as I had it translated from German, for the same reasons! - HWN.) and to make it known through a public printing. I did

not doubt that by carefully reflecting they would finally know the purpose of the monk and what is involved in the goal of the Art.

The third booklet was written by a learned Englishman, *Edoardus Kellaeus* (NB: not included in the R.A.M.S. edition as it is available elsewhere in English, *i.e.*, published by Weiser-HWN) famous in the previous century, who lived in Prague in 1591, together with another learned Englishman, *John Dee*, whose book can be seen in the *Theatrum Chymicum*. He lived at the time of Emperor Rudolph, for whom he tinged so much and so often on account of the many projections he has made. But he was imprisoned by Emperor Rudolph, I don't know why, and was kept in the Castle of Zobesslau. Upon his great promises, he was released from prison, but as he did not keep his promises, he was arrested again and taken to Castle Beyzem, twelve miles behind Prague, where he wrote this book and dedicated it to Emperor Rudolph. But when he tried to break out of prison, using ropes to let himself down from a window with the help of his countrymen, his impatience caused him to be discovered by a sentry and led back to the previous prison where, in spite of the efforts of the physicians and surgeons, he died in 1597. 42 years and a few months of age.

Aside from this, they can rejoice with me to hear and find in the German language two German philosophers of this Divine Art (as it is called by King *Geber*, in his book *Summa Magni & Perfecti Magisterii*, Book I, Chapter II), as may not easily be found in another foreign language. The first is *Frater Basiliius Valentinus* of the Order of St. Benedict. The other is

Philippus Theophrastus von Hoenheim (Paracelsus.)

Regarding the first, he has written so beautifully and clearly and described the whole process of the Great Stone of the age-old wise men figuratively and in the manner of the old philosophers, that in this no one can easily measure up to him. He himself writes in many places that he has written as clearly and explicitly as no one had done before him.

As it is, he has not only described the whole process figuratively for the Sons of Wisdom, filling their ears with pleasant words and similies, but, so that their eyes might also be entertained, he has very artistically painted the Great Work in beautiful hieroglyphic figures for the eyes of the Sons of the Doctrine, according to the manner and custom of the old philosophers, such as *Lampert Spring* (Lamspringk), a noble German, and *Abraham the Jew*, a Prince, priest and Levite, both of which philosophers are cited by *Nicolas Flamell* in his book. (He did this) so that the way to the fountain of health and wealth might be found and the doors of the great Philosophers' Stone be more easily opened.

Among the philosophers hardly any is to be found who placed the materia, the furnace with the vessels, the weights and colors so masterly before our eyes as he has done and has depicted so correctly.

True, other philosophers have also written about it but one either omitted this, another that, and described it incompletely. Yes, many being envious have written in a totally misleading manner, of which *Valentinus* can reasonably not be accused. This is why I most highly recommend the writings of this blessed man to the disciples and lovers of this sacred and Div-

ine Art. It is to be hoped that whoever understands them will probably not understand the writings of all true philosophers who did not write sophistically out of envy and illwill as some did, and will at last reach the desired goal.

In regard to the excellent philosopher *Philippus Theophrastus Paracelsus*, he has written very beautifully of the prima materia of metals, which alone acts with in all things and maintains them, in his book entitled: Secretum Magnum de Lapide Philosophorum, in which, among others, he also philosophizes wonderfully on the creation of the great and little worlds. However, he has not described the preparation of the Philosophers' Stone along the lines of the other wise men but expresses himself differently, in a very high and profound way, by which he reveals the truth. A Son of Wisdom can notice it, provided he completely understands the aforementioned German philosopher (Valentinus) and others. Else it is difficult and hard to learn anything from him. Of this difficulty of the Art he himself writes:

"It is not easy for a man to attain to the unchangeable knowledge of these three main points through his diligence and intelligence, and he can go wrong in a trice. He must receive his instruction orally from a true master, or else the work will be very unbcertain, for it requires long experience together with a great knowledge of all natural creatures. For how many are there who take to this Art and spend many years before they find the right materia or sujet of the tincture. And even if they ~~did~~ find them, a wind arises easily which will knock them down and confuses them so that they cannot easily decide (what

course to follow). And even if they have conquered the first *Caput* (head), the search for the other heads is very painful. In addition, the right storm-winds begin when the Preparation is to be done, because in this Art nothing is so secret as the Preparation. Nowhere are the philosophers so confused as when they are dealing with *the Preparation, for on it depends the whole foundation of this construction.* and the more frequently a man looks at the mere letters of this chapter, the more he is lead into a wrong way....".

Since then this high excellent secret is all a gift of God and cannot be easily investigated with one's own intelligence, much less learned from a sophist by a purchased process, and can hardly be obtained from a true philosopher's oral report, I will in conclusion exhort all lovers and Sons of Wisdom to direct in this Work all their sense and thoughts, projects and actions to these three points: **1. earnest prayer; 2. frequent carefull reading of proven writings; 3. work done according to Nature.** Let that be enough for them.

With which I commend them to the love of God and His gracious government and protection.

Praise be to the Supreme and Mightiest God Who has created this Art and Whom it has pleased to reveal it to God-fearing men. To Him be praise and glory, from now to eternity, **AMEN.**

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all of us, Amen. Praise be to God Omnipotent. *Laus Deo Omnipotent!*

HOW HAPPY ARE THOSE
WHO ACQUIRE THIS GIFT OF GOD.
THEY DO NOT SEEK ANY MORE
THAN THE HONOR OF GOD -
THEY LAUGH AT A GREAT GLITTER.



S E C R E T S

of the

STONE of the WISE

The beginning of the heavenly science is the fear of the Lord. The goal, however, is the love of our neighbor: endowing churches and poorhouses, so that what we have received from God be rendered back to Him again; after that, also helping our suffering and afflicted native country; freeing prisoners and assisting the poor and needy.

The light of this science is a gift of God which His Grace bestows upon whomever He wishes. Therefore, no one should undertake it unless he has previously thoroughly cleansed his heart, purified it of all mundane things or their cravings, completely surrendered to God, and left everything to Him.

The science of making the Philosophers' Stone is a perfect science of Nature and the Art which teaches the knowledge of metals. Its practice consists in the dissolution and investigation of the beginnings from which the metals are born, in order to reunite and recombine them on a much higher and more perfect level than they were formerly, so that they result in a general medicine for raising imperfect metals and curing all bodily sicknesses no matter which.

Those who are sitting in high honors and positions, as also those who are heavenly burdened with their own necessary affairs and must attend to them, should not endeavor to reach for the perfection of this Art, for it requires the whole man for itself alone. When it has got him, when he has dedicated himself altogether to the Lord and this Art, it removes him from all other affairs and studies, causing him to think nothing of any of them.

Whoever wishes to devote himself to this Art must first clean out and purify his heart of all harmful and evil things, such as vanity which is an abomination to God, an open portal to hell. Let him pray frequently, show love to his neighbor, crave no worldly things, avoid the company of other persons, be solitary and still so that his mind be all the more free and unhindered to investigate, reflect, meditate, and also be elevated all the more. For if the light is not illuminated or kindled by the rays of the divine power, it cannot penetrate through these secrets.

The alchemists who have filled their mind with innumerable sublimations, distillations, dissolutions, congelations, with many extracts and tinctures of spirits and other more subtle than useful operations, and have confused it with almost countless errors, can never attain to the simple way of Nature or the light of truth under their own steam, from which their all too laborious subtlety has diverted them and thrown their senses into various temptations and wrong tracks. Their hope is set

solely on a leader and faithful guide who would cleanse their obscured eyes to enable them to see the brightly shining sun of truth.

A beginner in this Art who is intelligent, stable and not vacillating, who is eager to learn the philosophy, is also experienced in physics, is of a pure heart, honest mind, and also totally devoted to God - let such a one, even if he is inexperienced in the Chymical Art, confidently and without doubting begin this work, diligently read the books of the genuine philosophers, look for a hard-working assistant, and he need thus not doubt reaching the desired result.

Let him be wary of and shun the false, deceitful philosophers, avoid reading their books or associating with them. For no matter what art he wishes to learn, nothing is more harmful and dangerous for a man than to associate with inexperienced, false and deceitful heads, from whom he hears lies instead of the truth, and by whom wrong opinions and errors are infused into a trusting, sincere and good mind.

A man who loves and seeks the truth should diligently read a few books but only the best, which are proven, sincere and truthful. In so doing, he must take care to be suspicious of what he finds easy in them or which is written easily, especially and above all regarding their secret words and concealed operations. For truth is hidden in the secret words but not in the open and easy ones, and nothing is more deceitful than when the philosophers write openly. Instead, nothing is more truth-

ful than when they write secretly, obscurely, or in riddles.

In my opinion, the very best teachers who have sincerely and well written about this secret Art are, among the old ones, *Hermes* and *Morienus Romanus*. Of the new ones I like best *Comes Trevisanus*¹⁾ and *Raymundus Lullius*²⁾. For what the latter has made public has hardly ever been said or written by anyone. Therefore, let him (the lover of the Art) read often and repeatedly his (Lullius's) old *Testament* as well as his *Codicil*, just as if they contained a precious treasure for him. Let him add to these two books his *Practica*. In these books he can find everything and take from them anything he wants, especially the true and right matter, the degrees of the fire, and how to proceed with the whole work and bring it to an end, which the old ones were greatly intent on concealing. The secret causes and origins of all things, and the secret motions of Nature are nowhere else revealed more clearly and truthfully. He has interspersed little about the first and secret philosophical water, but what there is is very suggestive.

