

The works of Sir George Ripley

Information on Ripley

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The Bosom Book of Sir George Ripley

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A Treatise of Mercury and the Philosophers Stone [Transcribed by Justin von Bujdoss]

The Ripley Scroll

George Ripley

George Ripley [1415?-1490] was one of the most important of English alchemists. Little is known about him, but it is supposed that he was a Canon at the Priory of St Augustine at Bridlington in Yorkshire during the latter part of the 15th century, where he devoted himself to the study of the physical sciences and especially alchemy. To acquire fuller knowledge he travelled in France, Germany and Italy, and lived for some time in Rome, and there in 1477 was made a chamberlain by Pope Innocent VIII. In 1478 he returned to England in possession of the secret of transmutation. He pursued his alchemical work, and is reputed to have given vast sums to the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem at Rhodes to defend them from the Turks. But his labours becoming irksome to the abbot and other canons, he was released from the order, and joined the Carmelites at Boston, where he died in 1490.

His name is attached to as many as five and twenty different works, most of which remain in manuscript. Whether or not they are all by him may be doubted, and it has been asserted that what is called the '[Vision](#)' is not by him but is the work of an anonymous writer of the following century. Tanner has enumerated his books and manuscript with the libraries of Oxford and elsewhere, where they are preserved.

Ripley adopted an allegorical approach to alchemy, and his most important writings are his *Compound of Alchemy* in verse which describes the alchemical process as undergoing twelve stages or 'Gates', and his emblematic 'Ripley Scrowle'. [The Compound of Alchymy](#), was one of the most popular on the subject. it circulated widely in manuscript. It was first printed at London :

The title has a woodcut border; there is an ornamental capital E containing a portrait of Queen Elizabeth, to whom the book is dedicated, and there is an engraved diagram called Ripley's Wheel. Ashmole reprinted it in the *Theatrum Britannicum* and added a note upon the author. He also printed several other pieces by Ripley: 'Verses belonging to his Scrowle', 'The Mistery of Alchymists', 'the Preface to his Medulla, which he wrote Ann. Dom. 1476, and dedicated to Geo. Nevell then Archbishop of Yorke', and another 'Shorte Worke'. All of these, like the 'Compound of Alchymy', are in verse.

Bibliography of printed books

The Compound of Alchymy. Or the ancient hidden Art of Alchemie: Containing the right & perfectest meanes to make the Philosophers Stone, Aurum potable, with other excellent Experiments. Divided into twelue Gates. First written by the learned and rare Philosopher of our Nation George Ripley,... whereunto is adioyned his Epistle to the King, his Vision, his Wheele, and other his Workes, neuer before published:... Set foorth by Ralph Rabbards

Gentleman... London Imprinted by Thomas Orwin, 1591, small 4to. 52 folios.

Opuscula quaedam chemica. Georgii Riplei Medulla philosophiæ chemicæ. Incerti autoris Canones decem, mysterium artis mira brevitæ et perspicuitate comprehendentes. Helicæ Monachi Franciscani Speculum alchymicæ. Ioan. Aurelii Augurelli Chrysopoeiæ compendium paraphrasticum. Artefi Clavis maioris sapientiæ.

Ioan. Pontanti Epistola de lapide philosophorum. Galli Etschenreuteri medici Epistola ad Guilielmum Gratarolum. Omnia partim ex veteribus manuscriptis eruta, partim restituta. Francofurti: J. Bringer. 1614. 157 pages.

Trois tractez de la philosophie naturelle, non encores imprimez; sçavoir, La turbe des philosophes... Plus, La parole delaissee de Bernard Trevisan. Et un petit traicté... intitulé, Les douze portes d'alchymie, autres que celles de Rippla [Ripley]. Paris: J. Sara. 1618. 8vo.

Chymische Schrifftten des hochgelehrten, firtresslichen vnd weüberhümten Philosophi Georgii Riplaei, Canonici Angli. Darinnen vom gebenedeyten Stein der Weisen vnd desselben kunstreicher præparation gründlich gelehret wird, Zuvor durch den Hochgelahrten Herrn Nicolaum Barnaudum Chymicum zu Lateinischer Sprache publiciret, Jetzo aber allen Filiis doctrinae zum besten durch einen Liebhaber der Kunst in Deutsche Sprache gebracht, vnd in Druck gegeben Anno 1624. Gedruckt In verlegung Johann Birkners, Buchhändlers in Erffurt. 8vo. [1], 111 pages.

Opera omnia chemica, quotquot hactenus visa sunt, quorum aliqua jam primum in lucem prodeunt, aliqua MS. exemplarium collatione à mendis & lacunis repurgata, atque integrati restitua sunt... [With preface by Ludovicus Combach.] Cassellis: typis Jakob Gentschii, impensis Sebald Köhlers. 1649. 8vo. [14], 439 pages.

