

Works of Sendivogius

[Sendivogius' Letters to a Society of Unknown Philosophers](#) [transcribed by Justin von Bujdoss]

[Sendivogius' Hieroglyphic seal of the Society of Unknown Philosophers](#) [transcribed by Justin von Bujdoss]

[Sendivogius - The New Chemical Light](#) - Twelve Treatises [transcribed by Jerry Bujas]

[Sendivogius - The New Chemical Light](#) - Parable, Dialogue [transcribed by Jerry Bujas]

Letters 1-10 of Sendivogius

This work was published in French in *Traitez du Cosmopolite nouvellement decouverts ou apres avoir donne unde idee d'une Societe de Philosophes...*, Paris, 1691. This translation by Ebenezer Sibly is found in MS. Ferguson 25. [Letters 11 - 20](#) . [Letters 21-30](#) . [Letters 31-40](#) . [Letters 41-55](#).

**LETTERS
OF
MICHAEL SENDIVOGIUS
TO THE ROSEYCRUSIAN SOCIETY
FOUND
IN AN OLD MANUSCRIPT
BY EBENEZER SIBLY M.D.
1791**

Epistle 1.

Greeting to my most honoured Friend and a most worthy Companion of the Society of unknown Philosophers. M.S.

Honoured and renowned Sir, yours and your Patron Briscius, our companions letters have been exceeding welcome to me, and I cannot express the Joy I had to hear that you have certainly and effectually been received into our Society and that there was a design on foot to settle and to enlarge our Society throughout all France, which I have had an ardent desire long before now to bring to pass. Neither can I doubt but that such a project will succeed well; since God hath endowed you with such great Perfections in mind and good manners (as Briscius doth testify it) and I myself am able to judge by your most ingenious letters.

For this purpose then I joyfully do send you (as you have desired me) in Latin the Statutes of our Society, the observation of which let be sacred to you and be it as such recommended to our future Brethren. Further I liberally do grant and promise you a communication of more Notions than your Patron hath yet imparted to you, concerning as well the theoretical as the practical part of our alchemy.

But then it will be necessary that you yourself labour in it, continually reading, speculating and working also, to make you able to add some things by your own industry and strength to those things such as are already revealed to you. For the rest you will find it a business of not so very high consideration as is talked of. For he that hath the key to the door can easily unlock the same.

And that you may be able to do it the sooner, I shall not be wanting to intimate to you the rocks which may stand in your way and to direct your deviating conceits, as often as you will take occasion to consult me about what you are reading or doing. And I protest to you that I will hide nothing from you except those things which you cannot learn but by ocular demonstrations and manual operations.

For every art hath its own way and manner of operating and above all, ours which cannot be expressed so well in words but that a particular demonstration and an experimental disquisition be also necessary, which for the most part answers but slowly, the hopes and expectations of philosophers.

I beg of you to take these my admonitions in good part from
Your most ready servant to all your commands,
Michael Sendivogius.
Brussels, 9th February, 1646.

Epistle 2.

Dear Companion,

You desire to know, and truly not without reason, what books among such an infinite number, as well of ancient as modern authors, you should choose to read; for few are faithful and then if there be and which they are that write the truth, and scorn for the most part to contradict themselves, though in the main all of them do aim at one and the same thing, though in an hieroglyphical style, suiting with out Cabal, our art being altogether cabalistic, which art to prostitute to the iniquity of sophisters, or to sacrifice to the lightness of the imprudent is altogether unjust and nefarious.

Let therefore your care be to choose to yourself out of such a multitude of books those that follow, and put by all the rest as being useless and unprofitable: for if you have but got the little fish called Remora (see my Novum Lumen Chymicum, page 59, in the beginning of the parable) which but one of that sort swims in the vast ocean, you need no more fishing, but only to get the Way to dress, boil and spice it.

Among the ancient books then these are the chiefest.

1. Hermes whose books are of very great nay the highest moment, in order to understand well and truly our business.

There are two small treatises of his; one inscribed with a posthumous name given by his commentators viz: *Transitus maris rubri*. The other; *Appulsus ad terram promissam*, both let be recommended to you before any other.

But they are rare to be had and perhaps not to be found in Europe.

I have found them in Constantinople by some Martians where having perused them I copied them for memory's sake.

2. Andernacus Paracelsus whose writings are like a clear day's sun light, but if you can light upon his Codicills which heretofore were called *Psalterium Chymicum* or Paracelsus his *Manual* make much of them. For therein you shall find displayed and clearly manifested all the secrets of our cabal, and of physick demonstrative with the whole knowledge of alchemical doctrine. This book is not so rare as the former. For I have found it at home in the Vatican Library and in several other places amongst my cabalistic brethren of our own nation. However it is not altogether so common that it were to be found everywhere. Therefore I did take a copy of this also for my own use, as I had done with the former.

All them I willingly would impart to you were it not that these did teach the same doctrine which I shall hereafter insinuate to you in the sequel of my letters, and that in a much clearer method and succintor style than they have done. Besides this his treatise *De Tincturis* is not to be neglected.

3. Lullius. But amongst all his writings I can only recommend to you these. His *Vade mecum*, and dialogismum entitled *Lignum Vitae*. Likewise his *Testamentum* and *Codicillus*, yet these two last with the rest of this author's innumerable writings together with those of Geber and Arnoldus de Villa Nova are almost made inexplicable because of a labyrinth of figments and unprofitable receipts so that I myself can scarcely pick out the truth to justify it.

There are other writings collections out of old philosophers books, not altogether unlearned. But there are so many sophisticated tricks intermingled and filled up with incubations of other authors of none or ill repute that it is a hard matter to discern true and good traditions of faithful and approved men from others.

Amongst the writers of the middle age these are good, Bonus Zacharias, Bernhardus Trevisanus, Roger Bacon, and

an anonymous which hath collected authentic sentences and is called Rosarium Philosophorum which to me seems to be the sentences of men of an approved integrity and of good doctrine.

Amongst authors of latter age I esteem none faithful besides Faber, a French author, as to his last books published. For his first books are erroneous and lying.

There are some things also orthodox in the author of Physica restituta but it is interwoven with many false precepts and fallacious sentences.

But if you have a desire at they very entrance into this study to have a full knowledge and sincere information in our alchemy they let it suffice our Novum lumen chymicum, with the annexed treatise of Sulphur and the dialogue between Mercury and the Alchemist, for in this book nothing is wanting. But it is necessary that it be read with attention and over and over again. And take notice that in the same book many preposterous things of the ancient philosophers are set down and that several things and in several places are as contradictory one to the other, all which is voluntarily thus insinuated and the reconciliation of all this and the solution of doubts hence arising you shall find in other places of the same book given in express terms though in broken sentences. Pray make use to these cautions and so farewell.

Brussels 24th February, 1646.

Epistle 3.

Dear Companion,

Those sheets of Pagetins which you have sent me handling of all the parts of our art and your doubts about it and by this occasion about our Novum lumen chymicum also I have read over and over with a great deal of attention. These writings, though they are corrupt as to the principal precepts yet they do demonstrate the author to be of great genius: And as to your doubts and questions, the same do argue to proceed from an ingenium not of common sagacity and acuteness.

But what of this doctrine is to be judged you shall have it in our answer to it with the next letters and according to your desire in a scholastic dogmatical style; with familiar arguments of the chief objections and propositions instanced, the solutions of the propositions together with the examples of our proposition where it shall be needful. Farewell.

Brussels, 10th March, 1646.

Epistle 4.

Dear Companion,

Our last did promise you our Judgment concerning Pagetins doctrine.

We will begin with that true, and touch that also which is false and erroneous, which shall be performed in this and our following letters, which will send as frequently as can be. Pagetins his own doctrine we shall make more plain so far as it is true by adding here and there to it what is required for its explanation and to substitute true ones for its false canons.

Your Pagetins then doth very well divide the whole matter in hand according to the custom and method of all true philosophers, viz, in two chapters.

The first treating of Nature, namely of natural productions of all things and chiefly of minerals.

The second of art, or those effects which accrue to things by art and then of the making of the Lapis Philosophorum, by whose means Gold and Silver is made by art.

What he doth teach in the first chapter comes near enough to truth, but the style he used is so concise and contract that it cannot create a sufficient knowledge of Nature's principles so as to obtain a full assent of the reader.

The second chapter of his treatise hath one thing which is very congruous to the best doctrine viz, his judgement concerning the general principles of Lapis Philosophorum, he affirming them to be a sort of Mercurius but different from common Mercury, that is from one that actually is mineral, when the former is not yet in either of the families of inferior mixed bodies, as are mineral, animal or vegetable specified and determined. And again that some sort of Sulphur be far from the common combustible and stinkened Sulphur, yet determined by some specific form and to be under some genus of the aforementioned mixture: which form that Sulphur may impress and communicate to the said Mercury by way of Fermentation. And that the same Sulphur were rightly constituted Lapis Philosophorum.

All the rest of this book is almost false and to be rejected as you shall see hereafter,

Farewell.
Brussels, 15th March, 1646.

Epistle 5.

Follows the examination of the first article of the second chapter of Pagetins.

It is most certain and not to be doubted but that Mercurius the true and nearest material principle of metals and minerals, to be a warm and moist humour or vapour as we shall make it good hereafter. Ergo, such a Mercurius cannot be gotten and generated in a cold and moist fountain and pure elemental water, as Pagetins will have. But it must be had out of a body and substance which is warm and moist and which is such because of preeminency of congealed air. And such is our matter which you are not ignorant of now.

Hence the error of Pegetins in this point is manifest.

But that he may not want his due praise, I must confess that hitherto I have not read any author that came nearer to the mark than he. For his substance he points at doth in all the general conditions agree with the true and genuine substance that contains the true Mercury and hath also almost all the true signatures and characters described here and there by the philosophers whereby the true Mercury and his offspring is known and discerned.

Let this suffice as to the first article.

Adieu.

Brussels, 20th March, 1646.

Epistle 6.

In the second article he labours to repeat the mysterious manner of extracting and also preparing Mercury out of Lullius misusing his authority and other philosopher's precepts misapplying them and ill brought in more than becomes an ingenious Man: commanding, that by distillation, the tenth part of his Magnesia, so first rises, as only useful and as the only true mercurial substance should be reserved; But that the nine other parts which by a continued distillation come forth, as being useless should be rejected, for this purpose that the said tenth part which was reserved should at last be restored again, to its remaining earth after a complete distillation (which earth he ridiculously esteems to be Sulphur and Salt of Mercury) and that by reiterated cohobations, inhumations, digestions, sublimations etc, described by him, all should be reunited again.

But herein he grievously mistakes, for what authors say of the tenth part that contain the spirit and of inhumation in its own earth, is to something else to be referred, than the extraction and preparation of Mercurius as we shall demonstrate it at another time somewhere else.

There is no other rule to be observed for the said extraction and preparation of Mercurius than simply to distil the Magnesia, whereby the spirit with its oil are brought over and elevated even to a siccity of the faeces and into a separation of the spirit from the oil and which spirit is afterwards oftentimes to be rectified. But hereof we shall treat and inform you more at large in the method of operating.

Farewell.

Brussels, 25th March, 1646.

Epistle 7.

Follows the third and fourth article; the former of which doth assign the Minera of the Sulphur necessary for the philosophical work, and doth do it very well. For there is not other Minera for the said Sulphur than which he intimates namely Gold or Silver.

The fourth article teacheth how to extract the said sulphur out of the entrails of the said Gold or Silver, but very ill. For he prescribes to this work a dissolvant altogether heterogenous to Gold and Silver and therefore violent, viz, a certain Mercurial oil made per deliquium from Quicksilver or common Mercury often sublimed with sal ammoniac. All which is against Nature's Intention which requires that Gold or Silver should be dissolved in order for the making of the Lapis Philosophorium in a benign water homogeneous. To these metals (I say homogeneous by homogeneity as our Cabala calls it of Principles, not of things principiated as some falsely do suppose it and are in the same error with Pagetins) that is to say the Dissolvment must be of the same nature with that Matter or substance out of which immediately your Gold or Silver was made, that matter being considered in its state of lesser composition it had before it coagulated into Gold or Silver (for there are many subordinate degrees of composition

in mixed bodies, as we shall see hereafter.) But it ought not to be of the same Nature with actual material or common Gold or Silver.

And now there is no substance in the whole Nature which can have such a Homogeneity of Principles of Gold and Silver, as our Mercury drawn from our Magnesia in manner as you know. For that Mercury is but a warm and moist vapour not yet determined (as common Mercury is) in any other Family of the lower mixed Bodies, namely mineral, vegetable, or animal, and therefore it is of a more simple degree of composition than common Gold or Silver, or any other mixture can be. For all other things and therefore common Mercury also (which Pagetins makes use of) they are already determined in your said families, and therefore most of them seem to have symbolizing qualities and conditions with Gold and Silver. Yet for all that they are heterogeneous, because they are not only specifically different from Gold and Silver, but have also an opposite nature, being under a different species of the same degree of composition constituted wherein the nature and condition of their heterogeneity consists, so that our Mercury is not the vulgar must be made use of, and for an extractive Dissolvement of the Sulphur of Gold or Silver and this is the grand Error of Pagetins.

Farewell.

Brussels, 30th March, 1646.

Epistle 8.

The fifth article dear companion consels and will persuade us that the philosophical Egg must be made and compounded out of one ounce or thereabouts of your Sulphur of Gold or Silver and with your addition of a very little quantity of his Mercury whose spirits he says that by often repeated distillations and cohobations your said Sulphur doth ingest and drives in and doth afterwards unlock all Humidity.

Thus he disputes against your sight of Nature, to make a monster which he will that your yellow of the Egg or the ferment which is the Sulphur of Gold and Silver should oftentimes throw off or separate the white of the Egg that is the thing to be fermented which is the Mercury and takes away its natural Humidity altogether necessary to a good effect of generation, and yet he will that notwithstanding all this, a philosophical chicken should be hatched or a cabalistic Coagulum should be formed.

How foolish is this notion of Pagetins be in this white. Indeed not to exaggerate since every fool can apprehend it. Farewell.

Brussels, 5th April, 1646.

Epistle 9.

The sixth article dear companion doth teach and most obstinately doth hold that there are required to your boiling of your Egg four different and continually increasing degrees of fire, which indeed favours an unexperienced philosopher, if as it seems he doth understand it, of actual Fire. Hence I find reason to change my opinion which I had of the author before, namely, that he in his former articles had studiously compiled most [egregious] errors only for [dismulation] sake and on purpose to impose upon your easiness of belief. But now I do find me mistaken, seeing with what eagerness of sincerity of mind he doth maintain such a doctrine and accordingly how he doth rest the sentences of alleged authors; being it is very well known that when the authors command four degrees of fire, that it must be only referred to the virtual central fire of ferment, which fire as it must in succession of time overcome far greater elemental qualities in its Mercury in bulk and geometrical proportion much exceeding him, so it doth proceed by four degrees, till it acquires such a degree of strength as by nature is designed chiefly for the product of those four principle colours. But your external actual fire, as it is but to excite the other internal, so it ought to be of a continual gentle almost equal degree.

And these are the errors of Pagetins.

Farewell.

Brussels, 4th April, 1646.

Epistle 10.

Having made an end with Pagettins works it follows dear companion that I do explain and declare to you the true Hermetical doctrine.

We shall therefore even as Pagettins hath done reduce the whole to chapters . The first shall treat of Nature. The other of Art. And all shall be treated according to cabalistical principals being the best and truest, infused by God into our first parents and derived to us, not by writing, but by Tradition and Hearing, and as to that proposed method, there can be no better used.

For since Arts business is to perfect Nature and since Art cannot effect this but by immitating Nature's works; it is needful first to know that Nature's works are to be immitated before you can elucidate the manner of imitating. The first chapter then shall be divided into two members. The first shall be a treat of the first Generation or the first creation of things.

The second shall be a treat of the second Genesis or the daily natural production of things created before.

Both are necessary for a philosopher to know who desires to learn the true principles of things, and truth contains rules. For as art doth incite the Nature, so doth Nature Creation only with this difference; that Creation supposes nothing and Nature supposes principiating principles, viz. the Elements, and Art supposes principles principiated, all of which in order, so that the perfect knowledge of Art doth depend on the knowledge as well of the first as second generation. Let this serve for a short prologue. We will pass to the matter itself.

Farewell.

Brussels, 15th April, 1646

Letters 21-30 of Sendivogius

[Letters 1-10](#) . [Letters 11 - 20](#) . [Letters 31-40](#) . [Letters 41-55](#).

Epistle 21.

The first great Difference is in Diversity of Sex, man and wife, in the said Families. For in the Family of Animals since God hath given them (atleast to the perfect Ones) a locomotive Faculty by Virtue of which they can come together and discharge their Office; God hath been willing to give to each Species peculiar Men and Women of the same Species. But to the Vegetables and Minerals, because the Species of these Families do want that same locomotive Faculty, so that they cannot come per se together and copulate. God hath given them one common Wife every where meeting them and equally fit for both Families and therefore she is like to nome of these Families, according to the Species but only according the Genus which to both Families is the nearest above them (proxime superius) namely the subalternate in respect of a Mixture. And this Wife or common Harlot is our Spiritus Universalis. Therefore as many primordial Seeds there are in every Region of the Elements and as many individua there are in the said two Families as many Men there are, but there is but one Woman common to all.

The second Difference consists in the Diversity of Offices of both Sexes which indeed is great in the said Families chiefly as to the common Function of Copulation. For the animals do copulate spontaneously by the impulse of Archeus without any other Artificial Industry, natural appetite being given them for that Purpose prompting them and most vigorously moving them to it. And therefore God hath given as well Men as Women suitable Instruments for Copulation and Generation. But the Vegetables though they seem in some Manner to do the like, when they permit the Seed of their ripe Fruits to fall into their everywhere, meeting Wife yet they do require Arts assistance to act well and surely.

The Minerals though in Respect of the primary Multiplication, they copulate without Arts Ministry, yea in Respect of the Second Multiplication (which chiefly concerns us at this Time) there is absolute necessity that the Hand and Managment of the Artist intervene. And therefore neither the said Minerals nor Vegetables have given them proper Instruments for Copulation or Generation. But the Woman hath from her Matrix Water and Earth for her Belly or Alexcum. There is also some difference in their particular Functions. But because its Knowledge makes nothing to our Purpose we will pass it by for Brevity's Sake and I shall pursue the Rest.

Farewell.

Brussels 21st June, 1646.

Epistle 22.

The third Difference is to be referred to the Disposition of the Universal Spirit and its Preparation which must go before Multiplication.

What concerns the primary Multiplication and its Terms there is no difficulty at all in. For there is not any other of the universal Spirit here required in order to the Effect of the three Terms besides the Degrees of its digestion mentioned before: because that in this Way of Multiplication it is common to all of the three Families, that in case the universal Spirit hath acquired a Sulphureous Digestion while he is assimilated with them and is turned into Seed. But if he remains in the Mercurial Degree that then a species is out of him multiplied, i.e., he is fermented and converted into a specific Individuum, according to the Quality and primordial Character of the seeds.

But as to the Effect of the secondary Multiplication and in Terms, the Preparation of the said universal Spirit is very discrepant in the said Families.

For in Animals, to have the Effect of the three Terms it requires another Digestion than the precedent Ones, viz: and Animal Digestion, which is done in the Bowels of the Animal. Therefore god hath laid upon them the necessity of Respiration by help of which the said universal Spirit is drawn and carried into the [Pridcordia] of the said Animal from the aereal Region where he abounds and there he is digested and recieves the odor of Form substantial.

Afterwards a Portion of it is mixed with the animals Seeds and transmuted into it, for to have the Effect of the First Term. But to have the Effect of the second Term, it is mixed in the Bowels of the woman with her menstruous Humour into which it is also transmuted.

Lastly to obtain the Effect of the third Term it is mixed with the Aliments which he dissolves, and himself is in and with them transmuted and converted into Chylus then into Blood and at last into the very substance of the Animal. For the same Manner in the family of vegetables he requires a vegetable Digestion for the Effects of either Term, which Digestion is absolved in the Heart of the vegetable. Therefore God hath Created a Magnesiam in all Plants which vulgarly is called Medulla or the Heart which doth draw to himself out of the Earth the said universal Spirit where he always abounds being plentifully driven into it through the Pores of the Earth by the Daily and great Agitations of wind and Weather.

But in the minerals it requires other specific Preparation than an artificial Purgation and Separation of its magnesia for to gain the Effect of the first Term, but as to the second and third Term, he requires a precedent metallic Digestion.

Farewell.

Brussels, 26th June, 1646.

Epistle 23.

The fourth Difference consists in the Effect of the third Term which doth vary in the said Families. For in animals and vegetables, if it be referred to the first Act it doth augment the Quantity by Extraposition; because that the seed, as also the Blood and other such like Substances (which are rather Instruments of vital actions than Parts of the vivent or at least they are parts disparate) do not take their Increase as Cause of the Vivent.

But if it be referred to the second then the Quantity and Bulk is augmented by an inward Assumption and the intrinsic Quality or virtue is raised and more intently.

In Minerals if it be referred to the first Term is doth also augment the Quantity and Bulk by Extraposition and yet the intrinsical Virtue is increased withal. But if it is referred to the Second it doth not augment the Quantity but rather diminishes, but the Quantity of intrinsic Virtue it doth exalt and extole. As to the Difference in Respect of the finish of Formation in the said Families the same is very great.

For in animals and Vegetables for the Effect of either Multiplication, the first and last Term are perfected by a single assimilation; because that which is fermented, acquires all the conditions and Parts of the fermenting Form, namely that of the Seed or of the Menstruum.

But the second Term doth not end in a simple assimilation because in this Term the fermented Thing acquires some other Condition, besides the form of the thing fermenting, viz; that of the Seed. For it cannot be said, that the seed of Man (and so in other Things) be the Man.

But in the Minerals either Term is perfected in the simple assimilations, because the Ferment viz: the Seed hath

actual formal Condition which it doth impress in the thing fermented; for this Reason because that all homogeneous Substances (such almost all the minerals and chiefly the Metals are) do retain all the Parts of the whole with its Nature however that Form diversity affected by accident in the first two Terms of their Multiplication, by Reason of a Diversity of Disposition of Mercury in the said Terms which they have to them assimilated.

And so much of the first Genesis where you have seen the physical Tria in one and unity in Trinity, Fecundity in Two; in the Triangle a Quadrangle; a center in the Circumference, and the Circumference in the Center. The Quadrature of the Circuli, The Septinarium taken from a Triangle and Quadrangle; a Decas from the Septinarius and the Triangle and such other Emblems of our Cabala and to explain more largely, and to teach, how to apply it is needless now. Follows the Second Genesis.
Farewell.

Brussels, 30th June, 1646.

Epistle 24.

To all things then created having their Properties and being placed in their Order and proper Regions, God hath given an universal Law, which by its proper name we call naturating Nature, and is, that nothing at any time should remain idle and without Work, but that all things perpetually should move and be moved, drive and be driven on, act and be acted according to the Intention and Inclination of the substantial Form by which the motions and [Visissitudes] of actions and Passions, causations and Affections; the upper most Bodies acting them that are in the middle Region and these the inferior Bodies which are the Mixture of the three Families; But these the Species subjected to each Family and the Individua also of each Species, and that these Motions be in themselves in manner proper to each of them, for this Purpose that thence in the mixturum Genius a perpetual and never failing new Production of things the World might be procured and also a Multiplication of what is produced and reparation of what is decayed or extinct.

This is that Degree of eternal authority on Purpose that the Integrity of this World and of things equally complete should not before its due Time by a succedaneous Decrease and Ruin be diminished and destroyed.

And besides this general Order God hath given another to each Species for its Conservation and Multiplication which we call Nature naturated, by whose Help and Assistance these Inferior things do not only hold a correspondence with the Superiors and subalternate causes as to their Actions, but they contribute also to them and with them by their own strength according to the Faculty of their own Condition. But the Governor of naturated Nature is Archeus. And thus by the universal manifest Causes viz: the Heavens and Stars the Elements do daily produce and multiply Salt, Sulphur, and Mercury these again the Spirit universal doth again produce partly menstrua and seeds, partly Individua of each Family which lastly multiplies their Species except those of Minerals which cannot effect this without Arts Assistance.

This is a short Exposition of the second Genesis.

Farewell.

Brussels, 3 July, 1646.

Epistle 25.

Before we handle of the Rules of our Art and its Precepts we must permit some things of its Intentions and Power according to the foresaid Principles.

The intention then of our Artist in General is to perfect Nature, i.e. its natural Productions; this being the Office of Art; and this she effects two ways.

1. With helping Nature, either in order that Nature may obtain its ordinary End and Purpose of specifical Perfection, in those Things she daily Produces, in what Manner soever she is used to do it and by which End she necessarily attains its Hypothesis, that is by a certain and not a defective Law, by itself without any other assistance, in case she were not hindered by some accident, or the other, or in her Work disturbed. So for example a Chicken may, and is sometimes produced out of a Hen's Egg being kept continously warm, and so it happens with many such other things that when Nature for some Reason could not Art hath perfected.

Or lastly that Art do hasten Nature's Production before the usual ordinary Term of time. By such cunning artifice the comming forth of many Things is often accelerated. But this though it may be an ingenious Intention of Art, yet it cannot reach some metallic Work, being it doth not suit so well with the inferior mixture of the mineral, as it doth

with the two other families.

2. In exalting Nature's Works already perfected, according to its ordinary Course and Degree of specifical Perfection, to a higher One. And this she doth effect in two ways.

I. Without changing of the Species, only by exalting the intrinsical Virtue of it.

For God hath given to each being, besides the ordinary specifical, extraordinary and almost infinite Degrees of Perfection, chiefly in the vegetable and mineral Family which notwithstanding Nature by herself without Arts help cannot attain to, as hath been often said in the first Chapter.

As for example when Dough is raised by the action of the Ferment and is perfected by the Baker. Or when that Wine Stock out of a barren Ground is transplanted into a fertile Soil. For then by an internal addition and Increase the wins Stock and its Branches Properties and Degrees of Virtue are augmented.

And this manner of Increase doth before the rest chiefly belong to the mineral Family, and if the first said Term of mineral Multiplication of the Seed and cannot be done otherwise.

But take care that you do not take the Union and Contradiction of dispersed Virtue for exaltation of Virtue specific and Power, by which for example the Spirit of Wine (and so it is to be understood of other things) being by distillation once freed from the adhering great quantity of Tartar and Phlegm in which the said Spirit was dispersed he seems to become much powerful and strengthened in inward Virtue; though not withstanding all this nothing is really added to its formal degrees of Strength but only that the dispersed Particles of the Spirit become more united and compressed because of the separation of heterogeneous Excrements which laid confused with the Spirit not substantially united but only in the body of the Wine together placed. By which separation that Spirit indeed attains sooner and easier the Term of his operation and action acting upon passive Subjects, but for all that he therewith gets no higher Degree of his specific Virtue, by which he could do anything above the degrees of his innate Virtue and Power ordinary, or that he could multiply his species. The Ignorance of which hath almost deceived all Pilosophers when they worry themselves with infinite Operations in Metals and other Minerals (whose case is the same with the [unrecognizable symbol]) in vain presuming to exalt therewith their Virtues so as to produce Extrordinary Effects and to give them the Power of multiplying their Species. However it is not to be denied but that such a seperating operation be very useful and necessary to the philosophical Work as means to obtain the End. For the Artists Industry must not end in that Operation or Seperation if he wishes to obtain the Effects and Intention of the Lapis Philosophorum.

Neither is the accidental alteration of sensible qualities to be taken for the said augmentation of Virtue. Because that by the Addition of Heterogeneous Things of divers sorts, the Face is only changed not Nature or the Activity and state Form substantial. In which thing there lies a most gross Error, or rather a Deception of Sophists.

2. With the changing of the lowest Species into Superious and that also in twofold Manner.

I. By Help and Benefit of the Universal agent, a certain Sort of mineral multiplied according to the first Term of Multiplication and so exalted in his Virtue that it be able to transmute many species yea all of them such are subalternate and to assimilate them according to Proportion of greater inequality in infinitum so that the least Part of the Agent may in a moment convert and transmute an immense Portion of each subjected species, which Effect belongs only to the Lapis Philosophorum and it is the last Term of the foresaid Minerals Multiplication.

II. By Virtue of a particular agent whose activity is effectual upon One or few species subjected converting them in Manner as is aforesaid and to be said more amply hereafter which effect is of single Transmutation.

Now from what hath been said, the Division of Chrysopoei doth depend namely to be universal or particular. The universal Chrysopoeia is occupied in the Preparation of the said universal agent, or the Multplication of the seeds of Gold and Silver its application and use.

The particular tends only to the Preparation of particular agents and what concerns their use also and application. According to which division this chapter like the former shall have likewise two members.

Farewell.

Brussels, 10 July, 1646.

The object of Chrysopoei is the above mentioned universal Agent, how to make and to prepare the same, whose Essence is necessary to be known before its confection.

This Definition then is thus.

The Agent which the Philosopher makes use of for universal Transmutation of the Metals is Gold or Silver multiplied not according to their quantity but to their seeds and that by their intrinsic Virtue or activity of their Form substantial; greatly exalted nature working and Art ministring; whose one and the least Part because of its exuberant Tincture or Seed wherewith it is endowed is able to give substantially the form of Gold and Silver to a great Quantity of all Kind of Metals, and to assimilate the same in a most quick manner.

This Definition is regular though long, for it hath its nearest Genus namely of Nature of Gold and of Silver Then it hath its nearest differences viz: the Multiplication of their Seeds and Virtue, not their Quantity, (by which it is distinguished from Gold and Silver vulgar being considered in their ordinary States of mineral Constitution as also from them and all other things besides be they animal, mineral or vegetable, multiplicable or being multiplied according to quantity only) and lastly the transmutation Virtue of the greatest quantity above his own of any Metal whatsoever (by which is distinguished from particular transmutative agents) and that in little lesser quality, above his own but for the most part equal or lesser Quantity.

That Gold or Silver be the Genus of the Lapis Philosophorum or of the forsaied universal agent is manifest from thence because it is required, that the Lapis should transmute the simplest metals into Gold or Silver therefore to effect this it is necessarily required that the natural and true form of Gold and Silver should be in him: For nothing can give and communicate to another what it hath not himself.

Neither is it to Purpose to say, that from the Doctrine of the first chapter it may be concluded the Lapis to be the Seed of Gold or Silver and therefore that it cannot be Gold or Silver in Substance. For we have already in the same place by anticipation answered to what is now objected viz: That all the Parts of Bodies homogeneous, are of the same Nature and Condition their whole is. Therefore the Seed of Gold must need be Gold Formally. Likewise as any other Vitriol drawn out of any Kind of Metals, being their Seed or Sperma, doth not differ from the very metals, but only by some accidents namely by [dissmutation, dimmutation] only of some accidental but no essential Qualities as for example of [fusibility] and Ductibility as also of exaltation of Qualities essential but chiefly of its activity.

However it is disjunctively said that the Lapis Philosophorum be Gold or Silver. For there is a twofold Stone one for Gold and the other for Silver though the same agent which is fitted and prepared for Gold making can serve also for making Silver as we have taught somewhere else, yet in case the Artist intends Gold, then he shall take Gold to work upon, by Reason that the Stone made may impress a Golidish form if he aims at Silver he shall choose for his subject Silver that the Stone may communicate the Silver any Form and this according to the Axioma, that nothing can give what it not hath himself.

Neither is against us, that there are some causes that produce quite different Effects from their Nature and therefore Gold not to be absolutely a necessary Ingredient for to make Salt (or rather Gold) which can be inferred also as to Silver.

But take Notice that this hath only Place as to universal and equivocal causes which are destined for divers Effects; such Causes are the Heavens and Stars. But Causes which are particular and universal and which by Necessity produce such Effects as are of like Nature with them and do act by the Powers of specific Seed, as it is in our Work, there the Business goes otherwise. But that the said Stone must be of Gold and Silver though not simple but being multiplied according to their Seeds of intrinsic Virtue of their form substantial, it is concluded from hence; Because if it did not by a most intense Degree of Virtue overcome the Faculty of other Metals it could not equally assimilate to himself (i.e. transmute them even alike) all and of divers Kind of Degree of perfect Metals, and such a Quantity which far exceeds his own. For every Assimitation or Transmutation happens in the Proportion of a greater Inequality, according to Aristotle and more according to Truth. But vulgar and simple Gold or Silvers Quality and Virtue do not answer in that Proportion in Respect of other imperfect Metals, since their Resistance, at least for the most Part doth by many Degrees exceed the Activity of vulgar Gold or Silver.