But about this same clear water which is sought by many, found by few, and is before everyone's eyes and serviceable, which is also the foundation of this work and labor, a Polish nobleman has written expressly and extensively enough. Although he is nameless³⁾, he has nevertheless brought great things to light both in his *Novum lumen chemicum* and in his *Tractatus De Sulphure*, with parables, secret sayings and riddles, and has revealed everything so clearly that nothing remains to be desired.

1) Bernard of Treviso

2) Raymond Lully

3) This famous alchemist was Michael Sendivogius.

The philosophers much rather and more clearly reveal their opinion by figures and secret sayings than by a mute and secret discourse, yes, much more so than in explicit words. For instance, the *Tabula Senioris*¹⁾, *Rozarii picturae Allegoricae, Abrahæ Iudei apud Flamellum Schemata*²⁾. Of the most recent and youngest, *Insignia Michaelis Majeri Emblemata*³⁾, in which the secrets of the old ones are sufficiently disclosed, so that they also present the old secret wisdom like new eyeglasses.

Those who affirm that the Philosophers' Stone is above Nature and the arts are totally mistaken and are blind, because they know neither the Sun nor the Moon.

The philosophers have used many different words to describe the matter of their secret Stone, but in such a way that most of them nevertheless agree regarding the work and the process, although in different words. True, the various words do not constitute an untruth or a doubt in the subject matter itself, as a single thing may be expressed in various words without hurting the truth.

The lover of the Art or the beginner should abstain from various interpretations of the words, because the philosophers reveal their secrets with double-tongued, dubious words, often also by contradictions and words totally opposed to the truth. In this way they confuse and conceal the truth, though they do not at all intend to falsify or reject it. That is why their books are full of secret and dubious double-tongued words, but in none do they endeavor to hide their golden bough:

1) Zadith Senior

2) Abraham the Jew, or Abraham Eleazar

3) Michael Maier

*quem tetigit omnis Lucus (or: Luciis), & obscuris claudunt con-
vallibus umbrae Nec ullis cedit viribus. Sed facilis volensq;
sequetur eum (or: cum) qui Maternas agnoscit aves, & geminae cui
forte columbae Ipsa sub ora viri coelo umbra volantes.*

(Whom every daybreak has covered and shadows close in dark valleys nor does he give in to any forces. But he who recognizes the maternal birds - he who is skillful and eager - will follow him, as well as the twins (female) whose doves perhaps, flying in heaven in the shadow itself under the mouths of the man.)

Whoever is seeking the art of bringing imperfect metals to perfection and augmentation outside of, or beyond, the nature of metals is on the wrong track, because we have: to take metallic forms from metals just as we take human forms from men, and oxen forms from oxen.

True, we must confess and admit that metals cannot be augmented solely by the wish and work of Nature. However, we must in turn confess that their power of augmenting lies quite deeply hidden in them and becomes manifest by means of the Art. In this work Nature requires the help of the Art, and both accomplish the end.

Perfect bodies have a more perfect seed. Therefore, the seed of the perfect metals lies hidden under a hard crust. Those who know how to extricate it with a philosophical solution have stumbled on the right track, because:

In auro Semina sunt auri quamvis abstrusa recedant.

(In gold are the seeds of gold but they retreat and hide)

Longius

Many philosophers thought that they could achieve their

work through the Sun and Moon. Others added Mercury to the Sun. Some took Sulphur and Mercury. Others again hoped to accomplish their work by adding natural salt to the two. All these believed that they could produce the Philosophers' Stone from two, then from three, then from four, even also from five. Thus they used many words concerning one single thing, but they agree in the process.

But to act sincerely and truthfully, without any reserve, we assert that the work can be accomplished with one two, namely, Sun and Moon, provided they are rightly prepared. Because that is the true and right result which is obtained by Nature with the help of the Art in which the conjunction of man and woman takes place, and therefore the child is much nobler and higher than its parents.

These bodies must be taken when they are in a state of pure, inviolate virginity, alive with their souls; not dead ones, as those are which are used by the common man, for who could expect life from a corpse? Violated and impure bodies are those called which are injured and have a mark on them; dead, however, are those called whom the highest tyrant of this world has forced to kill a soul and shed blood. Avoid the fratricide who would bring great danger to the whole work.

The Sun is the male, the foreman and the seed's giver of form. The Moon is the woman, who is called the Mother and the Mother of Nature, because she receives and nourishes the male seed in her womb. But she does not lack totally in active power,

because she rises in burning love to the male till she has drawn from him his extreme venereal lust and fertile seed. She also embraces him and does not stop till she is impregnated. Then she leaves him slowly.

By Moon or Luna the philosophers do not understand the common moon which is also male in their work and does a man's job in the conjunction. Therefore, nobody must dare make the conjunction of two males or hope for a fruit or child from such a conjunction; but *Gabricus* with *Beya*¹⁾, the brother's union with his sister, so that he might thus have a noble son of the Sun.

Conjugio junget stabili propriamq; dicabit.
(Male and Female will join in a stable marriage and it will be called proper)

Those who consider Sulphur and Mercury to be the matter of the Stone understand and mean by Sulphur the Sun and the common moon; by Mercury they understand the Moon of the wise. Consequently, the godfearing *Lullius* advises his friend not to endeavor to work except only with Mercury or the Moon instead of silver, and in Mercury and the Sun instead of gold.

Therefore, let no one be cheated into adding the third (natural salt), because love does not allow a third, and marriage consists of two. Love which asks for more is adultery and no marriage.

Accordingly, spiritual love does not defile a virgin. It follows that *Beya* could well have been united with *Gabritius* in spiritual love, without vice, because of his faithfulness, to

1) *Gabricus*, or *Thabritius*, or *Gabritius*. *Beya*, his sister. Both are the King's son and daughter.

make her more suitable and purer for marriage.

To give birth to children is the goal of a right marriage. But to ensure that a child be born nobler and stronger, both marriage-beds must be cleansed of various uncleanness, scab and stains before they go to the marriage-bed. They must not have anything foreign or superfluous about them, because a pure seed will result in a pure birth. And thus is consummated a pure marriage of Sun and Moon when they enter the conjugal room and unite, and she receives or takes from her husband the soul with good and lovable words. From this union is born a mighty King whose Father is the Sun, and his Mother is the Moon.

Those who are looking for the physical tincture outside the Sun and Moon waste effort and work. All is in vain, because the Sun gives an abundant red tincture while the Moon gives the white. Finally, these two are called perfect because through Nature's art they are clothed in the substance of the very purest Sulphur, perfectly purified. Therefore, tinge your Mercury with one of these two lights (Sun or Moon), because it is necessary that it be tinged before it can tinge in turn.

The perfect metals contain two factors which they can impart to the imperfect: tincture or fixation. For some, because they are tinged with a pure Sulphur, that is, with a white and red one, and are fixed, can therefore also tinge perfectly if they are prepared with their own Sulphur and arsenic. Otherwise, they do not have the power to augment their tincture.

In the work of the Philosophers' Stone, only Mercury is able

and right to give imperfect metals the tincture of Sun and Moon, so that, quite intermixed with the tincture, he (Mercury) can sufficiently tinge others. But he must first be impregnated with the invisible Sulphur so as to become all the more intermixed with the visible tincture of the perfect metallic bodies, and able to repay it with must interest.

The philosophers struggle and worry quite a bit about the extraction of the tincture from gold. They believe that the tincture can be separated from gold and then increased in virtue and power. Truly

Spes tandem agricolas vanis eludit arcistis.
(hope eludes the ears of corn of vain farmers)

It is impossible to totally separate the tincture of gold from its natural body, because it is not a body composed by Nature in an elementary way and which would be more perfect than gold. Its perfection consists in the powerful, strong and inseparable union of the pure and tinging Sulphur with Mercury as both are very well prepared for it by Nature, and whose separation Nature does not allow. Should it happen that, due to all too strong a fire or water, something were extracted from gold out of the remaining moisture, something which had become liquid or was part of the dissolved body, it must not be considered a separate tincture. That the tincture clings to its body from which it can in no way be separated, is unknown to the artists.

But supposing the tincture could be separated from its body,

one has nevertheless to admit that it could not be done without destroying body and tincture, because the artists are the destroyers of Nature by their fusion-fire and do more violence to the gold with the corrosive aquas fortes (ore water) than with the dissolving ones.

This is why those who hold this view may well throw their tincture into Mercury or another imperfect metal and join them as strongly as the Art is able to do. Their hope will nevertheless be shattered: First, because the tincture will neither penetrate nor tinge the forces of Nature and the weights. This is why nothing is gained hereby which would refund the expense and restore the damage of the robbed and spoiled body.

Cum labor in damno est crescit mortalis egestas.
(When effort is lost, mortal necessity increases)

Finally also, even if the foreign tincture is added to a foreign body, it does nonetheless not bring about such a perfect fixation or useful durability that it might stand a test and resist the preserver Saturn.

Therefore the lovers of chymistry who have heretofore followed these frauds should turn around immediately and begin with the right philosophical work, so that they may not regret their loss too late, causing them to lament with the prophet: "Strangers have devoured my strength." Hosea 7.

The philosophical work takes more time and trouble than expense, because the man who has the right strong matter requires few expenses. Therefore, those who aim at a large amount of

money and incur great expenses in their work rely more on others' riches than on their Art. This is why a beginning *chymicus* must not believe such cheats, for in promising golden mountains they are after money.