Chymische Schrifftten, darinnen von dem gebenedeyten Stein der Weisen und desselben Kunstreichen Præparation gründlich gehandelt wird. Nach der Lateinisch- und Englischen Edition Herrn William Salmon... ins Teutsche übersetzt durch B. Roth-Scholtzen. (Artephii... geheimer Haupt-Schlüssel zu dem verborgenen Stein der Weisen... ins Teutsche übersetzt durch B. Roth-Scholtzen.-Das eröffnete philosophische Vatter-Hertz an seinen Sohn, welches er... nicht länger wollt vor ihm verschlossen halten, sondern... erklärte demselben alle das, was zu der... Bereitung des Steins der Weisen vonnöthen war... in Teutscher Sprache publicirt durch B. Roth-Scholtzen.) Nürnberg: Johann Daniel Tauber erben, 1717. 8vo. 231 pages.

Georgii Riplaei, Canonici in England zu Bridlington, Chymische Schrifftten, Darinnen von dem gebenedeyten Stein der Weissen und desselben kunst-reichen Præparation gründlich gehandelt wird. Nach der Lateinisch- und Englischen Edition Herrn William Salmon, Profess. Phys. ins Teutsche übersetzt durch Benjamin Roth-Scholtzen, Phil. & Med. Doct. Zu finden bey Johann Paul Krauss, Buchhändler in Wienn. 1756. 8vo. [4], 233, [3] pages. [Contains also: Artephius, Geheimer Haupt Schlüssel, p. 105. Das eröffnete Philosophische vatter-Hertz an seinen Sohn, p.153.]

Aurifontina Chymica [Sometimes ascribed to John Frederick Houpreght.] : or, a collection of fourteen small treatises concerning the first matter of philosophers, for the discovery of their (hitherto so much concealed) Mercury. Which many have studiously endeavoured to hide, but these to make manifest, for the benefit of Mankind in general. London: for William Cooper. 24mo. 22, 272, 4 pages. [Item 4. A Treatise of Mercury and the Philosophers Stone. By Sir George Ripley.]

Collectanea Chymica: A Collection Of Ten Several Treatises In Chymistry, Concerning The Liquor Alkahest, The Mercury of Philosophers, and other Curiosities worthy the Perusal. Written by Eir. Philaletha, Anonymus, Joh. Bapt. Van-Helmont, Dr. Fr. Antonie, Bernhard Earl of Trevisan, Sir Geo. Ripley, Rog. Bacon, Geo. Starkey, Sir Hugh Platt, and the Tomb of Semiramis, see more in the Contents. London: Printed for W. Cooper. 1683-4. 12mo. [6], 193, [4], 32, 16 pages. [Item 6. George Ripley, Bosome-book.]

Eenige philosophische en medicinale tractaatjes beschrijvende de liquor alchahest, de mercurius der filosofhen, en andere curieusheden. Door Eir. Philaletha [and others]. Uyt het engels vertaald door J. van de Velde. Amsterdam: Jacob van de Velde. 1688. 24mo. [12], 260 pages. [Item 6. George Ripley. Het Besem-Boek.]

Willam Salmon. *Medicina Practica: or, Practical Physick. Shewing The Method of Curing the most Usual Diseases happening to Human Bodies... To which is added, The philosophick Works of Hermes Trismegistus, Kalid Persicus, Geber Arabs, Artefius Longævus, Nicholas Flammel, Roger Bachon, and George Ripley. All Translated out of The best Latin Editions, into English; and Carefully Claused, or divided into Chapters, and Sections, for the Pleasant Reading, and easier Understanding of those Authors. Together with a singular comment upon the first book of Hermes, the most Ancient of Philosophers. The whole Compleated in Three Books.* By William Salmon, Professor of Physick... London: Printed by W. Bonny, for Tho. Howkins and John Harris. 1692. 8vo. [30, 696, [2] pages. [Item 8. George Ripley. The Marrow of Alchymie.]

Manuscripts.

There are over 200 manuscript of Ripley's works, too many to list here.

Ripley's Twelve Gates

This text has been modernised by Adam McLean from the 1591 edition of *The Compound of Alchymy*.

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Ripley's First Gate

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CALCINATION - THE FIRST GATE

Calcination is the purgation of our stone,
And restoration also of its natural heat.
Of radical humidity it looseth none,
Inducing solution into our stone most mete.
Seek after philosophy I you advise
But not after the common guise,
With sulphur and salts prepared in diverse ways.

Neither with corrosives, nor with fire alone,
Nor with vinegar, nor with ardent water,
Neither with the vapour of lead,
Our stone is calcined according to our intent.
All those who to calcining so be bent,
From this hard science withdraw their hand,

Till they our calcining better understand.