If you do object, that Gold or Silver and chiefly Gold do and are able to transmute at least some of the inferior Metals because their Activity overcomes the Resistancy of those some Inferior Metals (which indeed cannot be denied) I do answer with Distinction, that if you speak of a particular Transmutation it is to be granted. For it is not incongruous to admit such a Transmutation And truly the Conversion of Food in the Substance of the Thing fed in the Vegetable and animal Family is nothing else than such a Transmutation. Neither is in this Case the Condition and Privilege of Minerals others. But it is still a particular Transmutation, neither doth it happen by way of proper Generation, i.e. by strength of the Seed, or that it should be occupied about greatest Quantities of the Things to be

transmuted. But if the meaning be of an universal Transmutation. I absolutely deny the Assertion. The Reason is, because this shall want what in the said universal Transmutation is required, viz: These three things in Respect of this Agent which also can be gathered from the definition above, viz:

1. That it must be able to transmute all Metals indifferently with equal Right and Power, though not in all equal Weight.

2. That the least of the Agent, be able to transmute an immense Quantity of any Metal.

3. That it must finish its Action of Transmutation in few Hours yea Minutes and that by a simple Application or Projection.

All which chiefly, the disproportion of the Quantity do lessen the Proportion of greater Quality, that can be in the vulgar Gold in respect of any Metal inferior, and on the other Hand do extoll the Resistancy of the said inferior Metals. For the Disproportion of Quantity hath this Effect (though it be not per se an active Quantity) that it augments or diminishes the activity or Resistancy of Quality active and passive, by so many Degrees as there is of Excess or Defect of the Same above, or to the true and just Measure and that some, not intrinsically by the Intention or Remission of Qualities but extrinsically by multiplication and Destruction of Parts, though in Things otherwise alike as to weight Number and Measure, anothers Activity or Resistancy might overcome the other Resistancy or Activity. For no man hath said yet that one Ounce of that Iron; (hot for example to eight Degrees) can as quickly and efficaciously make hot, one Hundred Ounces of Water though but cold to six Degrees as it will do ten ounces of Water, and contrary that ten ounces of the said Water can do as strongly resist an hundred ounces of the said hot Iron as a hundred or a Thousand ounces of water would do.

Farewell.

Brussels. 16th July, 1646.

Epistle 27.

Having thus explained the Essence of the Lapis Philosophorum it follows that we briefly consider its causes. For though it seems that by the said Definition the Terms might easily be adjusted, yet for all that, yet there remains greater obscurity about them than perhaps is thought of therefore needs to be explained and cleared. And because that any Work presupposes a Workman, it is fit to begin with the efficient Cause.

This then is twofold viz: The Principal and the ministering Cause. The Principal is Nature itself, without which nothing can be produced, so as to have natural Condition and Faculties. For artificial inactives properly are not Productions of natural Order.

The ministering Cause is Art Which cannot justly be said to produce, but only to help Nature in his Production of natural Things above the Terms of its ordinary Power as is said before. But how Art doth effect this you shall learn by the next Epistle.

Farewell.

Brussels, 21 July, 1646.

Epistle 28.

Next in order is Cause final. For every Agent Acts for some End or other. But since nothing can act for certain End or Purpose, except that End or Scope be Known to the Agent it belongs to us first to treat of that Scope.

The same then is twofold, viz: The nearest and the remote or last, The nearest scope then is the very before said first Term of mineral Production namely the Preparation of that universal Transmutative Agent, or (which is all one) the multiplication of the Seed of Gold or Silver.

The remote Scope or Finis is the Transmutation itself in which the last Term of the said Multiplication is concerned. Next to the Final is the exemplary Cause. For since Art hath not those Ways and Manners which are proper to Nature to prompt natural Production, but such as are alien from Nature it is convenient to know them first, before we lay Hand to the Work.

Natures Manner of Working is indeed the Exemplar to be imitated, in pursuance to purchase the said multiplication. It needs therefore to be considered and to be repeated what is said in the first Chapter; How Nature doth Work, viz: by solution and Coagulation. But she doth not dissolve by action of Fire to wit actual and violent (for hereby things are rather destroyed than loosened, or dissolved, and sterility thereby is induced.) but by action of Mercurial Water

and the Impression and strength of Nature Salt. That is to say by means and help of our living Mercury which by means of his incorporated Salt doth penetrate the Saline Parts of Bodies, and doth by dissipating the Parts divide the Compages or Connection of its physical Parts.

But the same Nature doth also coagulate again the same living Mercury by the help of the said Seed or Sulphur of the Body Gold dissolved, not again by the action of elemental common Fire and corrosive; but the central which exists in the most inward centers of the Sulphur which is excited to action by external Heats, either of the Sun or Stars or Five elemental.

Thus much of the final and exemplary Causes.

Farewell.

Brussels, 27th July, 1646.

Epistle 29.

Follows the material Cause.

For as soon as the Artist hath considered the [Ideam] and Exemplar of this intended Work he takes Matter in hand out of which Work is to be made according to his exemplary Model.

Now it is sufficiently verified that Gold or Silver be the Materia Lapis being they have been justly assigned for a Genus of it and for the subject which should receive its viz: Lapis form. But if the said Gold or Silver be the total and adequate Matter of the Lapis or only partial this is not enough discussed. We do therefore here assert and affirm that Gold and Silver are not the total and adequate matter, but only partial because as is said before, the Confection of the Lapis is the first Term of mineral Multiplication which consists and ends in the assimilation of a certain Thing with the Seed of Gold or Silver.

Therefore some things are to be admitted besides Gold or Silver for partial Matter of the Lapis. But that same thing cannot be anything else than our Silver besides our universal Spirit drawn out of our Magnesia. For the matter by which the Seed of Gold or Silver is multiplied and Gold or Silver Generated, must need be homogeneous to Gold and Silver. For out of heterogeneous Things a homogeneous Being cannot be brought forth. And such must be Gold multiplied. For from a Man and a Dog comes forth neither Man nor Dog, or a Plant or Stone from a Plant and Stone. And if you do object that we ourselves have somewhere else allowed a particular homogeneous Transformation namely that of the Food of any living Thing or Animal when it is converted into the substance of another different animal or vegetable; which something may happen in Minerals.

We answer, that such a Transmutation be not properly a Generation or Multiplication, because it is not effected by Virtue and Action of the Seed, but by the third Term or by a Completion of Multiplication of a thing generated already, as this Completion is explained before being it is done by the Power of our Form substantial as well in Minerals and vegetables as Animals.

But you may say further insisting and urging that we brood to come forth from animals of divers sort. So a Mule comes from a Horse and Ass and so many other Things. I answer that such broods degenerate not being of the same Species with Parents and Generants, and therefore the Species is not multiplied in this case.

Perhaps you will instance yet further saying; granted that the second matter must be homogeneous to Gold or Silver yet it doth not follow that therefore our Mercury must only be taken for that second Matter, for there are other things which are equally nay more homogeneous than the said Mercury and truly nothing is more homogeneous to Gold or Silver than Gold and Silver itself and their Parts or Principles.

But the Answer and Solution of this objection is very easy and ready from what in the Discussion of Pagetins Work namely that there are two sorts of Homogeneity. The one in Respect of Principles, by which two things do agree and have the same Identity of Nature with the Matter out of which the thing immediately is made and hath a radical aptitude to receive also one Time or the other the same Form. Thus for example the seed of a Dog is homogeneous with the Dog himself, because it hath the same Nature with that Seed this Dog was made of and hath also a radical Aptness to receive one Time or the Other, the Form of a Dog. And this is the Homogeneity which must be in our second Matter in respect of our first Matter which is Gold or Silver and which is no where else to be found but in our Mercury.

The second sort of Homogeneity is in things considered as principiated by which one Thing with another doth agree in Respect to the Form and all its natural Conditions. Thus Gold is homogeneous to Gold. And this sort of homogeneity is not required in our second Matter of the Lapis nay it is rather contrary to the Intention of the Lapis because that then the Ferment and the Thing fermentable should have the same formal Degree and so should not formally be distinguished, which here is necessary. For if the Fermentable Thing should and must acquire some

form which it had not done before. But you will instance say: This is true, being taken of Gold or Silver totally in its integral Substance but not of their separated Principles.

But what is true and holds in the whole, doth also hold in its Parts viz: in the Principles separated as well as in the principiated Thing destroyed in a manner. Because the said Principles cannot be so separated as that they could receive the former simplicity and could fully throw of [off] the Form of the principiated Being. Therefore the things could be simplified again (which we deny) yet the Inconveniency would come to all one thing. And it would make nothing against us, for they should likewise receive and have the same Respect (rationem) of Homogeneity of Principles, as we do require and exact. Besides this these Principles in what manner so ever separated that they should be again restored to the same former Individual at least specifical Body which according to nature is impossible. For then there should be a Regress from Privation to Habit. Neither hath any Man yet said that the physical Parts of any thing or substance being once separated could to the same substance be restored again, and in the same Number and Species could be reunited, except in the sole Man whose Form is not of the Genus of Material Forms.

Farewell.

Brussels, 9th August, 1646.

Epistle 30.

The last is the cause instrumental. For cause fromal is sufficiently expressed in the very definition and its Explication. This instrumental Cause then is like to the efficient Cause twofold also, being that Nature as well as Art have their own Instruments.

Nature's are two:

1. Water which serves for Solution. But this Water is no elemental Water but it is specifically the same Mercurius which was assigned for the partial Matter of the Lapis Rebis yet with all this Difference, That when it is proposed as a dissolvent it ought to be robbed of all its unctuousity and terrestreity (which do withstand the Efficacy of the volatile Salt in which the Solutive Faculty doth reside) and that by divers Rectifications: so that the same Water freely flowing and passing through the Pores of Gold or Silver it may mix itself with the Salt or Vitriol of the same Gold or Silver and by means of his own joined homogeneous humidity with Gold or Silver it may be able to separate and dissolve them with his homogeneous Parts in manner as Water dissolves Ice.

But when it is taken for the partial Matter of Lapis then it needs not so many Rectifications, for Rebis the second Instrument of Nature is a twofold Sort of Fire. The first sort is the central Fire or the [primigeneal] Heat moving the Powers of the Ferments and everywhere digesting and coagulating the Mercury which central Fire advances himself to four degrees of Heat according as his active Quality overcomes the other Qualities of the Matter. And these Four degrees are demonstrated by as many Principle colours namely Black, Green, White, Red. The second sort of Fire is the actual external Fire which doth excite the former Fire central, and as to preparatory operations, requires divers Degrees, but as to the main Work and Regimen of Coagulation but only one continual degree; so that which is said by some Authors concerning the four Degrees of Fire in the Works of the Lapis and its ordering shall and must be understood of the central Fire.[Note in the Margin: For the preparation several degrees of fire, but for coagulation but one continual degree.]

These Instruments are called natural, because the Art doth not properly use, but only disposes them for Nature's use and Works.

We will treat therefore next of the artificial Instruments.

Farewell.

Brussels, 20th August, 1646.

Letters 31-40 of Sendivogius

[Letters 1-10](#) . [Letters 11 - 20](#) . [Letters 21-30](#) . [Letters 41-55](#).

Epistle 31.

Arts instruments are several Vessels and a small Furnace with other Appertenances and are also of a twofold Order. Of the first are, such as do serve for the preporatory Operations and they are of two classes again. Of the first class are which belong to the Preparation of the dissolvent and they are again of three sorts.

1. A body or Bocia wherein our Magnesia is to be distilled, to draw out of her the living Mercury.
 2. A receiver to the Bocia, and these serve also for Rectification.
- Of the second sort is a small Furnace for distilling in ashes, or in fine sand.
Of the third are which help the distillation of the matter, such as are Cotton or Brimstone (pumex) which check the rising of our Magnesia caused by its Flatulency.

The Instruments of the second class are such as are necessary for the preparation and Trituration of Gold and Silver. And they are also of three sorts.

1. Vessels as Crucible, long necked Bodies, Bolt heads, cleansing Sachets.
2. A calcining Furnace one with an open Fire.
3. Such as serve for calcining and Trituration of Gold and Silver by fire potential, such as are the corrosive waters where Mercury or Antimony. For it is all one which of these Things in this case the Artis makes use of provided a perfect Powder be made of Gold or Silver and that the Calces by divers washing and Reverberations afterwards be very well purged and cleaned from the saltish Impressions which Calcination and [Exkoration], is altogether most necessary. For otherwise our living Mercury cannot unlock the Prisons of the Salt, or of Vitriol the Seed of Gold and Silver.

[Note in the Margin: Mind, looks like the rectified Water and calks of Gold.]
Farewell.

Brussels, 8th August, 1646.

Epistle 32.

The Instruments of the second principle order are those which do perfect the conception or coagulation of the Lapis Philosophorum. They are of threefold conditions also.

1. A glass made into the shape of an Egg in which both substances or Matter of the Lapis is to be put viz. the living Mercury and the Vitriol of Gold and Silver in their due Proportion as shall be described hereafter, where it is to be observed that the third Part only of the Egg is to be filled and then the mouth be very well hermetically sealed if you please stopped. [Notes in the Margin: "Third full only." and "Both only two things."]

Of the second condition are an earthen vessel in which the philosophical Egg is to be buried, laying about it fine ashes about the Breadth of a Thumb and a three foot in which the vessel may hang. [A tripod-like drawing containing the glass mentioned above is sketched in the left-hand margin.]

Of the third condition are, the Furnace or Athanor, with all its Appurtenances. For it is all alike what kind of Furnace you do provide so you can but give a very moderate continual and equal heat about the Egg.

Farewell.

Brussels, 13th August, 1646.

Epistle 33.

Having explained the Causes and the Application of them the manner of working succeeds which contains two Parts.

1. Is the number of Operations and the Explanation.
2. The Praxis.

Now with all of these Operations could orderly be collected out of our two last Epistles, yet because some things

might be thought to have been omitted about circumstances we shall minutely discuss them. Two actions (as is said before in the exemplary Cause) are principle, solution and coagulation. But these admit many other intervening middle actions viz: some preparatory Ones which are subordinate (or in order to obtain the principle ones) as means to gain proposed End, Finish, or Scope.

And they are of twofold categories or Ranks. Of the first and which are prescribed in order to make the solution are of threefold condition.

1. Is the preparation of the Dissolvent, that is, the Distillation of our Magnesia and rectification of what is distilled. [Note in the Margin: Mind this.] We do only make Mention of Distillation and Rectification because that pernicious Caprice of Separating, the Principles of Things principiated which some false Chymists do command, is altogether useless. I mean the separation of the Sulphur from the Mercury on purpose to reunite them afterwards again. For to the Effect or Works of Solution of Gold or Silver the volatile Salt only as to the Mercurial Part is necessary. But if the fixed Salt and the Sulphur of the same Magnesia do withstand the solution, the Sulphur because of its unctuousity and the salt because of its fixity, so far as it, that they can be here useful, that as is said, they rather hinder this work.
2. The Purgation and Calcination of Gold and Silver. The Instruments of which Operation you have seen above and are necessarily to be used, because that the subtilized Gold or Silver therewith brought to Powder may so much easier yield to a physical Solution and their Vitriol the Seed or Sperma be loosened. [Note in the Margin: "Gold, Mind."]
3. The Application of the Dissolvent to the prepared and to it disposed Gold or Silver and their ten times repeated [Cortus], so that through eleven Degrees you may have eleven grana or Seed of Gold or Silver. [Note in the Margin: Attend to this.]

Of the second Catagoria are such as dispose and order of Coction and coagulation and are of twofold Condition.

1. Those which require the Artist's Hand namely for composition of our philosophical Egg and that in Proportion ten to one viz: ten Parts of Mercurial liquor (which represents the White of an Egg) to one Part of Gold if your work be intended for Gold, or four parts of Mercury to one part of the Seed of Silver either which Seed takes place or represents the Yellow of the Egg, which proportion you ought always to keep for therein consists Nature's Weight, Number and Measure. Then this Egg requires to be put into the Furnace and then according for the Coction the ordering of the actual Fire is required. [Note in the Margin: Mind this.]
2. Those which of themselves naturally or by Force of Nature happen in the Egg so disposed without the Hand of the Artist and are physical corruption, mixtion, Contriturations (contritio) sublimation, Inceration, Imbibition, and many such acts described by authors, which being understood and worse interpreted by young Beginners, referring them artificial Industry and Operations hath brought them into a Labyrinth of inextricable Errors

The last of such Nature's Work is Fixation, which is the Lapis's Perfection and is done in Ten Months or thereabouts. It follows that we speak of Multiplication.

Farewell.

Brussels, 20th August, 1646.

[On the bottom of pages 66 and 67 of the original Ms the following notes appear:

Page 66: "Look at 72 tho on the same quite different to this leaf. 10 of our Rectifur Water to 1 of prepared Gold."

Page 67: "Philadelphia say until you can distinguish between preparatory Labors and those in the Egg you will

always remain in Error. This is really the truth."]

Epistle 34.

[Note in upper margin above Epistle 34 reads: Multiplication of the first powder.]

Having made an End with the Composition of the Lapis, there remains its Multiplication in infinitum which is effected by the same way and with the same operations the Lapis was made; only that instead of dissolved Gold or Silver, you lay in only so much of the Lapis as you laid in before of the said Gold or Silver for the first Confection of the Lapis. But as to the Mercurius no other is to be used and to be put to it than which I have made mention of before. But its Quantity in the multiplication of the Lapis is managed two ways and proportionated. [Note in the margin reads: So much of the other powder, fixed, 1 part and 10 parts of Water.]

For first you may take only ten parts of Mercurius to one Part of the perfected Lapis and then the Work is ended, ten times sooner than in the first Confection of the Lapis viz: in 30 or 40 days. And if this Lapis be once more multiplied, then with the same Proportion of Ingredients the work is ended, ten times sooner than it was in the first Multiplication, viz: in 3 or 4 days, and hereby you may understand what is said of the work, to be a work of three days. [Note in the margin reads: Mind 3 days work what.] But secondly the same Quantity of Mercurius is augmented tenfold also, namely that you take in the making of the Lapis or in the first Multiplication only ten parts of Mercury. But in the second Multiplication of this kind that you take an hundred parts of Mercury, and if you do repeat it the third time that you take a thousand parts and so forwards but though then the perfection of the work will require so long a Time as did the first making of the Lapis.

However multiply it which way you will you do always augment the Lapis in tenfold Proportion, not only as to its Bulk, but also as to his Virtue and Efficacy, so that after the first Multiplication each Part of the Lapis which only increased ten Times more in every Part of the Seed of the first Gold or Silver is now increased Ten times in every Part of the single Lapis made and a hundred Times in every Part of the said seed of Gold or Silver. But after the second Multiplication it surpasses these of the Seed a thousand, but those of the Lapis a hundred Times and so it goes forward.

The Reason of all this is because that when Nature works in One and the same subject for a substantial Production adds always ten Degrees of Perfection to the foregoing Effect or Product, being that she produces a new diverse species, if she goes about only to meliorate the same which we could prove by many natural instances and Examples. But that we know that you yourself by yourself can attain to its knowledge by your own Speculation. It remains that we speak of the use of the Lapis.

Farewell.

Brussels, 26th August, 1646.

Epistle 35.

The use of the Lapis is this, that he must be degraded i.e. must be lessened in his Power of Virtue with many Imbibitions of the foresaid, or with Mercury vulgar, till he hath acquired a just Temperament and Proportion of Strength fitted for a Medicine either for animals or Metals chiefly if the Lapis be multiplied. Otherwise since he hath an overpowering Heat and Dryness, he would destroy the natural Heat of the animal and dry up the radical Moistness of anything, instead that he should give succour to a diseased Animal. And as to inferior Metals, it would convert them into Powder, like unto himself and into an irresoluble Form instead of transmuting them into most perfect Gold or Silver.

Farewell.

Brussels, 1st September, 1646.

Epistle 36.

Now follows the Practice. [Note in the margin reads: Practice, mind this much.]

Take therefore of our choisest Magnesia of a whitish Colour and a tart Taste (subacidule) [q.u.] Throw it into a glass Boccia of sufficient largeness, so that only the third Part be filled. Then lay upon the Materia so much Cotton and

place little sticks athwart the glass amongst it that the whole Materia therewith be covered, or which is better make bullets out of the whole Matter and wrap them in Cotton; Throw them into the Boccia and having adjusted to it, as is usual a receiver very large and very well adjusted, distill it in fine sand and gentle Fire. First uses a most limpid or clear Spirit. Secondly a blackish Oil. And when nothing more distilled leave off and let all cool by itself.

Then Secondly take the Liquor distilled and rectify it in clear new vessels three or four times that the blackish Oil may be separated. And if you see that with the last rectified Spirit should ascend a yellow or red Oil then filter the spirits that the oil may remain in the filter.

Third. Divide your rectified Spirit in two equal Parts. One Part you shall keep for the confection and composition of the Egg. The other Part you shall again rectify so long till no Feces at all remain more and the Liquor is become very sharp (acerrimus) like the sharpest Spirit of Wine to a common Oil of Vitriol.

This is the Preparation of Mercury.[Note in the margin reads: Preparation of Gold.]

Fourthly. Take the purified Gold or Silver [Z1] and amalgamate it with Mercury vulgar washed and purified [Z viii] then mix the amalgam with common Sulphur [Z iv] or more if you please in a Mortar then let this mixture burn and deflagrate in a crucible in an open Fire of Charcoals, so that there remain a pure Calx which wash every often with common distilled Water and afterwards reverberate it 12 Hours.

This is the Preparation of Gold if you have a better, use that; For herein doth not consist the Mystery of our Art. But the Preparation of Silver is no other than a common Calcination and afterwards Purgation of the Calx described and taught by many authors everywhere, so that it is needless to teach here.

Fifthly. Put your Calx in a long necked Phial and pour upon it your sour or burning Mercury [q.s.] viz: Four or Five fingers height and put your Phial closed or stint up with an Arthenorium in Ashes for to circulate twenty four hours in continual heat of the first degree, which Time being past, distill two parts of the Liquor and presently cohobate it again, i.e. throw it back again upon the remaining third Part and repeat this operation eleven times and towards the end separate the Dissolutions by inclination from the Calx which remain and could not be dissolved. And afterwards separate also by Distillation the solvent Liquor from the dissolved Metal to the consistency of reddish and [triadish] Honey if it hath been Gold and blueish if it hath been Silver. [Notes in the margin read: Mind operation of Gold. Gold couple 11 times the Chalby Conceive. Quick Gold of Philosophers.]

This is now the Quick Gold or Quick Silver of Philosophers and the Seed of Gold, Silver.

But the signs that you have well proceeded in your operations are these. If the Liquor in the first circulation gets a Gold yellow Colour and in the following circulations a Redness by Degrees doth succeed. Then if the Peacock's Tail, or the Rainbow doth appear upon the Superficies of the Liquor; But the argument or sign of a radical Solution, is, when it cannot return again into a metallic Body. For this is the Propriety of Vitriol which is extracted out of Metals and such is our dissolved Gold or Silver.[Note on the bottom margin of the page reads: This differs from 66 there 10 hour, 2 of living Mercury and the preparation of Gold quite different.]

Sixthly. Take of the said Gold or Silver one part, of the living Mercury which you had reserved two parts, if you design for Gold, or four parts if you design for Silver. Both put apart in its Glass Egg provided; so that two Parts of it remain empty, and sigil the Mouth hermetically.

This is the Confection of the Philosophical Egg.

Seventhly, and lastly have an earthen Vessel ready, or a little Pot, fill it with Ashes, bury the Egg in it, so that the Ashes surmount the Matter the Breadth of a finger and hang this earthen Vessel in a three Footmade [Tripod] on purpose for it, and so let it stand and hang in the midst of any little Furnace, of what convenient Figure so ever, be it an Athanor with the [same] or another Furnace where you can give a very gentle equal Heat and which may encompass the Matter to the very End of the Work, which is the perfect fixation ending in an obscure Redness, after that the three other principle Colours have in their order appeared, these intervening Changes and their discoloured Mutations if the Lapis be for Silver.

But what that gentle Degree of Heat must be sole Experience will teach you because it cannot be described. And he that hath made it once, may notwithstanding therein fail.

Yet the Signs of its due Degree are the appearing of those four said Colours, at every three Months end, and of those intervening colours, at the end of every Quadregesima or 42 days or there about, till to the darkish Redness which is the Term of perpetual fixation. Of the Practice of Multiplication I need add Nothing. For you can gather that from what hath been said already, neither hath she a diverse Method from the Practice of the Lapis.

But we will add some things as to the use of the Practice and that in the following Epistle.

Farewell.

Brussels, 7th September, [year not included, presumably 1646.]

Epistle 37.

The use of the Practice of this.

1. As to Medicine to Animals. Dissolve 1 grain of the single Lapis in 100 grain of that Mercury wherewith the Lapis is made or in any other Liqour or specific vehicle for the present condition of the disease and the Temperament of the patient giving a due Portion of such liqours with the one grain of Lapis dissolved.

But if the lapis hath been once multiplied then one grain of it must be dissolved in a thousand grains of such convenient Liqour, if twice multiplied in ten thousand Grains of Liqour and so forwards.

2. As to the transmutation of the Metals. Take one Part of the single Lapis and two Parts of the said our, not of common Mercury or the once multiplied Lapis one part, and ten Parts of the same Mercury, or lastly one part of twice multiplied Lapis and a thousand parts of the said Mercury and set them to dry, first in a gentle Fire, then stronger and stronger till it gets the consistence of a stone. And such Imbibitions and [Desiccations] repeat till one Part of the Lapis converts ten Parts of Mercury common, twenty of Lead, 30 of Tin, 50 of Copper, and lastly 100 of Silver into perfect Gold. But half of the Part or thereabouts of the said proportion of those metals if the Lapis before Silver.

But if you should want a sufficient Quantity of the forsaid Mercury then you can degrade the Lapis with Mercury vulgar also in a manner following.

Project one Part of this single or multiplied Lapis upon ten Parts of Mercury vulgar heated and you shall have a powder of the same Nature with the Lapis, but a lesser Virtue and Effiacy. All this Powder project again upon two Parts of the same Mercury vulgar and if then the Powder grows moisted dry it by the Fire and it will remain a Powder, which lastly you can advance, project upon the foresaid Metals keeping the same proportion.

This is now the Universal and most exact Theory and Practice of the Lapis.

It remains that we make an access to the particular Chrysopoeia.

Farewell.

Brussels, 10th September, 1646.

Epistle 38.

The particular Chrysopoeia tends, and aims (as I said before) at a particular conversion of every Metal imperfect into perfect Gold or Silver and that either in the whole or only in part. According to which Division, this Member shall be divided again into two Sections.

The first shall be of Transmutation of imperfect Metals as to their whole Quantity or Bulk.

The second as to some Part of it.

The Transmutation of the whole Quantity is twofold.

1. It is effected by a Proportion of the Particular Transmutative agent of much greater Inequality in Respect of the Metal which is to be Transmuted, so the one Part of the Agent is able to convert many Parts of imperfect Metals into Gold or Silver according to its Ferment viz: Silver in Gold if you have for the ferment Gold and Gold in Silver, if you administer for a coagulum Silver. For in this work the specific Ferment must be applied just as it was in the confection of the Lapis and in the same manner namely the Gold or Silver dissolved in our Mercury. But the Difference is in the fermentable subject. Form in the confection of the Lapis our Mercury is taken and used as the thing fermentable, Because of Intention is not to make immediately Metal, But only the Seeds of Metals. But there the Matter which is to be fermented, is some Metal wherewith the Confection of a Metal is intended immediately. But as to the Metal it matters not of what Kind is taken for the thing fermentable, if it doth but symbolize with the Ferment, in the principal Qualities, though the Pondus will vary, because that all their connection and perfection is not equal, neither is the Virtue of its Ferment equal. Therefore according to the Nature of the ferment and the thing fermental, diversity of doses will be required, the rule of which I have not observed. For possessing greater Things I have such Trifles neglected.

But the manner of Preparation of the fermentable Metal consists in its Reduction into Vitriol, as the ferment is himself and like unto the agent namely our Mercury on purpose that like the dissolved Agent doth more efficaciously and sooner operate than if it was not dissolved so might the dissolved Patient better and easier receive the actions of the Agent. [Note in the margin reads: Good Observation.]

The regimen here of the Fire is not of the continual Degree, but of divers according as the colours do change For no Conflagration or precipitated sudden [Exsiccation] of the thing fermentable is here to be feared as it was in the Confection of the Lapis.

2. The Transmutation of the whole happens through Proportion of greater Inequality of the Transmutative Agent, with the imperfect Metal so that one Part of the Agent, can transmute but an equal Weight, or Part of the imperfect Metal, which Transmutation is rather effected upon common, or some other metallick Mercury than upon solid Metals. Neither needs this Transmutation, any dissolving Operations of the thing fermentable as the former did, but the Solution and Preparation of the Ferment here, always is necessary, for reason, that the activity of Form substantial, being otherwise hindered and now freed of its Fetters and Obstacles may act with the more Efficacy. If you do not do this seldom or never shall happen any due transformation.

But concerning the Transmutation as only to some Part of the Metal. This properly is not Transformation because it transmutes nothing substantially and he is twofold. The first is done by Extraction of perfect Metal out of the bowels of an imperfect Metal, namely Gold out of Silver, Iron, and Copper, but Silver out of Lead and Tin. For in the first three Metals, there is a great Deal of good Gold perfectly by Nature, elaborated and true and good in all its conditions and in the last there lies much Silver. For in the Mines of any Metal, there are many Ferments also of other Metals as the Seed of Gold in Silver, Iron and Copper Mines, and which Seeds when they meet Mercury they do determine him into Gold or Silver, according to their Nature. But because in the same Mine, there is a greater quantity of the ferment of imperfect metals which being confused with the ferment of perfect Metals, which Nature could not Separate except Art had intervened therefore it happened that thus the perfect Metal remained confined to the Substance of imperfect Metal. But the way to extract such perfect Metal, I have not for the present at hand though I have experimented it more than once.

One chief thing in this Business is to be taken Notice of, namely that this Operation is to be done by [repetensing] agents as are Tartar, Quick Lime, Sal Amoniac and such the like biting Salts for what corrodes the volatile Parts of the repercussing or repelling Agents, do depress and keep down the fix resisting Parts, so that by the separating Waters, or the Test, the fix Parts being united do no more yeild, which before being dispersed in more loose Quantities were forced to yield to be carried along with other volatile Parts, so that there is a reality in this Business, but little Profit when you come to complete and compare the Expences with that little quantity of good fix Metal which you have extracted.

Moreover is to be noted, that the perfect Metal thus extracted, comes forth of itself in its natural colour and splendor; Gold colour if it be Gold; Silver Colour if it be Silver, because that the Tinctures of Metals are of a fix and therefore unchangeable Condition or (which is all one) because the colours are inseperable Properties to the essence of fixed Metals.

But the second particular and improper Transmutation is effected by Condensation, or (as they call it) by fixation of Metals. And this in Reality and Truth, is but a sophistic Mutation or Change, though some Metals thus prepared do nevertheless sustain several Probations and Examina.

To this there are two ways.

The first is by Abstraction which is made with some metallick excrements or rather Recrements and some Mineral Salts by way of Cementation.

And it is not to be valued what is objected commonly, viz: that the spirits of volatile Metals cannot give a fixed form, which they have not. For such metallic Matters do first send forth and insinuate their spirits, into the Pores of the Metal which is to be condensed and fixed by means of their salts, and that with the first degrees of Cementation Fire where at least by means of sthe same salt , (whose Property is to be vitrified and to dispose to vitrification) the calcinated Metals (and such are the said Metallic Recrements) by the action of external Fire, are vitrified and that at the end of the Cementation, from whence those cemented Metals, become fixeable, and not so metallic, which is an undoubted sign of vitrification or mixture of Glass. In which state, it is of no wonder at all, if such cemented Metals do sustain corrosive waters.

The second way is Exsiccation, which again is practiced in two ways.

The first by amalgamating the Metals which are to be condensed or exsiccated with Mercury or Antimony, and then by burning of the amalgam.

Here the Humidity of any Metal is mixed with the humidity of Antimony or Mercury, and both fly away as soon as they feel the burning Fire.

The Second is Corrosion with Salts corrosive and Metals of a dry Constitution being mixed with such as Iron is and any other dry minerals. But Metals thus condensed commonly do want a just Tincture, for Reason above alledg'd. For bring that a metallic fix Tincture, is an essential Condition of a fixed Metal, certainly it cannot be found in a Metal not really, truly and Naturally fix. However I do not deny, but that by Art, there can be given in some manner, a fix Tincture especially as to Gold provided you add to your Work true upright Gold. I mean to the metals already condensed and then when they are, in the melting, united together, that you have put to it again a great quantity of [subifying] Metals, and thus be corroded again.