Those who navigate between Scylla and Charybdis must be on guard on both sides. Those who strive after the Golden Fleece are floating between the dubious rocks of Sulphur and Mercury. Through the diligent reading of good books and illuminated by bright sunshine they have acquired the science of the Sulphur, but they get stuck in the entrance of the Philosophical Mercury. Because those who have written about it have wrapped and hidden it in so many secret words that it is much sooner revealed to one who seeks it with great intelligence than one who strives after it with sweat and pains.

To obscure their Mercury, the philosophers have made him manifold and different in each part of their work. Whoever does not understand one single part of the work will not get to know Mercury.

The philosophers have especially made a triple Mercury, namely, after his philosophical preparation and sublimation of the First Degree, they call him *their* Mercury and Sublimated Mercury.

In the second preparation - which is called the first by the authors because they omit the first - when the Sun is again made crude or is *rejucundated* and dissolved into its prime matter: This one is called *Mercurius corporum* or Philosophical

Mercury proper. Then the matter is called *Rebus*, Chaos, the whole world, in which lie all works, for it is by itself sufficient to make the stone. (trans. note: the foregoing paragraph seems to be an example of deliberately confused writing!)

Finally, the philosophers sometimes call a perfect Elixir and a tinging medicine "their Mercury", although improperly so. Because the name Mercury properly belongs to a volatile thing. That is why they call 'Mercury' anything that sublimates in any kind of work. But the Elixir, because it is the most fixed of all, does not want the name of the bad Mercury. That is why they called him "their Mercury" in contrast to the volatile one. The right way to investigate and distinguish so many Philosophical Mercuries, however, is shown only to those:

*Jupiter, aut ardens evexit ad aethra virtus,
Quos aequus amavit.*

(whom just Jupiter has loved, or the burning power has emerged into the skies (or: ether). OR: whom Jupiter loves or is carried to the upper regions of the sky by the fiery power)

That is, to whom it is given and granted by God.

The Elixir is called Philosophical Mercury on account of its likeness to and great resemblance with the heavenly Mercury (the Planet). The latter has no elementary quality, and it is thought or considered that he can easily absorb it (the elementary quality), and he adopts the nature and character of other planets; he, the changeable and moveable *Protheus*, and he augments it (the nature of the other planets) with the opposition, conjunction and aspect. The changeable Elixir also causes some-

thing similar, as it has no quality of its own, adopts the quality and nature of that with which it is mixed, and augments the latter's nature and powers in a wonderful way.

In the first philosophical sublimation of Mercury, much effort and labor awaits the alchemist. For without *Alcide*, *Jason* plans in vain to conquer *Colchis*.

*Alter inauratam noto de vertice pellem
Principium velut ostendit quod sumere poscas
Alter onus quantum subeas.*

(One has shown the golden fleece from the known summit to be a beginning, as it were, which you demand to take. The other has shown it to be a burden to the extent as you enter into it.)

Because the entrance is guarded by two horned beasts which drive those away - not without harm - who approach without understanding. Their maliciousness is only softened by the insignia of *Diana* and the doves of *Venus* - if Fate calls you to the work.

It would seem that the poet has touched on the natural quality of the Philosophical Earth and its structure:

*Pingue solum primis ex templo a mensibus anni
Fortes invertant Tauri.
Cum Zephyro putris se gleba resolvit.*

(Let the brave bulls turn inside-out the fat earth the first months of the year, from the temple, when the West Wind has destroyed the putrid field.)

A man who calls the Philosopher's Moon or their Mercury, 'common mercury', either deceives himself or is being deceived. For *Geber's* writings, *Liber Perfecti Magisterii*, Capt. 4, Par. tit. I.1.I, teach us that the Philosophical Mercury is quick-silver, though not the common one, but that which is extracted from it in a philosophical manner and understanding.

That this Philosophical Mercury is not *Argentum Vivum*

(quicksilver) either in its nature or in its whole substance but a means and a fine pure being which has originated in it (argentum vivum) and has been created by it, agrees with the view of the very best philosophers.

This Philosophical Mercury is called by various names, now earth, now water of a different kind, because it is made from both in a natural way. This earth, in which the Elements are congealed and the philosophical gold is sown, is subtle, white and sulphurous. It is an *aqua vitae* or *ardens* (burning or fiery water) and it remains a water, a bright clear water called the water of the gold or silver. But this Mercury, because it contains its Sulphur which is augmented by the Art, is rightly called the Sulphur of the *argentum vivum*. Finally, the noble substance is the Venus of the ancients, *Hermaphrodita*, of both male and female sex.*

The *argentum vivum* is partly natural, partly unnatural. It has in its nature an inner hidden root which can never be extracted from it except by a preceding purification and artificial sublimation; the exterior is outside of Nature. Separate, therefore, the pure from the impure, the essential from the non-essential or accidental, and make the secret manifest through Nature. Aside from this, stop and let it be. For this is the foundation and the Art and the whole work.

The same dry and noble moisture constitutes the noble root moisture of the metals. It has therefore also been called glass by the ancients; for glass clings stiffly and firmly to the root

* Consider quicksilver being congealed Philosophical Mercury! - HNN

moisture but is extracted from it, which then does not yield to nor is overcome by anything but a very strong fire. Our inner and deep Mercury, however, emerges or reveals itself by a fire that is quite gentle but lasts all the longer.

Some obtained the hidden philosophical earth by calcination, others by sublimation, some under glass ware, some under vitriol and salt as under natural vessels, others have sublimated it from lime and glass. But we have it from the prophet in Genesis I. that in the beginning God the Lord created heaven and earth, but the earth was without form and void, and it was dark above the deep, and the Spirit of God hovered upon the waters, and God said: Let there be light, and there was light, and God saw the light, that it was good, and He divided from the light the darkness, etc. The blessing promised to Joseph by the same prophet will be enough for the wise and understanding. Deuteron. 33. Blessed of the Lord be his land for the apples of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath, and for the fruits of the sun and the moon, from the summits of the old mountains, for the apples of the eternal hills, etc. Pray to God from the bottom of your heart, my Son, that He may give you a part of this blessed earth.

Quicksilver has become so corrupted because of the original sin that it has two defects. It has received the first from the impure Earth which became mixed with it at its birth and clings to it like glue. The other defect resembles dropsy, an infirmity or disease of the water under the skin or between the skin. It

is due to crude and impure water being mixed with pure water, which water Nature did not want to cast out or separate by contraction. Because it is alien and foreign, it flees from a little heat. This leprosy which clings to the body does not belong to its root and nature but is accidental, and that is also why they (root and nature) are separated from it. The earthly one is cleansed by a moisture-bath and a rinsing of Nature. The watery one is driven away by a dry bath with a good birth-fire. Thus the dragon is divested of its scales and unclean hide and pelt, and renovated by a threefold ablu-tion and cleansing.

The philosophical sublimation of Mercury is done in two steps: by removing from him what is superfluous and by adding to him what is lacking. The superfluous is made up of external accidents which darken the glistening Jupiter with the brown-black spheres of Saturn. Therefore, separate the envious Saturn till you obtain the red star of Jupiter. Add to it natural sulphur, one grain, and ferment. Although Mercury has in himself as much as is sufficient for himself, make sure that others also have enough of it. Therefore, augment the invisible philosophical Sulphur till the Virgin's Milk is pressed out. Now the first door is open.

The evening dragon, the dragon that shows up in the evening, guards the entrance to the courtyard or the garden of the philosophers. When the latter emerges, a fountain of a brightly shining water discharges out of a sevenfold outflow and pours in

everywhere at the entrance in which there are three times seven magical numbers. Give the dragon to drink, let it drink till it takes off its filthy garb. Then shining Venus and the horned Diana will like you very much and look favorably upon you.

In the garden of the wise three kinds of flowers must be assiduously sought and found: light-brown violets, dropping lilies, and the red immortal amaranth. Not far from the fountain, which is close to the entrance, you will first find the flowering violets which, moistened by the wide golden river through the creeks, will take on the brightly-shining color of the somewhat dark sapphire; the Sun will give you signs. You must not cut those priceless flowers off their root till you make the Stone. For when they are fresh and are thus broken off, they have more juice and tincture. Break them off with a subtle hand and good understanding, for when luck is against you, they will easily follow. And when one flower is broken, the other gold one will not lack.

The philosophers also have their sea in which small plump fish with silvery scales are born. Whoever is able to envelop them in a subtle net and extract them, may be considered an experienced fisherman.

The Philosophers' Stone is found in very old mountains and flows down from very little everflowing creeks. These mountains are of silver and the creeks are of gold. From there come gold and silver and all royal treasures.

Whoever wishes to attain the Philosophers' Stone must take

a long and faraway trip, because he must visit both Indias to bring from there the very whitest jewels and the very purest gold.

The wise draw their Stone from seven stones of which two are the noblest and of a different nature and virtue. One, an invisible Sulphur, pours into it Spiritual Mercury, *Mercurium Spiritualem*. The former (the first) gives it warmth and dryness. The latter (the second), however, cold and moisture. In this way the power of the Elements is augmented with their help. The first is found in the oriental region; the second, in the occidental. These two have the power to tinge and augment. And if the Stone would not get its first tincture from these two, it would neither tinge nor augment.