For by such calcining, their bodies will be spoiled,
For it diminishes the moisture of our stone.
Therefore when bodies to powder be burnt,
Dry as ashes of tree or bone,
Of such calxes then will we will have none,
For moisture we multiply radical,
In our calcining, diminishing none at all.

And for a sure ground of our true calcination,
Work wisely only kind with kind.
For kind to kind has appetite and inclination.
He who does not know this, in knowledge is blind,
And may wander forth as mist in the wind,
Knowing never with profit where to alight,
Because he conceives not our words aright.

Join kind to kind therefore as reason is,
For as every young shoot answers its own seed,
Man begets man, a beast a beast, likewise,
Further to treat of this there is no need.
But understand this point if you will succeed,
Each thing is first calcined in its own kind,
This well concealed fruit therein shall you find.

And we make calx unctuous both white and red,
Of three degrees or our base be perfect,
Fluxible as wax, else stand they in little stead.
By right long process as philosophers do write,
A year we take or more for our respite.
For in less space our calxes will not be made,
Able to tinge with colour that will not fade.

And for thy proportions you must beware,
For therein may you be beguiled.
Therefore so that your work will not be marred,
Let your body be subtly filled with Mercury,
As much then so subtiled,
One of the Sun, two of the Moon,
Till altogether like pap be done.

Then make the Mercury four to the Sun,
Two to the Moon as it should be,
And thus your work must be begun,
In figure of the Trinity,
Three of the body and of the spirit three,
And for the unity of the substance spiritual,
One more than of the substance corporeal.

By Raymond's repertory this is true Proportion,
There who choose to look.
The same my Doctor did show to me,
But three of the spirit Bacon took,
To one of the body,
For which I lay awake many a night before I knew it.

And both be true, take which you choose.

If the water also be equal in proportion to the earth,
With heat in due measure,
From them shall spring a new young shoot,
Both white and red in pure tincture,
Which in the fire shall ever endure.
Kill you the quick, the dead revive;
Make trinity unity without any strife.

This is the surest and best proportion,
For where is least of the part spiritual,
The better therefore shall be solution,
Than if you did it swell with water,
Your earth overglutting which loses all,
Take heed therefore to the potter's loam,
And make you never too wet your womb.

That loam behold how it is tempered,
The mean also how it is calcinated,
And ever look you bear this in mind,
That never your earth with water be suffocated.
Dry up your moisture with heat most temperate,
Help Dissolution with moisture of the Moon,
And Congelation with the Sun, then you have done.

Four natures into the fifth so shall you turn,
Which is a nature most perfect and temperate,
But hard it is with your bare foot to spurn,
Against a bar of iron, or steel newly sharpened,
For many do so which be infatuated,
When they such high things take in hand,
Which they in no way do understand.

In eggs, in vitriol, or in blood,
What riches they go there to find.
If they Philosophy understood,
They would not in working be so blind,
To seek Gold and Silver out of their kind.
For like as fire is of the burning principle,
So is the principle of gilding likewise.

If you intend therefore to make,
Gold and Silver by craft of our philosophy,
Take neither eggs nor blood,
But Gold and Silver which naturally Calcined,
Wisely and not manually,
A new generation will be brought forth,
Increasing their kind as does everything.

And if it were true that profit might be,
In things which are not metalline,
In which be colours pleasant to see,
As in blood, eggs, hair, urine or wine,
Or in mean minerals dug out of the mine,
Yet must that element be putrefied and separated,

And with elements of perfect bodies be disposed.

But first make rotation of these elements,
And into water your earth turn first of all,
Then of your water make air by levitation,
And air make fire, then I will call you a Master,
Of all our secrets great and small.
The wheel of Elements then you can turn about,
Truly understanding our writings without doubt.

This done, go backwards, turning the wheel again,
And presently turn your fire into water,
Air into earth, else you will labour in vain.
For so to temperament is brought our stone,
And Nature's contractions, four are made one,
After they have three times been circulated,
And also your base is perfectly consummated.

This under the moisture of the Moon,
And under the temperate heat of the Sun,
Your Elements shall be incinerated soon,
And then you have the mastery won.
Thank God your work was then so begun,
For there you have one true token,
Which first in blackness will be shown to you.

That token we call the Head of the Crow,
And some men call it the Crow's bill,
Some call it the ashes of Hermes tree,
And thus they name it after their will,
Our Toad which eats his fill of the earth,
Some name it by that which it is mortified,
The spirit with venom intoxicated.

But it has an infinity of names, I say,
For it is named after each thing that is seen to be black,
Till the time it waxes white,
Then it has names of more delight,
Called after all things that be full white,
And the red likewise after the same,
Of all red things does take the name,

You are now within the first gate,
Of the Castle where the Philosophers dwell.
Proceed wisely that you may win,
And go though more gates of that Castle.
This Castle is round as any bell,
And gates it has yet eleven more,
One is conquered, now to the second go.

