

A
TREATISE
OF
BERNARD
EARL OF
TREVISAN,
OF THE
Philosophers Stone.

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A Singular Treatise of Bernhard Count Trevisan concerning the Philosophers Stone.

Considering the long Desires and Hopes of the Students in the Chymick Art, I will in the present Treatise briefly and openly declare this Art. First therefore the Subject of the Art is to be known, in the second place, the Foundation, in the third, the Progress, fourthly and lastly, the Extraction of the Elements: Which being known, every one may most easily attain the end of the Art.

The Subject of this admired Science is *Sol* and *Luna*, or rather Male and Female, the Male is hot and dry, the Female cold and moist, and know for a certain that our Stone is not compounded of any other thing, although many Philosophers name several other things, of which they speak Sophistically.

Nevertheless by *Scotus*, *Hortulanus*, *St. Thomas*, and *Christopher Parisiensis*¹, and very many others, many other things for another Cause are sophistically reckoned up, that Ignorant Men may be deceived, because it is not fit for Fools to know our Secrets: And this is it, which I thought fit at this time to propound concerning the Subject of our Art.

The Foundation of this Art, is the Knowledge of the four Qualities, and that in the beginning of the work, Coldness and Moisture have the Dominion: For as *Scotus*² saith,

As the Sun dries up the abundance of Water in Fenny and Boggy Places, after the same manner our Sulphur when it is joined with its Water or Mercury, doth by little and little consume and drink up the same by the help of the Fire, and that by the assistance of the only living God.

The Progress is nothing else than a

certain contrary Action, for the Description of contrary things is one and the same, and if you shalt have twice made this equality, you shall finish the whole Progress.

But now all skill consists in drawing forth the Elements, wherefore read over that which follows so often, until you cannot conceive and understand it; and know that no one ever spoke so plainly as I in this Place, as you will find by what follows: Therefore give thanks to the great God, and be grateful to your Friend who communicated to you this Tractate: Live also according to God and reason, because Divine Wisdom will not enter into a wicked Soul, nor into a Body subjected to Sins.

The Extraction of the Elements is a certain Composition of Blackness, Whiteness, Yellowness, and Redness: And know that Natures ought to be drawn from their Root. But the Root is a certain Congregation of Elements, consisting in Sulphur and Mercury, which they call a confused Mass³. But the Natures, which are drawn forth from the Root are Sulphur and Mercury, which when they are joined together are separated, and purified, that they may be the better mingled afterwards, and united with the Body, out of which they are drawn. And after the Colours have passed, and that which is above, is made like that which is below, and that which is below like that above, then Miracles will from thence appear. Which being done, you have a Triangle in a Quadrangle, and a fifth thing which is contained in four⁴.

Now remains the Multiplication, in which this briefly is to be noted; That the *Elixir* ought to be nourished out of the same things, from which at first it had its Composition. No Philosopher before now has so openly declared this, as I have here done; and that for two Causes, first because from the beginning to the end of the work a long time is required, although some Philosophers do say, the Stone may be made in one day, and others in one month: But know that they speak Enigmatically, and

¹ "La Summetta, La Violetta; Il Lucidario". (1476). Italian fifteenth-century manuscript., in "Manuscripts and Books on Medicine, Alchemy, Astrology and Natural Sciences Arranged in Chronological Order", Anonymous, (1929).

² Michael Scot (1175-1234), "*Quaestio Curiosa de Natura Solis et Lunas* (A careful investigation of the natures of sol & Luna)". Extracted from *Theatrum Chemicum*, Vol. V., Page 713.

³ Chaos.

⁴ *Emblema XXI. Atalanta fugiens*, (1618) Michael Maier.

that their words ought not thus to be understood.

Nevertheless I say with *Scotus* that the Stone or perfect work may be made in one year. Secondly, because Man's Life is short, and he grows Old, before he comprehends and understands what is needful to be done in the Composition of the Stone. And therefore I have here so openly explained all things, least this, so noble a Science, should be lost and perish.