For in this Mixture, (as it is said before) there, what is real is joined to true Gold. And therefore the Tincture is

augmented, namely by addition of Parts tinging. However such Tincture is weak always. But for White, there cannot be so given a fix Tincture.
Farewell.

Brussels, 17th September, 1646.

Epistle 39.

Our last Epistle hath thoroughly sifted all things that belong to particular Chrysopoeia or the Art of Gold making short and plain. There wants only (wherewith I shall conclude the whole Tractation of metals) the way to try the metallic works, its order and Examination of what is good or bad.

Be it known then; Two Metals to be the only perfect Gold and Silver yet to have obtained a Degree of Fixation. And the Conditions of either Perfection are three; Solidity Weight and Tincture.

The signs then and Examination of the Reality of these conditions is twofold; common or private to either.

Common Examinations to both Gold as well as Silver are the Eye, Ignition, Candefaction, Extension; the Needle, or Knife, Fusion and the Cement.

The Eye doth judge the Title of the Tincture by the Touchstone, The Ignition if she makes a black spot upon the metal tried, such as covers the whole [Superficies], it argues a false Mixture.

The Extension, if it cannot be made readily, or if the metal while it is worked and extended, cracks, it argues a mixture of heterogeneous things, Salts or friable Metals as Tin. The Needle, or Penknife, if it finds the Metal to hard and that it will not easily yield to the Iron it argues also a Mixture of other Minerals.

The Fusion or Melting if it be very easily done, it argues a great Quantity of admixed imperfect Metals: For thus Ferrumen is made. If the Metal be harder to be Melted than ordinary it argues a great gathering of vitrified Minerals in the Metal. If this Tincture and Substance thereby is lessened it argues a sophisticated Work.

The Test if it lessens the Tincture, or Substance bears the same sign of altered or adulterated Metal.

The private signss concern Gold or Silver apart.

The Trials of Gold are Regal Cementation; separation by corrosive waters; the trial with Antimony solution in Lapis Armenius, and the Reduction to a body after Solution.

By the regal Cementation true Gold is known, if no notable Loss after several repeated Cementations, is found.

Through Separation and Inquartation, defective Gold is known, if a part which should be fixed, Gold will dissolve with Silver, or though it be not dissolved if some things is separated in manner of Gold and some things of Grey colour also lies above the Gold, or lastly if the whole Part, not dissolved is grey and not of black colour, neither receives by [nealing] the Yellowness again, such as is due to Gold, and if the Calces being reduced into a body shall sustain the corrosive Water, upon a Touchstone.

Lapis Armenius Purgation evidences faulty Gold, if after its evaporation the Gold doth lose of its Substance and Colour.

Solution, of the Gold is very hard to be dissolved, and it is to be advised that Aqua Regis which dissolves Silver and not Gold, as soon as it is made regal, should dissolve Gold and not Silver. Hence if the Solution proves difficult in Aqua Regis it is argument of unchanged Silver, or vitrified Bodies to be mixed with it.

Lastly, if the dissolvin waters being loaded with the dissolved Calces, and yet do not turn yellow, it is malum Omen, an Ill omen; and if the Calces cannot be reduced into a body, or the greatest part of them doth vitrify, it is a sign of a mixture of heterogeneous Minerals and Salts, moreover if the Tincture thereby is diminished.

The private or particular Trials and Examinations of Silver besides the Test are following these.

The solution of the Calces; separation from corrosive Water by copper Plates, and lastly their Reduction into a body. If the dissolving Waters loaden with the Calces, have no blue, [coruleous] Colour, or if the Silver be too quick dissolved it is faulty.

In the separation of the Calces from the dissolving waters by copper plates, if the Calces do not stick to the plates the Silver is Sophisticated; for true Silver doth not do that.

These said Trials, solution of the Calces, Separation and Reduction into a body are the surest before all others of Gold as well as Silver. And yet they are ignorantly neglected of Tryers and Examinators, not making as the should true use of.

The order to be held in the Trial follows and is threefold.

Right, Retrograde, and Oblique.

The Right Order follows successive the [phases] above described, in the Trials, as well as common and equivocal as private and universal.

All which is that the Metal doth legitimately sustain, there is no doubt, but it hath its physical Reality viz: That it is all its natural always approved conditions commendable. But if the contrary, that it falters in one or the other Trial, then know that such comes to pass, either in the first and second trials, or in the last univocal Ones.

In the first and middle ones, viz: common and equivocal, it argues altogether the work be sophisticated and by no means to be approved; But if the fault be but found by the last Trials, it is a sign of some Fixation, and the work is fit for mechanical things. Yet this Reason is not so very certain neither, it be then that the Metal have sustained, that same Trial and in the same Order 3 or 4 times over and over again.

For as I have said, the vitrified Bodies mixed with the Metal can defend themselves against the first Times Trial which if it be repeated, it makes those substances and vitrified Bodies to vanish away, so that the metallic substance comes to its natural State again; But if the Metal doth not return to it again, then that Fixation as is said, is good and sufficient for Workmanship, though it be not a true and natural Fixation and Perfection and therefore cannot be useful for medicinal Affairs and other natural and proper Offices required from essential Gold or Silver.

The retrograde Order, which is shorter, begins from the last universal Trial, viz: from the solution, collection of the Calces and their Reduction into a body, which if it succeeds legitimately, then there needs no further trial. For these Trials alone legitimate a Reality, manifesting the essential Properties of the Metal. But if it doth not succeed, go on in the retrograde Trials, of which if but one doth fail it is an ill Omen. But if all do answer according to your wish it is an argument of sufficient Fixation, as it is said for [fabrile] Works especially if after such retrograde Trials, the right Order also hath been followed, and that hath well succeeded.

The oblique Order, begins with the middle Trials and it goes on either straight forwards, to the very last Trial, or in retrograde Order from the last to the first. If after all such Trials, there be a happy coming out, tis well; but if after the retrograde Way the Trial succeeds indifferently, the Probation is uncertain. For many sophisticated Works do sustain all probations and trials made, in contrary and preposterous Order, which will not suffer the right Order and Trials made according to the natural Series.

Farewell.

Brussels, 22nd September, 1646.

Epistle 40.

For these forsaid Probations and Trials we have thought fit to add some caution for Fear you should one Time or other be deceived and by observing perhaps in the Antimonial Trial a diminution of the Substance of Gold, to condemn that as not good. For in the said Antimonial Trial (as it is commonly made) the best and the purest Gold may suffer a Detriment, not that it flies with the Antimonial Mercury but because it doth mix it self in the Trial, which the Recrements, in which there remains a small Portion of Gold and that through the too accurate Industry of the Examiner and not without great Labour and weariness of the Body. For this comes to pass according to the common Way, when by great violent labour, and long agitation of great bellows, the whole quantity of trial substance is dissipated and thus the Gold which is to be purified, is by this Operation driven into divers crucibles and also lose by the way.

But do so, mix with the fitted Antimonial Powder, the eighth Part of the crude Tartar and then go on in your Way and you shall lose nothing or vey little of your Gold and your Labour will be so much less. For the Tartar throws down the whole quantity of Gold to the Bottom of the crucible so that nothing can remain in it but the Antimonial Feces. And now what besides this I have said might belong to the Methods of Trials, viz: in what manner they are performed, such Things you shall find in common Books, which herein do give you good Directions, but if anything should be wanting you must converse with expert Ethnicks. For such things are better learned by experimental Habits than by Precepts.

Neither doth Philosophy's shortness concern herself with such little Artifices, or unusual Commerce engaged in greater Business should allow it. And herewith is finished the accurate and true compendious Doctrine of the Whole-hermetical Doscience, I promised you by means whereof you can when you please lay hand yourself on the Wolrk.

And if by Chance in the Work itself, though done according to the Rule given above, in the Practice all things should not presently succeed according to your With the Senses, do not leave therefore your Work, but rather have a Recourse to our theoretical Epistles, in which we have explained both creations, and endeavor by that, what is explained there and orderly described to explain that, what in the Practice seems to you intricate and obscure, remembering that Proposition which there we have laid down for an undoubted Axiom, viz: that Art imitates Nature and yet perfects the same, and that as many Acts be in the One as the Other few excepted such as we have there

noticed and rehearsed. And again those acts, if you cannot distinguish, read over and over again the very Text of mosaical Exposition of the Creation of the inferior World, namely the Fabrick attentively considering each Day's Operation of the primordial Week. For with the number, Order and Manner also, is admirably well thought of all our philosophical operations and practice that by the dictate of the Holy Ghost and himself in a s true Exemplar given to all true Philosophers, nothing therein being left out or preposterously or confusedly written.

This Council I have given you for a Conclusion, provoking all others, which as to this matter can be given. Farewell.

Brussels, 1st October, 1646.

Letters 41-55 of Sendivogius

[Letters 1-10](#) . [Letters 11 - 20](#) . [Letters 21-30](#) . [Letters 31-40](#) .

Epistle 41.

Our intention was, that having given you in these Epistles such an easy and clear Method as possibly could be given, of the true Principles, as well as the alchymical Theory, as its Practice, you might now apply yourself to the reading of Authors and do endeavor to explain and to apply their writings and sentiments to these our Principles being they do not at all differ from theirs; except perhaps in some Expressions and Cunnings of communicating of our Hypothesis. But since you are as you say so deeply engaged, as well in public as private affairs, and since this study requires a mind free from all cares, [Note in the margin reads: True.] we will not think much to give you according to your Desire such short and perspicuous Rules for conferring and confronting the Doctrine of our Epistles, with the best of the best Authors, as with the Sense and meaning of our Nouvum Lumen Chymicum, also and we have thought fit to [unrecognizable word] advise you also of some things without which Knowledge there cannot be a natural and Genuine Interpretation of me and authors though the some may be right, true and conformable to the Intention of the wise. First then it is to be taken Notice of, that all and so many Authors are faithful, though they have written and lived in divers ages, yet they have all with One and the same Contrivance and Artifice, as if conspired, endeavoured that while they would leave to Posterity the Monuments of Alchymical Truth which they really had found themselves by their work, they have performed it in such a Manner that those which were thereinto born and by God destined to get this sacred Knowledge, and excited by the Testimony of those Brethren, might upon those grounds first ask that some knowledge from God, with zealous Prayer (For without his special Grace and Assistance the same cannot be acquired, neither being acquired can be exercised, of Men though otherwise witty and ready, as well in speculation aas Operation) and hope to attain to it. But those which being unworthy of so precious and not less pernicious Art coming into wicked hands, or which by God were destined to other Affairs, might by their enigmatical writings and Difficulty of Labour be terrified there with and averted from their intended Purpose. Therefore the ancient Writers have purposely many things left out, and left them to be said by their followers and to be added. Yet so as not you repeat again what had been said already by their Predecessors.

Besides this they have everywhere invented Fables and thrown many stones in the way, as if by those singular Ways, they had proposed to themselves All, but One and the Same Object and End viz: to hide the Mysteries. And thus they all have used the same general ways to effect it which I now shall reduce to three heads and declare hereafter.

Farewell.

Brussels, 1st October, 1646.

Epistle 42.

The first way is that to cause greater Obscurity. They have in several Places in their Writings divided One thing in itself, and have not only distributed the same one Thing in several Parts, but have also thrown in the Way with it exquisite Appositions, nay (that I may say so) formal Contradictions, so that what One Place doth affirm, the other denies. However they do not altogether suppress to find out the way, to reconcile it and to distinguish their meaning, yet nevertheless it is all sounded in a vast and profound sea of confusion.

The second way is that in One Place and the same Context they do make Expression of two or more different things or if they do of them handle seperately in divers Places and contexts, they do confound them and make it as one thing, expressing it with almost the same words in appearance the same thing signifying and that especially when they come to touch the Preparation of our Mercury or also the Mastery and its Fermentation or specific Determination, to a Metalline Nature. For those things though they be altogether different, yet they make them so alike the joined Propositions, which seem to have a joined Sense have altogether for seperated Intentions, only cohering because of the affinity, analogimus, or Onionymia of matter.

The third way is that they study to propose things in a preposterous order, especially when they come to treat of the Subject and Disposition of their Operations. For things being treated of in right Order, though in an obscure style may at length be found out, by sharp wits, remaining only hid to Fools. Therefore they thought it congrous to their Design, now to begin in their writings from the End, now from the Beginning, now to leave off the lastly to invert all.

These things are of us like to the other Authors, religiously and with great Industry observed in our Nouvum Lumen Chymicum, with its depending Treatises, the Dialogues namely of Sulphur and Mercury, some operations we have contracted under generical Acceptions of Terms, for Fear of Interception, which however we have largely here explicated in our theoretical Epistles.

Neither is there any Thing left out, or that I should have dealt preposterously or deceitfully. And therefore if you will fully apprehend, as well our, as the meaning meaning of other authors, according to the Doctrine of our Epistles and desire to be able to explain rightly the obscure Places and so to avoid [Rocks] and to reconcile contrary Doctrines and lastly to be able to distinguish what is confusedest, then it becomes you to have deeply infixed in your mind the most necessary foresaid Distinction, hitherto never so openly expressed and perhaps never hereafter so perspicuously set forth viz: the Distinction between the universal and the two partial Lapides, or the Exaltation of the Philosophical Mercurius or the Magestry, and then its mineral Fermentation or Specification. For this Distinction is the Key to the temple of philosophical wisdom and is also the mystery of our Art. Besides this you must remember to infer, confer and refer Places to Places, subjects to subjects and sentences to sentences. Farewell.

Brussels, 8th December, 1646.

Epistle 43.

After the general advice how to read and understand authors, it will be usefull to come to a particular Explanation and conciliation not of all and every single Place and Expositions about the last Part of Chrysopeia (of such chiefly you do not consult us) but only of the chiefest Places to which all other Places and seeming contradictions can be referred, as well in our as in other Authors writings here and there occurring.

All seeming Contradictions then in all Authors and also in our Writings do concern either the things signified by certain words or Terms, or the Term itself signifying the Thing. Those which concern the Thing can be reffered in general to two Heads namely, to the Matter, and to the manner of handling the Operation.

The first Head is to be divided again into two Articles suitable to the two last Doubts where it was questioned [Quotaxtes] the Matter of the Lapis be and what she is.

What concerns the first Article where it is asked of the Matter of the Lapis be of various sort, there are some that obstinately do hold and affirm and that under an obligation of a sacred Oath that there is but one Thing for the Lapis or if there be more than one, that they are ought to be considered as a mixtum and in ye constitution of a mixtum and those Parts are three viz: Salt, Sulphur, and Mercury making up but one physical Totum one thing by itself in any mixed Body and not many. The ground of which sentence seems is taken from what somewhere else I with divers other Authors have delivered in our writings viz: that one only Thing be sufficient for to make the Lapis.

However there may two Things be used but they must be of one Radix and that [unrecognizable symbol] for Brevity's sake which abreviation some think to be a new invention above the experience of the ancients and not necessary for the confection of the Lapis.

Others contrary do admit two divers substances and partial Matters for the Lapis which the Philosophers under the name of Sulphur-vive and living Mercury and with divers other two membered nomenclatures do decypher as when they call it living Gold, living Silver, Man and Wife, Gabricius and Bera, and such like, which Diversity of Names, sounds as if there were also comprehended diversity of Nature's together with a difference of affections, and that it were distinct Supposita and consequently that there was involved Plurality of things consisting in two numbers. To which Number modern Philosophers add a third Substance and name, viz: Salt.

Others lastly are not contended with the number neither but will have seven Substances for the Materia viz: of seven Metals. For say they the Lapis is to be an universal Agens. But the universal Nature is such that it is made up by all its subjected species. Add to this that we ourselves seem to favour this opinion, when we have in our Nouvum Lumen Chymicum expressed some things like to it in our Discourse of the Seven Planets and Harmony of Metals. To this Opinion comes near that which to the Lapis requires three substances or three divers things, instead of seven Metals, to which may be added that the Lapis being befriended with the three Families with the three Families of the lower mixture conserve them herein equally being he serves for their Production, Conservation, and Reparation always.[Note in the margin reads: Their species Individuum.]

All which seems could not be if the Lapis were and must not be composed of things of a threefold Purpose of Nature.

These Things are opposed against the first article all which the following Epistles shall elucidate.

Farewell.

Brussels, 4th October, 1646.

Epistle 44.

Both sentences of the precedent Epistles are true, but you must take them in the proper sense and under certain limitation or distinction.

The first is true in Respect of the primordial Production viz: the Fermentation of our living Mercury and his conversion into the Seed of primordial Nature by action of Primordial Seed, in Manners, the ways largely exposed which Production may happen not only in the Bowels of the Earth but also in artificial Vessels. Neither is there unto necessarily required anything else besides the foresaid Spiritus Universalis or our living Mercury. For it cannot happen otherwise but that this our mercurius through so many assertions, descertions, by which he is agitated and moved driven by the Archeus from the lowest to the uppermost Parts of this Sublunary World and contrary, but that by so many as it were Distillations, Rectifications, and Sublimations the being thus prepared hath also by his magnetical Virtue attracted out of most profound lurking holes of primordial Seeds, many seeds of Gold and Silver, by means of which he can be assimilated and consequently can be made mineral and Metallick.

For the Lapis metallicus is nothing else than the multiplied Seed of Gold or Silver or the Mercury specified and assimilated into the Seed of Gold or Silver.

But this is in the Earth effected in a very long Time partly because of the Debility of the Archeus, partly because of the weakness of the fermentative Faculty of primordial Seeds.

But if we have Respect unto the Production which belongs to Art and to which is done by Virtue of Particular Seeds and with far more Efficacy and Celerity than the former, then I say in that Respect this first Opinion is altogether false, because that the particular Seeds of Gold or Silver necessarily must be had from Gold or Silver vulgar and are not to be applied to the said Mercury as we have proved abundantly elsewhere.

Therefore we must for the confection of the Lapis admit two Things, namely Sperma, or the Vitriol of Gold which contains the particular Seed of Gold and our Spirit Universal which is to be assimilated and converted into particular Seed of Gold, or if you please, of Silver, namely to make up the Lapis metallicus, or a metallick specification and that according to the first Intention and Term of Multiplication elsewhere explained.

However, take notice that these two things notwithstanding are but of one Radix and are not to be looked upon as incomplete Substances which Respect have all natural Parts of physical mixture in Respect of their physical Whole one by itself (as those men ridiculously hold and defend, which affirm that all of the Plurality of things here to be defended, must consist in the Separation of Mercury, Sulphur and Salt from one complete Substance, viz: Gold or Silver. For this State of Habit (Habitus) signifies and argues a State of a divided and maimed Body, but not of divers Things of one Radix, but they are to be taken as compleat Substances, distinct and not depending one upon the other, yet agreeing according to the homogeneity of Principles therefore explained, which Homogeneity doth include an identity and unity of offspring or Radix of both Substances, but not an Unity, or Identity of the Trunk or Stipes. And this Distinction is very well to be noted and observed. For there is a very vast Difference between the Unity or identity of the Radix (as for example the Tree and the fruit of the Tree, which have their own complete Beings, distinct and altogether different, are said to be of the same Root and offspring that is of the same as well active as passive seminal and constitutive Principles of the Species.) And the identity of the whole Trunk or Stipes. For the Bark and Heart of any Tree having their distinct Being from the Tree, but an incomplete one, are said to be Parts by themselves, of one and the same Body.

All which that it may be no longer obscure to you I will more plainly explain, for the sake of the alleged Sentences.

The first Sentence, then can be understood either of the first Lapis, or Magistry or of second, that is, its Specification. If it be understood of the Magistry the sentence is not True.

1. Because that thereunto is required, nothing else but our Universal Spirit. For here this Magistry is nothing else than a due Coition or Coagulation of the sole substance of the said universal Spirit according to the three divers degrees of his Temperation, viz: Mercurial, Sulphurous, and Saline; In which Saltishness, the Exaltation of the universal Mercurius and the Perfection of the magistry is terminated by Imitation of natural coction of the same Mercurius done in the Bowels of the Earth, before he is specified through primordial Seeds.

But if the said Sentence be understood of the specification or the Specific Magistry's Determination to the Nature of Gold or Silver it must be two ways distinguished. For if the Meaning be of that Specification which (though seldom and in a very long Time) doth happen without any intrinsical Accession by the Power of the primordial Seeds, viz: whereof the said universal spirit, hath in himself but a very small Quantity which doth constitute his hermaphroditical Nature so that the very Seeds take Place of the masculine Seeds and the substance of the Spirit that of the feminine: Or if we aim at that same specification which happens by extrinsical Accession and copulation of Seeds, either primordial in the Bowels of the Earth or particular in an artificial vessel, then in that same sense the said sentence is False.

For the specifying Seed and the Matter specifically are really two distinct substances, yea two complete but homogeneous substances by homogeneity of principiating Principles and therefore one and the same Radix which is all one with true Philosophers.

But perhaps you will argue thus; All mixed Bodies though of diverse Species and Nature are according to this sort of Homogeneity of Principles, homogeneous. For according to our aforesaid Doctrine all Matters subjected to any of those mixed Bodies Form is homogeneous with the universal Spirit and therefore they are also one of the Same Radix: so that any of these bodies can be taken for all Sorts of Multiplication to be the proper Matter which if it doth hold in things which are of divers Species and Number, certainly it will hold in natural Parts of a mixture, as it is a mixture viz: in Mercury, Sulphur, and Salt, because that these have the same natural Principles, with the whole. And certainly this Objection doth mightily pinch and leave it without it's due Resolve anywhere in Authors to be found directly expressed. Take it then here I pray you.

And to answer to this objection decisively it is to be observed that there are three conditions required according to the Philosophers before anything can be called homogeneous with another by Homogeneity of Principles.

Of the first condition is that both Substances have a complete Being so that one towards the other must not bear the Relation of being Part of the Whole.

The second is that One of these complete substances being considered as a Mixture, be more simple than the other and be but one degree higher in the sense of mixture which we have given in our theoretical Epistles.

The third is that the simpler substance be equally indifferent to all Forms and be naturally capable and apt to receive a new and another above his own Form, another Thing, which is of greater Composition.

Further it is to be noticed, that the Word Radix be equivocal and is taken three ways:

1. Properly for a material Principle of all things, not for that chymical Materia prima without any Form as the false schools do hold, but for our universal Spirit not yet contracted to a certain Species, of any lower mixture and having the Propriety of a complete Substance or if you rather will it is to be taken for principiated Principles. Yet more simple such as gradually ascending you can reckon till you come to the most simple Elements or to the very primordial chaotic Water.
2. Improperly by the Analog: to the precedent Acceptation for the principle Part of any living Thing which first receives the Nourishment and afterwards doth distribute to its Parts, collectively or distributively.
3. Yet more improperly; for the Trunk or Stipes of anything and that in Respect of the Parts hewn from it or separated, that is, for a total Supposition or any complete Substance in Respect of its complete substantial Parts.

This being agreed to the answers and solution of the former Objection will be easy.

For all mixtures of the three Families of each Species being compaired amongst themselves, have indeed the first conditions viz: to be complete substances, but they do want all the other.

For they are in the Scale of the mixture, of the same Degree of the last Genesis. That is, they are individuals under each species of One, or other Genus of the three Families. And therefore as we have said before, though they amongst themselves, can be transmuted, one into another, by Virtue of Odour of substantial Form, yet with all they

cannot acquire a new Form, superior in degree. But Salt, Sulphur and Mercurius if (which however we do deny) they could be separated from any Mixture, they could not be complete substances having always the Relation as Parts to the Whole.

The above said mixtures then are not adverse to the Species of the same Radix, which as they have amongst them being they are not homogeneous by homogeneity of Principle, since the necessary thereunto belonging conditions are wanting, and so neither are Salt, Sulphur and Mercury homogeneous for the self same Reason, yet they are of the same Trunk, which the Philosophers as yet have not minded.

The second Sentence how far she is true and by what Distinction is more than Evident by the Elucidation of the foregoing.

Lastly the third Sentence if it be referred to the passive Power of our universal Spirit, viz: to a disposition to receive all forms and the very nearest which he hath, this, theirs, or any of theirs, then this Sentence is most true but if the same be referred to the Effects it is false. But the argument whereupon the said Sentence is grounded, in respect of to materials is traded or taken from metaphysic and mental composition and applied to physical Productions. Neither is our Meaning that when we speak of the seven metals analogically being taken for the seven Planets from whom they have these their cabalistical names, or contrary speaking of Planets and meaning thereby the Metals, that those seven Planets or Metals substantially do enter the Matter of the Lapis. But only that we would therewith express that all the Virtues of those Planets and Influences are agreeing and highly exalted in the universal Spirit. Sometimes we do signify therewith the divers Degrees of the Contemperative successfully intervening in the Coction of the philosophical Egg (manifesting itself by the Colours) and answering in Order the Qualities and Temperaments as well of the seven Metals and the seven Planets.

Farewell.

Brussels, 20th October, 1646.

Epistle 45.

The second Article is concerned about the Qualities of the Matter and is according to the Division of the precedent Article, divided into two Sections, distributing the whole Matter of the Lapis into particular Matters.

In the first Section is treated of the Doubts made to the first Matter, namely active and assimilating Matter.

In the second is treated of the Oppositions referring to the second Matter, namely the passive Matter, or which is to be assimilated.

Either of these Sections is subdivided again into two Particles. Of which the first shall consider the Essence and Nature of the Matter. The second its properties. Concerning then the Nature and essence of materia prima some do say that it is common Gold or Silver. I mean simple and vulgar Gold, as it brought out of the mines and no other Substance. And truly many a Passage in Philosophical books seem to confirm this position.

Others grant the same to be something else besides common Gold or Silver, yea it to be of their Nature and only Virtually so, or having some affinity or analogy with their that is to say whose Nature is partly the same with Gold and Silver, partly different, such as is Antimony, Vitriol, Sulphur common or any other inferior Metal, which is proved by the authority of many Writers. Others lastly inclining to a middle opinion say that not anological neither virtual Gold or Silver, be the materia Lapis but true mineral and genuine Gold or Silver yet under some artificial Form given by a physical Preparation but not common and in this Respect it is called living Gold or Silver not common neither vulgar but under the form of Mercury or Salt or Sulphur drawn out of Gold or Silver or any other Subject or both the former. And truly neither of them which hold this Proposition want any plausible Arguments to confirm it, nay as it were decrees of the Wise, which the next Epistle shall declare.

Farewell.

Brussels, 25th October, 1646.

Epistle 46.

The first and the last Sentence are true. For as we have somewhere else proved, that the Ferment or prima Materia Lapis can be nothing else than the Vitriol (which is the Sperma) of Gold or Silver but the particular Seeds of Gold and Silver are truly and physically Gold and Silver, though now considered under some other Form and artificial Preparation not common, yet friendly to their Nature. In which Preparation Gold and Silver is dissolved with the like

natured Dissolvent as in Ice in Water which is the Nature with Ice. In which sense the Gold or Silver are said to be reduced to their Principles: that is to say to be resolved into water and into the same Water from whence they had their Beginning, by means of which Water they being dissolved their Vitriol or Sperma is drawn out and cannot again be brought into a metallick Body till after the confection of the Lapis by Perfection.

It is therefore true what other sentence maintains: and therefore have no need of any other Distinction or Exposition of any Decrees of the Author about this Matter. For in this said sentence all do proclaim the naked Truth without Veil.

But the second Sentence is absolutely false, if it be understood of the prima Materia, namely of the Ferment notwithstanding the Authorities which commonly are alledged for it, all which Testimony are to be understood of the second Matter, namely our Universal Spirit, or our living Mercurius, which because of his Homogeneity of Principle which it hath with Gold and Silver it is not unaptly called Gold or Silver being so virtually and analogally. And though the Philosophers here do not express fully their meaning which they have of the second matter, yet for that Reason our Solution cannot be reprehended; because as I have remarked heretofore such is the council and artifice of all Philosophers, that they divide and distribute the Truth, in several disjointed and here and there dispersed Propositions. And truly such Speeches of the analogical Matter, scarce one doth utter but that he hath also somewhere else let fall and or given more express and scarce obscure Prescriptions and Descriptions of the Gold mineral, the first Matter.

Farewell.

Brussels, 1st December, 1646.

Epistle 47.

About the Properties of the first Matter there are amongst the Authors, scarce any or but small Dissentions and therefore those whatever they may be can easily be reconciled by the Doctrine of our precedent Epistle. Therefore we will go presently to the second Matter, about this then there are no small Oppositions. For some will have that the same be vulgar Mercury. To which assertion now adays almost the whole Troop of pretended Philosophers give their consent being supported by probable arguments, and the short sentences and apophthegms of the Wise.

Others prove the vulgar not to be it, but a metallic One, or of the same substance out of which came forth the prima Materia of Gold or Silver or which is drawn out of any other metallic substance as Lead, Iron, etc.

Other less scrupulous do affirm that the Mercurial Part of anything, be it mineral, vegetable or animal and that either collectively or distributively may with equal Right serve for the second Matter, being that it is said that the Mercurius of the Philosophers be in all places and in all things. Lastly because the philosophical Fathers do describe the second Matter, that she be vile, known of all Men everywhere to be found, of common use to all Men and before the Eyes of all Men; and there are which give their Suffrage, for Excrements, Filth and Dirt not well smelling for the most Part.

All these Oppositions we shall reconcile. And to do this I must in this Place reveal a Secret, which hitherto above all Things hath been kept secret by the Philosophers. And that is that the Philosophers have considered and described three Things about the second Matter.

1. The second Matter itself viz: That substance which is the true second Matter of the Lapis and that is our spiritus universalis or our living Mercury.
2. The Substance in which the same spirit lodged; namely that Corpus out of which this second Matter was drawn, that is to say a certain Sort of true and natural Earth not differing from the elemental Earth essentially but only accidentally in Respect of its great Subtilization and natural Purification, which is effected by the Archeus. And this commonly is called magnesia.
3. And lastly, the manner now that this second Matter doth exist in this Earth namely, not as a substantial Part of the whole, or a Portion of a physical Body by itself in which it exists; but like a thing contained in another Vessel, or in an extraneous Continent, or like an accidental Part, by accident joined to make up the whole. That is to say a Corpus made up only of Parts complete aggregated, or brought together in the compound, each in his

proper Being and only locally in the same whole joined and confused, such is the Water, wherewith the sponge is filled. It is not certainly a substantial Part of the Sponge but is only and every way confused in the Sponge.

Which nature of the subject of this second Matter and its Manner of Existency is verified by this: that (and it is worthy to take notice of) after the separation, the Caput Mortum hath a deep black colour, and a consummate Insipidity, and natural Siccity of Earth, and that no Salts remain in it, which is a sign, it is not to be a mixture out of the three Families: For there is no Mixture, but it leaves leaves in the Caput Mortum Salt after a distillatory Separation.

The Ignorance or Incogitancy of the Secret hath caused chimerus and Phantasms in Philosophers Brains confounding these three things and conceiving that the Descriptions given and referring to all these Three do belong only to one and the same Thing, and on the otherside the Knowledge of this Arcanum its consideration and Application are able to clear all, though never so pregnant or foolish Oppositions and to demonstrate the Truth in its splendor as will appear in the next.
Farewell.

Brussels, 7th December, 1646.

Epistle 48.

The Arcanum of the precedent Epistle being exposed the Oppositions against the second Matter are easily cleared. The first sentence then must be distinguished two ways.

1. By distinguishing the Term, or the word common. For if we speak of the very substance of the second Matter, namely that of our universal Spirit, and this word is taken improperly, signifying vulgar, and this the second Matter to be a vulgar Thing and Not something rare; than the sentence is altogether false.

But if the same word is taken in its proper and natural sense, as it signifies a Habit and Relation to many Things, and thus referred to the very substance of the Second Matter then this sentence is most true. For our Mercurius or universal Spirit is common and a common Principle of all Things, neither can be given any mixture of the three Families to which it hath not this Relation to other Things, as to be to them a necessary Principle.

But if the foresaid Term of common be taken and understood of the Subject wherein the Second Matter lodges of the Manner of his Inexistency in the same, let the Word be taken properly or improperly without controversy that Proposition is false.

For Mercury vulgar hath not precisely that Nature and essence of Earth which the said Subject must have: Neither hath common Mercury anything in itself which is not an essential Part of it. For the Mercury, Sulphur and Salt of his (if there be any such Things in him) have lost in him their complete Being and their own Totality, which they had before in themselves, neither can they be restored to that again which we have sufficiently proved somewhere else viz; where we did treat of [Actro] simplification (as Bread cannot be bought again to Corn) the Reason of which is the same as is that concerning the Restitution of Parts of a physical Compound, to its former Totality and completion of his Being. The second Way of distinguishing the same said sentence is by distinguishing the passive Power and the act of which Distinction we have made use above in precedent Articles in another Matter.