The Flying Virgin, well washed and purified, impregnated with the first spiritual seed of the first man, so that she becomes grossly pregnant, is of inviolate virginity and is tinged at her cheeks with a light-brown color. Put her together with the second man without any suspicion of adultery. Then she will again conceive from this corporeal seed and finally give birth to an honored child having both sexes: male and female. From this will arise a generation of the most powerful Kings.

Lock both, the Eagle and the Lion, well purified and tied together, in their brightly-shining cloister. Keep the entrance tightly closed and guarded, so that their steam may not escape and fly out above and the outer air may not enter. Thus put together, the Eagle will tear the Lion up and devour it. Therefore, it will be overcome by a long sleep and become dropsical

with a bloated belly. It will be changed into a very black raven by a strange transformation. With its gradually spread-out feathers it will begin to fly, and by its flight will push out or press out water from the clouds till, quite moistened, it throws off its feathers and falls down, changing into a very white swan. Those who do not know the cause of things will freeze, will be astonished when they consider that the world is nothing but a continual transformation and change. They will be surprised that the precisely-determined seeds can be changed in such a manner. The philosopher must follow Nature in his work.

Nature progresses in shaping and carrying out her work by bringing a thing to its final perfection from the beginning of its birth through various means, as if by degrees. That is why she proceeds slowly, and she reaches her goal step by step and not by leaps and bounds. Nature decides and determines her work which she undertakes between two extremes set apart by many means and differences. In its works and in order to search into and produce the Blessed Stone, the philosophical practice, which is Nature's monkey, must not deviate from Nature's example, because what is done outside of Nature's way is a mistake, or not far from it.

The Stone's extremities are the natural quicksilver and the perfect Elixir, but the intermediate means, with the help of which the work advances, are threefold: either pertaining to the matter, to the effect, or to the specific signs. By such means the whole work is performed.

The means of the Stone from matter come in various degrees. Some are extracted from others one after the other. The first are Mercury philosophically sublimated and the perfect metals which, although they are extremes in the work of Nature, nevertheless occupy a middle position in the philosophical work. From the first the second are extracted, that is, the four Elements which in turn are circulated and congealed. From the second, the third means are produced, namely both kinds of Sulphur, whose multiplication ends the work. The fourth and last means are the weighted ferments and ointments obtained by mixing the above-mentioned, which are produced one after another in the work of the Elixir. If the above-said are handled properly, the perfect Elixir is finally born. It is the end and purpose of the whole work, in which the Philosophers' Stone rests as in its center. Its multiplication is nothing but a brief repetition of all previous operations.

The active factors or *regiminum* (which are also called the key to the work) are four in number. The first is the *Solutio* or liquefaction. The second is the Bath. The third is the *Reductio* or the bringing back (Restoration). The fourth is the *Fixatio* or the fixation. Through the liquefaction the bodies flow back into their old matters. What is cooked becomes uncooked or gross, and thus it turns into a union of man and woman, out of which a black raven is born. Finally, the Stone is separated into the four intermingled Elements, which is done by the receding of the lights of Sun and Moon. The bath teaches how to make the

raven white and a Jupiter out of Saturn. It is done by transforming the body into spirit.

Reduction or leading back (restoring) means giving its soul back to the killed Stone and nourishing it with a digestible spiritual milk till it attains once more its perfect power. In these last two operations the dragon rages within itself and by bristling its tail, it uses itself up completely and is at last transformed into a Stone. Finally, at the time of the fixation, it congeals both kinds of Sulphur over its congealed body by means of the spirit of the tinctures. It boils the ferment by degrees; it makes the uncooked crude ripe and the bitter sweet. At last it gives birth to the flowing, penetrating and tinging Elixir, completes and perfect it, and raises it to the very highest sublimity.

The means, or signs, are colors which appear and follow one after the other in a specific order. They are indicative of the stage which the process has reached. There are especially three colors which should be noted as criteria. Some add a fourth. The first is the black, which is called the Raven's Head on account of the great blackness which prevails. When the work is becoming black, it is an indication that the fire is attacking Nature and beginning the dissolution. But when it has become totally black, it indicates the perfect liquefaction and combination of the Elements. Then the little grain putrefies and is corrupted, so that it may be more suitable for birth.

The black color is followed by the white, in which there is

the perfection of the first degree and of the white Sulphur. This is called the Blessed Stone. This earth is white and thin like a leaf, and the philosophers sow their gold in it.

The third color is yellow like lemons. It appears in the transition from the white to the red as an intermediate and intermixed with both. It is like the dawn with saffron-colored hair, a messenger of the Sun.

The fourth color is red or bloodred and can only be extracted from the white with fire. But because the white color is easily changed by other colors, it is soon changed from its whiteness by the sunrise. The yellow-red of the Sun accomplishes the work of the Sulphur, which is called a male seed, the fire of the Stone, the royal crown, and the Son of the Sun. With it, the first labor of the worker ceases.

Aside from these signs, which are deeply rooted in matter, indicating its essential transformation, there are countless others colors which show up in the vapors like a rainbow in the clouds. They are soon mixed with and effaced by the colors that follow them, and they rather move the air than the earth. Alchemists should not attribute much importance to and bother with them, as they do not last. Nor do they come from the inner disposition of the matter but from the fire which paints and tinges everything with a color in a little moisture, and without danger.

But if some new colors do not appear at the right time, they do not bring anything good to the work, such as a repeated blackness, for instance, because the young ravens in the nest must not

be allowed to come back to it again. The same applies to a premature redness, as it only augurs well for the harvest if it occurs but once at the end of the process. But if it appears at the beginning or before the end, it proves that there is much dryness in the matter. It is not without danger, which can only be averted by a downpour from heaven.

The Stone is raised by successive digestions as by degrees, and finally it attains its perfection. Four digestions, which are in accord with the four above-indicated effects or regimens, complete the whole work. These effects are accomplished by the fire, which also causes their differences.

The first digestion produces the dissolution of the body, by which the first conjunction of man and woman and the mingling of both seeds take place. Putrefaction, the resolution of the Elements into a homogeneous water, the *eclipse of the sun and the moon in the dragon's head*, finally, the whole world's regression into the old void and dark abyss. The first digestion occurs, just as in the stomach, in a constant warmth, better suited to a weak corruption than a generation.

In the second digestion, the Spirit of the Lord moves above the waters. The light begins to shine, as does the separation of the waters from the water. Sun and Moon are renewed. The Elements are extracted from the chaos, so that those which are perfectly mingled in the spirit may make a new world. A new heaven and earth are formed. At last, all spiritual bodies become young ravens and begin to be transformed into doves with

changed feathers.

Lion and Eagle embrace with an eternal kiss. This regeneration of the world is done by a fiery spirit which descends in the form of a water and washes the original sin off. Because the water of the philosophers is a fire that is stirred by the ascending heat of the *Balneum*. Take care that the separation of the waters be done by measure and weight, making sure that nothing of what remains in heaven retains anything of the Earth, and that the water which is driven or pulled over the heaven does not lack in dryness.

Hic sterilem exiguus deserat humor arenam.

(Here this scanty humor leaves the sterile sand)

The third digestion gives to the regenerated Earth a distinct milk and all the spiritual virtues of the Quintessence, and it joins all living souls to the body by means of the spirit. Then the Earth conceals in itself a great treasure and at first becomes like a shining moon, thereafter like a red sun. The first is called the Earth of the Moon; the second, the Earth of the Sun, because both are born of their marriage. From now on none is afraid of the punishment of the fire. Both are without blemish, because they have been purified so often by the fire and have suffered great torture till all the Elements were processed.

The fourth digestion must or should consume all the secrets of the world. By it the Earth is changed into an exceedingly precious ferment. It ferments all imperfect bodies, because it

has been changed into the heavenly nature of the Quintessence whose virtue emanates from the Universal Spirit. It is a sure panacea and a catholic medicine for all the diseases of all creatures. The secret stove of the philosophers reveals this wonder of Nature and the Art by repeating the first digestions. Be sincere in your works, so that God may be merciful to you.

Illa seges demum votis respondet avari agricolae.

(The product finally answers to the vows of the greedy farmer)

The whole process of the philosophical work is nothing but *solutio and congelatio*, opening and joining, the *solutio* or dissolution being for the body, the congelation for the spirit, and yet both are but one operation. But the fixed and the volatile are perfectly mixed and united in the spirit. This cannot take place unless the fixed body has before been dissolved and made volatile. The reduction fixed the volatile body into a lasting body, just as before the fixed was changed into a volatile - and the volatile nature can at last become fixed. But as long as the two natures are united in the spirit, the thus intermixed spirit has an intermediate nature between the body and the spirit: fixed and volatile.

The production of the Stone is an example of the creation of the world. Because it is necessary that it, too, has its chaos and prime matter in which the intermixed Elements float until they are separated by the fiery spirit. When they are thus separated, the light one is driven above and the heavy below. When the light rises, darkness recedes. The waters gather

into one and the dry appears. Finally, two great lights come forth one after another, and in the philosophical Earth are produced the virtues of minerals, plants, and animals.

The Lord God created Adam out of a lump of earth in which the powers of all the Elements were implanted, especially in the Earth and the Water, which are more apt to form a body and do so more tangibly. Into this dough God breathed a vital air and made it come to life with the sun and the Holy Ghost. He gave Eve to the man as his wife, blessed them and gave them the command and the power to multiply. This creation of Adam is not unlike the birth of the Philosophers' Stone. Because an earthly and heavy body, dissolved in water, first turns into a lump or clump to which the name Adamic Earth rightly belongs. In it are contained the virtues and powers of all Elements. Finally, the heavenly soul is infused into it by the spirit of the Quintessence and the solar influence, and by the blessing of the dew of heaven it is given the virtue and power to multiply through the union of male and female.

