

# The Work of Dickinson

A 17th century allegorical alchemical poem by Edmund Dickinson, transcribed from MS Ferguson 91 in Glasgow University Library.

## The worck of Dickinson.

When Phoebus with his rayes bright  
Through the Raine takes his flight  
His heate is then soe nourishinge  
To the Earth and every other thinge  
That sapp and roote doth then revive  
By Phoebus heate attractive  
Drawing by branches of the vine  
Water mingled with Earth fine  
Containeinge also fier and Ayre  
Which liquor on Earth hath noe peere  
CHAOS veterum some doe it call  
Confused in it the Elements all  
Wherefore draw thou a water bright  
Contayneng in it the fiers might  
And in the residence thou shalt finde  
An Earth black as man of Inde  
Which into Luna looke thou throwe  
Till it be whiter then the snowe  
That Earth put in a glasse faire  
And put thereto of his water cleere  
But close the mouth well of the Glasse  
That the Spirit doe not out passe  
A dayes space then lett them stand  
To be buried in could sand  
Then doe it in a bath of lent heate  
That faint water it maye out sweate  
So weake water thou shalt up still  
But fier beneath with Earth will dwell  
When all the fainte water is drew  
And fier left in the Earth belowe  
Then of this water put on more  
And do as earst thou didst before  
But often times thou must doe this  
To gett much store of fier I wisse  
So when thy fier is multiplied  
Which still belowe in Earth will bide  
Then hast thou gott a burning fire  
That draw forth at thy owne desier  
For Earth with his attractive might  
Keepes downe with him the fire bright  
First hide the fire the Earth within  
And afterward looke thou them twinne  
Thus Raymund ment when he did say  
Absconde ignem in intimis terrae  
Then set thy glass in dry fire  
Till the white fumes doe appeare

Receive the same cloudes bright  
Which tourne the water greate of might  
This water if thou doest not knowe  
Some thinge thereof I will the shewe  
Of which Philosophers meane  
From bowels of the Earth updrawe  
By Phoebus might as earst was shewne  
Mercury vegetable it is without doubt  
That causeth Cropp and roote to sproute  
Ignis humidus forsooth it is  
The comfort of our life I wis  
Mercury vegetable that men of clatter  
That reduceth Gold to his first matter  
This is the key that all must done  
To open the bodies of Sonne and Moone  
Also the menstrue vegetative  
The metalline body that doth revive  
The menstrue resolutive is the thinge  
Which the menstruum resolved forth doth bringe  
Then rectifie this water of might  
And doe in it obryson bright  
Which thou that tourne to his first matter  
As doth Ice in warme water  
And so together thou must convert  
That never asunder they shall depart  
Then circulate them so thou shall  
To heale in man diseases all  
For then thou has Electrum right  
The first essence of the Sonne bright  
This is the Philosophers Sulphur vive  
Theire Tinctur, lead, their Gold of life  
Likewise Luna thou maist reduce  
To serve the to an other use  
If thou hast grace then mayst thou finde  
A water of an other kinde  
Which faster to the metall doth cleave  
Ingendred in the Earth beneath  
Reduce him rightly into water  
Which of metalls is first matter  
Whose partes so divide thou shall  
Into Earth and water minerall  
That after they may conjoynd be  
To cure in metalls leprosy  
And for the order of true workenge  
In figures is satt downe every thinge  
To make white stone and the redd  
Elixir vitae to putt away dread  
To shew the order I meane truly  
For workes in Bookes disordred bee  
And keepe this secret I the praye  
As thou wilt answer it at doomes day  
And keepe it out of wicked hands  
Which in no feare of God stands  
And keepe it well in safety  
To guide thy bretheren eke and thee  
The key of all is heere in briefe

Which erst by none was ere so reife  
And looke that aye thou live aright  
And serve the Lord in Truth and Spight  
And dooe good deedes unto the poore  
So shalt thou live for ever more.