For if you speak of the very Substance of the second Matter and the Term or Word be understood of Mercury vulgar [positive] that is to say, for a Matter which hath Dispositions not far remote to receive the Forms and acts of vulgar Mercury then that sentence is true.

And this manner of expounding is not unusual, for in this sense, corn is called the Food of Men, though immediately the Man doth not feed upon the raw Corn as it is yet in the Herb, but upon Bread which is made of the Seed of the same in Relation to the subject or the Body out of which our Mercury is drawn and of the manner of its Existency in it, then the Sentence can neither be taken for true and veritable for the same Reasons we have alledged above.
Farewell.

Brussels, 12th December, 1646.

Epistle 49.

The second Opinion being understood either of the second Matter herself, or of her Subject or of the Manner of the Inexistency in it, the same is certainly false.

But the Authority upon which it is grounded must be understood, not of the second, but of the first Materia Lapis which is the Vitriol of Gold and Silver which Vitriol indeed really is the metallic Mercury but in the state of metallic Coction, hence it cannot be brought back again to its former and primogeneal Simplicity as we have often said this. And this Manner of speaking is not unusual neither. For wheaten Bread is called wheat and it is really Wheat but under a new Form and Coction, from which Form it cannot be recalled again to serve for the same Effect and Purpose as it could have done and been useful before it was made into Bread. For being once made so, let it afterwards be altered, changed and prepared, as you will yet it can never be restored again to its former habit of wheat or Meal, out of which the Bread was made in such a Manner, that out of the same such like Bread all together could be made again, as was the former. But if wheat not yet fully made into Bread but only into a Paste and being in a fermentation can other Wheat not yet fermented but only with the other impasted bring to the same Fermentation also.

The very same Thing happens in Metals for the same Reason and Cause though some Things in another Manner as to the Act of Fermentation.

The third Opinion which holds that any mixed Bodies Mercurial Part may be our second Matter is most notoriously false, either if you refer it to the main substance of our second Matter or to its Subject or the Manner of its Existency in it.

But the Reason of such an Opinion is to be considered and distinguished.

For as to the Place it is granted that our Mercurius or universal Spirit exists everywhere, because he is joined with all the Elements and chiefly with the Air not only filling all spaces of the World hindering everywhere vacuity, but also penetrating all other Elements and all other Bodies, taking Possession of their Pores.

And this is so far that it contradicts us not but rather, that it, by an inexpugnable Argument doth confirm our Doctrine. For this Condition and as it were Immensity can ascertain to nothing else in the world besides our Mercurius or universal Spirit.

But as to its proper and substantial Inexistency in all and every one mixed Body, that is in a manner of a part substantial, it is again to be distinguished.

For if the meaning be that of Mercurius be in all things actuated and contracted unto a new Degree of Composition or of Form substantial above that Degree he had before, then it is granted; But then in such a state he cannot profit at all, or be useful, as to the making of the Lapis neither can it be subjected for the second Matter, as we have proved sufficiently except you would have it back simplified, which is impossible and against Nature, as we have already demonstrated. But that the same Mercury should be in all those singular Things in the Degrees of that Simplicity and Power which is Necessary for this Purpose, that he may be used as the second Matter to the Lapis that is absolutely false and contradictory to itself. For the Part would then be greater than its whole, and though the Authors might seem in express words, such to insinuate, yet their Meaning is not to be taken according to the Latter in the foresaid sentence. For they will by no means teach that the second Matter of the Lapis, thus diversified in all things should be taken for it out of all things, but that the same thing which is in all things actuated, and by it all things are coagulated should be searched for and found in that state which it had before it was actuated by every Mixture, such as is daily actuated and coagulated to produce new Mixtures and that by action as well of primordial as particular Seeds. Farewell.

Brussels, 18th December, 1646.

Epistle 50.

These are not a few Oppositions about the Proprieties and Qualities of the second Matter, them that follow its Essence.

For some do say, that the Matter be of a liquid consistency, not altogether solid, neither fluid.

Others will have it [diaphanous].

Others opacous.

Others of coelestial Colours.

Others White.

Others as to the Taste will have it tart and so as to the Scent also.

Others to be pleasant and sweet.

Others will have its Constitution moist.

Others dry.

Others grant a goldish or internal red Tincture.

Others deny the same.

Others do choose it old, others new and fresh.

All those different opinions are easily reconciled according to what hath been said before.

For if the Question be about the main substance of the second Matter she is fluid and liquid. [Note in the margin reads: 2 matter fluid and liquid.]

When she first begins to be condensed and grows thickish she is diaphanous and of a coelestial but not a blue colour, only pellucid and afterwards appearing with intermixed infinite colour, like unto a rainbow.

She is moist in summo Gradu because she abounds of congealed Air. Hence you understand the sayings that she doth not modify the hands namely, as long as it remains in its Density or Coagulation.

It hath an internal exuberant Tincture which it shews within a few days, after being separated from its Subject viz: a citrine Colour like unto dissolved Gold. But this [Retrograde] comes to be exalted and then it becomes high red and many other colors intervening.

The effect must be chosen to wit that Mercurial substance or universal Spirit which by any natural Distillations and Cohobations hath changed it's cold and moist into hot and moist Qualities. In which state it is no where to be found, but in our subject which being once separated he becomes very bitter an infallible sign of his quality. But if the Question be of the subject of our second Matter then as ascertain to her the contrary Quality and Propriety. For the said subject is condensed and thickish, opaque and of a hardish solidity, sweet and of an agreeable smell and of extreme Dryness. For it is really and essentially Earth and the new or fresh is to be chosen. [Not in the margin reads: 2 matter here, thick, opaque and Solid.] For this Matter in Process of Time easily loses its universal Spirit. There are some more pregnant or contrary Qualities attributed to our famed Matter by Authors, but they shall find a more compendious Place to be treated of amongst the Terms where the descriptions are explained.

Farewell.

Brussels, 22nd December, 1646.

Epistle 51.

Follows now the second Chapter, concerning the modus agendi or manner of working, about which there are also many oppositions and are to be referred either to the useful or useless Parts of the Matter, or to the Direction of the Work for to attain the End wished for.

Of which Matter though we have given sufficient Distinctions in our Epistles, yet they are here to be repeated again with some other expressions, Order and more plainly. Now about the useful Parts, some contend that only the Mercurial Part of our Matter is beneficial.

Others only Sulphuric.

Others also Saline.

Others lastly will have them both together, but being first separated from their Body or Substance and afterwards reunited again into the same Body and total substance, the Phlegm only and Caput Mortum being taken away.

Now to reconcile these contradictions, we must know that there are two sorts of Parts, belonging to a complete corporeal Substance or Physical Totum (such as our Matter must be) and those Parts are distinguished in natural and excrementitious Parts.

The excrementitious are threefold.

1. Phlegma or rather the Mercurial Aquosity which in the first Production of it hath abounded and exceeded Nature's Weight or a due Proportion as to the strength of primordial or particular Seeds, which superfluous Portion and that because of Nature's Weakness that it is the expelling Faculty of Seeds or because of Archeus Weakness that moves the Seeds remains confused with the rest yet but locally not as a substantial Part of the Mixture, but as an Alien and accidentally aggregated and congested into it, till at last the Archeus could expell them.

2. The Caput Mortum that is a superfluous Portion of terrestrial Corporeity which likewise Nature could not expell or because it is restrained on purpose for consecration of

the Mixture, as to be the Cortex.

3. A Sort of Saltness or Oiliness growing together of Both namely the Phlegma and Caput Mortum, and hath the face of a stinkled and poisonous Oil or malignant Sulphur.

But these excrementitious Parts do not exist universally in all Mixed Bodies. For the mixture of the first Classis have them not, described somewhere else, I mean the principiating Principles; and so our universal Spirit being considered by himself. The Reason of it, because that their material Principles are most simple and pure, which of themselves obey and follow the Motions of their Architect and Mover of Archeus, so that nothing in the first Mixture either exceeds or is deficient. For the Archeus easily can drive out what could exceed in the Matter and contrary, can take to him again what is wanting; But in the mixed Bodies of the second Classis that is in the three Families there it happens otherwise. For their material Principles are of greater composition and heavier to be moved and that more efficaciously resisting the actions and Motions of the same Archeus. From thence comes ill Temperament in the Mixture namely either in Excess, or Defect in one or the other Quality. Therefore what Moistness so ever be in the said Principles all is Mercurial and useful, yea, necessary for any Production for in this Aqosity resides the Root of Fermentability and of corporificable Faculty. [Note in the margin reads: Mind this, page 131.]

And the infima mixture do admit likewise such excrementitious Parts, though not all, neither do all of mixture equally, or always; in some there are Faces without Phlegma as in imperfect Gold in a Diamond. Hence it is that sometimes our Dissolvent doth dissolve the entire substance of Gold though this happens but rarely. But that is not our concern here. For it is needless to enquire for such pure Gold, because our Spirit doth dissolve nothing and is incorporated with Nothing but what is pure in the Metal. For this solution happens not by the Power of extraneous corrosive Salts, but by common, of homogeneous Things by Homogeneity of Principles wherefore Heterogeneous Things will not be dissolved neither united. [Note in the margin reads: Mind.]

Natural Parts of the Matter are twofold, necessary Ones and contingent.

The necessary Ones are they which essentially do concur to constitute the necessary or physical [Totum], and separation of which necessarily must destroy the mixtum neither being once separated, can be composed or brought together again as to make up the same numerical and specific Body, as we have proved some where else, and have exemplified it. But these essential Parts are Matter and Form, with their pre-ordinate or subordinate [connatural] and eminently comprehended Parts social, or comparts, such as to all the Degrees of the Form, are them which the Scholastics call essential which do conditionate the form substantial, as for Example in each Animal, there is Animality, Capacity, Substantiality and so on until the highest Degree of transcendental Entity.

But as to the principiated Principles of our Matter the same are contracted and determined into a certain species of the Mixtum, which are called Salt, Sulphur, and Mercurius, and properly are Parts of the Mixtum as we have insinuated somewhere else.

The contingent Parts are them which being separated do diminish the substance of the Mixtum but do not destroy it, and are again of twofold Order, namely homogeneous and heterogeneous. But here you must understand Homogeneity in the vulgar Sense of Schools. The homogeneous or simply quantitative Parts are these whose Essence is the same with the Totum and whose separation doth only diminish the Quantity of the substance, as for Example are some Ounces taken out of a Pound of Gold.

The heterogeneous or Integrals (which makes up the whole, are such Substances which are of different Nature, Rationis) as well in Respect of themselves as their Totum, whose total Separation doth destroy the total Substance which never by any Means can be repaired or restored again. An Abstraction of some of those Parts doth break the Totum in Pieces, but doth not altogether destroy it.

All three kinds of Parts do (though not equally) belong to all mixta, as well as the infima of the three Families as to those of the middle and also upper Region, namely to principiated Principles not yet contracted to a certain Species. I said not equally for in some doth exist a greater Quantity of Sulphur which therefore have given them the Name of Sulphur by the Philosophers and that in a large Signification, for the Denomination is always taken from the major Part. Hence Gold in our Books is for the most Part called Sulphur and is frequently by that Appellation of Sulphur signified. In others abounds Mercury, and them have the Nomenclature of Mercury. [Note in the margin reads: Mind this, Gold called Sulphur in the Books.]

In others exceeds Salt and they are so called.

However in solid things and them which are very well concocted Salt and Sulphur are all One and the same thing, or at least they are joined so closely that they scarce or not at all can be separated. Hence the Ancients (and so neither I in my Novum Lumen Chymicum) seldom or never speak of the principle of Salt.

But when things are reduced into Vitriol, then indeed becomes them the Name and Faculty of Salt, yet then also because of the Diversity of Effects they have, now they are called Salts now Sulphurs.

Farewell.

Brussels, 26th December, 1646.

Epistle 52.

In foresaid Oppositions the Authors Aim either at the Substance itself, of both partial Matters, viz: the Vitriol of Gold and our universal Spirit: or at the Subject in which either Matter is comprehended and is drawn out viz: the simple Mineral Gold and our Magnesia. If the Business concerns the Substance itself, then we must consider either the excrementitious or the natural Parts. If we regard the excrementitious, there are none to be drawn of, because none are here excrementitious, the One being of perfect Contemperation viz: the Vitriol of Gold, and the other of perfect Simplicity viz: our universal Spirit.

But if we regard the natural Parts, their Separation is not to be attempted, because you cannot do it, without the Destruction of the Mixtum. And though it were possible otherwise to be done, yet that Operation would signify nothing to the purpose and be superfluous. For as it is said and proved, it is against Nature, that such Parts can be brought again together to make up the same numerical or specifical Body.

But if we regard either Subject and make Reflections upon either Parts excrementitious, then there is somethings indeed to be taken from them, namely from the Gold, the Terrestreity or the superfluous Earth, which in the Production of it was confusedly mixt with its Substance: and from the Magnesia also, in whose generation, the universal Spirit meets such Earth as a Receiver and Conservator, or as a vessel for the same, his Reception to the Use of Philosophers knowing which Earth, because it is not, neither can be a natural Part, of the said universal Spirit, it can in that Respect be called its Excrement.

But if you would Reflect on the natural Parts, then in vain (as is said before) their separation is attempted.

Now after the Disquisition and Election of the useful Parts the Direction and Regimen of the Work by Art doth follow to obtain the wished End, where the signs, viz: the changes or Diversity of Colours happen.

In which Business, as in the rest, the Authors do seem vehemently to be in opposition one to the Other.

Some, they will have but one Regimen.

Others three.

Others four, viz: Solution, Ablution, Reduction, Fixation.

Others require but one continual Fire.

Others use several Degrees of Fire and manner of Heat.

Others will have but one Vessel.

Others many.

Others make divers Distillations, Imbibitions.

Others will have but one Coction.

Others assign but two Colours principle White and Red.

Others three, Black, White and Red.

Others four, Black, Green, White and Red with divers intervening Colours.

Others will have the first colour to be Red, others the same to be Black.

All of these Differences we easily could reconcile and verify everyone according to foregoing Discourses and upon the account only of diversity of Respects being had, by these Men, but that we should not be too [prolix], more than becomes our epistolar Brevity, and besides that the Expositions and Explanations here unto serving are obvious and to be found almost in all philosophical Books, let it suffice then to delineate to you the course of the whole Practice out of the first Chapter of Genesis, which for a Directory I have given already.

Contemplate then, how the said Text of the first Chapter of Genesis heving but touched in few proenual Lines the general Parts of the corporeal World, namely Heaven and Earth, doth also teach, how that the Beginning, Parts, Preparations for the Mageistry are herein occupied and busy; that out of the Chaos (not the primordial which only belong to the Creation and the Creator, but of the second, but as to us the first natural Chaos, that is our water, or universal Spirit which is involved in Darkness and tenebricious Confusion in our Magnesia upon which doth hover the azothic Spirit the created and corporeal Image of the uncreated Spirit) Heaven be made and also the philosophical Earth, which is empty and vacuous, congelating or growing together like Time and in a quell and Salt in the Sea, which Earth at last is to be impregnated and made fertile with Seed by action of the Azotic Spirit artificially mix'd by help of external Fire. Further though the same Holy Spirit descending from generals to specials doth admirably teach the number, order and manner of all and each Arts Operations comprehended in the Number, Order and Quantity of Works done in the creation Work and first let the Light be divided from Darkness which are

upon the Face of the Philosophical Deep; and that the Day should be separated from Night, for this Purpose that afterwards Darkness and Light should follow one the other alternately in all succeeding Operations. For in the whole Work Light and Darkness have interchangeably their turn.

2. How in the firmament is made in the midst of the waters and waters are divided from waters, namely those which are under the Firmament from these which are above it that is the thick from the Subtil; and that those should be gathered into one Place that the dry Land might appear.

3. How the said Earth should bud and bring forth green Herbs making Seeds after its Kind, viz: not seeds now for the three Families (for that doth not now concern us) but that proper Seed of the same three Families wherewith this Earth was to be sown and so made fruitful which frequent Irrigations of Homogeneous Dew.

4. How two great Luminaries were to be made the lesser viz: the Elixir to the White, and the greater viz: the Elixir to the Red and they should shine in the philosophical Heavens and illuminate the Earth, be it metallic, vegetable, or animal: and that they should be for Signs, Days, and Seasons, and Years, i.e. may they work such Temperaments Perfection as that there may come out, the external Signs and Marks according to the Diversity of Seasons and Age. And lastly let them make an Incompatibility suiting to the Capacity of a corporeal substance or Mobile.

5. How the said Elixirs are to be multiplied by the same water (out of which they grew at first together, or did coagulate and that they should be multiplied as well in virtue as bulk, by operations in the same Order; and with the same Regimen they had before when they were made fermented and specified, by the specific Seeds of each Family of the inferior Mixta according to each Family's Nature.

6. Let the said multiplied Elixirs within animal Bodies be converted to comfort them, by skillful exhibitions, the vegetable propagated by conjunction and union of their Salts and lastly the Metals and Minerals be transmuted by projection of Sulphurous Copulation.

And so much of the Matter and the modus agendis.

In the following Epistle we will treat of the terms.

Farewell.

Brussels, 31st December, 1646.

Epistle 53.

All what belongs to the Terms is reduced to two Heads.

The first handles of Terms compound.

The second of the single Ones.

The compound Terms, are Descriptions whereby the Philosophers do indicate as well the Matter as the modus agendi but chiefly to demonstrate the Matter which are reducible to two Articles.

The first of these which concern the first Matter.

The second which the second Matter concerns.

The Descriptions belonging to the first Matter are divided in univocal and analogical.

Analogical are by which the Gold is described in that State and Condition as it serves and is subjected to philosophical Operations and as it is in materia prima Lapis and hath given him several Names taken from divers Bodies, which partly have the like Nature with Gold, partly are of nature different.

Thus the living Sulphur of Gold is called Vitriolum in which sense you must understand that famous saying of Vitriol, visitabis interiora terra, rectificando, invenies occultum lapidem, veram Medicinam. [Note in the margin reads: Here is the proper description of Vitriol (symbol of Vitriol) so often spoken by the Philosophers.] And truly our dissolved Gold or the solar Earth is a metallic Vitriol, by some analogy and Proportion agreeing with all kind of Vitriols. Of which sort of Descriptions there are innumerable in Authors, framed now by the similitude of Causes, now because of some Identity of some Proprieties, now because of Conformity of Effects and Actions; now because of some equality in Accidents.

The Authors call both Substances Gold. Item Coagulum, the Ferment, the yellow of the Egg, philosophical Man and Univocal Descriptions are which describe Gold by Name, or by such Qualities and Attributes which are proper to him, and principally belong to him and which do declare it whole Essence and only and precisely the same, such are obvious in our and all other philosophers books. [Note in the margin reads: Acting the part of the Mate.] The Meaning of such Descriptions is easily found out, neither need such here to be referred.

Farewell.

Brussels, 7th January, 1647.

Epistle 54.

The second Article of the Descriptions of the second Matter is subdivided into three Particles.

The first contains the Descriptions belonging [to] the Matter itself.

The second considers the Descriptions of the Subject, in which the Matter lodges and from whence the same must be had.

The third hath Descriptions which are common to both viz: the Substance of the Matter and to its subject.

The Descriptions of the first Particle are as the former Ones, univocal or Analogical.

Analogical are many and are, per se, well enough understood to be such being taken Notice of: if the same larger or more contract there should be described the nature of our Matter, some of such Descriptions are referred to the Traction of simple Terms, which we leave here out for Brevity's sake. Univocal also are various, such e.g. is that which doth affirm, that our Matter be every where; that she exists in every corporeal Being; that she is before all Men's eyes openly, yet cannot be seen; that she is vile and always to be found upon the very Dunghill, yet is to be esteemed for the hidden Food of Life.

All which how they should be understood and how they belong only to the universal Spirit, hath been sufficiently insinuated in the precedent Epistles.

The Descriptions of the second Particle are likewise analogical or universal.

Analogical are by which the subject of materia Secunda is called Talem, terrafoliata, mel, Ros Mercury Philosophorum minera, Forea and many such others.

Universal are very rare and in two Volumes we do find but 3 or 4 which are so clear and perspicuous that clearer ones cannot be given though it might not appear so at first. The first is by which it is asserted, that the Name of our Subject in all the Parts of the known world, and most Languages as well now in use, as absolute hath the same sound, or very little Difference. For at least the first syllable is everywhere alike to sound also in Effect of the Letter. The other is by which it is said, that the Name of my Subject is absolved with these letters and five characters. For the Name really as well in Latin as Greek and Hebrew Tounge, is written only with their Letters of divers species, and with two of the same species with the Two of the precedent Ones.

The third is which says that the subject is prefigured only with one mystical character unto which five letters can be referred, expressing the Word, be it, that either the Character Totaly be divided and distributed into parts which are like unto the said Characters or be made up and compounded out of the partial Characters that are like to those five foresaid you can verify these Descriptions according to your Pleasure, since you know the true Name.

But the Quality of the Subject and the Liquor drawn from it ought rather to be considered, that the Opinion which in this Affair we have given you might be confirmed in you and laid deep in your Head. [Note in the margin reads: Read Epistle 51 attentively.]

The third Particle could give you many such like Descriptions, as the others were, mix'd Ones and completing both viz: the Substance of the Matter, and in it's subject, by which many Philosophers do testify, that their Matter be neither vegetable, animal or Mineral, neither that it is drawn out of vegetables, animals or minerals; or that they should come from them. But this Discourse would exceed the Term of an Epistle. Add to this that our Counsel and Intention is not to scrape together all kind of Descriptions and to take Pains to refer them to their proper Places but only that we might give Lights to distinguish them of the Descriptions of the manner of proceeding, we add nothing though our Division might require it, because we have hereof sufficiently treated in the latter Part of the Chapter and in that of the modus agendi.

Farewell.

Brussels, 12th January, 1647.

Epistle 55.

There remains now to treat of the simple Terms.

The whole Ambiguity then of simple Terms concerns Homonymy with divers other Things and Operations, that is in the various application of the same Word unto divers Things.

Or it concerns Polyonymy of the same Thing diversely affected and considered.

According to Homonymia, Spirit universal before he is received into our Magnesia which we call its Subject hath

the Nature of Mercurius Philosophorum, not absolutely but only by analogy and Proportion which it hath with the Planet Mercurius as far namely as the same Planet being joined to all an every one of the rest of the Planets takes upon him their Qualities and Nature. Even so doth our Mercurius with inferior Planets namely the Metals and all other mixt Bodies which cannot be said of the vulgar Mercurius that he can do so. Which Mercury though he can join himself to the Metals by amalgamations, yet he cannot take on him their Qualities by any Kind of Artifice at least not so far as concerns the Multiplication of the Seeds. [Note in the margin reads: Mind common Mercury.] In like manner the same our Spirit, is called by the same name of Mercury while he yet resides in the Magnesia; [Note in the margin reads: Take notice.] Item as soon as he is drawn out of the same, or when reviving in the Philosophical Egg after corruption, he is intimately incorporated and infused into Gold and identified with the same. But what at present and how affected should be understood since that Term is so various in many Passages, that you can judge when you consider, what Part of our Art you have before you, theoretical or Practical and accordingly you must pass your Judgement. The same thing happens to Gold which is called a Ferment as well in the Philosophical Egg as in the State of the perfect Lapis and likewise in the act of Projection.

According to the Polyonymia the foresaid Mercurius is according to the Diversity of his State he is in, and according to its operations now called Antimony, namely then when he in the foresaid Solution doth purge the Gold and made it more subtil, in a manner as common Antimony doth do it, in common Way though this our Purgation is much nobler and powerfull.

Then he is called Lead and that in the philosophical Egg according to the Degree of the metallic Form, he hath assumed or rather according to the symbolical Temperament which he hath now with Lead.

Then he is called the Wife, because it receives the Seed of the Gold. [Note in the margin reads: Mind this much.]

Then Magnesia from Magic, because he draws to him the specific Seed of Gold like as with a magnetical Virtue.

Then Chalybus, because like the Magnet doth draw the Steel, so the said Gold Seed doth draw the said Mercury.

Item it hath the Name of Sulphur, Salt and Ferment namely in the confection of the Magistry, or in its Multiplication. And at divers other Times and in divers other Operations. He is called Sulphur namely when it changes its cold temper in its central Fire and Heat takes Dominion. It is called also Salt when the Dyness of the Fire and Earth do stave and stand in Balance with Humidity, one subject to the others Victory and when the Substance is come to such a Consistency that without any Detriment the same can be dissolved in Water or Fire, but in a serene Air can be hardened, like Earth or Salt.

Lastly the said Spirit is called Ferment, in that State when he himself being coagulated, can also coagulate another Substance and make the same like himself and this as well in the confection of the magistry as in the multiplication of the same.

The same is with the Gold which after it is dissolved, is by Proportion called Vitriol and in the Corruption of it is called the Ravens Head.

Let this suffice for you, and do not desire more, except that when perhaps God and Time and your Business will give you leave to lay hand on the Work, I as I have done now might lead you; that you may prosperously finish it, and that notwithstanding you many Invocations.

Farewell.

Brussels, 18th January, 1647.

The Hieroglyphical Seal - Sendivogius

This work was published in French in *Traitez du Cosmopolite nouvellement decouverts ou apres avoir donne unde idee d'une Societe de Philosophes...*, Paris, 1691. This translation by Ebenezer Sibly is found in MS. Ferguson 25. [Letters to the Society of Unknown Philosophers.](#)

The Hieroglyphical Seal of the Society of unknown Philosophers.

Let no man judge this present Character to be invented and erected for us for nothing. For the Trident is the Neptune of our Parable which comprehends the whole hermetical Science hieroglyphically and compendiously, as well the Theory as the Practice. But that these Mysteries may be well understood we shall proceed in twofold Order geometrical namely by resolution and Composition or analysis and synthesis.

By way of Analysis first the Maxus is to be considered or the Total Unity of the Figure.

2. The Duality, or that Part of Conus or that of the right Pyramids.

3. The Trias, or Triplicity of the sines, or that of the angles, and

4. The Quaternarium of the Lines, and last of all the utmost Points, the Dimension of the whole figure and the Breadth of the Lines.

Each of them have their cabalistic Significations.

But the way of Synthesis or Composition, the Reversion of the Quaternarius of the Linse, to a Trias takes Place.

Then of the Trias into a Binary of the Cones.

3. That of the Binary into a Monas.

And both Analysis as well as Synthesis do not inelegantly represent as well the first Genesis, viz: the Creation of corporeal Beings; as also the second Genesis viz: the natural Production or Multiplication of the same Things, and lastly also doth it represent the Order which imitating Art doth keep both in its analytic as well as synthetic Method.

And now as concerning the first Genesis, monas, or the Unity of the Total Character, its deform Figure, or, as it were of no Figure because of its ugly Sinuosity, which tends neither to the Figure of a Triangle, neither Square nor yet a Circle, or any other perfect Figure, denotes the characteristical Water, the first corporeal Being, which hath a deform Form and is indifferent to receive any perfect Form. The Duality or Binary of two strait Pyramids, or the two Cones going together, denotes the most remote, active and passive Power of the said [Ens].

The Trias or Triplicity of the Sines (being threefold corroborated and turned and opposite One to the other and so disposed that each makes the immediate and indivisible lateral Part of the Other) signifies the Hylem, Archeus and Azoth which in like manner stand affected and related one to the Other. The Quaternans of strait Lines of Divers Latitude, Position and Term, notion yet mutually conjoined signify the four Elements, their Distinction and

Distribution of their first Qualities as well as symbolical as dissymbolical.

Then as to the Retrogradation by Synthesis.

The threefold Conjunction of Lines in their compounded Angles doth spew the Composition of principiated Principles of the first Order, viz: Salt, Sulphur, and Mercury and the Cortion of the Elements and communion, which their dissymbolical Qualities have by means of symbolical.

The Binary of Cones or that of the Pyramids in various Sides and joining together in the Basis do denote the principiated Principles of the second Order as are Sulphur and Mercury, mas and [Fomina], humidum and calidum. Lastly the Monas of the total Characters which is drawn from the joined Cones and all coalescing doth represent Mercurium Philosophorum, Aquam chaoticam secundam, or in a Word our universal Spirit.

But the outmost Point which here and there; answer the Conjunction of the Cones do represent the masculine and feminine Seed of all kind of Species.

But the Points in which the Lines mutually do concur and make Angles, those represent the three Families of the infima mixta with their Diversity of Species formed out of the said Seeds.

Now likewise as to the natural Production and Genesis. The Monas of the whole Character, demonstrates the whole Matter, not that fictitious one of the erroneous Schools but of corporeal, sensible and already endowed with some primordial Form, namely that of the simple Elements or principiating Principles, as also represents the principiated Principles.

The Binary of Cones, shows the real and actual Motion of Action and Passion of all corporeal Beings and the nearest cause of perpetual Corruption and generation. The Trias of the Sines doth prefigure the Influence of the higher Bodies viz: the Stars and Astra and the continual Reflux of the inferior and confluence of middle Regions, Bodies form the Center of the World, to the Circumference of the whole Corporeal Machine.

The Quaternary of Lines demonstrates the Effluxion of the Elements and the Emission of the quinta Essentia.

But to make a Reflection by Synthesis.

The Triplicity of signs shows the Multiplication of principiated Principles of the first Rank and Order viz: Salt, Sulphur, and Mercurius. The Binary of Cones, is a Type of multiplication of principiated Principles of the second Order, by the Congress of that President.

Lastly the Monas of a Sinous hieroglyphical Characteris an Image of Multiplication as well of primordial Seeds, as that of the Species of both Families of the infima mixta by a threefold Digestion and magisterial concoction and determinated Specification of the universal Spirit.

Likewise in the Analysis and Synthesis touching our Art. The Monas of the Character as a type of the foresaid chaotical water, which is loaded with a confused Bulk of heterogeneous Things out of which he must be brought to Light by means of our Art, of doubled consistency. The Binary of Cones signifies the two substances, coming from the Body of the universal Spirit, by the solution of what is coagulated, but not by division of what is mix'd, to be distinguished.

The Trias of the Lines prefigures the threefold Temper which the universal Spirit hath acquired viz: Mercurial,

Sulphurous, and Saline.

Lastly the Quaternary of Lines denotes the harmony of the four Elements.

Then by an inverse Order, or to proceed again by Synthesis.

The Triplicity of lines describes the three principal Parts of the Magistrty, and its Purposes viz: the Solution of the Body, the Coagulation of the Spirit, and the Union of the Body, Soul, and Spirit and that by means of Digestion. The Binary of joined Pyramids do depaint the Specification of the Magistrty, by Solution and Coagulation as well for the Red and White Elixirs.

But the Position of the most outward Points designs the Projection of the Elixir upon divers Qualities of divers other Bodies and an actual Transmutation of imperfect Forms to a most perfect One, either of a more noble Species or again of a seminal Substance.

L.D. et B.V. Maria

Sendivogius - The New Chemical Light

This key work of 17th century alchemy, appears to have been first published in 1608, and I have counted nearly 30 editions printed up to the end of the 18th century. It was included in a number of alchemical compendia, and was frequently quoted in alchemical works. The English text has here been transcribed by Jerry Bujas.

[Go to second part - Parable and Dialogue](#) . [Go to Third part - Concerning Sulphur](#).

The New Chemical Light Drawn from the Fountain of Nature and from Manual Experience to which is added A Treatise Concerning Sulphur

[The Author's Anagram]:

"Divi Leschi genus amo"

In this sentence: "I love the Divine Race of Leschi,"
all the letters of the Author's name are found transposed,-
to wit: Michael Sendivogius.

PREFACE

Upon all genuine Seekers of the great Chemical Art, or Sons of Hermes, the Author implores the Divine Blessing and Salvations.