The greatest secret of this work lies in the manner of operating, which totally depends on the nature of the Elements, because the matter of the Stone passes from one nature to another. The Elements follow one another in the process, but each is pushed by the cycle of moist and dry till they are all turned down and rest there.

In the work of the Stone the other Elements are circulated in the form of water, as the Earth is dissolved into water which

contains the other Elements. The water is sublimated into steam. In turn, the steam becomes water, and thus the water is moved in perpetual circulation till it stays down fixed. But when the water is fixed, all the Elements are fixed. In this way they are dissolved into water and are again exhaled through it. With it they live and die. The Earth, however, is the grave of all of them and their ultimate end or goal.

The order of Nature requires that every birth begin out of the moist and in the moist. In the philosophical work Nature has to be put in order, so that the matter of the Stone, which is earthly and dense or solid and dry, be first of all dissolved into the next Element, or Water, and may flow in it. Then Saturn is born out of the Sun.

Water, driven through seven cycles, is followed by the Air which is driven hither and thither in the wind by as many cycles as are required to congeal it below. Jupiter is born after Saturn, by whose arrival the philosophical child is formed and nourished in the womb, and is at last born with a white and clear face like the brightness of the moon.

The fire of Nature, which achieves as much as the fire of the Elements, will be drawn from its hidden place when it drives the external fire. Then the crocus tinges the lily. The cheeks of the child - which has become stronger - become red. The crown is prepared for the future King. This is the accomplishment of the first work, the perfect reversal of all the Elements. Its sign is that all have ended in dryness and the body lies still

without thumping and movement. Thus all the Elements rest at last in the Earth and are tranquil in it.

The fire contained in the Stone is the Archeus of Nature, the Son of the Sun, and the Regent who moves and digests the matter and executes in it everything as soon as he obtains his freedom, for he lies hidden powerlessly under a hard crust. Therefore, give him his freedom, so that he may serve you willingly, but take care not to drive him unduly because he would suffer such tyranny and fly away without leaving you any hope for his return. Therefore challenge him with great gentleness and preserve him well and with caution.

The first mover is the external fire, the moderator of the inner fire and the whole work. Therefore the philosopher must be well acquainted with its regulation. He must well take care of the degrees and points, for in them rests the progress and success of the work, or its ruin and corruption. Thus the Art assists Nature, but the philosopher is the servant of both.

With these two tools, Nature and the Art, the Stone rapidly soars from the Earth into heaven and falls back again upon the Earth, because the Earth is its nurse. And when it is brought into the belly of the Air, it takes on the power of the superior and the inferior.

The circulation of the Elements is done by two kinds of wheels, a big and extended one and a small or contracted one. The extended wheel congeals all Elements in or upon the Earth and its cycle is not finished before the work of the Sulphur is

accomplished. The revolution of the small wheel ends with the extraction and preparation of each Element. In this, however, there are three cycles which, through a constant and intricate motion, keep on driving the matter away and frequently - at least seven times - spin each Element around, so that they follow each other in the proper order and harmonize in such a way that if one is lacking, the work of the others is altogether in vain. These are the chief tools of Nature by which the Elements are prepared. The natural philosopher should therefore consider the process in the physical treatise, which is described in detail for this purpose.

Each single cycle has its own motion, but the motion of all cycles deals with the subject of the moist and the dry. Therefore they are bound together with chains, so that they may produce one single effect and one single natural accord. Two of them are opposites on account of their goals as also of the causes and effects, because one moves upward to dry by heat, the other moves downward to moisten by cold. But the third is like sleep and causes both to rest through digestion.

Of the three cycles, the first is the emptying, which is the action of removing the excessive moisture and also of separating the pure and subtle from the gross earthly slime. But there is great danger in the motion of this cycle, because *it deals with spiritual things and is far above Nature.*

In the motion of this cycle two things must be avoided: First, that it moves too much or too violently; secondly, that

it moves too long. If it moves too violently, it causes confusion in the matter, so that the impure gross and undigested part fled away together with the pure and subtle, and the undissolved body flies away with the dissolved one, blended with the spirit. In the fast motion the heavenly nature is blended with the earthly, and the spirit of the Quintessence becomes blunt and powerless by the admixture of the Earth. A slow motion causes the Earth to become all too emptied and thus powerless, barren, and emptied of its spirit, so that it cannot easily be made to recover. Both errors either burn the tincture or drive it away altogether.

The second cycle is the replacement, the aim of which is to restore the powers of the weakened body and to give it a drink. The first cycle caused sweat and labor, this one gives healing and refreshment. The purpose of this action is to crush and soften the Earth as the potters do, so that it can be blended all the more easily.

The motion of this cycle must be lighter and gentler than that of the previous, especially at the beginning of the resolution, to prevent the young ravens from drowning in their nest in too much water, and their world from being deluged. It is this cycle that measures the water and investigates the mass: because it distributes the water according to geometrical laws. It is considered that in the entire work and practice there is no greater secret than the precisely and correctly measured motion of this cycle, because it gives form to the young philoso-

phical child and breathes soul and body into it.

The laws of motion in this cycle demand that it run slowly and leisurely and that its water be poured out sparingly, so as not to diverge from the right mass by rushing and attacking the inner fire with too much water. *This inner fire is the right foreman of the work*, not blunt or weak or even altogether extinct. Food and drink are to be tendered one after another, so that the digestion is done all the better and the dry is well blended with the moist, for the indissoluble conjunction of both is the goal of the work. Therefore take care to add as much moisture as is removed by the dry, so that the strengthening of the lost powers may restore as much as the emptying had taken through weakness.

Digestion, the last cycle, takes place with a still and almost intangible motion. That is why the philosophers say that it is done in a secret furnace which cooks the accepted food and transforms it into the members of the body. It is therefore called a putrefaction, because just as food is corrupted in the stomach before it turns into blood and is distributed to all members, this operation corrupts and putrefies somewhat by a digestive and stomachic heat, to make it adhere all the more or be congealed all the better, and to be transformed from a mercurial into a sulphurous nature. In addition, it is also called inhumation or interment, as through it the spirit is interred and buried like a dead man. But because it disappears very slowly, it requires more time. The first two cycles work especially in the

dissolution, this one on the coagulation, although all three effect both.

The laws of this cycle require that it be driven or moved with a febrile, slow semi-heat, to prevent the volatile from flying away and the spirit from being disturbed when it is totally united with the body. That is why great care must be taken that the Earth be not disturbed by winds and rain. Finally, just as this third cycle always follows the second in the correct order, so the second follows the first. Thus the three cycles, by ceaseless and yet successive operation, perform a perfect circulation which, after being frequently repeated, transform everything in the Earth and make peace among enemies.

Nature needs fire - and so does the Art, following her example - as a tool and hammer to forge her works. In the operation and work of both, fire is the master and manager. Therefore the science of the fire is very necessary to a philosopher, without which he will revolve the wheel of Nature in vain, just like a second *Ixion*¹⁾.

The word "fire" is understood in various ways by the philosophers. Sometimes it is used metonymically for heat, such as "as much heat, as much fire." Nature knows three kinds of fire in the generation of metals and plants: a heavenly, an earthly, and an inner. The first flows into the earth from the sun as its origin. It moves the mercurial and sulphurous vapors out of which metals are generated, and intermixes with them. It moves and stirs the fire of plants which lies like dead in their seed

1) A figure of Greek mythology who was condemned to ceaseless but futile labor.

and to which it flashes rays of fire as spores to vegetation for their plant life.

The second fire lies hidden in the earth. By its stirring and action the vapors of the earth rise and are pushed through small holes and tubes, and driven from the center upward to the surface of the earth. This is done both for the generation of metals where the earth is mountainous and for the generation of plants. It makes their seed ready and suitable for generation by putrefaction and softening.

The third fire is born of the first, the solar fire, together with the thirsty metallic vapor. It is covered by the Menstruum, becomes thick together with the moist matter and is kept imprisoned in the latter's power, or rather, it is attached to the mixture like a form. But implanted in the seed of plants, it adheres to the seed till it comes or is led out, stirred by the sharpness of its father's rays. Then it moves, stirs, and thus forms the matter from within, becoming the fashioner and builder of the mixture. But in animal generation this heavenly fire acts together with the animal, though it cannot be felt. For it is the prime active power of Nature. But the woman's warmth is like the earthly warmth inasmuch as it putrefies, dissolves, and prepares the seed. The fire implanted in the seed, however, the Sun's Son, disposes the matter, and when it is disposed, he also fashions it.

In the matter in which they work, the philosophers can observe three fires, a natural and a nonnatural one, also an anti-

natural one. They call the natural fire the heavenly spirit. It is implanted and preserved in the deepest ground of the matter and quite firmly bound up with it. The power of the metals renders it mute and dull until it is moved, stirred and released by the philosophical Art and external heat and has obtained the power to move a dissolved body. Then it fashions its wet matter by expanding, penetrating, unfolding, and coagulating it. In every mixing the fire of Nature is the beginning of heat and motion.