The Theory of the same Author.

Use venerable Nature, for the Philosophers from their own Authority have imposed various Names on this Nature, by reason of divers Colours appearing in its Alteration. For when it appears under the form of Water, they have called it *Argent vive*, Permanent Water, Lead, Spirit, Spittle of *Lune*, Tin, &c. When it's made dry and becomes white, they have named it Silver, Magnesia, and white Sulphur. When it grows red, they call the same Gold and Ferment. But they do not vary in the thing itself, when that is always one thing only, and the same matter, and always of the same Nature, in which nothing enters which is not drawn from it, and this which is next to it, and of its Nature. This is most true, to wit, the Stone is one, and one Medicine, and it is a Water clear, and bright, permanent, pure and shining, of a Celestial Colour. If Water did not enter into our Medicine, it could not purify nor mend itself, and so thou could not obtain your desire: But that which doth mend it is *Sol*, for the Water cannot be made better without it: For without *Sol* and his shadow a tingeing Poison cannot be generated. Whoever therefore shall think that a Tincture can be made without these two Bodies, to wit *Sol* and *Lune*, he proceeds to the Practice like one that is blind. For Body doth not Act upon Body, nor Spirit upon Spirit: Neither doth Form receive an Impression from Form, nor Matter from Matter, when as like doth not Exercise either Action or Passion upon its like. For one is not more worthy than another, wherefore there can be no Action between

them, when as like doth not bear Rule over like. But a Body doth receive Impression from a Spirit, as Matter doth from its Form, and a Spirit from its Body, because they are made and created by God, that they may Act and suffer each from other. For Matter would flow infinitely, if a Form did not retard and stop its Flux. Wherefore when the Body is a Form informing, it doth inform and retain the Spirit, that it afterwards cannot flow any more.

The Body therefore doth tinge the Spirit, and the Spirit doth penetrate the Body, whereas one Body cannot penetrate another Body, but a subtle Spiritual congealed Substance doth penetrate and give Colour to the Body. And this is that Gummy and Oleaginous Stone, proportioned in its Natures, containing a Spiritual Nature occultly in itself together with the Elements purified. Therefore the Philosophers Stone is to be wholly reduced into this Gumminess by the last Reiteration or Inceration of a certain gentle Flux, resolving all the Elements, that they flow like Wax. But when it is the Stone, it appears like Copper, whereas notwithstanding it is a certain Spiritual Substance, penetrating and colouring or tingeing all Metallic Bodies.

From hence thou may easily guess, that this doth not proceed from the crassitude and grossness of the Earth; but from a Spiritual Metallic Substance, which doth penetrate and enter. Wherefore it behooves you to resolve the Body into a subtle Metallic Spirit, and afterwards to congeal and fix, retain and incerate it, that it may flow before it tinge. For Gold doth Colour nothing besides itself, unless first its own Spirit be extracted out of its own Belly; and it be made Spiritual.

Know that our Mercurial Water is a living Water, and a burning Fire, mortifying and tearing in pieces Gold more than common Fire. Therefore by how much more it is better mixed, rubbed and ground with it, by so much more it destroys it, and the living fiery Water is more attenuated. But now when three are made one in the Form of a congealed Substance, then it hath in it a true Tincture, which can endure the

Violence of the Fire. Therefore when the Body is so tinged, it can tinge another, and it hath in itself all Tincture and Virtue. From hence all they who tinge with *Sol* and his Shadow, (viz.) with the Poison, that is *Argent vive*, do perfectly complete our Stone, which we call the great and perfect Gum. Know for certain that it is not necessary, that our Stone or Gum lose its first Mercurial Nature in the Sublimation of its crude and first Spirit: for the Oil and Gum pertaining to this Stone are nothing else, then the Elements themselves Mercurialized, and made equal together, shut up and coagulated, resoluble and living, retained or bound in the viscosity of the Oily Earth, and inseparably mixed. We ought to know that that Gum or Oil is first drawn out of the Bodies, which being added, it is reduced into a Spirit, until the superfluous humidity of the Water be turned into Air, drawing one Element out of another by digestion until the Form of Water be converted into the Nature of Oil, and so our Stone in the end gets the Name of Gum and Sulphur.