When I considered in my mind the great number of deceitful books and forged Alchemistic "receipts", which have been put in circulation by heartless impostors, though they do not contain even a spark of truth -- and how many persons have been and are still daily led astray by them? -- it occurred to me that I could not do better than communicate the Talent committed to me by the Father of Lights to the Sons and Heirs of Knowledge. I also wish to let posterity see that in our own age, as well as in ancient times, this singularly gracious philosophical Blessing has not been denied to a few favoured men. For certain reasons I do not think it advisable to publish my name; chiefly, because I do not seek for praise for myself, but am only anxious to assist the lovers of philosophy. The vainglorious desire for fame I leave to those who are content to seem what they, in reality, are not. The facts and deductions which I have here briefly set down are transcribed from that manual -- experience, graciously bestowed upon me by the Most High; and my object is to enable those who have laid a sound foundation in the elementary part of this most noble Art, to advance to a more satisfying fullness of knowledge, and to put them on their guard against those depraved "vendors of smoke," who delight in fraud and imposition. Our science is not a dream, as the vulgar crowd imagines, or the empty invention of idle men, as the foolish suppose. It is the very truth of philosophy itself, which

the voice of conscience and of love bid me conceal no longer. In these wicked days, indeed, when virtue and vice are accounted alike, the ingratitude and unbelief of men keep our Art from appearing openly before the public gaze. Yet this glorious truth is even now capable of being apprehended by learned and unlearned persons of virtuous lives, and there are many persons of all nations now living who have beheld Diana unveiled. But as many, either from ignorance or from a desire to conceal their knowledge, are daily teaching and inducing others to believe that the soul of gold can be extracted, and then imparted to other substances; and thereby entice numbers to incur great waste of time, labour, and money: let the sons of Hermes know for certain that the extracting of the essence of gold is a mere fond delusion, as those who persist in it will be taught to their cost by experience, the only arbitress from whose judgment seat there is no appeal. If, on the other hand, a person is able to transmute the smallest piece of metal (with or without gain) into genuine gold or silver which abides all the usual tests, he may justly be said to have opened the gates of Nature, and cleared the way for profounder and more advanced study. It is with this object that I dedicate the following pages, which embody the results of my experience, to the sons of knowledge, that by a careful study of the working of Nature they may be enabled to lift the veil, and enter her inmost sanctuary. To this final goal of our sacred philosophy they must travel by the royal road which Nature herself has marked out for them. Let me therefore admonish the gentle reader that my meaning is to be apprehended not so much from the outward husk of my words, as from the inward spirit of Nature. If this warning is neglected, he may spend his time, labour, and money in vain. Let him consider that this mystery is for wise men, and not for fools. The inward meaning of our philosophy will be unintelligible to vainglorious boasters, to conceited mockers, and to men who smother the clamorous voice of conscience with the insolence of a wicked life; as also to those ignorant persons who have fondly staked their happiness on albefactions and rubrefactions and other equally senseless methods. The right understanding of our Art is by the gift of God, or by the ocular demonstration of a teacher, and can be attained only by diligent, humble search, and prayerful dependence on the Giver of all good things; now, God rejects those who ho hate Him and scorn knowledge. In conclusion, I would earnestly ask the sons of knowledge to accept this Book in the spirit in which it was written; and when the HIDDEN has become MANIFEST to them and the inner gates of secret knowledge are flung open not to reveal this mastery to any unworthy person; also to remember their duty towards their suffering and distressed neighbours to avoid any ostentatious display of their power; and above all, to render to God, the Three in One, sincere and grateful thanks with their lips, in the silence of their hearts, and by refraining from any abuse of the Gift.

Simplicity is the Seal of Truth

As after the completion of the preface it was found that it did not cover the whole of the space allotted to it, I have, at the publisher's request, there set down the "last will and testament of Arnold Villanovanus" which I once turned into Latin verse. I am conscious that the style of my versification is wanting in neatness and elegance; but this defect was partly caused by the necessity of adhering strictly and faithfully to the Author's meaning. Testament of Arnold de Villanova

It is said that Arnold de Villanova a man who was as a credit to his race, signified his last will in the following words:

"It has its birth in the earth, its strength it doth acquire in the fire, and there becomes the true Stone of the ancient Sages. Let it be nourished for twice six hours with a clear liquid until its limbs begin to expand and grow apace. Then let it be placed in a dry and moderately warm spot for another period of twelve hours, until it has purged itself by giving out a thick steam or vapour, and becomes solid and hard within. The 'virgin's milk ' that is expressed from the better part of the Stone is then preserved in a carefully closed oval-shaped distilling vessel of glass, and is day by day wondrously changed by the quickening fire, until all the different colours resolve themselves into a fixed gentle splendour of a white radiance, which soon, under the continued genial influence of the fire, changes to a glorious purple, the outward and visible sign of the final perfection of your work."

THE FIRST TREATISE

Of Nature, what she is, and what manner of men her Disciples ought to be

Many Sages, Scholars, and learned men have in all ages, and (according to Hermes) even so early as the days before the Flood, written much concerning the preparation of the Philosopher's Stone; and if their books could be understood without a knowledge of the living processes of Nature, one might almost say that they are calculated to supersede the study of the real world around us. But though they never departed from the simple ways of Nature they have something to teach us, which, in these more sophisticated times, still need to learn, because we have applied ourselves to what are regarded as the more advanced branches of knowledge, and despise the study of so "simple " a thing as natural Generation. Hence we pay more heed to impossible things than to those objects which are broadly exhibited before our very eyes, we excel more in subtle speculations than in a sober study of Nature, and of the meaning of the Sages. It is one of the most remarkable features of human nature that we neglect those things which seem familiar, and are eager for new and strange information. The workman who has attained the highest

degree of excellence in his Art, neglects it, and applies himself to something else, or else abuses his knowledge. Our longing for an increase of knowledge urges us ever onward towards some final goal, in which we imagine that we shall find full rest and satisfaction, like the ant which is not endowed with wings till the last days of its life. In our time, the Philosophical Art has become a very subtle matter; it is the craft of the goldsmith compared with that of the humble workman who exercises his calling at the forge. We have made such mighty strides in advance that if the ancient Masters of our science, Hermes and Geber and Raymond Lullius, were to rise from the dead, they would be treated by our modern Alchemists not as Sages but as only humble learners. They would seem very poor scholars in our modern lore of futile distillations, circulations, calcinations and in all the other countless operations wherewith modern research has so famously enriched our Art though without understanding the sense of the ancient writings.

In all these respects, our learning is vastly superior to theirs. Only one thing is unfortunately wanting to us which they possessed, namely, the knack they had of actually preparing the Philosopher's Stone. Perhaps, then, their simple methods were after all the best; and it is on this supposition that I desire, in this volume, to teach you to understand

Nature so that our vain imaginations may not misdirect us in the true and simple way. Nature then, is one, true, simple, self-contained, created by God and informed with a certain universal spirit. Its end and origin are God. Its unity is also found in God, because God made all things. Nature is the one source of all things: nor is anything in the world outside Nature, or contrary to Nature. Nature is divided into four "places" in which she brings forth all things that appear and that are in the shade; and according to the good or bad quality of the "place" she brings forth good or bad things. There are only four qualities which are in all things and yet do not agree among themselves, as one is

always striving to obtain the mastery over the rest. Nature is not visible, though she acts visibly; she is a volatile spirit who manifests herself in material shapes, and her existence is in the Will of God. Students of Nature should be such as is Nature herself -- true, simple, patient, constant, and so on; above all, they should fear God, and love their

neighbors. They should always be ready to learn from Nature and to be guided by her methods, ascertaining by visible and sensible examples whether that which they propose to perform is in accordance with her possibilities. If

we would reproduce something already accomplished by Nature, we follow her, but if we would improve on her performance, we must know in and by what it is ameliorated. For instance, if we desire to impart to a metal greater excellence than Nature has given to it, we must take the metallic substance both in its male and its female varieties, else all our efforts will be in vain. It is as impossible to produce a metal out of a plant, It is most important for us to know her "places" and those which are most in harmony and most closely allied, in order that we may join things together according to Nature, and not attempt to confound vegetables with animals, or animals with metals.

Everything should be made to act on that which is like to it -- and then Nature will perform her duty. as to make a tree out of a dog or any other animal.

SECOND TREATISE

Concerning the operation of Nature in our Substance, and its Seed

I have already said that Nature is one, true, and consistent, and that she is known by her products, such as trees, herbs, &c. I have also described the qualifications of a student of Nature. Now I will say a few words about the operation of Nature. As Nature has her being in the Will of God, so her will, or seed is in the Elements. She is one, and produces different things but only through the mediate instrumentality of seed. For Nature performs whatsoever the sperm requires of her, and is, as it were only the instrument of some artisan. The seed if anything is more useful to the artist than Nature herself; for Nature: for Nature without seed is, what a goldsmith is without silver and gold, or a husbandman without seed corn. Wherever there is seed, Nature will work through it, whether it be good or bad. Nature works on "seed" as God works on the free will of man. Truly it is a great marvel to behold Nature obeying the seed not because she is forced to do so but of her own will. In like manner, God permits man to do what he pleases not because He is constrained but of His good and free bounty. The seed, then, is the elixir or of anything, or its quintessence, or its most perfect digestion and decoction, or, again, the Balm of Sulphur, which is the same as the radical moisture in metals. We might say much more about this seed, but can only mention those facts which are of importance in our Art. The four elements produce seed, through the will of God and the imagination of Nature; and as the seed of the male animal has its centre or storing place in the kidneys, so the four elements by their continual action project a constant supply of seed to the centre of the earth, where it is digested, and whence it proceeds again in generative motions. Now the centre of the earth is a certain void place wherein nothing is at rest; and upon the margin or circumference of this centre the four elements project their qualities. As the male seed is emitted into the womb of the female, where only so much as is needed is retained while the rest is driven out again, so the magnetic force of our earth-centre attracts to itself as much as is needed of the cognate seminal substance, while that which cannot be used for vital generation is thrust forth in the shape of stones and other rubbish. This is the fountain-head of all things terrestrial. Let us illustrate the matter by supposing a glass of water to be set in the middle of a table, round the margin of which are placed little heaps of salt, and of powders of different colours. If the water be poured out, it will run all over the table in divergent rivulets, and will become salt where it touches the salt, red where it

dissolves the red powder, and so on. The water does not change the "places," but the several places differentiate the water. In the same way, the seed which is the product of the four elements is projected in all directions from the earth-centre, and produces different things, according to the quality of the different places. Thus, while the seed of all things is one, it is made to generate a great variety of things, just as the seed of a man might produce a man if projected into the womb of a female of his own species, or a monstrous variety of abortions, if projected into the wombs of different female animals. So long as Nature's seed remains in the centre it can indifferently produce a tree or a metal, a herb or a stone, and in like manner according to the purity of the place, it will produce what is less or more pure. But how do the elements generate the sperm or seed? There are four elements, two heavy and two light, two dry and two moist, but one driest and one moistest of all; and these are male and female. By God's will each of these is constantly striving to produce things like to itself in its own sphere. Moreover they are constantly acting on one another, and the subtle essences of all are combined in the centre, where they are well mixed and sent forth again by Archeus, the servant of Nature, as is more fully set forth in the Epilogue of these twelve Treatises.

THIRD TREATISE

Concerning the true and first Matter of Metals

The first matter of metals is twofold, and one without the other cannot create a metal. The first and principal substance is the moisture of air mingled with warmth. This substance the Sages have called Mercury, and in the philosophical sea it is governed by the rays of the Sun and the Moon. The second substance is the dry heat of the earth, which is called Sulphur. But as this substance has always been kept a great mystery, let us declare it more fully, and especially its weight, ignorance of which mars the whole work. The right substance, if the quantity of it which is taken be wrong, can produce nothing but an abortion. There are some who take the entire body for their matter, that is, for their seed or sperm; others take only a part of it: both are on the wrong track. If any one, for instance, were to attempt the creation of a man out of a man's hand and a woman's foot, he would fail. For there is in every body a central atom, or vital point of the seed (its 1/8200 part), even in a grain of wheat. Neither the body nor the grain is all seed, but every body has a small seminal spark, which the other parts protect from all excess of heat and cold. If you have ears and eyes treasure up this fact, and be on your guard against those who would use the whole grain as seed, and those who strive to produce a highly rarefied metallic substance by the vain solution and mixture of different metals. For even the purest metals contain a certain element of impurity, while in the inferior the proportion is greater. You will have all you want if you find the point of Nature, which you must not, however, look for in the vulgar metals; it is not to be found therein, for all these, and common gold more especially, are dead. But the metals which we advise you to take are living and have vital spirits. Fire is the life of metals while they are still in their ore, and the fire of smelting is their death. But the first matter of metals as a certain moisture mixed with warm air. Its appearance is that of oily water adhering to all pure and impure things; yet in some places it is found more abundantly than in others because the earth is more open and porous in one place than in another, and has a greater magnetic force. When it becomes manifest, it is clothed in a certain vesture, especially in places where it has nothing to cling to. It is known by the fact that it is composed of three principles; but, as a metallic substance it is only one without any visible sign of conjunction, except that which may be called its vesture or shadow namely, sulphur, &c.

FOURTH TREATISE

How metals are produced in the Bowels in the Earth

The metals are produced in this way: after the four elements have projected their power and virtues to the centre of the earth, they are, in the hands of the Archeus of Nature distilled and sublimed by the heat of perpetual motion towards the surface of the earth. For the earth is porous, and the air by distillation through the pores of the earth is resolved into a water out of which all things are generated. You should know that the seed of metals is the same, in the first instance, as the sperm of all other things, viz., a vaporous moisture. Hence it is foolish to seek the dissolution of metals in the first matter, which is nothing but a vapour, and in so doing philosophers have not comprehended the first matter, but only the second, as Bernard Trevisan well argues, though in a somewhat obscure manner, for he addressed himself to the Sons of the Doctrine. For my part before openly explaining this theory, I would warn all men not to seek that which exists everywhere by itself in a soft volatile form by so many circulations, calcinations, and reiterations of hard gold and silver, which can never be changed back into their original substance. Let us follow the real meaning of the writers of Alchemy whose works we read, and remember that if Art would produce any solid and permanent effect, it must follow in the footsteps of Nature, and be guided by her methods. It must trust itself to the guidance of Nature as far as Nature will lead, and go beyond her by still adhering to her rules. Now I said that all things are produced of a liquid air or a vapour which the elements distil into the centre of the earth by a continual motion, and that as soon as the Archeus has received it, his wisdom sublimes it through the pores, and distributes it to each place, producing different things according to the diverse places in which it is deposited. Some think that each metal has its own seed. But this is a great mistake for there is only one

Seed. The sperm which appears in Saturn is the same as that which is found in gold, silver, copper, &c.; their difference is caused by the place, and by the time during which Nature was at work upon them, the procreation of silver being achieved sooner than that of gold, and so with the other metals. The vapour which is sublimed by heat from the centre of the earth, passes either through cold or warm places. If the place be warm and pure, and contain adhering to it a certain fatness of sulphur, the vapour (or Mercury of the Sages) joins itself to its fatness, and sublimes it together with itself. If in the course of its further sublimation this unctuous vapour reaches other places where the earth has already been subtilized, purified, and rendered moist by previous ascending vapours, it fills the pores of this earth, and with it becomes gold. But if this unctuous moisture be carried to impure and cold places, it becomes lead; if the earth be pure and mingled with sulphur, it becomes copper. For the purer the place is, the more beautiful and perfect will the metal be. We must also note that the vapour is constantly ascending, and in its ascent from the earth's centre to its superficies, it purifies the places through which it passes. Hence precious metals are found now where none existed a thousand years ago, for this vapour, by its continual progress, ever subtilizes the crude and impure, and as continually carries away the pure with itself. This is the circulation and reiteration of Nature. All places are being more and more purified: and the purer they become the nobler are their products. In the winter this unctuous vapor is congealed by the frost. At the return of spring it is set free, and is the Magnesia which attracts to itself the kindred Mercury of the air, and gives life to all things through the rays of the Sun, the Moon and the Stars, thus bringing forth grass, flowers, and the like, for Nature is never idle Even during a single moment. This then, is the only true account of the generation of Metals. The earth is purged by a long distillation, and when the unctuous or fatty vapour approaches, the same are procreated, nor are they ever otherwise begotten notwithstanding the imaginations of those who misinterpret on this point the writings of the philosophers.

FIFTH TRACT

On the generation of all kinds of Stones

The substance of stones is the same as that of all other things; and their quality is determined by the purity of the places in which they arise when the four elements distil their vapour to the centre of the earth, the Archeus of Nature expels and sublimes it in such a manner that it carries with it in its passage through the pores of the earth, all the impurities of these places up to the surface, where they are congealed by the air, all that pure air engenders being congealed by crude air, their ingression being mutual, so that they join one with another, since Nature rejoices in Nature. Thus rocks and stones are gradually built up and generated. Now the larger the pores of the earth, the greater is the quantity of impurities carried upward; and thus the earth is most completely purified under those places where there is a great accumulation of stones or rocks at the surface, and in this manner the procreation of metals becomes easier in these places. This explains the fact that metals are scarcely ever found in plains, but nearly always in the bowels of rocky hills. The plains are often moist with elemental water which attracts to itself the rising vapour, and with it is digested by the rays of the Sun into the rich clay which potters use. In places where the soil is gross, and the vapour contains neither unctuousness nor sulphur, it produces herbs and grass in the meadows. The precious stones, such as diamonds, rubies, and emeralds, chrysopras, onyx, and carbuncle, are all generated in the same manner as ordinary stones. When the natural vapour is sublimed by itself without sulphur or the unctuousness of which we have spoken and reaches a place where there is pure salt water (i.e., in very cold places, where our sulphur cannot exist, for could it exist, this effect would be hindered), diamonds are formed. The unctuous sulphur which rises with the vapour cannot move without warmth and is instantly congealed. When it reaches a slightly cold place, leaving the vapour to continue its upward movement without it. Colours are imparted to precious stones in this way.

When the unctuous sulphur is congealed by the perpetual motion, the spirit of the water digests it in passing and purifies it by the water of the salt, until it assumes a red or white colour. This colour is volatilized by so many repeated distillations, and at length is borne upward with the purifying vapour, which by its aid is able to enter imperfect bodies, and thus to pervade them with colour; the colour is united to the partly congealed water and fills all its pores so that the two are absolutely one. For water which has no spirit is congealed by heat, and water which has a spirit is congealed by cold; but he who knows how to congeal water by means of heat, and to join to it a spirit, is like to discover something a thousand times more precious than gold, or anything which is in the world. Let him separate the spirit from the waters in order that it may putrefy, and that the grain may appear. Then let him purge off the dross, and reduce the spirit to water. This union will produce a branch which bears little resemblance to the parent stem.

SIXTH TREATISE

Concerning the Second Matter and Putrefaction

We have spoken of the first matter of all things, and after what manner they are born by Nature without seed, that is, after what manner Nature receives the matter from the elements whereof she engenders seed. We will now consider this seed and the things evolved from it. Everything that has seed is multiplied thereby, but not without the aid of Nature for seed is nothing but congealed air, or a vaporous humour enclosed in a body; and unless it be dissolved by

a warm vapour, it cannot work. Now, the nature of this seed which is produced out of the four elements, is threefold: it is either Mineral, or Vegetable, or Animal. Mineral seed is known only to the Sages. Vegetable seed is common and vulgar, as we see in fruits. Animal seed is known by imagination. But vegetable seed exhibits most clearly the process by which Nature evolves natural objects out of the four elements. Winter is the cause of putrefaction: it congeals the vital spirit in trees, and when the heat of the Sun, which magnetically attracts moisture, sets it free, the natural heat (of the tree) which is thereby stirred up, drives a subtle vapour of water towards the surface, and makes the sap to flow, always separating the pure from the impure, though the impure may sometimes precede the pure. That which is pure is congealed into flowers, the impure becomes leaves, the gross and thick hardens into bark. The bark of the tree remains fixed; the leaves fall when the pores are obstructed by heat or cold; the flowers receive a colour according to the quality of the natural heat, and bear fruit or seed. We may instance the apple, wherein is the sperm, whence the tree does not spring; but in this sperm is the seed or grain interiorly, whence the tree is born even without sperm, for multiplication is not of the sperm but of the seed. Thus we see how Nature, without our help, creates vegetable seed out of the four elements. But how about Minerals? Nature brings forth Mineral or Metallic seed in the bowels of the earth. This is the reason why so many will not believe in its existence -- because it is invisible. And on this account the vulgar unbelief is not so greatly to be wondered at: for if they hardly understand that which is openly before their eyes, how should they know anything about that which they cannot see. Yet, whether they believe it or not, the fact remains the same, and it is most true that which is above is as that which is below, and that which is born above has origin from the same source which is at work down below, even in the bowels of the earth. What prerogative have vegetables above metals that God should give seed to the one and withhold it from the other? Are not metals as much in His sight as trees? It is certain that nothing can grow without seed; for that which has no seed, is dead. The four elements must either bring forth metallic seed or produce metals without seed. In the latter case, they cannot be perfect: for nothing is complete without seed. He who can bring himself to believe that metals are destitute of seed, is unworthy to understand the mysteries of our Art. The metals then really contain their own proper seed; and it is generated in the following way. The vapour which (in the manner repeatedly described rises from the earth's centre, and is called Mercury not on account of its essence but on account of its fluidity, and the facility with which it adheres to anything, is assimilated to the sulphur on account of its internal heat; and, after congelation, is the radical humour. Thus metals are indeed generated out of mercury; but those ignorant persons who say that this first substance of metals is ordinary mercury, confound the whole hole body with the seed that is in it, seeing that common mercury, too, contains metallic seed, as well as the other metals. Let us illustrate the matter by the analogy of the human body. Therein it is certain that there is a seed whereby the species of mankind is propagated. That body (which may be likened to common mercury) contains seed, which is not seen, and of which the quantity is very small in proportion to the size of the whole body: the process of generation is performed not by the whole body, but by this seminal "congealed watery vapour." But as no vital generation could take place if the body were dissected in order to get at the seed, as the murdering of the body would kill the seed -- so ignorant Alchemists may be said to murder the body and kill the seed of metals, when they dissolve their bodies, whether of gold, silver, or lead, and corrode them with aqua fortis, in order to obtain the metallic seed. All multiplication is performed by means of male and female seed; and the two (which by themselves are barren) must be conjoined in order to bring forth fruit, i.e., a new form. Whosoever, therefore, would bring forth any good thing must take the sperm or the seed, and not the entire body. Take, then, the living male and the living female, and join them in order that they may project a sperm for the procreation of a fruit according to their kind, for let no one presume to suppose that he can make the first matter. The first matter of man is earth, and there is no one so bold as to dream that he can create a man. God alone can perform this artifice. But if the second substance (or seed) which is already created, be put in the proper place, Nature will produce a new form of the same species. The Artist only separates what is subtle from its grosser elements, and puts it into the proper "vessel." Nature does the rest. As a thing begins, so it ends. Out of one arise two, and out of two one -- as of God the Father there was begotten God the Son, and from the two proceeded God the Holy Ghost. Thus was the world made, and so also shall it end. Consider carefully these few points, and you will find, firstly the Father, then the Father and the Son, lastly, the Holy Spirit. You will find the four elements, the four luminaries, the two celestials, the two centrics. In a word there is nothing, has been, and shall be nothing in the World which is otherwise than it appears in this symbol, and a volume might be filled with its mysteries. I say, therefore, it is the attribute of God alone to make one out of one, you must produce one thing out of two by natural generation. Know, then, that the multiplying sperm is the second substance, and not the first. For the first substance of things is not seen, but is hidden in Nature or the elements: the second substance is occasionally seen by the children of knowledge.

SEVENTH TREATISE

Concerning the Virtue of the Second Matter

But in order that you may the better know this second matter, I will describe to you its virtues. Nature is divided into three kingdoms, the mineral, the vegetable, and the animal. It is manifest that the mineral kingdom could subsist of itself were there no vegetables or animals in the world; the vegetable in like manner, is independent of the animal and mineral. These two kingdoms were created in independence. The animal kingdom alone depends for its subsistence on the two others, and is the most noble and excellent of all; and seeing that it is the last of the three, it governs the two others, because virtue expands itself at the third, even as it is multiplied in the second. In the vegetable kingdom the first substance is the herb or the tree, which you cannot create, but which is produced by Nature alone. The second substance is the seed which you see, by which herbs and trees are propagated. In the animal kingdom the first substance is the beast or man, whom you cannot create; but the seed, or second substance, by which they are propagated, you know. In the mineral kingdom, too, you are unable to create a metal, and if you boast that you can do so, Nature will laugh at your pretensions; given even the possession of that first matter which is vaunted by the philosophers, namely, the centric salt, you cannot multiply it without gold; but the vegetable seed of metals is known only to the Sons of Science. In the case of plants, the seed is seen outwardly, and is digested by warm air. In animals the seed appears inwardly and outwardly, and is prepared in the kidneys of the male. Water is the seed of minerals, in the very centre of their heart and life; and the "kidneys of its digestion" are fire. The receptacle of vegetable seed is the earth; the receptacle of animal seed the womb of the female; and air is the receptacle of water -- the mineral seed. The receptacles of seed are the same as congelations of bodies; digestion is the same as solution, and putrefaction the same as destruction. The specific property of seed is to enter into union with other substances belonging to the same kingdom, because it is subtle, and, in fact, air congealed by fatness into water. It is recognizable by the fact that it does not become naturally united to anything outside the kingdom to which it belongs. It is not dissolved, but only congealed, as it does not need solution but only congelation. Hence it is necessary that the pores of bodies be opened to admit the sperm, in the centre of which lies the seed (which is air). When it enters its proper womb it is congealed, and congeals the pure or mixed substance which it finds. So long as there is any seed in the body the body lives; when it is all consumed the body dies; and any emission of seed weakens the body, as may be seen in the case of dissolute persons, and of trees which have been too richly laden with fruit. The seed, then, is invisible, but the sperm can be seen, and is even as a living soul, which is not found in dead things. It is extracted after two manners, of which the first is gentle and the second violent. Nothing is produced without seed, but everything comes into being by means of seed. Let all sons of knowledge remember that seed is vainly sought in dry trees, and that it is found only in those which are green.

EIGHTH TREATISE

How Nature operates through our Art in the Seed

Seed in itself produces no fruit, if it be not placed by Nature or Art in its own proper womb. Though seed in itself is the most glorious of all created things, yet the womb is its life, which causes the putrefaction of the enclosing grain or sperm, brings about the congelation of the vital atom, nourishing and stimulating its growth by the warmth of its own body. All this is constantly and regularly being enacted (by months, years, and seasons) in the above said three natural kingdoms. The process can be hastened artificially in the vegetable and mineral, but not in the animal world. In the mineral kingdom, Art can do something which Nature is unable to perform, by removing the crude air which stops up the outward pores of minerals, not in the bowels of the earth but in the circumference. The elements vie in projecting their seed into the centre of the earth in order that it may there be digested. The centre, by a caloric movement, emits it into the womb; of these wombs there are an untold number -- as many as there are places, and one place always purer than another. Know that a pure womb will bring forth a pure form of its own species. For instance, as among animals there are wombs of women, cows, mares, bitches, so in the mineral world there are metals, stones, and salts. Now salts principally demand consideration, with their localities, according as they are less or more important.

NINTH TREATISE

On the Commixtion of Metals, and the Eliciting of the Metallic Seed

We have spoken hitherto of Nature, of Art, of bodies, sperm and seed. Let us now proceed to the practical enquiry, how metals should be mixed, and how they are mutually related. For as a woman is generated in the same womb, and out of the same seed as a man, and the only difference is in the degree of digestion, and the purity of the blood and salts, so silver is produced from the same seed, and in the same womb as gold; but the womb of the silver had more water, and, as it were less digested blood than that of gold, according to the times of the celestial moon. But if you would understand the sexual union of the metals and their manner of emitting and receiving seed look at the celestial bodies of the planets. You will see that Saturn is higher than all the rest, to whom Jupiter succeeds, then Mars, the Sun, Venus, Mercury, while the last place is occupied by the Moon. The virtues of the planets descend, but do not ascend; and so as experience teaches us, Mars is easily converted into Venus, but not Venus into Mars, which has an inferior sphere. Also Jupiter may be quickly transmuted into Mercury, because Jupiter has a higher

place; the one is second after the firmament, the other second after the earth. Saturn is the highest, the Moon lowest; the Sun combines with all, but is never ameliorated by its inferiors. There is a great correspondence between Saturn and the Moon, the Sun being medial between them; as also between Mercury and Jupiter, Mars and Venus, which all have the Sun as their centre. Most operators know how to transmute iron into copper, or Venus, without using gold, they also know how to change Jupiter into Mercury some can prepare the Moon (silver) out of Saturn; but if they could prepare gold by these changes, their secret would be worth knowing indeed. For this reason I repeat that it is important to know the mutual correspondence of metals, and their possibilities of union. There is one metal which has power to consume all others, for it is, so to speak, their water, and almost their mother, and is resisted only by the radical humour of gold and silver, and ameliorated by it. This metal is called Chalybs (steel). If gold is united to it eleven times, and emits its seed, it is weakened even unto death; but the Chalybs (steel) conceives and brings forth a son much nobler than the father; and when the seed of the son is placed in her womb it purifies it, and renders it a thousand times better fitted to produce excellent fruit. There is another Chalybs (steel) which is like this one, and created as a thing by itself by Nature this steel is able, with its wonderful virtue, to elicit from the rays of the " sun " that which so many have sought, and which is the chief principle of our Art.

TENTH TREATISE

On the Supernatural Generation of the Son of the Sun

We have treated of those things which are produced by Nature and have been created by God, so that those who are searchers of this science may comprehend more easily the possibility of Nature, and the utmost limit of her powers. I now go on to speak about the method of preparing the Philosophers Stone. The Stone or Tincture is nothing other than gold digested to the highest degree. Common gold resembles a plant without seed; but when such a plant is matured, it produces seed-and so, when gold is ripened, it produces its seed, or the Tincture. If any one asks why gold and other metals do not commonly produce seed I answer because the crudity of the ore, which has not sufficient heat, prevents it from being matured. In some places pure gold is found which Nature has been striving to mature, but which has not attained to ripeness on account of the crudity of the air. An analogous case is that of the orange tree, which bears no fruit in northern latitudes, because it has not sufficient warmth, while in warmer countries it ripens the most delicious fruit, and a like result it is possible to produce in colder countries, by means of artificial heat. The same thing happens with metallic natures, and so gold may be made to produce seed, by a wise and judicious Artist who knows how to assist Nature. Should he act independently of Nature, he would err, for in this science, as in all others, we can do nothing but supplement Nature, nor can we otherwise aid her than through the agency of heat or fire. Now, in order that Nature may be enabled to work upon a congealed metallic substance, wherein the spirit does not appear, the body must be dissolved and its pores opened. Now there are two kinds of solution, the violent and the natural; and under the former head come all those methods of solution which are in vogue among the vulgar herd of modern Alchemists, and the same are cold and useless. Natural solution takes place when the pores of the body are gently opened in our water, so that the digested seed can be emitted and placed in its womb. Our water is a water which does not wet the hands; it is a heavenly water, and yet not rain water. The "Body" is gold, which gives out the seed. Our silver (not common silver) is that which conceives the seed of the gold. There it is digested by our continual fire, for seven or even ten months, until our water consumes three, and leaves one; and this is something twofold. Then it is nourished with the milk of earth, or the fatness of that which is formed in the breasts of the earth, and is regulated and conserved by the putrefaction of the surrounding substance. In this way that infant of the second generation is born. Now us advance from theory to practice.

ELEVENTH TREATISE.