They call nonnatural fire that which comes from the outside and is introduced into matter by strange tricks, so as to increase its natural powers. But they call antinatural fire that which putrefies the whole *compositum* and destroys the moderation of Nature. It is imperfect because it is unsuitable for birth. It cannot overcome corruption. Such a fire or heat is that of a Menstruum, and it is improperly called an antifire, for it is somewhat natural, as it corrupts and spoils only the intact specific form, that is matter, to make it ready and suitable for birth.

It is more believable, however, that the corrupting antinatural fire is not different from the inner one, but is its first degree. Because the order of Nature requires that corruption precedes birth. That is why the inner, with-Nature-agreeing fire accomplishes both. It stimulates two things in Nature, first, to achieve a slow corruption by a gentle heat, and to prepare the body. Secondly, to arouse a much stronger fire of great-

er heat for birth, to give life to the elementary body which has been disposed by the first fire, and to fashion it totally. That is why a double motion of a double degree of heat is used, and this should not be considered two different fires. The name antinatural fire, however, is given much more rightly to the corruptive fires.

By successive degrees of digestion the nonnatural fire is changed into a natural or implanted one and is increased. The whole secret consists in the increase of the natural fire which, because it is simple, cannot act beyond its powers or bestow a perfect tincture to an imperfect body. It is self-sufficient but has nothing to give. When it is increased by the nonnatural fire, however, it acts more vigorously and extends far beyond the boundaries of Nature. It tinges foreign and imperfect bodies and makes them perfect due to the greatness of the tinctures and the hidden treasure of the increased fire.

The philosophers also call their water a fire because it is very hot and contains a fiery spirit. It is also called a fire because it burns imperfect metals more than common fire. For it dissolves them perfectly, while they resist our fire and cannot be dissolved by it. This is the reason why it is also called a burning water. But the fire of the tincture is hidden in the belly of the water and manifests by a dual effect: the dissolution of the body, and the increase.

Nature uses two kinds of fire in her work, an outer and an inner. The first is the seed of all things, implanted in the

intermixed ones and hidden in their center. It moves and makes its body come alive, being the starter of life and motion. But the second, namely the outer fire, awakens the first from its sleep, just as if it were poured from heaven or earth, and it impels it to act. Because the live little sparks implanted in the seed require an outside mover whereby they are moved and begin to act.

Likewise in the philosophical work. The matter of the Stone has its inner fire which is partly innate, partly added to it by the philosophical process. These two combine and get together inside because they are of the same kind. The inner needs the outer which the philosopher dispenses according to the laws of the Art and Nature. The outer incites the inner to move. These fires are like two wheels where that which is concealed is slowly or quickly pushed and moved by the tangible wheel. Thus the Art helps Nature.

The inner fire holds a middle position between mover and matter. That is how it happens that while it is being moved by the former, it in turn moves the latter. If it is strongly driven, it will in turn drive strongly. The whole shaping of the work consists in the mass of the external fire.

Whoever does not know the degrees and points of the external fire should leave the philosophical work alone. For he will never be able to bring light out of darkness if the work does not pass through the heat by points and degrees, just like the four Elements of which the external ones are transformed by the central ones.

Since the whole work rests on the separation and perfect preparation of the four Elements, as many degrees of the fire are required, because each Element is extracted with its own grade of fire.

We speak of four degrees of the fire: that of the bath, of ash, of coal, and fire itself which is also called the *optetic*. Each degree has its points, usually only two, sometimes three. The fire must be driven carefully, as through points. It is thereby decreased or increased so that the matter, just like Nature, may proceed to its formation and perfection, as it were, of its own. For Nature does not abhor anything as much as what is done with violence. Therefore the philosopher must carefully consider the slow departure and approach of the sun, whose light of the whole world imparts its warmth to the ground according to the seasons and their destination, and gives them their temperature.

The first point of the heat of the bath is called the fever-warmth or the warmth of manure. The second point is the bath itself. The first point of the second degree is the heat of ashes. The second point is the heat of sand. The fires of coal and of flames actually have no proper points but are distinguished in the understanding according to the strength or gentleness of the fire.

In the works of some philosophers we read only of three degrees of the fire, the bath of ashes and of fire which comprises the coal and flame baths simultaneously. The heat of manure is

sometimes distinguished from the degree of the bath. Thus the philosophers confuse the light of the fire with all sorts of words, for its knowledge counts among the noblest secrets.

Because in the White Work only three Elements are extracted, only three fire-degrees are required. The fourth, that is the *opteticus*, is reserved for the fourth Element which brings the pure Work to its end. The first degree causes the eclipse of the Sun and Moon. Through the second, the light of the Sun and the Moon is renewed. Through the third, the Moon obtains its full light. Through the fourth, however, the Sun is elevated to its highest honor. But in each part the fire is administered by geometrical rule, so that active and passive correspond with the disposition, and their powers appear in equal measure.

The philosophers have assiduously hidden their fire, and have barely touched on it. They point to it more by writing about its properties than by indicating its names. Thus they say that there is an airy fire, a vaporous, a moist, and a dry, a bright, and an astral one, which can easily be increased or decreased by degrees at the discretion of the artist. Whoever wishes to know more about the fire will get satisfaction in the books of *Lullius* who has truthfully revealed the secrets and practice to sincere hearts.

The fight of the Eagle with the Lion has been described in various ways. Because the lion is the strongest of all animals, it is necessary that many eagles get together to subdue him - at

least three or more, up to ten. The less there are, the harder the struggle and the slower the conquest. The more eagles there are, however, the shorter the fight and the prompter the tearing up of the lion. In *Lullius*, seven eagles are said to be best, but nine in *Senior*.

The vessel in which the philosophers cook their work is of two kinds: one of Nature, the other of the Art. The vessel of Nature - which also has the name "vessel of Nature" - is the Earth of the Stone, or the woman, or also the mother in whom the man's seed is conceived, corrupted and readied for birth. The vessel of Nature, however, is threefold, because the secret is cooked in a threefold vessel.

The first vessel of the Art is made of transparent stone or of stone glass. Some philosophers have concealed its form in a puzzling description: Now of two parts, that is, a retort and an alembic, now of three parts drawn above and held together by an added cover, be it said.

The variety of these vessels they say is necessary for the philosophical work, and to conceal them they have called them by all kinds of names according to the different operations. Those used for the dissolution they call *Solutoria*; those used for putrefaction, *Putrefactoria*; for distillation, *Distillatoria*; for sublimation, *Sublimatoria*; for calcination, *Calcinatoria*, etc.

But without saying an untruth, one vessel is enough to do and complete both works of the Sulphur, and another is required for the work of the Elixir. The different digestions do not re-

quire different vessels. Yes, one should rather take great care that the vessel not be changed or opened before the completion of the first work.

The form of the glass vessel or the retorts must have an oval bottom, the neck must be bent over or crooked, one hand's breadth or more, sufficiently wide with a narrow mouth, like an unbroken smooth surface, everywhere thick and sturdy enough to enable it to stand long-lasting and sometimes simultaneous fires. The alembics are called blind because they are closed hermetically to prevent anything extraneous from entering them and the spirits from going up in smoke.

The other vessel of the Art is a wooden one, made of a block of oak divided into two half, hollowed balls in which the philosophical Egg is warmed and nourished till the young bird appears. See *Fonte Trevisam*.

Alchemists call the third vessel their stove. It preserves the other vessels, the matter, and the whole work. This the philosophers have also endeavored to hide.

The stove which preserves the secrets is called *athanor* because of the everlasting fire in its keeping. It provides the work with a constant though varying fire which has to be considerably increased or decreased according to the amount of the matter or the size of the stove.

The stove should be made of baked stones, or fat soil, or stove-earth, well dissolved and intermixed with hair to make it stick together more firmly and stiffly and to prevent it from

bursting in long-lasting heat. The walls must be three or four fingers thick, so as to enable them both to preserve the heat and to resist it.

The form of the stove should be round, its inner height two foot. In the middle there should be an iron or copper plate, round, thick like the back of a knife. It should take up almost all of the inner width of the stove, but a little narrower, so that it does not touch the walls. It should be placed on three or four props attached to the walls, with many holes to facilitate the rising of the heat through them and the sides of the stove.

Under the iron plate there has to be a hole, and another one above it. Coal is put on the fire through the lower, and through the above one can test or feel how the fire is, strong or mild. Opposite these holes there should be a small window fitted with a glass through which the colors can be seen. In the center of the plate put the secrets' tripod with a threefold cask. Finally, the stove must always be covered with its attached cover, and the holes must well be closed to prevent the heat from escaping.

Now you have everything required for the work, whose goal is the birth of the double Sulphur. The composition and processing of both is done as follows: Take a red dragon, the stout-hearted, aggressive one, whose birthday does not lack in strength. After this, seven or nine noble Eagles, Virgins whose sight does not weaken before the sunbeams - chose those. Throw the birds with

the wild animal into a clear prison which must be well closed. Put a Bath under them to rouse them to battle with lukewarm vapor. Soon they will start a long and hard fight till finally, about the 40th day, the Eagles begin to rob the beast and tear it up. When it dies, it infects and poisons the whole prison with a black poison which hurts the Eagles, and they die. Out of the putrefaction of the dead bodies a raven will be born, slowly grow after a Bath and, with a craned neck, will soon stretch its wings and begin to fly. Because of the wind and clouds it seeks out cracks and flies about for a long time. You, however, must prevent it from finding a crack. At last, when it has become white due to slow and long-lasting rain and heavenly dew, it is transformed into a snowwhite swan. When the raven is born, it is a sign for you that the dragon has died. To make the raven white, extract the Elements and distill them in the order prescribed till they are congealed in their Earth and have turned into a snowwhite and quite subtle powder. When this is done, you will have obtained the first desire to the White.