But whosoever hath brought the Stone thus far, that it appear like a mixing Gum, and suffers itself to be mixed with all imperfect Bodies, he verily hath found a great Secret of Nature, because that is a perfect Stone, Gum and Sulphur.

This Stone then is compounded of a Body and Spirit, or of a volatile and fixed Substance, and that is therefore done, because nothing in the World can be generated and brought to light without these two Substances, to wit, a Male and Female: From whence it appears, that although these two Substances are not of one and the same species, yet one Stone doth thence arise, and although they appear and are said to be two Substances, yet in truth it is but one, to wit, *Argent-vive*. But of this *Argent vive* a certain part is fixed and digested, Masculine, hot, dry, and secretly informing: But the other which is the Female, is Volatile, crude, cold and moist; and from these two Substances the whole may easily be known, and the whole Stone entirely understood. Wherefore if our Stone did only consist of one Substance, in it there could be no Action

and passion of one thing towards the other; for one would neither touch nor come nigh or enter into the other: As a Stone and piece of Wood have no Operation on each other, since they do consist of a different matter, and hence they can by no means, no not in the least be mixed together, and there is the same reason for all thing that differ in matter. Wherefore it is evident and certain that it should be necessary for the Agent and Patient to be of one and the same Genus; but of a different species, even as a man differs from a Woman. For although they agree in one and the same Genus, yet nevertheless they have diverse Operations and Qualities, even as the Matter and Form. For the Matter suffers, and the Form acts assimilating the Matter to itself, and according to this manner the Matter naturally thirsts after a Form, as a Woman desires an Husband, and a Vile thing a precious one, and an impure a pure one, so also *Argent vive* covets a Sulphur, as that which should make perfect which is imperfect: So also a Body freely desires a Spirit, whereby it may at length arrive at its perfection. Therefore Learn you the Natural Roots, and those that are better, with which you ought to reduce your Matter, whereby you may perfect your work. For this blessed Stone has in it all things necessary to its perfection.

The Practice of the same Author.

If we well consider the Words of *Moriennus* that great Philosopher in Alchemy, who said,

Mix together Water, Earth, Air, and Fire in a due weight, without doubt thou wilt obtain all the Secrets of this Divine Science.

First, when he said, put into the Water, or putrefy the Earth in Water, this signifies nothing else, then the Extraction of Water out of Earth, and the pouring of Water upon the Earth, so long until the Earth putrefy and be cleansed, otherwise it would not bring forth its Fruit. Secondly when he said, mix Water and Air, it's no more then if he should have said, mix Water now prepared with Air dissolved, or join and mix

together dissolved Air with Water. Judge you your selves: For you know that Air is warm and moist, and you have the saying of *Morienus* concerning the dissolution of Air, Earth, Fire and Water. Some when they speak of Dissolution, say that the Solution of the Fire is better, because whatsoever is dissolved in the Fire, that flows in the Air. Note that the Fire of the Philosophers is nothing else then the Air dissolved and congealed⁵. This you may better comprehend from similitude, and suppose that first you have Air dissolved and congealed, to which add Fire. The Earth ought to be first prepared, and the Fire dissolved, before they are mixed.

For the Earth together with the Fire ought to be put into a fit Vessel, and after is to be introduced the inextinguishable Fire of Nature, which when it descends upon the Earth, devours the whole together with its Gum, and converts it into its own Nature. Wherefore if you consider well the Sayings and Precepts of the Philosophers, and understand their Mystical Sence, you shall come to all the Secrets of the Divine Chymick Art.

FINIS.

⁵ Distillation.