Concerning the practical preparation of our Stone or Tincture by means of our Art

Our discourse in preceding chapters has been enlarged by appropriate examples which will facilitate the understanding of the practice, which, in accordance with natural procedure, must be performed as follows: take eleven grains of our earth, by as many doses, one grain of our gold, and two grains of our silver. Here you should carefully bear in mind that common gold and silver are of no use for our purpose, as they are dead. Those which I ask you to take are the living metals. Expose them to the heat of our fire, and there will come out of them a dry liquid. The earth will first be dissolved into a water which is called Mercury of the Sages, and this water will dissolve the bodies of the gold and silver, and consume them, till only the tenth part with one part remains, which is the radical metallic humour. Then take the water of saltpetre from our earth, in which is a living river and a flowing wave. Let this water be clear, and pour on it the radical humour: expose the whole to the fire of putrefaction and generation, which is not the same as that of the first operation. Regulate the heat judiciously, until there appear colours like those of the Peacock's Tail, and then continue to apply this well-regulated heat until the colours resolve themselves into a pronounced green. Be not weary but continue till the rest of the colours have manifested. When you observe at the bottom ashes of a brown colour, while the water is almost red, you should open the vessel and dip a feather into it. With this feather smear a morsel of iron, and if it becomes tinged, pour into the vessel as much of a

certain water (which we will describe hereafter) as there is of crude air which has entered in, and then again subject it to coction over the same fire, until it colours the feather again. Further than this my experience does not go. The water I have mentioned is the menstruum of the world from the sphere of the Moon and so carefully rectified that it has power to calcine the Sun. Herein have I desired to discourse everything to your understanding and if sometimes you will take my meaning rather than my words, you will find that I have revealed all, more especially as regards the first and second work. It remains for me to say a few words about the fire. In the first operation the fire should be of one degree and continuous and should pervade the whole substance with an even warmth. In the second operation we need a natural fire, which digests and fixes the substance. Behold, I say unto you the truth! I have unfolded the regimen of the fire if only you understand Nature. But it is needful also to speak a few words concerning the vessel, which ought to be such as is indicated by Nature; and two of these vessels suffice. In the first operation the vessel should be round; in the second it should be somewhat smaller; it should also be of glass in the form of a vial or egg. But, know, above all things, that fire employed by Nature is one and its differences are determined by differences of distance. The vessel of Nature is also one, but we use two in order to accelerate the development of our substance; its material is one, but consists of two substances. If you would produce anything, look at the things that are produced. If you cannot understand those which are continually before your eyes, it will go hardly with you when you seek to produce those which are as yet unseen. Remember that God alone can create; but He has permitted the Sage to make manifest things that are hidden and concealed according to the ministry of Nature. Consider I pray you the simple water of the clouds. Who would believe that it contains in itself all mundane objects, hard stones, salts, air, earth, and fire? What shall I say of the earth, which seems simple enough and, and contains water, fire, salts, air, and much besides? O, admirable Nature, who knowest by the means of water how to produce the wonderful fruits of earth, who dost give life to them and nourish them by means of air! Everything depends upon the faculty of seeing which we bring to the study of nature. Common eyes, for instance, discern that the sun is hot; the eyes of the Sage see that the sun itself is cold and that it is only its movements which produce heat for; its effect is felt at so great a distance in space. The heat of the sun is the same as our natural fire; for as the sun is the centre of the planets and thence scatters its heat downward in all directions, so in the centre of the earth there is a sun of the earth, which by its perpetual motion drives heat or rays upward towards the surface of the earth. This inward heat is much more powerful than elemental fire but it is tempered and cooled by the water which pervades and refreshes the pores of the earth; otherwise all things would be consumed by its fierceness. In the same way, the fierce rays of the sun are tempered and assuaged by the air of the intermediate atmosphere, without which everything would be consumed, and no generation would be possible. But I must now proceed to explain after what manner the elements act upon each other. In the centre of the earth, then, there is a central sun, of which the heat pervades the whole earth to its surface by reason of the movement thereof, or by the motion of the firmament thereof. This heat changes the water of the earth into air (or vapour), which being much more subtle than water, is violently driven upward through the pores of the earth. But when it reaches the colder atmosphere it is once more condensed into water and in some places we do indeed see this water or condensed, air driven highly up into the air by the force of the central fire: just as a kettle of water when exposed to gentle heat sends upward a gentle stream of vapour and air, while the steam thickens and the upward movement becomes more intense when the fire is kindled into a blaze. By this action of the "central sun" the elements are distributed over the earth and each finds the place where in can grow. This upward current of air is not always noticeable because in many places there is not enough water to make it perceptible: an empty kettle gives out no steam I say, then, that fire or heat is the cause of the motion of the air, and the life of all things; and the earth is their nurse, or receptacle. If our earth and air were not cooled by water, the earth would be parched up, as it is even now in some places where the pores of the earth are closed up, and be obstructing the movement of the water would be placed at the mercy of the two kinds of solar heat. In this way the destruction of the world will one day be brought about. Now in our Art you should closely imitate these natural processes. There should be the Central Heat, the change of the water into air, the driving upward of the air, its diffusion through the pores of the earth, its reappearance as condensed but volatilized water. Then you must give our Ancient One gold and silver to swallow and consume, till he himself is burnt to death and his ashes are scattered into the water, which you must then subject to coction for a sufficient space of time. The result will be the Medicine which is a cure for leprosy. But be careful not to take heat for cold, or cold for heat. Mix only things which are like each other, and separate contrary elements by means of heat. If you do not follow the guidance of Nature all your efforts will be in vain. I swear by God that I have spoken to you as a father should to his son. He that hath ears, let him hear, and he that hath sense, let him understand.

TWELFH TREATISE

Concerning the Stone and its Virtue

We have spoken sufficiently in preceding chapters concerning the production of natural things, the elements, the first and second matters, bodies and seeds, as also of their use and virtue. I have written also of the Philosophical

Stone, and shall now speak of its virtue, in so far as experience has discovered it to me. Before, however, I proceed to describe the virtues of the Stone, I will, for the better understanding of our Art, once more recapitulate what has already been said. If any one doubts the reality of our Art, he should read the books of those ancient Sages whose good faith no one ever yet called in question, and whose right to speak on this subject cannot be challenged. If you will not believe them, I am not so foolish as to enter into a controversy with one who denies first principles: the deaf and dumb cannot speak. Why minerals alone should be excluded from God's primal benediction, when He bade all things increase and multiply after their kind, I am unable to see; and if minerals have seed they have it for the purpose of generic propagation. The Art of Alchemy is true in its nature. Nature is true also, but a true Artist is rarely found. Nature is one, our Art is one but the workmen are many. Nature, then, generates things through the Will of God out of the first Matter (the product of the elements) which is known to God alone. Nature produces things, and multiplies them out of the second substance which is known to the Sages. All elements are mutually dependent, though they do not agree when joined, but the queen of all is water, because it is the mother of all things --and over it broods the spirit of fire. When fire acts on water, and strives with it, the first matter is evolved. Thus arise vapours of sufficient denseness to combine with earth, by means of that crude air which from the very beginning was separated from it. This process is going on ceaselessly, by means of perpetual motion. For motion causes heat, as you may know by continued friction of any substance. Motion causes heat, heat moves the water; the motion of water produces air, which is the life of all living things. Thus all things grow out of water, out of its more subtle vapours are produced light and subtle things; out of its "oil," things of greater weight; out of its salt things far more beautiful and precious than the rest. But as Nature is often hindered by the impurity of this vapour, fatness, and salt, from producing perfection, experience has taught us to separate the pure from the impure. Therefore, if you would ameliorate Nature, and produce a more perfect and elaborated subject, purge the body by dissolution of all that is heterogeneous, and unite the pure to the pure, the well-digested to the well-digested, and the crude to the crude, according to the natural and not the material weight. For you must know that the central saltpetre never contains more earth than is required whether it be otherwise pure or impure. But it is different with the fatness of the water, which is never found pure. Art purges it by the action of twofold heat, and then again combines its elements.

EPILOGUE

or Conclusion of these Twelve Treatises

I have composed, O friendly reader, the preceding twelve treatises for the benefit of the students of this Art; in order that they might understand the operations of Nature, and after what manner she produces all things which are in the world, before they put their hands to any experiment. Otherwise, they might be trying to open the gate without a key, or to draw water with a sieve. For in regard to our Holy and Blessed Art, he for whom the sun shines not, walks in thick darkness, and he who does not see the light of the moon, is involved in the shades of night. Nature has her own light, which is not visible to the outward eyes. The shadow of Nature upon our eyes is the body. But where the light of Nature irradiates the mind, this mist is cleared away from the eyes, all difficulties are overcome, and things are seen in their very essence, namely, the inmost heart of our Magnesia, which corresponds to the respective centres of the Sun and Earth. The bodily nature of things is a concealing outward vesture. If you dressed a boy and a girl of twelve years of age in exactly the same way, you would be puzzled to tell which was the boy and which the girl, but when the clothes are removed they may easily be distinguished. In the same way, our understanding makes a shadow to the shadow of Nature, for our human nature is concealed by the body in the same way as the body by the clothes. I might in this place discourse fully and philosophically of the dignity of man, of his creation and generation but I will pass over these themes and touch briefly on his life alone. Man is made of earth, and lives through air; for air contains the hidden food of life, of which the invisible spirit, when congealed is better than the whole hole world.

Truly wonderful and admirable are the ways of Nature, who shews to us day by day the light of truth. I have set down in these twelve Treatises that which she has revealed to me in order that the God-fearing reader may more easily understand that which I have seen with my eyes, that which my hands have performed, without any fraud or sophistication. For without the light and knowledge of Nature it is impossible to attain to the perfection of this Art, unless it be revealed to a man by the Spirit, or secretly by a loving friend. The substance is vile and yet most precious. Take ten parts of our air; one part of living gold or living silver; put all this into your vessel; subject the air to coction until it becomes first water and then something which is not water. If you do not know how to do this and how to cook air, you will go wrong, for herein is the true Matter of the Philosophers. You must take that which is, but is not seen until the operator pleases. This is the water of our dew, which is extracted from the saltpetre of the Sages, by which all things grow, exist, and are nourished, whose womb is the centre of the celestial and terrestrial sun and moon. To speak more openly, it is our Magnet, which I have already called our Chalybs, or steel. Air generates this magnet, the magnet engenders or manifests our air. Thus Hermes says that its father is the Sun, its mother the Moon, and that the winds have fostered it in their womb, that is to say, the salt Alkali (called by the Sages salt of Ammonia, or vegetable salt) is hidden in the womb of Magnesia. The operation thereof is as follows: --

You dissolve condensed air, and in it a tenth part of gold; seal it up and expose it to our fire, until the air is changed into powder and there will be seen, given the salt of the world, a great variety of colours. The rest of this process and the method of multiplication you will find fully set forth in the writings of Lullius, and other of the ancient Sages, so therefore I do not dwell on them being content to treat only of the first and second matters. This I have done frankly, and with open heart. Think not that any man in this world has spoken more fully and clearly than I have. I have not learnt what I tell you from books, but by the experiment of my own hands. If you do not understand it at first, or are unable to accept the truth, accuse not my work, but blame rather yourself, believing that God will not reveal this secret unto you. Take it, then, in all earnestness, read and again read it, especially the Epilogue of these twelve Treatises, and diligently consider the possibilities of Nature, the action of the elements, and which is chief among them, especially in the rarefaction of air or water, by which the heavens and the whole world were created. This I admonish you to do, as a father admonishes a son. Do not wonder that I have written so many Treatises. I am not in need of books for myself but was impelled to record my experience by pity towards those who are wandering astray in the darkness of their own conceits; and though I might have set forth this secret in few words, I have written at great length in order to equip you with that knowledge of Nature, without which you could not hope to succeed in this Art. Do not be put out by the seeming contradictions with which, in accordance with the custom of the Sages, I have had to conceal my real meaning a little. There is no rose found without thorns. Revolve diligently in your mind all that I have said about the way in which the elements distil the Radical Moisture to the centre of the earth, and how the terrestrial and centric sun again raises and sublimes them, by its continual motion, to the surface of the earth. Note also the correspondence which has been affirmed between the celestial and the centric Sun for the celestial Sun and Moon have a special power and a wonderful virtue in distilling upon earth by their rays. For heat is easily united to heat, and salt to salt. As the central sun has its sea and crude perceptible water, so the celestial sun has its sea of subtle and imperceptible water (the atmosphere). On the surface of the earth the two kinds of rays meet and produce flowers and all things. Then rain receives its vital force out of the air, and unites it to that of the saltpetre of the earth. For the saltpetre of the earth is like calcined tartar, and by its dryness, attracts air to itself -- which air it dissolves into water. For this saltpetre itself was once air, and has become joined to the fatness of the earth. The more abundantly the rays of the sun descend, the greater is the quantity of saltpetre generated, and so also is the harvest on earth increased. All this does experience daily teach. I have willed thus to set forth solely for the benefit of the ignorant the correspondences which exist between all things, and the efficacious virtue of the Sun, Moon, and Stars. The wise have no need of such instruction. Our substance is openly displayed before the eyes of all, and yet is not known. Oh, how marvellous is our heaven, and our water, and our mercury, and our saltpetre which are in the world sea, and our vegetable, and our fixed and volatile sulphur, and our dead head, or dregs of our sea, and our water that does not wet the hands, and without which no mortal can live -- without which nothing is born or generated in the whole world! It is lightly esteemed by men, yet no one can do without it: for it is more precious than all the world beside, and, in short, it is nothing but our pontic-water which is congealed in the sun and moon and extracted from the sun and moon, by means of our chalybs (steel) through the skill of the Sages by a philosophical artifice and in a surprising manner I did not really intend to publish this book, for reasons that are named in the preface; but my love for earnest students of this Art got the better of my caution. So have I sought to make known my good-will to those who know me, and manifest unto the initiated that I am their companion and equal, and that I desire their acquaintance. I doubt not that there are many persons of good conduct and clear conscience who possess this great gift of God in secret. I pray and conjure them that they should preserve even the silence of Harpocrates. Let them be made wise by my example, and take warning from my dangers. Whenever I have revealed myself to the great, it has always been to my peril and loss. But by this work I now shew myself to the Sons of Hermes, while at the same time I instruct the ignorant, and direct lost seekers into the right path. Let them know that the secret is here as plainly expounded as it ever will be. I have kept nothing back except the secret of extracting our "salt of Ammonia," or "Mercury of the Sages" out of our "sea water," and the great use to which it is put. If I have not expressed myself very plainly on these points, it is only because I may not do so. The secret can only be revealed by God, who knows men's hearts and minds, and He will vouchsafe this knowledge, in answer to earnest and importunate prayer after a repeated careful perusal of this Book. The vessel, as I have said, is one, or two at most will suffice; and if you have knowledge of Nature, a continuous fire, and the right substance, you ought to succeed. Let me caution you, in conclusion, not to be led astray by those who waste their time and money on herbs, animals, stones, and all kinds of minerals but the right ones. Farewell, good reader, and may you long enjoy the results of my labours, to the glory of God, the salvation of your soul, and the good of your neighbour.

Sendivogius - The New Chemical Light

Parable and Dialogue. [Transcribed by Jerry Bujas.]

[Go to first part - Twelve Treatises](#) . [Go to Third part - Concerning Sulphur](#).

A PREFACE TO THE RIDDLE OF THE SAGES

Addressed to the Sons of Truth

Though I have already given unto you, O Children of Science, a full and exhaustive account of our Art, and of the source of the universal fountain, so that there seems no further call to say anything, having, in the preceding Treatises, illustrated the mode of Nature by examples, and declared both the theory and the practice, so far it is permitted me to do, yet there may be some of my readers who think that I have expressed myself here and there in too laconical a fashion. I will therefore once more make known from beginning to end the entire process, but in the form of a philosophical enigma, so that you may judge how far I have been permitted to attain by God. There is an infinite number of books which treat of this Art, but you will scarce find any which contain a more clear explication of the truth than is here set down. I have, in the course of my life, met with a good many who fancied that they had a perfect understanding of the writings of the Sages; but their subtle style of interpretation was in glaring contrast with the simplicity of Nature, and they laughed at what they were pleased to call the rustic crudeness of my remarks. I have also frequently attempted to explain our Art to others by word of mouth; but though they called themselves Sages, they would not believe that there is such water in our sea, and attributed my remarks to temporary insanity. For this reason I am not afraid that my writings will reveal anything to unworthy persons, as I am persuaded that it is only by the gift of God that this Art can be understood. If, indeed, subtlety and mental acuteness were all that is necessary for its apprehension, I have met with many strong minds, well fitted for the investigation of such subjects. But I tell you: Be simple, and not overwise, until you have found the secret. Then you will be obliged to be prudent, and you will easily be able to compose any number of books, which is doubtless more simple for him who is in the centre and beholds the thing itself, than one who is on the circumference only, and can only go by hearsay. You have a clear description of the matter of all things, but I warn you that if you would attain to this knowledge you should continue in earnest prayer to God, and love your neighbour. In the second place, you should not be ready to imagine all manner of subtleties and refinements of which Nature knows nothing. Remain rather in the way of her simplicity, for therein you are far more likely to put your finger on the subject than if you abide in the midst of subtleties.

In reading my book, do not stick too closely to the letter of my words but read them side by side with the natural facts which they describe. You should also from the first fix your eyes steadily on the object of your search, and the scope and aim of our work. It is much wiser to learn with your mind and your brain first than by bitter experience afterwards. The object of your search should be to find a hidden thing from which, by a marvellous artifice, there is obtained a liquid by whose means gold is dissolved as gently and naturally as ice is melted in warm water. If you can find this substance, you have that out of which Nature produced gold, and though all metals and all things are derived from it, yet it takes most kindly to gold. For all other things are clogged with impurity, except gold wherein there is no uncleanness, whence in a special manner this matter is, as it were, the mother of gold. If you will not follow my instructions, and be warned by my cautions, you can derive no benefit from my book. I have spoken as plainly as my conscience would permit. If you ask who I am: I am a Cosmopolitan. If you know me, and wish to be good and honourable men, keep my name a secret. If you do not know me forbear to enquire after my name, for I shall make public nothing more than appears in this writing. Believe me, if my rank and station were not what they are, I should enjoy nothing so much as a solitary life, or to have joined Diogenes in his tub. For I behold this world full of vanity, greed, cruelty, venality, and iniquity; and I rejoice in the prospect of the glorious life to come. I no longer wonder, as once I did, that the true Sage, though he owns the Stone, does not care to prolong his life; for he daily sees heaven before his eyes, as you see your face in a glass. When God gives you what you desire, you will believe me, and not make yourself known to the world.

A Parable,

or

Enigma of the Sages

Added by way of an Appendix

Once upon a time, when I had been for many years of my life sailing from the Arctic to the Antarctic Pole, I was cast ashore by the will of God, on the coast of a certain great ocean; and though I was well acquainted with the properties of that sea, I did not know whether there was generated near those shores that little fish Edieneis, which is so anxiously sought, even unto this present, by men of high and low degree. But as I watched the Naiads and Nymphs disporting themselves in the water, being fatigued with my previous toils, and overwhelmed by the multitude of my thoughts, I was lulled asleep by the soft murmur of the waves; and as I slept sweetly and gently, I beheld a marvellous vision I saw ancient Neptune, with a trident in his hand, rise, with venerable aspect, from our sea, who after a friendly salutation, carried me to a most beautiful island. This island was situated in the southern hemisphere, and contained all that is required for man's use and delight. It appeared a more pleasant and delightful abode than Virgil's Elysian fields. The shores thereof were fringed with verdant myrtles and cypresses. The meadows were studded with a large variety of beautiful and fragrant flowers. The slopes of the hills were clad with vines, olives, and cedars. The roads were overhung by the intertwining branches of laurels and pomegranate trees, which afforded grateful shade to the wayfarer. The plains were covered with groves of orange and lemon trees. In short, the island was an epitome of earthly beauty. Concealed under a rock, Neptune shewed me two minerals of that island, gold and chalybs (steel). Then I was conducted to an orchard in the middle of a meadow, which was at no great distance, the same being planted with a great variety of beautiful trees. Among these he shewed me seven enriched by particular names; and two of them towered above the rest. One bore fruit which shone like the sun, and its leaves resembled gold; the fruit of the other was whiter than lilies, and its leaves were like fine silver. Neptune called the first the Solar, and the second the Lunar tree. The only thing which it was difficult to obtain in the island, was water. The inhabitants had tried to get it from a spring by means of a conduit, and to elicit it from many things. But the result was a poisonous water, and the only water that could be drunk was that condensed out of the rays of the sun and moon. The worst of it was, that no one could attract more than ten parts of this water. It was wonderful water! I can tell you; for I saw with my eyes and touched with my hands its dazzling whiteness, which surpassed all the splendour of the snow. While I stood wrapt in admiration, Neptune vanished from my sight, and there stood before me a tall man, on whose forehead the name of Saturn was inscribed. He took a vessel, and scooped up ten parts of the water, in which he placed fruit from the Solar tree; and the fruit was consumed like ice in warm water. So I said unto him: "Lord, I behold here a marvellous thing. This water is small in quantity; nevertheless, the fruit of this tree is consumed therein by a gentle heat. To what purpose is all this?" He graciously replied: "My son, it is true that this thing is wonderful. But this water is the water of life, and has such power to exalt the qualities of this fruit, that it shall afterwards, without sowing or planting -- only by its fragrance -- transmute the six trees which remain into its own nature. Moreover, this water is as a woman to the fruit: the fruits of this tree can putrefy nowhere but in this water; and though the fruit by itself be wonderful and precious -- yet when it putrefies in this water, it brings forth out of this putrefaction a Salamander that endures the fire; its blood is more precious than all treasures, and has power to render fertile six trees such as you see here, and to make their fruit sweeter than honey." Then I said unto him: "Lord, how is this thing done?" He replied: "I have already told thee that the fruits of the Solar tree are living, and they are sweet; but whereas the fruit while it is cooked in this water can inform but one part, after its coction has been completed it can inform a thousand." I then enquired whether the fruit was boiled in this water over a fierce fire, and how long? He answered this water has an inward fire, and when this is assisted by continuous outward warmth, it burns up three parts of its own body with this body of the fruit, until nothing but an incredibly small part remains, which, however, possesses the most marvellous virtue. This is cooked by the wise Master first for seven months, and then for ten. But in the meantime, on each fiftieth day, a variety of phenomena is witnessed." Again I besought him whether this fruit was cooked in several waters and whether anything was added to it. He made answer: "There is no water, either in this island or in the whole country but only this kind alone that can properly penetrate the pores of this fruit; and you should know the Solar tree also grew out of this water, which is collected by magnetic attraction out of the rays of the Sun and Moon. Hence the fruit and the water exhibit a wonderful sympathy and correspondence. If any foreign substance were added to the water, its virtue would only be impaired. Hence nothing should be put into the water but this fruit. After its decoction the fruit has life and blood, and its blood causes all barren trees to bring forth the same precious fruit." I asked whether the water was obtained by any secret process, or whether it was to be obtained everywhere? He said: "It is found everywhere, and no one can live without it, but it is best when extracted by means of our Chalybs (steel), as which is found in the belly of the Ram. If you ask what is its use, I answer that before the due amount of coction has been performed, it is deadly poison, but afterwards it is the Great Medicine, and yields 29 grains of blood, each one of which produces 864 of the fruits of the Solar tree." I asked whether it could be still further improved. "The Sages say," he returned, "that it can be increased first to ten, then to a hundred, then to a thousand, then to ten thousand times its own quantity, and so on." I asked whether that water was known by any particular name. He cried aloud saying: "Few know it, but all have seen

it, and see and love it; it has many names, but we call it the water of our sea the water that does not wet the hands." "Do they use it for any other purpose?" I enquired; "and is anything born in it?" "Every created thing," he replied, "uses it, but invisibly. All things owe their birth to it, and live in it. Nothing is, properly speaking, in it, though itself mingles with all things. It can be improved by nothing but the fruit of the Solar trees without which it is of no use in this work." I was going to ask him to speak more plainly when he began to cry out in such a loud voice that I awoke out of my sleep, and Saturn and the hope of getting my questions answered vanished together. Be contented, nevertheless, with what I have told you, and be sure that it is impossible to speak more clearly. If you do not understand what I have said, you will never grasp the writing of other philosophers. After a while, I fell into another deep sleep, in which I saw Neptune standing over me, congratulating me on our happy meeting in the Garden of the Hesperides. He held up to me a mirror, in which I saw the whole of Nature unveiled. After we had exchanged a few remarks, I thanked him for conducting me to this beautiful garden, and introducing me to the company of Saturn; and I heartily besought him to resolve for me the difficulties and doubts which Saturn had left uncleared. "For instance," I said, "I have read and believe that for every act of generation a male and a female are required; and yet Saturn spoke of generation by placing the Solar fruit in the water, or Mercury of the Sages. What did he mean? As the lord of the sea, I know that you are acquainted with these things, and I entreat of you to answer me." He said, "What you say about the act of generation is true; and yet you know that worms are produced in a different way from quadrupeds, namely by putrefaction and the place or earth in which this putrefaction occurs is feminine. In our substance the Mother is the water of which so much has been said, and its offspring is produced by putrefaction, after the manner of worms. Hence the Sages call it the Phoenix and Salamander. Its generation is a resurrection rather than a birth, and for this reason it is immortal or indestructible. Now, whatsoever is conceived of two bodies is subject to the law of death; but the life of this fruit is a separation from all that is corruptible about it. It is the same with the Phoenix, which separates of itself from its corruptible body." I enquired whether the substance was compound in its nature. "No," he said, "there is only the Solar fruit that is put into the water which must be to the fruit in the proportion of ten to one. Believe that what was here revealed to you in a dream by Saturn after the manner of our island, is not a dream, but a bright reality which will stand the test of broad daylight." With these words he abruptly left me, without listening to my further questions; and I awoke and found myself at home in Europe. My God shew to you, gentle reader, the full interpretation of my dreams! Farewell!

To the Triune God be Praise and Glory!

A Dialogue between Mercury, the Alchemists, and Nature

On a certain bright morning a number of Alchemists met together in a meadow, and consulted as to the best way of preparing the Philosopher's Stone. It was arranged that they should speak in order, and each after the manner that seemed best to him. Most of them agreed that Mercury was the first substance. Others said, no, it was sulphur, or something else. These Alchemists had read the books of the Sages, and hence there was a decided majority in favour of Mercury, not only as the true first matter, but in particular as the first matter of metals, since all the philosophers seemed to cry with one voice: "O our Mercury, our Mercury," &c., whatever that word might mean. Just as the dispute began to run high, there arose a violent wind which dispersed the Alchemists into all the different countries of the world -- and as they had arrived at no conclusion, each one went on seeking the Philosopher's Stone in his own old way, this one expecting to find it in one substance, and that in another, so that the search has continued without intermission even unto this day. One of them, however, had at least got the idea into his head that Mercury was the substance of the Stone, and determined to concentrate all his efforts on the chemical preparation of Mercury saying to himself, for this kind of discourse is very common among Alchemists, that the assembly had determined nothing, and that the dispute would end only with the confection of the Stone. So he began reading the works of the philosophers, and among others that of Alanus on Mercury, whereby he became a philosopher indeed, but not one who had reached any practical conclusion. Then he took (common) Mercury and began to work with it. He placed it in a glass vessel over the fire, where it, of course, evaporated. So in his ignorance he struck his wife and said "No one but you has entered my laboratory; you must have taken my Mercury out of the vessel." The woman, with tears, protested her innocence. The Alchemist put some more Mercury into the vessel, and kept close and jealous watch over it, expecting that his wife would once more make away with it. The Mercury rose to the top of the vessel in vaporous steam. Then the Alchemist was full of joy, because he remembered that the first substance of the Stone is described by the Sages as volatile; and he thought that now at last he must be on the right track. He now began to subject the Mercury to all sorts of chemical processes, to sublime it, and to calcine it with all manner of things, with salts, sulphur, metals, minerals, blood, hair, aqua fortis, herbs, urine, and vinegar. All these substances were tried in succession, everything that he could think of was tried; but without producing the desired effect. Seeing that he had

still accomplished nothing, the poor man once more began to take thought with himself. At last he remembered reading in some authors that the matter was so contemptible that it is found on the dung hill; and then he began to operate on his Mercury with various kinds of dung. When all these experiments turned out failures, he fell into a deep sleep, and there appeared to him an old man, who elicited from him the cause of his sadness, and bade him use the pure Mercury of the Sages. When the Alchemist awoke he pondered over the words of the old man, and wondered what he could mean by "the Mercury of the Sages". But he could think of no other Mercury but that known to the common herd, and went on with his efforts to purge it; for which purpose he used, first, the excrements of animals, then those of children, and at last his own. He also went every day to the place where the old man had appeared to him, in the hope that he might be able to ask him for a more detailed explanation of his meaning. At times, he would pretend to be asleep; and because he thought that the old man might be afraid to come to him in his waking hours, he would swear to him, and say: "Be not afraid to come, old man I am most certainly asleep. See, my eyes are tightly shut". At length, from always thinking about that old man, he fell into a fever, and in his delirious visions he at last saw a phantom in the guise of that ancient standing at his bedside, and heard him say "Do not despair, my friend. Your mercury is good, and your substance is good, but it will not obey you. Why do you not charm the mercury, as serpents are charmed?" With this, the old man vanished. But the Alchemist arose, with these words still ringing in his ears: "Serpents are charmed" -- and recollecting that apothecaries ornament their mercury bottles with images of serpents, he took up the vessel with the mercury, and repeated the formula of conjuration "ux, ux, ostas," etc., substituting the word mercury for the name of the serpent: "And thou mercury, most nefarious beast." At these words the Mercury began to laugh, and said to the Alchemist "Why dost thou trouble me, my Lord Alchemist?"

Alchemist: Oho, do you call me your lord? Now I have touched you home. I have found a bit to bridle you with; wait a little, and you shall soon sing the tune that I bid you (Then as his courage increased, he cried angrily): I conjure you by the living God -- are you not that Mercury of the Sages?

Mercury: (pretending to speak in a whimpering and frightened tone of voice): Master, I am Mercury.

Alchemist: Why would you not obey me then? Why could I not fix you?

Mercury: Oh, most high and mighty Master, I implore you to spare your miserable slave! I did not know that you were such a potent philosopher.

Alchemist: Oh, could you not guess as much from the philosophical way in which I operated on you?

Mercury: I did so, most high and mighty Master, but I wished to hide myself, though now I see that I cannot hide myself from my most potent Lord.

Alchemist: Then you know a philosopher when you see him, as you now do, my gallant?

Mercury: My most high Lord, I see, and to my own great cost, that your Worship is a high and mighty and most potent philosopher.

Alchemist: (with a smile of satisfaction): Now at last I have found what I sought (To the Mercury, in awful tones of thunder): Now mind that you obey me, else it will be the worse for you.

Mercury: Gladly, Master, if I can for I am very weak.

Alchemist: Oho, do you begin to make excuses already?

Mercury: No, but I am very languid.

Alchemist: What is the matter with you?

Mercury: An Alchemist is the matter with me.

Alchemist: Are you laughing at me, you false rogue?

Mercury: Oh, no, no, Master, as God shall spare me, I spoke of an Alchemist - you are a philosopher.

Alchemist: Of course, of course, that is quite true. But what did the Alchemist do?

Mercury: Oh Master, he has done me a thousand wrongs; he belaboured and mixed me up with all manner of disagreeable and contradictory things, which have stripped me of all my powers and so I am sick, even to death.

Alchemist: You deserved such treatment, because you would not obey.

Mercury: I never yet disobeyed a philosopher, but I cannot help laughing at fools.

Alchemist: And what is your opinion of me?

Mercury: Oh, Master your Worship is a great man, and mighty philosopher, greater by far than Hermes, both in doctrine and wisdom.

Alchemist: Well, I won't praise myself, but I certainly am a learned man. My wife says so, too. She always calls me a profoundly learned philosopher.

Mercury: I quite believe you. For philosophers are men whom too much learning and thought have made mad.

Alchemist: Tell me, what am I to do with you? How am I to make you into the Philosopher's Stone?

Mercury: Oh, my master philosopher, that I cannot tell. You are a philosopher, I am the philosopher's humble slave. Whatever he wishes to make me, I become, as far as my nature will allow.

Alchemist: This is all very fine, but I repeat that you must tell me how to treat you, and whether you can become the Philosopher's Stone.

Mercury: Mr. Philosopher, if you know, you can make it, and if you don't you can't. From me you cannot learn anything with which you have been unacquainted beforehand.

Alchemist: You talk to me as to a simple person. Perhaps you do not know that I have lived at the courts of great princes, and have always been regarded as a very profound philosopher.

Mercury: I readily believe you, my Master for the filth of your brilliant experiments still cleaves to me.

Alchemist: Tell me then, are you the Mercury of the Sages?

Mercury: I am Mercury, but you should know best, whether I am the Mercury of you philosophers.

Alchemist: Tell me only whether you are the true Mercury or whether there is another?

Mercury: I am Mercury, but there is also another.

With these words the Mercury vanished. The Alchemist shouts and calls aloud, but there is no answer. At last he is fain to derive some little comfort from the thought that he has had speech of Mercury and therefore must be very dear to it. With this thought he once more sets himself to sublime, distil, calcine, precipitate, and dissolve the Mercury in the most awful manner, and with different sorts of waters. But his efforts turned out failures, and mere waste of time. Then he began to curse Mercury and to blaspheme Nature for creating it. When nature heard this, she called Mercury to her, and asked him what he had done to the Alchemist, and why he would not obey him. Mercury humbly protested his innocence. Nature admonished him to obey the Sons of Knowledge who sought to know her. Mercury promised that he would do so, but added: "Mother Nature who can satisfy fools?" Nature smiled, and departed. Mercury indignant with our Alchemist, returned also to his own place. The philosopher presently appeared with some excrements of swine, and was proceeding to ply Mercury therewith, when the latter thus wrathfully accosted him: "What do you want of me, you fool? Why did you accuse me?"

Alchemist: Are you he whom I so much desire to see?

Mercury: I am; but blind people cannot behold me.

Alchemist: I am not blind.

Mercury: You are as blind as a new-born puppy. You cannot see yourself: how then should you be able to see me?

Alchemist: Oh, now you are proud and despise me because I speak humbly. Perhaps you do not know that I have lived at the courts of princes, and have always been called a philosopher?