If you wish to continue to the Red, add the Element fire which is lacking in the White Work. Therefore drive the matter in such a way that the vessel be not moved and the fire be leisurely strengthened through fine points till what is secret becomes revealed, which will be indicated to you by the yellow color breaking forth. Regulate the fire of the fourth degree through its points till the lilies turn into red roses because of *Vulcan*, and finally the amaranth is tinged with brown-red

blood. But you must not stop challenging the fire with fire until you become aware that the matter will end in quite red ash. This Stone will elevate your mind to greater things through the blessing of the Holy Trinity.

Those who, due to ignorance of the Art and of Nature, believe that they have finished the work with the perfect Sulphur, are greatly mistaken and will attempt projection in vain. Because the proof of the Stone is completed with a double work, the first being the production of the Sulphur and the second, the manufacture of the Elixir.

This philosophical Sulphur is quite a subtle Earth, very warm and dry, is whose belly the fire of Nature is greatly increased and lies hidden. That is why it is also called the fire of the Stone, because it contains the power to open and penetrate the bodies of metals and to alter their disposition, and to produce its like. It is therefore also called a father and a male seed.

So as not to pass over anything in silence, the Students of the philosophy should know that a second Sulphur can be made from the first and augmented indefinitely. When the wise philosopher has obtained the mineral of this heavenly ore, he must preserve it very carefully. The matter out of which the Sulphur is born is also the matter out of which it will be augmented with the addition of a small part of the first - but everything in the right weight. The student should learn the rest from *Lully*. It is enough for me to show the way.

The Elixir is made of three different matters: of metallic water or Mercury, sublimated as before; of the white or the red ferment, depending on the alchemist's purpose; and of the second Sulphur - everything in the right weight.

There are in the right, perfect Elixir five necessary qualities: it must be liquid, lasting, penetrating, tinging, and augmenting. It gets its tincture and fixation from the ferment, its penetrating power from Sulphur, from quicksilver the means of uniting the tincture, that is, of the ferment and of Sulphur. But the power of augmentation, which is infused into it, comes to it from the spirit of the Fifth Essence.

Two perfect metals result in a perfect tincture because they are tinged with the pure Sulphur of Nature. This is why no ferment of metals should be sought outside these two bodies. Therefore, tinge your white and red Elixir with Sol and Luna. Their Mercury first absorbs their tincture, and when he has absorbed it, he gives it to others.

In preparing the Elixir, take care not to alter or intermix the Elements. Both Elixirs require their own ferment and their own Elements, for Nature is so constituted that the two lights have their different Sulphurs and different tinctures.

The second work is cooked in the same or a similar vessel, the same stove and the same degrees of fire as the first, but it is done in a shorter time.

There are three kinds of moisture in the Stone, namely, the watery, the airy, and the radical. Therefore, all the worker's

efforts and labor must be used against this moisture. Also, in the work of the Stone no other Element than the moisture is circulated, because the Earth must first of all be turned into moisture and made liquid. However, the radical moisture of all things - which is considered a fire - is very tough and sticky because it is attached to the center of Nature from which it cannot easily be separated. Therefore, extract these moistures very gently, one after another, by dissolving and again congealing them through their wheels. For by frequent and successive repetition of the dissolution and congelation the wheel is expanded and the whole work completed.

The perfection of the Elixir consists in the firm conjunction of the dry with the moist, so that they can never again be separated, but the dry flows into the moist with considerable heat and stays there till the fire is completely suppressed.

Take of the red Earth or of the red ferment three lbs, water and air a double lb. Powder them finely and make of them an amalgamate like butter or a metallic dough, so that the Earth is softened and cannot be felt when moistened. Therefore, add to it one and a half lbs. This has to be sufficiently digested in a tightly closed or sealed vessel, with the first degree of the fire. After this, the Elements have to be extracted in order, then, with a slow motion, brought down in their Earth and congealed so that no volatile can move. Finally, the matter will end in a shining, red and transparent rock. Take of that as much as you please, throw it into a crucible over a gentle fire, imbibe and

water it with its red oil till it becomes quite liquid - but without smoking. Be not afraid that it might fly away because the Earth, softened by the imbibing, retains and absorbs it inside. Now the Elixir is prepared. Keep it with you and take good care of it. Rejoice in God the Lord and keep silent.

In the same way and order the White Elixir is also made and produced, but by using only the white Elements. When it is sufficiently cooked, its body will turn into a white, shining, crystal-like leaf which will become liquid when polished with a white oil. Of one of these two Elixirs throw one lb. over 10 lbs. of quicksilver well washed with wine. You will be surprised at its performance.

Because in the Elixir the powers of the fire of Nature are abundantly increased by the infused spirit of the Quintessence, and because the body's bad mishaps, which covered their purity and the true light of nature with darkness, are wiped out by frequent sublimations and digestions, therefore the fiery Nature, severed from its fetters and strengthened by the aid of the heavenly powers, is mightily effective thus locked in our five Elements. It is no surprise, therefore, that not only do they have the power to perfect the imperfect but also to increase their own powers.

The way to augment the Elixir is threefold. The first: take one lb. of red Elixir, mix it with the pounds of its red water, dissolve it into water in a medicinal vessel and coagulate the well dissolved and blended matter till it turns into a ruby-

red leaf. Thereafter, wax it with its red oil - which is described above - till it flows. Thus you will get a medicine that is ten times stronger than the first. This work is accomplished easily and in a short time.

The second method: take some of your Elixir, as much as you like. It must be well mixed with its water, always in accordance with the weights. Seal it tightly in a reduction vessel and dissolve it in a Bath with moisture. When it is dissolved, distill it by separating the Elements from their own fire and by congealing them down, as has been shown in the first and second works, till they turn into a Stone. Finally, cover it with wax and throw it to project. This way takes longer but is much richer, as the power of the Elixir is a hundred times stronger, because the subtler it becomes with frequent operations, the more power of the inferior and the superior it retains, acting all the more vigorously.

Finally, take one oz. of the said Elixir which has been augmented in power, and throw it over one hundred of the washed Mercury. In a short time Mercury, heated with coal, will be transformed into a pure Elixir. If you wish to throw one oz. of it over one hundred similar Mercury, the very purest gold will appear before your eyes. The augmentation of the White Elixir is done in exactly the same way. The virtue of this medicine consists in the healing of all diseases and the maintenance of health. For its use, see *Arnaldus de Villanoa*, *Lully*, and other philosophers' books.

Whoever is looking for the time of the Stone will learn it from its sign-bearer. The first work to the White must be completed in the house of the moon. The other in the second house of Mercury. But the first work to the Red will be completed in the second house of Venus. The last one, however, in the second royal seat of Jupiter, from whom our mightiest King will obtain a crown with a most precious ruby.

Sic in se sua per Vestigia volvitur annus.

(And so the year turns around into itself
through its own paths) Aeneid Book 6

The Golden Fleece is guarded by a three-headed dragon. The first head comes from the Water, the second from the Earth, the third from the Air. These three heads must necessarily end in one single mighty one which will devour the other dragons. Then the way to the Golden Fleece is open to you.

Farewell, studious reader. To read this, invoke the Spirit of the Eternal Light. Speak little, use your reason, and discern correctly.

TO THE LOVERS OF THE HERMETIC PHILOSOPHY:

G R E E T I N G S!

This is the difference between the hermetic, living, and the dead, heathen, Philosophy, that the former has not been inspired by anything but by God into the first man, applying himself to chymistry, and that it has no other informer than the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, which blows where it listeth and kindles the true light in the hearts of His own, by whose power all error and darkness are at once radically driven out.

The latter, however, has been invented by the heathen, who, disregarding and rejecting the pure fountain, invented original causes of things, with great harm to the learned. And what good or truth could they do or dream up, they upon whom the true Light - the eternal wisdom of Christ, the spring of all wisdom and understanding - had never broken and appeared?

It is no wonder, therefore, that they have produced nothing but worthless poems, and brought to light old wives' tales, by which they have so distorted the worthy Philosophy that one can no longer recognize anything of its noble and natural beauty.

But here now, one feels inclined to make a countermove.

Hermes, the first and noblest of these Philosophers, was also a heathen (they say), and yes, that many years before there had been authors who had brought forth and spread the Philosophy by their reputation. If that is indeed the case, what of it?

True, our *Hermes Trismegistos* was born among the heathens, but he was specially and more than others, gifted by the Lord God. With his whole life and actions he honored God. He cognized God the Father, Who had not revealed His Godhead to anyone else, Who had also created man. He also cognized the Son of God, by Whom all things are made, Whose high name, like an unspeakable miracle, is unknown to man, even unknown to the angels who wonder at His birth.

Such a man was our Hermes, who by special divine revelation knew ahead of time that the Son of God would be born in the flesh and that this would be in the final days, so that He could grant eternal salvation to the faithfull. It was he who taught the mystery of the Holy Trinity - although One in essence, yet in three distinct Persons - as any intelligent person may see from what is to follow, so clearly and understandably that it can hardly be found more explicitly.