Mercury: The gates of princes stand wide for fools; and it is they that fare sumptuously in the palaces of the great. I quite believe that you have been at court.

Alchemist: You are, undoubtedly, the Devil, and not a good Mercury, if you speak like that to philosophers.

Mercury: Now, in confidence, tell me whether you are acquainted with any philosophers.

Alchemist: Do you ask this of me, when you are aware that I am myself a philosopher?

Mercury: (smiling): Behold the Philosopher! Well, my philosopher, what do you seek, and what would your have?

Alchemist: The Philosopher's Stone.

Mercury: Of what substance would you make it?

Alchemist: Of our Mercury.

Mercury: Oh, my philosopher, then I had better go: for I am not yours!

Alchemist: You are none but the Devil, and wish to lead me astray.

Mercury: Well, my philosopher, I think I may return the compliment: you have played the very devil with me.

Alchemist: Oh, what do I hear? This is most certainly the Devil. For I have done everything most scientifically, according to the writings of the Sages.

Mercury: Truly, you are a wonderful operator; your performances exceed your knowledge by as much as they defy the authorities which you have in your books. For they say that substances should be mixed only with substances of a kindred nature. But you have mixed me, against Nature, with dung and other foul things, and are indifferent about defiling yourself so long as you can torture me.

Alchemist: I do nothing against Nature: I only sow the seed in its own proper earth, according to the teaching of the Sages.

Mercury: You sow me in dung; at the time of the harvest I vanish, and you reap dung. Verily, you are a good husbandman!

Alchemist: Yet the Sages say that their substance is found on the dunghill.

Mercury: What they say is true, but you understand only the letter, and not the spirit of their injunctions.

Alchemist: Now I see that you are perhaps Mercury. But as you will not obey me, I must once more repeat the words of conjuration: Ux, ux, ostas ---

Mercury: (laughing): It is of no use, my friend; your words are as profitable as your works.

Alchemist: They say true when they call you a wonderful and inconstant and volatile substance.

Mercury: You call me inconstant. But to the constant I am also constant, and to the man of fixed resolve, I am fixed. But you, and the likes of you, are continually abandoning one substance for another, and are ever vagabonds in experiment.

Alchemist: Tell me truly, are you the Mercury which, side by side with sulphur and salt, the philosophers describe as the first principle of all things, or must I look for some other substance?

Mercury: The fruit, when it falls, lies near the tree that bore it. I am the same that I was except in the matter of age. In the beginning I was young, and I remained so as long as I was alone. Now, I am old, and yet I am the same as ever. I am only older than I was.

Alchemist: I am glad that you are old. For it is a constant and fixed substance that I require, and this also have I invariably sought.

Mercury: It is in vain that you come to the old man whom you did not know as a youth.

Alchemist: What is this you say? Did I not know you when you were young? Have I not subjected you to all manner of chemical processes, and shall I not continue to do so till I have prepared the Philosopher's Stone?

Mercury: Woe is me! What shall I do? I already scent the foul odour of dung. Woe is me! I beseech you Master Philosopher, not to ply me with excrements of swine -- the foul smell will drive me hence. And what more do you want of me? Am I not obedient? Do I not mingle with all things that you ask me to amalgamate with? Do I not suffer myself to be sublimated, precipitated, amalgamated, calcined? What more can I do? I have submitted to be scourged and spat upon till my miserable plight might move a heart of stone. I have given you milk, blood, flesh, butter, oil, and water. I have done all that any metal or mineral can do. And yet you have no pity on me! Woe is me!

Alchemist: Oho, it does you no harm, you rascal, you deserve it all richly, for not changing your form, or for resuming the old form after a mere temporary change!

Mercury: I do whatsoever you make me do. If you make me a body, I am a body. If you make me powder, I am powder. How can I be more obedient than I am?

Alchemist: Tell me, then, what you are in your centre, and I will not torment you any more.

Mercury: I see there is no escape from speaking fundamentally to you. If you will, you may now understand me. With my form which you see you have nothing to do. My centre is the fixed heart of all things, immortal and all-pervading. I am a faithful servant to my master, and a faithful friend to my companions, whom I do not desert, and with whom I perish. I am an immortal body. I die when I am slain, but rise to stand before the judgment seat of a discriminating judge.

Alchemist: Are you then the Philosopher's Stone?

Mercury: My mother is such, and of her is born artificially some one thing -- but my brother who lives in the citadel has in his gift that which the Sage desires.

Alchemist: Tell me, is your age great?

Mercury: My mother bore me yet I am older than my mother.

Alchemist: How in all the world am I to understand you if you answer my questions in dark parables? Tell me in one word, are you that fountain concerning which Bernard Count of Trevisan, has written?

Mercury: I am no fountain but I am water, and the fountain surrounds me.

Alchemist: Since-you are water, is gold dissolved in you?

Mercury: Whatever is with me, I love; and to that which is born with me I impart nourishment. That which is naked I cover with my wings.

Alchemist: I see plainly that it is impossible to talk to you. Whatever I ask you, your reply is foreign to the point. If you do not answer my questions better, I will torment you again.

Mercury: Have pity on me. Master, I will gladly tell you all I know.

Alchemist: Tell me are you afraid of the fire?

Mercury: I myself am fire.

Alchemist: Why then do you seek to escape from the fire?

Mercury: Because my spirit loves the spirit of the fire, and accompanies it wherever it goes.

Alchemist: Where do you go when you ascend with the fire?

Mercury: Every pilgrim looks anxiously towards his country and his home. When he has returned unto these he reposes, and he always comes back wiser than he left.

Alchemist: Do you return, then?

Mercury: Yes, but in another form.

Alchemist: I do not understand what you mean, nor yet about the fire.

Mercury: If any one knows the fire of my heart; he has seen that fire (proper heat) is my food; and the longer the spirit of my heart feeds on fire, the fatter will it be: its death is afterwards the life of all things belonging to my kingdom.

Alchemist: Are you great?

Mercury: My body, as you must know, can become one drop out of a thousand drops, and, though I am always one, you can divide my body as often as you like. But my spirit, or heart, always produces many thousands of parts out of one part.

Alchemist: How is this to be brought about? After what manner should my operation be performed on you?

Mercury: I am fire within, fire is my food and my life; but the life of fire is air, for without air fire is extinguished. Fire is stronger than air; hence I know not any repose, and crude air can neither coagulate nor restrain me. Add air to air, so that both become one in even balance; combine them with fire, and leave the whole to time.

Alchemist: What will happen then?

Mercury: Everything superfluous will be removed. The residue you burn in fire, place in water "cook," and when it is cooked you give as a medicine, and have no fear.

Alchemist: You do not answer my questions. Wife, bring the excrements of swine, and we will see whether we can get the better of his stubbornness.

In his utmost extremity, Mercury called in the help of Nature, amidst much lamentation and mourning over these threats of our admirable Alchemist. He impeaches the thankless operator; Nature trusts her son Mercury, whom she knows to be true and faithful and comes full of wrath to the Alchemist, calling him imperiously before her.

Alchemist: Who calls me?

Nature: What are you doing to my son, arch-fool that you are? Why do you torment him? He is willing to give you every blessing, if you can understand him.

Alchemist: Who dares to rebuke so great a philosopher, and a man withal so excellent as I am?

Nature: O fool, and of all men most insensate, I know and love all philosophers, and am loved of them. I take pleasure in aiding their efforts, and they help me to do that which I am unable to accomplish. But you so-called Alchemists are constantly offending me, and systematically doing despite to me; and this is the reason why all your efforts are doomed to failure.

Alchemist: It is not true. I, too, am a philosopher, and understand scientific methods of procedure. I have lived with several princes, and with more than one philosopher, as my wife can testify. Moreover, I possess at this very moment a manuscript which has lain hidden for some centuries in a certain wall. I know very well that I am almost at the end of my labours, and am on the point of composing the Philosopher's Stone; for it was revealed to me a few days ago in a dream. I have had a great many dreams, nor do I ever dream anything untrue; my wife knows it.

Nature: It is with you as with a great many of your fellows: at first they know everything, but in the end their knowledge turns to ignorance.

Alchemist: If you are truly Nature, it is you who serve for the operation of the work.

Nature: That is true; but it is performed only by those who know me, and such do not torment my children, nor do they hinder my working. Rather they clear away the impediments, that I may the sooner reach the goal.

Alchemist: That is exactly what I do.

Nature: No; you do nothing but cross me, and deal with my children against my will. Where you should revive you kill; where you should fix, you sublime; where you should calcine, you distil; and thus my obedient son Mercury you torment in the most fearful manner.

Alchemist: Then I will in future deal with him gently, and subject him only to gradual coction.

Nature: That is well, if you possess understanding; otherwise, you will ruin only yourself and your possessions. If you act in opposition to my commands, you hurt yourself more than him.

Alchemist: But how am I to make the Philosopher's Stone?

Nature: That question does not justify your ill treatment of my son. Know that I have many sons and daughters, and that I am swift to succour those who seek me, provided they are worthy.

Alchemist: But who is that Mercury?

Nature: Know that I have only one such son, he is one of seven, and the first among them; and though he is now all things, he was at first only one. In him are the four elements, yet he is not an element. He is a spirit, yet he has a body; a man, yet he performs a woman's part; a boy, yet he bears a man's weapons; a beast, and yet he has the wings of a bird. He is poison, yet he cures leprosy; life, yet he kills all things, a King, but another occupies his throne; he flees from the fire, yet fire is taken from him; he is water, but does not wet the hands; he is earth, and yet he is sown; he is air, and lives by water.

Alchemist: Now I see that I know nothing; only I must not say so. For I should lose the good opinion of my neighbours, and they would no longer entrust me with money for my experiments. I must therefore go on saying that I know everything; for there are many that expect me to do great things for them.

Nature: But if you go on in that way, your neighbours will at last find you out, and demand their money back.

Alchemist: I must amuse them with promises, as long as I can.

Nature: And what then?

Alchemist: I will try different experiments; and if they fail, I will go to some other country, and live the same life there.

Nature: And then?

Alchemist: Ha, ha, ha ! There are many countries, and many greedy persons who will suffer themselves to be gulled by my promises of mountains of gold. Thus day will follow day, and in the meantime the King or the donkey will die, or I myself. **Nature:** Such philosophers are only fit for the gallows. Be off, and take with you my most grievous curse. The best thing that you can do, is to give yourself up to the King's officers, who will quickly put an end to you and your philosophy!

Sendivogius - The New Chemical Light

Concerning Sulphur. [Transcribed by Jerry Bujas.]

NEW CHEMICAL LIGHT

SECOND PART

CONCERNING SULPHUR

The Author's Anagram:

Angelus Doce Mihi Jus (Angel, Teach me Right.)

PREFACE

As I am not at liberty to write more plainly than the Ancient Sages, gentle Reader, you may possibly be dissatisfied with my Book, particularly as you have so many other philosophical treatises ready to your hand. But you may be sure that no necessity is laid upon me to write at all, and that if I have come forward it is only out of love to you, having no expectation of personal profit, and no desire for empty glory, for which reason I here refrain, as I have before done, from revealing my identity to the public. I was under the impression that in the first part of this work I had already given a lucid account of our whole Art. But my friends tell me that there is one point with which I have not yet fully dealt, and vehemently urge me to write this second treatise about Sulphur. The question is, whether even this Book will convey any information to one before whom the writings of the Sages and the Open Book of Nature are exhibited in vain. For if you could incline your ear to the teaching of Nature you would at once be able to emancipate yourself from the tutelage of printed volumes; in my opinion it is better to learn from the master himself than from one of the disciples.

In the preface to my twelve Treatises, and again in the twelfth chapter, I have already hinted at the reason why there is now so great a multitude of books on this subject, that they confound and hinder the student instead of helping him. The confusion is rendered worse confounded by the ill-will of the Sages, who seem to have set pen to paper for the express purpose of concealing their meaning; and by the carelessness with which some of the more important volumes are copied and printed; the sense of a whole passage is often hopelessly obscured by the addition or omission of one little word (e.g., the addition of the word "not" in the wrong place). Yet the student may get information even from these books (as the bee obtains honey even from poisonous flowers), if he reads them by the light of natural fact, and with constant reference to the utterances of other Sages. One writer explains another. Yet some of them are so closely beset with the difficulties of an obscure phraseology, that it is almost impossible to understand them, except by reading them side by side with the facts of Nature; for their interpreters and commentators are more hopelessly unintelligible even than the writers whom they take upon themselves to explain; the exposition is more difficult than the text. If you would succeed in this study, keep your eyes fixed on the possibilities of Nature, and on the properties of the natural substance. It is universally described as common and easy of access and apprehension, and it is so, but only to those who know it. He who knows it can discover it in the dunghill; he who does not will fail to find it even in gold I have no desire to praise myself, but this one thing I will say, that the reading of my Books, in combination with a careful study of Nature, and of the writings of other genuine possessors of this Stone, must in the end open up to you the understanding of this secret. If I have planted another tree in the dense forest of Alchemistic literature, I have done so, not in order to obstruct the path of students, but in order to aid and refresh them by the way. Let not the diligent and God-fearing enquirer despair. If he seek the

inspiration of God he will most surely find it. This knowledge is more easily obtained of God than of men. For His mercy is infinite, and He never forsakes those who put their trust in Him; with Him there is no respect of persons, nor does He despise the humble and contrite heart. He has showered the fulness of His mercy even on me, the unworthiest of all His creatures, in shewing to me His wonderful power and ineffable goodness, which I am utterly unable to declare. The only way in which I can, in a small degree, at least prove my gratitude, is by succouring my struggling brother students with friendly counsel and assistance. Rest assured, then, gentle Reader, that He will grant this boon to you, if you wait upon Him day by day with earnest prayer, and in the power of a holy and loving life. He will throw open to you the portals of Nature; and you will be amazed at the simplicity of her operations. Know for certain that Nature is wonderfully simple; and that the characteristic mark of a childlike simplicity is stamped upon all that is true and noble in Nature. If you would imitate Nature, you should take her simplicity for your model in all the operations of Art. If my Book does not please you, throw it away, and take up some other author; it is short, so that you need not spend much time in reading it through. Only persevere: to the importunate knocker the door will at length be opened. The times are at hand when many secrets of Nature will be revealed to men. The Fourth or Northern Monarchy is about to be established; the Mother of Knowledge will soon come; and many things will be brought to light that were hidden under the three preceding monarchies. This fourth kingdom God will found by the hand of a prince who will be enriched with all virtues, and endowed with wisdom greater than that of Solomon. In his time (to adopt the words of the Psalmist) mercy and truth will meet together; peace and justice will kiss each other; truth will spring up from the ground, and righteousness will look down from heaven. There will be one Shepherd and one fold; and knowledge will be the common property of all. For those days I, too, am waiting with longing. Pray to God that it may come soon, gentle Reader. Fear Him, love Him, and- read carefully the books of His chosen Sages-and you will soon see, and behold with your own eyes, that I have spoken truly.

CONCERNING SULPHUR

The Second Principle SULPHUR is by no means the least important of the great principles, since it is a part of the metals and even a principal part of the Philosopher's Stone. Many Sages have left us weighty sayings about this substance: for instance, Geber himself ("Sum of Perfection," bk. I, chap. 28), who says: "It illumines all bodies, since it is the light of the light, and their tincture." But seeing that the ancients regarded it as the noblest principle, before we proceed to speak about it, we must first explain the origin of the three principles. The origin of the principles is a subject which has hitherto been but scantily discussed in the works of the Sages; and the student who knows nothing about it, is as much in the dark in regard to this matter, as is a blind man in respect to colour. I therefore propose to make this point which my predecessors have neglected, the subject of my treatise.

Now, according to the ancient Sages there are two principles of things, and more particularly of metals, namely, Sulphur and Mercury; according to the Moderns there are three: Salt, Sulphur, and Mercury, and the source of these principles are the elements; of which it therefore behoves us to speak first. Be it known to the students of this art that there are four elements, and that each has at its centre another element which makes it what it is. These are the four pillars of the world. They were in the beginning evolved and moulded out of chaos by the hand of the Creator; and it is their contrary action which keeps up the harmony and equilibrium of the mundane machinery; it is they which, through the virtue of celestial influences, produce all things above and beneath the earth. We will say a few words about each of them in due order of succession: and first of all about the nearest element, Earth.

Concerning Elementary Earth

Earth is an element of considerable quality and dignity. In this element the other three, especially fire, are latent. It is admirably adapted both to the concealment and to the manifestation of things committed to it. It is gross and porous, specifically heavy, but naturally light. It is also the Centre of the World and of the other elements; through its centre passes the axis of the earth to both poles. It is porous, as we have said, like a sponge, and produces nothing of itself; but it receives all that the other three project into it, conscientiously conceals what it should hide, and brings to light that which it should manifest. Whatsoever is committed to it putrefies in it through the action of motive heat, and is multiplied by the separation of the pure from the impure. Heavy substances are hidden in it. Light substances are driven by heat to its surface. It is the nurse and womb of all seed and commixtion; and these seeds and compounds it faithfully preserves and fosters till the season of maturity. It is cold and dry, but its dryness is tempered with water; outwardly it is visible and fixed; inwardly it is invisible and volatile. It is a virgin substance, and dead residue of the creative distillation of the world, which God will one day calcine, and after extracting the humour, create out of it a new crystalline earth. In its present state it consists of a pure and an impure element. The first is used by water for producing natural forms; the latter remains where it is. It is also the storehouse of all treasures, and in its centre is the Gehennal fire, conserving the machine of the world, and this by the expression of water, which it converts into air. This fire is produced by perpetual motion, and the influences of the Stars; it is aided by the Solar heat, which is tempered by the atmosphere, and the two together mature the growth of all things. For this reason the element of earth has fire intrinsically, and the earth is purified by this inward fire, as every element is purified by that which is

in it. The inmost part, or centre of the earth, is then the highest purity mixed with fire, in which there is ceaseless motion, and we have shewn at some length in the twelve Treatises that it is, as it were, an empty space, into which the other elements project their products. It is enough for us to remember that this elementary earth is like a sponge, and the receptacle of all other elements.

Concerning Elementary Water

Water is an element of great specific gravity, full of unctuous moisture. Outwardly it is volatile inwardly it is fixed, cold, and humid It is tempered by air, and is the sperm of the world, in which the seed of all things is conserved.

There is a great difference between sperm and seed. Earth is the receptacle of sperm, water the receptacle of seed.

Whatever the air, under the influence of fire, distils into the water, is imparted by the water to the earth. There is always an abundance of sperm awaiting seed, in order that it may carry it into the matrix, which is performed by the movement of the air, excited by the imagination of fire. Sometimes sperm has not a sufficient quantity of seed, for want of heat to digest it Sometimes, when there is no seed, the sperm enters the womb alone, but is ejected again without producing any fruit. At other times conception does not take place, even when there is plenty of seed in the sperm, because the womb is rendered barren by a superfluity of bad sulphur and malignant phlegm. Water is capable of commixtion with all things, by means of its volatile surface; it purifies and dissolves earth; air is congealed in it, and thus intimately united to it. It is the Solvent of the World, because by the action of heat, it penetrates the air, and carries with it a warm vapour which causes the natural generation of those things with which the earth is like a womb impregnated. When the womb has once received a due portion of seed, Nature never rests until the natural form (whatever it may be) has been produced. The humid residue, or sperm, is putrefied in the earth by means of warmth, and out of it worms and other things are generated. An intelligent Artist will readily understand how great a variety of wonders is performed by Nature through this element, as a sperm, but the said sperm must be operated upon, having already within it an imagined astral seed of a certain weight. For Nature produces pure things by means of the first putrefaction, but things far purer by means of the second, as you see in the case of wood, where vegetable fibre is produced as the result of the first putrefaction, while the putrefaction of wood engenders worms and insects-natural forms endowed with sentient life; and it is clear that animate creatures endowed with sense and motion belong to a higher creative level, and are moulded of a purer substance than plants.

Water is the menstruum (solvent) of the world, and exists in three degrees of excellence: the pure, the purer, and the purest. Of its purest substance the heavens were created; of that which is less pure the atmospheric air was formed; that which is simply pure remains in its proper sphere, where, by the Will of God, and the co-operation of Nature, it is guardian of all subtle substances here below. It has its centre in the heart of the sea; its polar axis coincides with that of the earth, whence flow forth all springs and fountains of water, which are presently swollen into great rivers. This constant movement of water preserves the earth from combustion, and distributes the seeds of things throughout its length and breadth. Yet all water courses return to the heart of the sea. As to the ultimate fate of this water opinions are divided. Some say that all water is generated in the stars, and the sea does not overflow its shores because the water is consumed by fire as it reaches the heart of the sea. But this hypothesis is contrary to Nature's methods of working: Nature produces like out of like -and how can the stars, which are air and fire, produce water? Moreover, the safety of this earth depends on the equilibrium of the four elements; if at any time the total quantity of one element exceeded that of the others, the universe would relapse into chaos. Hence, if the stars generated water, they must manifestly produce an equal quantity not only of air and fire, but also of earth-which is manifestly absurd. It is much more reasonable to suppose that the waters are chained down, as it were, to the foundation of the earth by the circumambient air, and that they are constrained by it to continue in a ceaseless movement towards the Arctic pole-because no vacuum is possible in Nature; which is also the reason why there is a Gehennal fire in the centre of the earth, which is presided over by the Archeus (the first principle) of Nature. For in the creation of the world God first of all separated the quintessence of the elements from the weltering mass of chaos; and out of it He evolved fire, the purest of all substances, giving to it the most exalted place in the universe, and making it, in a special manner, the dwelling-place of His Sacred Majesty. In the centre of chaos was kindled that fire which afterwards distilled and carried upward the purest substance of water But because this most pure fire now occupies the firmament, and surrounds the throne of God, the waters have been condensed into a body beneath it; and thus the sky is formed, while the water which now forms the atmospheric air and the lower firmament is due to the action of a lower and grosser fire As the water of the firmament cannot pass the bounds of that highest and celestial fire, so the lower fire cannot pass through the atmospheric air to the earth; nor can the air pass the bounds of this lower fire The water and the earth were formed together into one organic mass Only one part of this water was volatilized into air, in order to protect the earth from the fierce and consuming heat of the sun If there had been a vacuum in the air, all the water would have evaporated; but as the space below the firmament is already filled up with air, the great bulk of the water is kept below, near the centre of the earth, by the pressure of the air These natural conditions continue to operate day by day, and through their normal action the world will be preserved from destruction during

the good pleasure of the Creator The central fire is kindled day by day by the universal motion and influence of the celestial bodies This fire heats the water and a certain quantity of the water is dissolved into air; the air day by day keeps down by its weight the residue of the water, and causes it to form one mass with the earth And as the equilibrium of the world is thus naturally preserved by the Creator, so every natural generative process in the world must repeat the same conditions on a small scale Thus the elements below act in perfect unison with the elements above, which God created of a far greater purity and excellence, and the example of obedience to their influences, which is set by the whole universe, is imitated on a small scale by the constituent parts of the world below But let us now proceed to explain the flux and reflux of water There are two Poles-the Arctic Pole in the north, and the Antarctic Pole, or the southernmost point of the earth The Arctic Pole possesses the property of magnetic attraction; the Antarctic Pole that of magnetic repulsion Thus the Arctic Pole attracts the waters along its axis, and then they are again repelled by the Antarctic Pole along its axis; and, as the air does not permit inequality, they are once more forced back to their centre, the Arctic Pole In this their continual course from the Arctic to the Antarctic Pole, they pass through the middle (i.e., along the axis) of the earth, are diffused through its pores, and break out here and there as springs and fountains, which are swollen into rivers, and return to the Point whence they first flowed forth This universal motion is incessantly proceeding The waters then, are not generated by the stars and consumed in the heart of the sea; but they flow forth from the centre of the sea into the whole earth, and are diffused through all its pores On this principle the Sages have constructed conduits and aqueducts since it is well known that water cannot rise higher than the level of its spring or fount If this were not an actual fact, art would vainly found its practical conclusions upon it; and the natural principle involved is illustrated in the process by means of which wine is drawn out of a cask.

It may be objected to our view that if the water of our springs were derived from the sea, it would be salt, and not sweet, as we actually find it to be The answer to this objection lies in the fact that the sea water, in its passage through the pores of the earth, gradually deposits all the salt which it contains, and thus wells forth from the ground in a sweet and fresh condition It should, however, be remembered that some of our springs-called mineral or saline springs-actually do exhibit all the original saltiness of the sea water which has not passed through earth calculated to retain its mineral element In some places we also meet with hot springs, which are caused by the passage of the water through certain spots where large deposits of sulphur have been set afire by the central heat of the earth; every one who has tasted this water must have observed its sulphureous flavour Something closely analogous happens when the water passes through large deposits of iron, or alum! or copper, and acquires their taste Thus the earth IS a great distilling vessel, formed by the hand of an all wise Creator, on the model of which all Sages have constructed their small distilling vessels; and if it pleased God to extinguish the central fire, or to destroy) the cunning machinery, this universal frame would relapse into chaos. At the end of time, He will kindle the Central Fire into a brighter flame, will cause all the water to evaporate, will calcine the earth-and thus the earth and the water will be rendered more subtle and pure, and will form a new and more glorious earth The operations of the earth and the water are always performed in combination, and are mutually dependent, since they are the two tangible elements, in which the other two work invisibly. Fire keeps the earth from being submerged, or dissolved; air keeps the fire from being extinguished; water preserves the earth from combustion. This is what the Sages call the equilibrium of the elements, and it illustrates the aid which they render to each other. Fire is closely associated with earth, and air with water. It will suffice if we remember that elementary water is the sperm and menstruum of the world, and the receptacle of seed.

Concerning Elementary Air

The most noble element of air is inwardly heavy, visible, and fixed, outwardly light, volatile, and invisible. It is hot and moist, Is tempered by fire, and is nobler than earth or water. Air is volatile, but may be fixed, and when fixed, renders all bodies penetrable. Its purest substance has been formed into the vital spirits of animals, that which is less pure into the circumambient atmosphere, and the grosser residue has remained in the water, and associates with it as fire with its kindred earth. In the air the seed of all things is formed, as it were, in the body of the male, and is projected by its circulative motion into its sperm, which is water. It contains the vital spirit of all creatures, is the life of all, and penetrates and forces its seed upon all, as the man does upon the woman. It nourishes, impregnates, conserves the other elements; and we are taught by daily experience that it is the life not only of minerals, animals, and vegetables, but also of the other elements. We see that water becomes foul and unwholesome without a supply of fresh air; without it fire is extinguished-as is well known to Alchemists who regulate the temperature of their fire by the supply of air. Air is also that which conserves the pores of the earth. In short, the whole universe is kept fresh and sweet by air, and it is the vital element of man, beast, plant, and stone. It contains the seed of all things which is forced up, into vegetables for instance, through the pores of the earth by the action of fire, and thus the tree is built up atom by atom out of the vital element of congealed air. This vital force has remained in it ever since the time when the Spirit of Life brooded over the waters in the air. The magnetic power of life which air undoubtedly

possesses, was put into it by God at the Creation. As the magnet attracts to itself hard steel, and as the Arctic Pole attracts to itself the water, so the air, by means of the vegetable magnet which is in the seed, draws to itself the nutriment of the menstruum of the world (which is water). This power of attracting water is in a certain part (viz., the 280th part) of all seed. If, then, any one would be a cunning planter of trees, he should take care to turn the point of attraction towards the North; for as the Arctic Pole attracts water, so the vertical point draws to itself the seminal substance. If you would know what the point of attraction in a tree is, submerge it entirely in water; that point which always appears first, will be the point of attraction. In the air, then, is the seed and the vital spirit, or abode of the soul of every creature.

Concerning Elementary Fire

Fire is the purest and noblest of all elements, full of adhesive unctuous corrosiveness, penetrant, digestive, inwardly invisible, fixed, hot and dry, outwardly visible, and tempered by the earth. Of its purest substance was created the Throne of the Almighty; of that which is less pure, the Angels; out of fire of an inferior purity were created the stars and the heavenly luminaries; that which was less pure still was used to bear up the heavens; that which is impure and unctuous -- that, namely, which we have termed the fire of Gehenna -- is in the centre of the earth, and was there inclosed and shut up to set this lower world in motion. Though these different fires are separate, yet they are also joined together by natural sympathy.

This element is the most passive of all, and resembles a chariot when it is drawn it moves; when it is not drawn, it stands still. It exists imperceptibly in all things; and of it is fashioned the vital rational soul, which distinguishes man from all other animals, and makes him like God. This rational soul was divinely infused into his vital spirit by God, and entitles him to be regarded as a microcosm, or small world by himself. But the fire which surrounds the Throne of God is of an infinitely pure and simple essence, and this is the reason that no impure soul can know God, and that no human eye can penetrate this essential fire, for fire is the death and destruction of everything composite-and all material substances are of this nature What I said about the restful passivity of fire, applies in a certain sense to the eternal calm and unchangeableness of the Divine Nature. For as the fire sleeps in the flint, until it is roused and stirred up from without, so the power of God, which is a consuming fire, is only roused to action by the kindling breath of His Almighty Will. How calmly and solemnly does not even an earthly monarch sit enthroned in the pomp and state of his royalty! His courtiers hardly venture to move, and all around is calm and still. But when he rises what a stir of motion and activity does he not cause! All that are about him arise with him, and presently you see him sweeping along in grand and stately majesty. Yet the pomp of an earthly prince is but a faint reflex of the glory of the King of Kings. When He utters the voice of His Will, all heaven is roused, the world trembles, and thousands of angels speed forth on His errand. But it may be asked how I come to have this knowledge about heavenly things which are removed far beyond human ken. My answer is that the Sages have been taught of God that this natural world is only an image and material copy of a heavenly and spiritual pattern: that the very existence of this world is based upon the reality of its celestial archetype; and that God has created it in imitation of the spiritual and invisible universe, in order that men might be the better enabled to comprehend His heavenly teaching, and the wonders of His absolute and ineffable power and wisdom. Thus the Sage sees heaven reflected in Nature as in a mirror . and he pursues this Art, not for the sake of gold or silver, but for the love of the knowledge which it reveals; he jealously conceals it from the sinner and the scornful, lest the mysteries of heaven should be laid bare to the vulgar gaze. If you will but rightly consider it, you yourself are an image of God, and a little picture of the great world. For a firmament you have the quintessence of the four elements attracted to the formative womb out of the chaos of seed, and bounded by your skin; your blood is fire in which lives your soul, the king of your little universe) acting through the medium of the vital spirit; your heart is the earth, where the Central Fire is always at work; our mouth is your Arctic, and your stomach your Antarctic Pole, and all your members correspond to some part of the greater world as I have set forth at some length in my work on the Harmony of the Universe and in the Chapter on Astronomy. In the microcosm of man's nature the soul is the deputy or Viceroy of the Creator. It governs the mind, and the mind governs the body: the mind is conscious of all that is conceived in the soul, and all the members understand the mind, obey it, and wait eagerly to carry out its behests. The body knows nothing of itself; all its motions and desires are caused by the mind; it is to the mind what the tool is to the craftsman. But though the rational soul operates in the body, a more important part of its activity is exerted on things outside the body: it rules absolutely outside the body, and therein differs from the vital spirits of brute beasts. In the same way, the Creator of the world partly acts in and through things belonging to this world, and is thereby, in a sense, included in this world. But He absolutely transcends this world by that infinite part of His activity which lies beyond the bounds of the universe, and which is too high and glorious for the body of the world. The great difference between the soul's extracorporal, and God's extramundane, activity, is that man's rational activity is purely imaginative and mental, whereas God's thoughts are immediately translated into real existences. I might be mentally in the streets of Rome, but my journey would be purely imaginative; God's conceptions are at once objective essences. God, then, is included in the world, only as the

soul is enclosed in the body, while it has power to do things which far transcend the capacity of the body. By material relations such as these you may know God, and learn to distinguish Him from the material manifestations of His power. When once the gates of knowledge have been flung wide for you, your understanding will be enlarged.

We said that fire was the quietest of all elements, and that it is stirred by a kind of motion well known to the Sages. The Sage should be perfectly acquainted with the generation and destruction of all things; he is familiar with the creation of the heavens, and the composition and commixion of things terrestrial; yet, though he knows everything, he cannot make everything. He knows the anatomy and composition of the human body-yet he cannot make a man. This is a mystery which the Creator has kept in His own hand. Nature cannot work till it has been supplied with a material: the first matter is furnished by God, the second matter by the Sage. But in the philosophical work Nature must excite the fire which God has enclosed in the centre of each thing. The excitation of this fire is performed by the will of Nature, and sometimes also by the will of a skillful Artist who can dispose Nature, for fire naturally purifies every species of impurity.

All composite substances are purified by fire, as all substances that are not fixed owe their purification to water. It is the property of fire to separate and divide composite substances; and this separation means a purging away of the impure from the pure. This element also acts secretly, by marvellous means, not only in opposition to the rest of the elements, but also to all other things. For as the reasonable soul was made of this most pure fire, so the vegetable soul was made of the elementary fire which Nature governs. The fire which is contained in the centre of any given thing acts in the following way: Nature provides the motive power, which stirs up the air; the air stirs up and rouses the fire, which separates, purges, digests, colours, and brings every seed to maturity, and expels the matured seed through the sperm into places or wombs, either pure or impure, more or less hot, dry, or humid; and according to the nature of the place or womb, different things are produced (cp. the Twelve Treatises). So the Most High God has ordained that, in the economy of the universe, one thing should be at enmity with another, and that the death of one thing should be the life of the other; that one thing should consume what another produces, and evolve out of it some higher and nobler form of life. The elementary separation of all living things is death; and hence it is necessary for man to die, as his body is compounded of the four elements, which cannot hold together for ever. In spite of this fact, our science furnishes an incontestible proof of man's original immortality. It is certainly true that all composite substances are liable to decomposition; that this decomposition, when it takes place in the animal world, is called death; and that the human body is a substance compounded of the four elements. But it is also true that the elements of Paradise, where man was created, are not subject to this law, seeing that they are most sure and incorruptible heavenly essences, and if man had remained in this pure and celestial region, his body would have been incapable of natural decay. Adam, however, in an evil day for our race, disobeyed his Creator, and straightway was driven forth to the beasts, into the world of corruptible elements which God had created for the beasts only. From that day forward his food was derived from perishable substances, and death began to work in his members. The pure elements of his creation were gradually mingled and infected with the corruptible elements of the outer world, and thus his body became more and more gross, and liable, through its grossness, to natural decay and death. The process of degeneration was, of course, slow in the case of Adam and his first descendants; but, as time went on, the seed out of which men were generated became more and more infected with perishable elements. The continued use of corruptible food rendered their bodies more and more gross-and human life was soon shortened to a very brief span indeed. In some favoured climes, where men eat and drink moderately, they still sometimes live to a green old age; but in our latitudes men abridge the term of their natural existence by grossly filling themselves with an excess of elementary corruptible food, and thus, before their time, become like "the beasts that perish." When the pure and essential elements are joined together in loving equilibrium, as they are in our Stone, they are inseparable and immortal, like the human body in Paradise; whence also our philosophical treasure has been compared to the creation of man, an analogy which modern wise men, who take all things literally, have understood as referring to the corrupted generation of this present order, which is produced from corruptible elements.

It was the recollection of man's immortality in Paradise that first set Sages a-thinking whether those pure and essential elements might not be obtained in this world, and united in one body. At length a merciful Creator made known to them that the desired conjunction of such elements existed in gold. It could not be found among the animals who are sustained by corruptible food, nor in vegetables, because they exhibit the elements in a state of inequality and contention. When corruptible elements are united in a certain subject, their strife must sooner or later bring about its decomposition, which is, of course, followed by putrefaction; in putrefaction, the impure is separated from the pure: and if the pure elements are then once more joined together by the action of natural heat, a much nobler and higher form of life is produced. In the strife of the elements, which follows when a body has been broken up by the victory of water, earth and air unite with fire, and together they overcome the water, digest, cook, and ultimately congeal it-which is the beginning of a new life. For if the hidden central fire, which during life was in a

state of passivity, obtain the mastery, it attracts to itself all the pure elements, which are thus separated from the impure, and form the nucleus of a far purer form of life. It is thus that our Sages are able to produce immortal things, particularly by decomposition of minerals; and you see that the whole process, from beginning to end, is the work of fire.

Thus, then, we have briefly set forth as much as will serve our purpose concerning the four elements. Truly the description of each might be extended into a large volume, but we postpone all amplification for our Treatise on Harmony, which, God helping, if our life be spared, will be opportune to a more large discourse upon natural things.

Concerning the Three Principles of All Things

The three Principles of things are produced out of the four elements in the following manner: Nature, whose power is in her obedience to the Will of God, ordained from the very beginning, that the four elements should incessantly act on one another, so, in obedience to her behest, fire began to act on air, and produced Sulphur; air acted on water and produced Mercury; water, by its action on earth, produced Salt. Earth, alone, having nothing to act upon, did not produce anything, but became the nurse, or womb, of these three Principles. We designedly speak of three Principles; for though the Ancients mention only two, it is clear that they omitted the third (Salt), not from ignorance, but from a desire to lead the uninitiated astray. Whoever would be a student of this sacred science must know the marks whereby these three Principles are to be recognised, and also the process by which they are developed. For as the three Principles are produced out of four, so they, in their turn, must produce two, a male and a female; and these two must produce an incorruptible one, in which are exhibited the four (elements) in a highly purified and digested condition, and with their mutual strife hushed in unending peace and goodwill. In every natural composition these three represent the body, the spirit, and the hidden soul; and if, after purging them well, you join them together they must, by a natural process, result in a most pure substance. For though the soul is most noble, yet it cannot reach the goal without the spirit which is its place and abode; and if it is your desire to bring it back to a given place, both the soul and the place must be purged and washed from all impurity, so that the soul may dwell in glory, and nevermore depart. Without these three Principles, the Artist can do nothing, since even Nature is powerless without them. They are in all things, and without them there is nothing in the world, neither, indeed, can be. Their origin being such as we have described, it is from these, by an imitation of Nature, that you must produce the Mercury of the Philosophers, and their first matter, bearing in mind the laws which govern natural things, and especially metals. Do not think that Salt is unimportant because it is omitted by the Ancients; they could not do without it, even if they did not name it, seeing that it is the Key which opens the infernal prison house, where sulphur lies in bonds. The three Principles are necessary because they are the immediate substance of metals. The remoter substance of metals is the four elements, but no one can produce anything out of them but God; and even God makes nothing of them but these three Principles. Why, then, should the Sage lose time and labour over the four elements, when he has the substance made ready to his hand by Nature? It is surely less troublesome to go three miles than four, and as these three Principles exist in all things, and, according to their proportions, etc., produce either metals, or plants or animals, it is best to use them as our first substance. The body is earth, the spirit water, the soul fire or sulphur of gold. The Spirit augments the quantity of the body, the soul the virtue. But because in the matter of weight there is more of spirit than of fire, the spirit is uplifted, oppresses the fire, and attracts it to itself in such a way that both augment in virtue, and the earth, which is mediate between them, augments in weight. The Artist should determine which of the three Principles he is seeking and should assist it so that it may overcome its contrary. Afterwards he must seek by his skill to supplement what has been wanting in Nature and thus his chosen Principle will obtain the necessary victory. The element of earth is nothing but a receptacle, in which fire and air carry on their strife through the mediation of air. If water predominate, temporal and corruptible things are produced; if fire obtains the victory, it produces lasting and incorruptible things. So you know which of the elements ought to receive your aid. Moreover, though fire and water are in all things, they can produce nothing without air and earth. Their activity is aroused by external heat (in Nature, the Central Fire of the earth), and in their struggle they are assisted each by that which is like to it. By this strife they are subtilized in the pores of the earth, and when they ascend to the surface they produce flowers and fruit, in which they closely associate together as friends; and the more they are subtilized and purified in their ascent, the more excellent are the fruits which they produce.

When the purification has thus been performed, let water and fire become friends, which they will readily do in their earth which ascends with them; and the process will be the more speedily and perfectly accomplished, if you combine the two in their proper proportions—thus improving upon Nature. In all natural compounds fire is always the smallest part; but it is aided and stirred up by the action of outward fire; and according as fire is overcome or obtains the mastery, imperfect or perfect things are the result. The outward fire does not enter into the composition as an essential part of it, but only by the effect which it helps to produce. The inward fire is sufficient, if it only receive nutriment from the outward fire, which feeds it as wood feeds elemental fire; in proportion to the quantity of nutriment the inward fire grows and multiplies. Care should be taken, therefore, that the outward fire is not so fierce

as to devour instead of feeding, the inward fire. Gentle coction will be the best means of attaining perfection, and of adding excellence to weight. But as it is difficult to add to a compound substance, I would advise rather to produce the same effect by removing that which is present in an excessive quantity. Remove that which is too much, and let the compound develop itself naturally. But many artists sow straw instead of grain; others sow both; many throw away that which the Sages love; others begin and do not persevere to the end; they look for short and easy labour in a difficult Art. But we say that this Art consists in an even mingling of the virtues of the elements-in the natural equilibrium of the hot, the dry, the cold, and the moist-in the conjunction of the male and female, the female having engendered the male, i.e., of fire and the radical humour of the metals. If you understand that the Mercury of the Sages contains within itself its own good Sulphur, digested and matured by Nature, you can accomplish the whole process by means of Mercury alone; but if you know how to add the supplement which our Art requires to the natural proportions of substances, to double the Mercury, and to triple the Sulphur, you will all the more quickly produce, first the good, then the better, and finally the best-though only one sulphur appears, and two mercuries (which, are, however, of the same stock); they should not be crude nor too much digested, yet well purged and dissolved (if you understand me).

It is really unnecessary to describe the matter of the Mercury and the Sulphur of the Sages, as it has already been as plainly delineated by the Ancients as is consistent with our vow. We do not altogether say that the Mercury of the Philosophers is a common thing, or that they have openly called it by its name, and that the matter from which Mercury and Sulphur are philosophically extracted has been plainly pointed out. For the Mercury itself is not found above ground, but is extracted by an artifice from Sulphur and Mercury conjoined, in short, Sulphur and Mercury are the ore of our quicksilver, and this quicksilver has power to dissolve, mortify, and revive metals, which power it has received from the sulphur (which has some of the properties of an acid). In order to put you on the right track, I will also tell you the difference between our quicksilver and common mercury. Common mercury does not dissolve gold and silver so as to amalgamate with them; but when our quicksilver dissolves gold and silver, it amalgamates with them in inseparable union, as water is mixed with water. Common mercury has bad combustible sulphur, which turns it black; our quicksilver contains incombustible, fixed, good, snow-white and red sulphur. Common mercury is cold and humid; our quicksilver is hot and humid. Common mercury blackens other bodies; our quicksilver renders them white and pure as crystal. Common mercury is changed by precipitation into a yellow powder and bad sulphur; our quicksilver is converted by heat into snow-white, good, fixed, and fusible sulphur. Common mercury becomes more fusible, our quicksilver more fixed, the more it is subjected to coction. Our quicksilver possesses such marvellous virtue that it would by itself be sufficient for our purpose, if subjected to gentle coction; but in order to accelerate its congelation, the Sages add to it its well digested and matured sulphur.

We might well have cited philosophers in confirmation of the points of our discourse, but as our writings are more clear than are theirs, we have no need of their support. Whosoever understands them will understand us better. If you would practise our Art, learn first to hold your tongue, and study the nature of minerals, metals, and vegetables. Our Mercury may be obtained from all things, as everything has it; only from some substances it is more easily procured than from others. Our Art is not a matter of luck or accident, but is founded on a real knowledge, and there is only one matter in the world by which, and of which, the Stone of the Philosophers is prepared. The substance is indeed to be found everywhere, but the method of its extraction out of some matters would take a lifetime, and if you begin your search without a due knowledge of natural things, more especially in minerals, you will be working in the dark and in blindness. It is, indeed, possible to set about our Art in a casual manner; and some who actually operate on our quicksilver, begin at the wrong end, and thus fail in bringing it to perfection, because they are quite in the dark about its real nature. Yet after all, we must confess that a right knowledge of our Art is the gift of God alone, and is granted to diligent students in answer to earnest and importunate prayer. To the Master it may appear easy enough; but to the beginner it must seem at first very hard and uphill work. He should not, however, despair, for in due time he will receive the reward of his diligence and aspiration; even in the dangers which the knowledge may bring upon him, he will be kept from harm by the loving hand of Providence, as I can testify from personal experience. We have with us God's Ark of the Covenant, which contains the most precious of earthly things, and is guarded by the holy Angel of the Lord. We heard that our enemies had fallen into the snare which they had laid for us; that those who sought our lives had been enclosed in the meshes of death; that those who attempted to rob us of our goods had lost all that they possessed; and that those who strove to blacken our reputation, died in shame and dishonour. Such is the care which God has of us, Who, from our childhood, has kept us safe under the shadow of His wings. And the feeling uppermost in our minds is the humbling consciousness of our utter unworthiness: we do not deserve the very least of His great mercies. But one thing we do and will do: our hope and trust always have been, are, and will be, in Him alone. We will not put our confidence in men or in princes: we will place ourselves in the hands of One who remains unchanged when all earthly power and greatness have passed away. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: never did Sage utter truer word than this; and if we would attain to the knowledge

of this glorious science, if we would be able to use it well when we possess it, we must wait on God continually. and importune Him with earnest prayer. But to proceed with our description of the Matter. We said that it was quicksilver, and quicksilver only: whatever is added, is gained from this same substance. We have repeatedly affirmed that all things earthly are evolved out of three principles. But for our purpose they must be purged of their impurities, and then recombined; that which is wanting is added-and thus imitating and assisting Nature we arrive at a degree of perfection such as Nature is unable to attain, on account of the impurities with which her operations are clogged. Do not suffer yourself to be confounded by the apparent contradictions which the Sages have introduced into their writings for the purpose of keeping their secret. Select only those sayings which are agreeable to Nature; take the roses, leave the thorns. If you wish to produce a metal, your fundamental substance should be metallic; only a dog can beget a dog; without wheat you will vainly plough your field; and all your endeavours in this Art will be in vain, unless you take your radical humour from a metal. There is one substance, one Art, one operation It is as erroneous to suppose that any of the particular benefits of our Stone can be enjoyed before the Stone itself has been prepared, as it would be absurd to imagine that you can have a branch without a root or tree. If you have water you can cook in it various kinds of meat, and thus obtain broth of different flavours; but there will be no broth unless you have both the water and the meat In metals, then, as in all other things, there is only one first substance, but the universal substance is modified in a vast variety of ways, according to the course of its subsequent development. Thus one thing is the mother of all things. This great fact ought always to be borne in mind in studying the works of the Sages; for nothing but mistakes and disappointment can result from a slavishly literal interpretation of their books. It is a pity that, instead of humbly studying and following Nature our Alchemists are so ready to adopt any fancy or notion that happens to pass through their minds. They seek to attain the end not only without a middle part, but without so much as a beginning. But how can anyone who sets about our Art in so casual and haphazard a manner expect anything but disappointments? Let our Alchemists have done, then, once for all, with their sophistical methods, to which they ascribe so great an importance-with their dealbations, rubrefactions, fixations of the Moon, extractions of the soul of gold,-and let them place themselves under the unerring guidance of Nature For though the soul of the metal has to be extracted, it must not be killed in the operation; and the extraction of the living soul, which has to be reunited to the glorified body, must be carried on in a way very different from the violent method commonly prevailing among Alchemists. Wed not propose to multiply wheat without seed corn. But let us, in concluding this part of the subject, earnestly inculcate on the student's mind the necessity of having seed that will germinate and grow, and to avoid the use of seed which has been killed by an excess of fiery heat.

Concerning Sulphur

Among the three principles the Sages have justly assigned the first place to Sulphur, as the whole Art is concerned with the manner of its preparation. Sulphur is of three chief kinds: that which tinges or colours; that which congeals mercury and essential sulphur, which matures it. The properties and preparation of this Sulphur we propose to describe, not in a set treatise, but in a dialogue like that which brought out the essential properties of Mercury. We will only say, by way of preface, that Sulphur is more mature than the other principles, and that Mercury cannot be coagulated without it. The aim and object of our Art is to elicit from metals that Sulphur by means of which the Mercury of the Sages is, in the veins of the earth, congealed into silver and gold; in this operation the Sulphur acts the part of the male, and our Mercury that of the female. Of the composition and action of these two are engendered the Mercuries of the Philosophers.

In our former dialogue we gave an account of the meeting of Alchemists, which a sudden tempest brought to so abrupt a close Among those who took a prominent part in the proceedings, was a good friend of the first Alchemist; he was not a bad man, or an impostor, but, as they say, nobody's enemy except his own; yet he was foolish withal, and though really very ignorant, had no small opinion of his own wisdom and learning. He had at the meeting been the foremost champion of the claims of Sulphur to be-regarded as the first substance of the Stone, and was satisfied that he would have been able to make good that claim, if the meeting had not been prematurely broken up. So when he got home he resumed his operations on Sulphur in a very confident spirit. He subjected it to distillation, sublimation, calcination, fixation, and to countless other chemical processes, in which he spent much time and money. without arriving at any result whatsoever. His failures at length began to prey on his health and spirits, and in order to recruit the former, and raise the latter, he fell into the habit of taking long walks in the neighbourhood of the town where he lived. But wherever he went he could think of nothing but Sulphur. One day, with his mind full of this besetting idea, and being wrought almost to an ecstasy he entered a certain verdant grove, in which there was abundance not only of trees, herbs, and fruits, but also of animals, birds, minerals, and metals. Of water there was indeed a great scarcity; it was carried to the place by means of aqueducts, and among these was a conduit flowing with water extracted from the rays of the moon ; -- but this water was reserved for the use of the Nymph of the grove. In the grove there were two young men tending oxen and rams, and from them he learned that the grove belonged to the Nymph Venus. The Alchemist was gratified enough, but all his thoughts were absorbed by the

subject of Sulphur, and when he remembered the words of the Sages, who say that the substance is vile and common, and its treatment easy, when he recollected the vast amount of time, labour, and money which he had vainly spent upon it, he lifted up his voice and in the bitterness of his heart, cursed Sulphur. Now Sulphur was in that grove, though the Alchemist did not know it. But suddenly he heard a voice which said: "my friend why do you curse Sulphur? "

He looked up in bewilderment nobody was to be seen. "My friend, why are you so sad?" continued the voice.

Alchemist: Master, I seek the Philosopher's Stone as one that hungers after bread.

Voice: And why thus do you curse Sulphur?

Alchemist: My Lord, the Sages call it the substance of the Stone; yet I have spent all my time and labour in vain upon it, and am well nigh reduced to despair.

Voice: It is true that Sulphur is the true and chief substance of the Stone. Yet you curse it unjustly. For it lies heavily chained in a dark prison and cannot do as it would. Its hands and feet have been bound, and the doors of the dungeon closed upon it, at the bidding of its mother, Nature, who was angry with it for too readily obeying the summons of every Alchemist. It is now confined in such a perfect labyrinth of a prison, that it can be set free only by those Sages to whom Nature herself has entrusted the secret.

Alchemist: Ah! miserable that I am, this is why he was unable to come to me! How very hard and unkind of the mother! When is he to be set at large again?

Voice: That can only be by means of hard and persevering labour.

Alchemist: Who are his gaolers?

Voice: They are of his own kindred, but grievous tyrants.

Alchemist: And who are you?

Voice: I am the judge and the chief gaoler, and my name is Saturn. **Alchemist:** Then Sulphur is detained in your prison?

Voice: Yes; but I am not his keeper.

Alchemist: What does he do in prison?

Voice: Whatever his gaolers command.

Alchemist: And what can he do?

Voice: He can perform a thousand things, and is the heart of all. He can perfect metals and minerals, impart understanding to animals, produce flowers in herbs and trees, corrupt and perfect air; in short, he produces all the odours and paints all the colours in the world.

Alchemist: Of what substance does he make the flowers?

Voice: His guards furnish him with vessels and matter; Sulphur digests it; and according to the diversity of the digestion, and the weight of the matter, he produces choice flowers, having their special odours.

Alchemist: Master, is he old?

Voice: Know, friend, that Sulphur is the virtue of the world, and though Nature's second-born-yet the oldest of all things. To those who know him, however, he is as obedient as a little child. He is most easily recognised by the vital spirit in animals, the colour in metals, the odour in plants. Without his help his mother can do nothing.

Alchemist: Is he the sole heir, or has he any brothers?

Voice: He has some brothers who are quite unworthy of him; and a sister that he loves, and who is to him as a mother.

Alchemist: Is he always the same?

Voice: As to his nature, it is always the same. But in person his heart only is pure: his garments are spotted.

Alchemist: Master, was he ever quite free?

Voice: Yes; in the days of the great Masters and Sages whom Nature loved, and to whom she gave the keys of the prison.

Alchemist: Who were these wise adepts?

Voice: There have been very many, and among them Hermes, who was one and the same with the mother of Sulphur. After him there were kings, princes, a long line of Sages, including Aristotle and Avicenna. All these delivered Sulphur from his bonds.

Alchemist: What does he give to them for delivering him?

Voice: When he is set free, he binds his gaolers, and gives their three kingdoms to his deliverer. He also gives to him a magic mirror, in which the three parts of the wisdom of the whole world may be seen and known at a glance: and this mirror clearly exhibits the creation of the world, the influences of the celestial virtues on earthly things, and the way in which Nature composes substances by the regulation of heat. With its aid, men may at once understand the motion of the Sun and Moon, and that universal movement by which Nature herself is governed-also the various degrees of heat, cold, moisture, and dryness, and the virtues of herbs and of all other things. By its means the

physician may at once, without consulting an herbarium, tell the exact composition of any given plant or medicinal herb. But now-a-days men are content to trust to the authority of great writers, and no longer attempt to use their own eyes. They quote Aristotle and Galen, as if there was not much more to be learned from the great Book of Nature which is spread open before them. Know that all things on the earth and under the earth are engendered and produced by the three principles, but sometimes by two, unto which the third, nevertheless, adheres. He who knows these three principles, and their proportions as conjoined by Nature, can tell easily by their greater or less coction, the degrees of heat in each subject, and whether they have been well, badly, or passably cooked. For those who know the three principles know also all vegetables by sight, taste, and odour, for these senses determine the three principles, and the degree of their decoction.

Alchemist: Master, they say that Sulphur is a Medicine.

Voice: Nay, you might rather call him a physician, and to him who delivers him out of prison, he gives his blood as a Medicine.

Alchemist: How long can a man ward off death by means of this universal Medicine?

Voice: Until the time originally appointed. But many Sages who did not take it with proper caution, have died before that time.

Alchemist: Do you call it a poison then?

Voice: Have you not observed that a great flame swallows up a small one? Men who had received the Art by the teachings of others, thought that the more powerful the dose they took of our Medicine the more beneficial would be the effect. They did not consider that one grain of it has strength to penetrate many thousand pounds of metals.

Alchemist: How then should they have used it?

Voice: They ought to have taken only so much as would have strengthened and nourished, without overwhelming, their natural heat.

Alchemist: Master, I know how to make that Medicine.

Voice: Blessed are you if you do! For the blood of Sulphur is that inward virtue and dryness which congeals quicksilver into gold and imparts health and perfection to all bodies. But the blood of Sulphur is obtained only by those who can deliver him from prison; and therefore he is so closely imprisoned that he can hardly breathe, lest he should come to the Palace of the King.

Alchemist: Is he so closely imprisoned in all metals?

Voice: In some his imprisonment is less strict than in others.

Alchemist: Why, Lord, is he imprisoned in the metals so tyrannously?

Voice: Because if he once came unto his royal palace, he would no longer fear his guards. He could look from the windows with freedom, and appear before the whole world, for he would be in his own kingdom, though not in that state of highest power whereto he desires to arrive. **Alchemist:** What is his food?

Voice: His food is air, in a digested state, when he is free; but in prison he is compelled to consume it in a crude state.

Alchemist: Master, cannot those quarrels between him and his gaolers be composed?

Voice: Yes, by a wise and cunning craftsman.

Alchemist: Why does he not offer them terms of peace?

Voice: He cannot do so by himself: his indignation gets the better of his discretion.

Alchemist: Why does he not do so through some commissary?

Voice: He who could put an end to their strife would be a wise man, and worthy of undying honour. For if they were friends, they would help, instead of hindering each other, and bring forth immortal things.

Alchemist: I will gladly undertake the duty of reconciling them. For I am a very learned man, and they could not resist my practical skill. I am a great Sage, and my Alchemistic treatment would quickly bring about the desired end. But tell me, is this the true Sulphur of the Sages ?

Voice: He is Sulphur; you ought to know whether he is the Sulphur of the Sages.

Alchemist: If I find his prison, shall I be able to deliver him?

Voice: Yes, if you are wise enough to do so. It is easier to deliver him than to find his prison.

Alchemist: When I do find him, shall I be able to make him into the Philosopher's Stone ?

Voice: I am no prophet. But if you follow his mother's advice, and dissolve the Sulphur you will have the Stone.

Alchemist: In what substance is this Sulphur to be found ?

Voice: In all substances. All things in the world -- metals, herbs, trees, animals, stones, are its ore.

Alchemist: But out of what substances do the Sages procure it?

Voice: My friend, you press me somewhat too closely. But I may say that though it is every where, yet it has certain palaces where the Sages can most conveniently find it; and they worship it when it swims in its sea and sports with Vulcan (god of fire), though there it is disguised in a most poor garb. Now is it in a dark prison, hidden from sight.

But it is one only subject, and if you cannot find it at home you will scarcely do so in the forest. Yet, to give you some heart in your research, I will solemnly assure you that it is most perfect in gold and silver-most easily obtained in quicksilver.

With these words Saturn departed, and the Alchemist, being weary with walking, fell into a deep sleep, in which he saw the following vision: He beheld in that grove a spring of water, near which Salt and Sulphur were walking and quarreling, until at last they began to fight. Salt dealt Sulphur a grievous wound, out of which there flowed, instead of blood, pure, milk-white water, that swelled into a great river. In this river the virgin goddess, Diana, came to bathe; and a certain bold prince, who was passing by, was inflamed with great love towards her; which she, perceiving and returning, pretended to be sinking under water. The prince bade his attendants assist her; but they excused themselves, saying that the river, though it looked small and all but dried up, was most dangerous. " And," said they, " many of those who have passed here before have perished in it." Then that prince threw off his thick cloak, plunged into the river, and stretched out his arm to save the beautiful Diana; but she grasped it so convulsively that they both sank under water together. Soon afterwards their souls were seen rising upward above the water, and they said, " We have done well, for in no other way could we be delivered from our stained and spotted bodies."

Alchemist: (speaking): Will you ever return into those bodies?

Souls: Not while they are so polluted-but when they are cleansed, and the river is dried up by the heat of the sun.

Alchemist: What do you do in the meantime?

Souls: We soar above the water till the storm and the mists cease....

Then the Alchemist thought that he saw a great number of his fellows come to the spot where the body of the Sulphur lay slain by the Salt; and they divided it among themselves, and gave a piece to him also. Then they went home, and began to operate on their (dead) Sulphur, and are at it to this day. Presently Saturn returned, and the Alchemist said: Master, come quickly, I have found Sulphur -- help me to make the Stone.

Saturn: Gladly, my friend. Prepare the quicksilver, and the sulphur, and give me the vessel.

Alchemist: Oh, I do not want Mercury. It is a delusion and a snare, as my friend the other Alchemist discovered to his smart.

Saturn: I can do nothing without quicksilver.

Alchemist: Oh no, we will make it of Sulphur only.

So they set to work on that piece of dead Sulphur, and sublimed, calcined, and subjected it to all manner of chemical operations. But they produced nothing save little bits of sulphurous tow, such as they use for lighting fires. Then the Alchemist confessed the fruitlessness of his endeavours, and bade Saturn set about the work in his own way. Then Saturn took two kinds of quicksilver, of different substance but one root, washed them with his urine, and called them the sulphurs of sulphurs; then he mixed the fixed with the volatile, after which he placed them in a proper vessel, and set a watch to prevent the sulphur from escaping; afterwards he placed them in a bath of very gentle heat -- and thus they made the Philosopher's Stone, which must always follow as the outcome of the right substance. Then the Alchemist took it in his hand, admired its beautiful purple colour, and danced about with it, shouting aloud with joy and delight. Suddenly the glass slipped out of his hand and broke into a thousand pieces; the stone vanished; and the Alchemist awoke with nothing in his hand but some pieces of sulphurous tow. There are a good many Alchemists who, having an extremely favourable opinion of themselves, and fancying that they can hear the grass grow, rail against this Art, because they think that if the Stone were not a mere delusion, they could not have failed to find it. We, for our part, are not over anxious to rob these people of their comfortable conviction. But to men who were worthy (men both of high and low degree) we have repeatedly proved the reality of our Art by incontestable ocular evidence. Let me warn those who wish to follow the true method in studying our Art, airways to read with constant reference to natural facts, and never, under any circumstances, to do anything contrary to Nature. If the Sages say that fire does not burn, they must not believe it; for Nature is greater than the Sages; but if they say that it is the property of fire to dry and heat things, they will accept this statement, because it is in accordance with the truth of Nature --- and the facts of Nature are always simple and plain. If any one came and taught you to make this Stone, as though he were giving you a receipt for making cheese out of milk, he might speak more plainly than I have done; but I am compelled to veil and conceal my meaning because of the vow which my Master exacted of me. My last words shall be addressed to you who have already made some progress in this Art. Have you been where the bridegroom has been married to the bride, and the nuptials were celebrated in the house of Nature? Have you heard how the vulgar have seen this Sulphur, as much as have you who have taken such pains to seek it? If you wish that even old women should practise your philosophy, shew the dealbation of these sulphurs, and say openly to the common people: Behold, the water is divided, and the Sulphur has gone forth; when it returns it will be whiter than snow, and will congeal the water. Burn the Sulphur with incombustible sulphur, wash it, and make it white and purple until the Sulphur becomes Mercury, and the Mercury Sulphur, and you can proceed to quicken it with the

soul of gold. Our Mercury must be corrected by means of Sulphur-otherwise it is unprofitable. A prince without a people is a wretched sight-and so is an Alchemist without Sulphur and Mercury. If you understand me, I have spoken.

The Alchemist went home, bewailed the broken Stone, and his folly in not asking Saturn about the Salt of the Sages, and the way of distinguishing between it and ordinary salt. The rest he related to his wife.

Conclusion Every student of this Art should first carefully read what is said-in this and other Treatises -- about the creation, operation, properties, and effects of the four elements; otherwise he cannot apprehend the nature of the three principles, or find the substance of the Stone, or understand its development. God has created the elements out of chaos; nature has evolved the three principles out of the elements; and out of these principles she makes all things, and gives power to her beloved disciples to produce marvelous preparations. If Nature produces metals out of the principles, Art must follow her example. It is one of the rules of Nature to act through intermediate substances; and this book should enable the student to judge what substances are intermediate between the elements and metals, and between metals and the Stone. The difference between gold and water is great, that between water and mercury not so great, and that between gold and mercury very small, for mercury is the habitation of gold, water the habitation of mercury, and sulphur is that which coagulates mercury. The whole arcanum lies hidden in the Sulphur of the Sages, which is also contained its the inmost part of their Mercury, which has to be prepared in a certain way that shall be described on another occasion.

I have not written this Treatise with the object of refuting the ancient Sages, but only for the purpose of correcting, explaining, and supplementing their statements. After all, they were only men and they sometimes did make assertions which can now no longer be maintained. For instance, when Albertus Magnus says that gold was once found to have developed in the teeth of a dead man, he is out of harmony with the possibilities of Nature; for an animal substance can never develop into a mineral. It is true that animals and vegetables contain sulphur and mercury, as well as minerals; but these principles are animal and vegetable, not mineral. If there were no animal sulphur in man, the mercury of his blood could not be congealed into flesh and bones; and if plants contained no vegetable sulphur, their mercury or water (sap) would not be congealed into leaves and flowers. The three kinds of sulphur are essentially the same, but, like the three mercuries, they are differentiated according to the three kingdoms, and cannot act outside their own kingdoms. Each kind of mercury can be coagulated by none but its own sulphur, and if gold was found in the teeth of a dead man it must have been introduced in an artificial manner-either as gold, or in the shape of some other metal which by the gradual action of its own metallic sulphur on its metallic mercury, was afterwards transmuted into gold. It is mistaken impressions and superstitious notions, like this one of Albertus Magnus, that we have set ourselves to correct in this Treatise, by stating once for all the true facts of animal, vegetable, and mineral development.

Let the painstaking student be satisfied to have received a true account of the origin of the Three Principles. There is no greater help towards a successful end than a good beginning. I have in this Treatise started the student on the right road, and given him clear and practical directions. With God's blessing, and by dint of diligent and persevering study, he may now fairly hope to reach the glorious goal. But I, having told out all that is lawful for me to utter, now commit myself to the mercy of a loving Creator, who will receive me to Himself; and I commend the gentle and pious Reader to the same great Father of All, to whom be praise and glory, through the endless succession of the ages.