For he says: he has been the *Lumen Intelligens*, that is, the understanding light for the *lumen intelligens*, and He has always been *Mens Mentis Lucida & nihil aliud fuit hujus VERITAS & SPIRITUS omnia continens*. Aside from Him, there is no God, no angel, nor any other being. For he is the Lord of

all things. He is also a Father and God, everything is under and within Him.

I pray Thee, Thou Word of the Father, which He only spoke after He had created the whole world: I pray Thee by the only-begotten Word of the Father, which understandeth everything, have mercy on me, have mercy on me.

Now, you sons of Hermes, seek, and if you like, seek day and night, again and again, in the great books of the pagan Philosophers, with as much diligence as possible, to see if you find in them such holy, such pious, yes, such Christian things. Discover that he was a heathen - I admit it! But our Hermes was a heathen who recognized God's omnipotence both from the creatures and from himself, and he worshipped the Lord God as God. Nor do I hesitate to add to this, that with his piety he far surpassed many of our time who only call themselves Christians; and for the blessings he received he thanked the fountainhead of everything good as he could with a humble heart.

Rather listen you Children or Sons, to the teachings of the Prophets and see if God the Lord did not likewise work and walk among the people, since He spoke thus: From the rise to the setting (from East to West) my name is great among the heathen, spake the Lord Zabaoth.

Remember and admit openly that they were heathens, the wise men who came from the East, led by a preceding star, and adored Christ. You faithful apprentices of the true and right

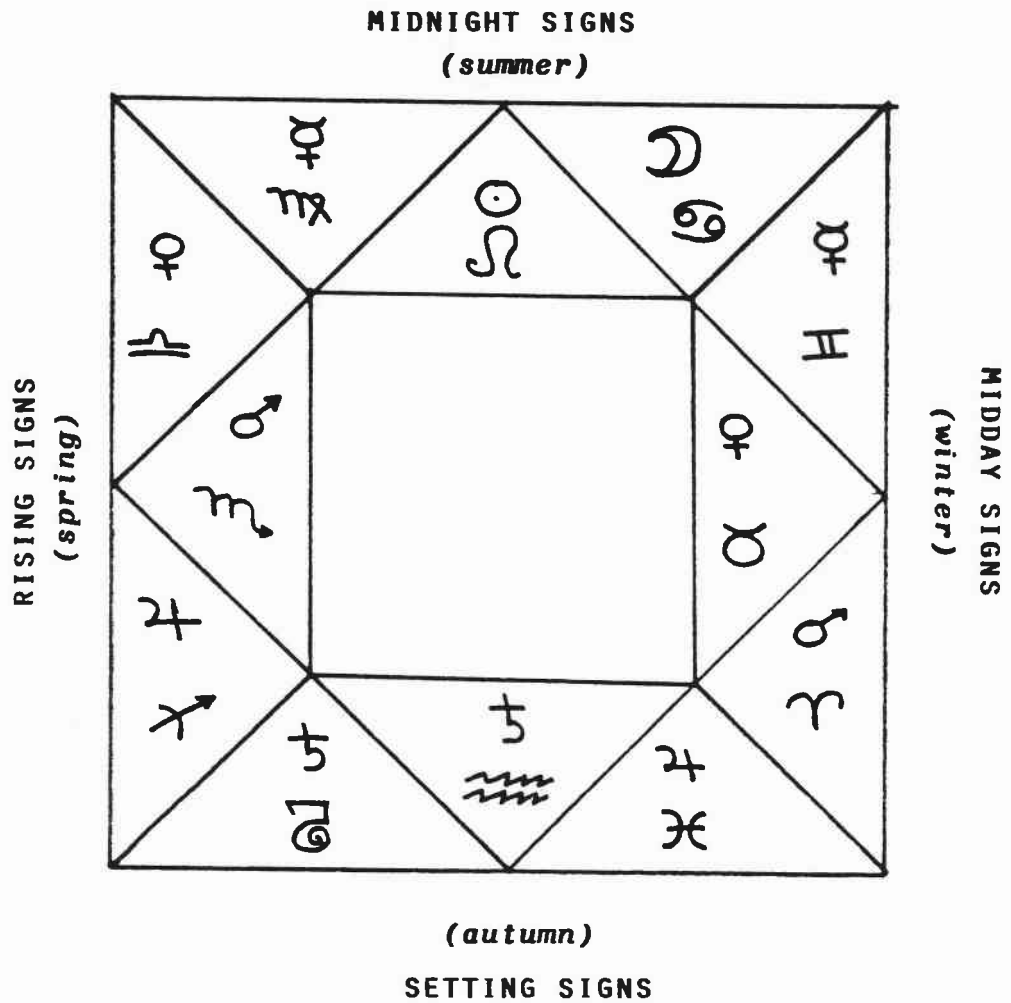
wisdom, consider from where other heathens, after Hermes, took their teachings and philosophies, and you will find that they do not credit God with their wisdom but their own work and effort. Now, turn your eyes and look at the beginning of *Tractatus vivi aurei septem capitum Patris veste Hermetis de Lapidis Physici secreto*, and see how piously he speaks and writes of God the Lord, the giver of these secrets. For Hermes writes: At such a great age, I did not slacken and spared no work till I invented this art and science solely through God's inspiration, Who revealed it to me as His servant. *Verum rationabilibus judicare vim arbitrandi tribuit, Sed nemini occasionem delinquendi reliquit.*

But so that I might have nothing to fear of Judgement Day or the day of the damnation of souls on account of the disclosure of this science, I did not wish to reveal anything of it to anybody. Nevertheless, I wished to reproduce to the faithful exactly what the *Autor fidei* had thought me worthy of receiving from him.

So much for Hermes. In my estimation, nothing wiser or more in accord with the Christian religion could have been brought forth. And that is how it has happened that all highly enlightened and highly intelligent persons - as many as there may be or may have been - have accepted the living worthy Hermetic Philosophy with their whole heart, mind, and all their might, while totally rejecting the heathen as dead and ungodly. As to the right and true Philosophy, they interpret it and make it

more understandable with writings and books. Among all of those, I sincerely admit, I have to this day, not read any other that I consider truer, purer or clearer than that of the *Anonymus Philosophus* and *Alepusus*. Therefore, I wished to do a favor to the lovers of the Hermetic Philosophy by publishing this little work on the secrets of the Hermetic Philosophy with the philosophical sign-bearer, according to the author's own intention. Farewell

DIAGRAM WITH THE HOUSES OF THE PLANETS



OF THE TIMES OF THE STONE

This figure is called Signifer Philosophorum (sign-bearer of the Wise). Each planet is assigned two houses by the ancients, except the Sun and the Moon, each of which has but one house, both close together. In this figure, each planet

is shown in its own houses. In their Philosophical Work, the Philosophers begin their year with winter, with Capricorn, which is the first house of Saturn. Then turning in a clockwise direction comes the second house of Saturn, Aquarius, at which time Saturn, that is the blackness of the Work, begins to have the upper hand after the 45th or the 50th day. When the Sun enters Pisces, the Work turns black and blacker than black. And the Raven's Head begins to show and come forth.

When the third month has gone by and the Sun enters Aries, Sublimation or the separation of the Elements begins.

The following months, up to Cancer, will cause the Work to become White. Cancer adds to it the greatest shine and whiteness and perfectly completes all the days of the Stone or White Sulphur, or the infinite Work; which the Moon sits and rules gloriously in its house.

In Leo, the *Basilica* (kingdom, reign), of the Sun begins a Sun-Work, which ends in Libra in a Red Stone or perfect Sulphur. The other times, Scorpio and Sagittarius, are imputed to the Complement of the Elixir. Accordingly, the wonderful birth of the Wise starts during the rule of Saturn and reaches its end and right perfection during the rule of Jupiter.

THE TWELVE SIGNS IN THE DAY

From:	11 p.m. to	1 a.m.	RAT	=	SAGITTARIUS
	1 a.m. to	3 a.m.	OX	=	CAPRICORN
	3 a.m. to	5 a.m.	TIGER	=	AQUARIUS
	5 a.m. to	7 a.m.	RABBITT	=	PISCES
	7 a.m. to	9 a.m.	DRAGON	=	ARIES
	9 a.m. to	11 a.m.	SNAKE	=	TAURUS
	11 a.m. to	1 p.m.	HORSE	=	GEMINI
	1 p.m. to	3 p.m.	SHEEP	=	CANCER
	3 p.m. to	5 p.m.	MONKEY	=	LEO
	5 p.m. to	7 p.m.	ROOSTER	=	VIRGO
	7 p.m. to	9 p.m.	DOG	=	LIBRA
	9 p.m. to	11 p.m.	BOAR	=	SCORPIO

THE TWELVE SIGNS IN THE YEAR

From:	Mar 21 to	Apr 19	ARIES	=	DRAGON
	Apr 20 to	May 20	TAURUS	=	SNAKE
	May 21 to	Jun 21	GEMINI	=	HORSE
	Jun 22 to	Jul 21	CANCER	=	SHEEP
	Jul 22 to	Aug 21	LEO	=	MONKEY
	Aug 22 to	Sep 22	VIRGO	=	ROOSTER
	Sep 23 to	Oct 22	LIBRA	=	DOG
	Oct 23 to	Nov 21	SCORPIO	=	BOAR
	Nov 22 to	Dec 21	SAGITTARIUS	=	RAT
	Dec 22 to	Jan 20	CAPROCORN	=	OX
	Jan 21 to	Feb 19	AQUARIUS	=	TIGER
	Feb 20 to	Mar 20	PISCES	=	RABBIT