The end of the First Gate.

Ripley's Second Gate

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SOLUTION - THE SECOND GATE

Now I will speak a word or two of Solution,
Which reveals what ere was hid from sight,
And makes thin, things that were thick,
By virtue of our first menstruum clear and bright,
In which our bodies have been eclipsed from light,
And of their hard and dry compaction subtilated,
Into their own first matter kindly retrogradated.

One in gender they be, and in number two,
Whose father is the Sun, the Moon the mother,
Mercury moves between,
These and no more be our Magnesia, our Adrop,
And no other things be here, but only sister and brother,
That is to mean, agent and patient,
Sulphur and Mercury, co-essential to our intent.

Betwixt these two, equally contrary,
Engendered is our mean most marvellous,
Which is our Mercury and unctuous menstrum,
Our secret Sulphur working invisibly,
More fiercely than fire burning the body,
Dissolving the body into mineral water,
Which we do call night or darkness in the North.

But yet I trust, you understand not utterly,
The very secret of the Philosopher's Dissolution.
Therefore understand me, I counsel you wisely,
For the truth I will tell you without delusion,
Our Solution is cause of our Congelation,
For Dissolution on the one side corporeal,
Causes Congelation on the other side spiritual.

And we dissolve into water which wets no hand,
For when the earth is integrally incinerated,
Then is the water congealed; this understand,
For the elements be so together concatenated,
That when the body is from his first form altered,
A new form is induced immediately,
For nothing is without form utterly.

And here a secret I will disclose to you,
Which is the ground unto our secrets all,
Which if you do not know you shall but lose,
Thy labour and costs both great and small.
Take heed therefore that in error you not fall,
The more your earth, and the less your water be,
The rather and better solution shall you see.

Behold how ice to water does relent,
And so it must, for water it was before,
Right so again to water our earth is gone,
And water thereby congealed for evermore.

For after all Philosophers that ever were born,
Each metal was once mineral water,
Therefore with water they turn to water all.

In which water of kind occasionate,
Of qualities been repugnant and diversity.
Things into things must therefore be rotated,
Until diversity be brought to perfect unity.
For Scripture records when the earth shall be troubled,
And into the deep sea shall be cast,
Mountains and bodies likewise at the last.

Our bodies be likened conveniently to mountains,
Which after high Planets we name,
Into the deepness therefore of Mercury,
Turn them, and keep you out of blame,
For then you shall see a noble game,
How all shall become powder as soft as silk,
So does our rennet kindly curd our milk.

Then have the bodies lost their first form,
And others been induced immediately,
Then you have well bestowed your cost,
Whereas others uncunningly must go by,
Not knowing the secrets of our Philosophy.
Yet one point more I must tell thee,
How each body has dimensions three.

Altitude, Latitude and also Profundity,
By which always we must turn our wheel,
Knowing that your entrance in the West shall be,
Your passage forth to the North if you do well,
And there your lights lose their light each deal,
For there you must abide by ninety nights,
In darkness of purgatory without lights.

Then take your course up to the East anon,
By colours variable, passing in manifold ways,
And then be winter and spring nigh overgone,
To the East therefore devise your ascending,
For there the Sun with daylight does uprise in summer,
And there disport you with delight,
For there your work shall become perfect white.

Forth from the East into the South ascend,
And sit you down there in the chair of fire,
For there is harvest, that is to say an end
Of all this work after your own desire,
There shines the Sun up in his Hemisphere,
And after the eclipse is in redness with glory,
To reign as King upon all metals and Mercury.

All in one glass must all this thing be done,
Like to an egg in shape and closed well,
Then you must know the measure of firing,
Which if unknown your work is lost each deal.

Never let your glass be hotter than you may feel,
And suffer still in your bare hand to hold,
For fear of losing, as Philosophers have told.

Yet to my doctrine futhermore attend,
Beware your glass you never open nor move,
From the beginning until you have made an end,
If you do otherwise, your work may never achieve,
Thus in this Chapter, which is but brief,
I have taught you your true Solution,
Now to the third gate go, for this is won.

The end of the second gate.

Ripley's Third Gate

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SEPARATION - THE THIRD GATE

Separation does each part from the other divide,
The subtle from the gross, the thick from the thin,
But look you set aside manual Separation,
For that pertains to fools that little good do win,
But in our Separation Nature does not cease,
Making division of qualities elemental,
Into a fifth degree till they be turned all.

Earth is turned into water black and blue,
And water after into air under very white,
Then air into fire, elements there be no more,
Of these is made our stone of great delight,
But of this Separation much more must we write,
And Separation is called by Philosophers definition,
Tetraptative dispersion of the said four elements.

Of this Separation I find a like figure,
Spoken by the prophet in the psalmody,
God brought out of a stone a flood of water pure,
And out of the hardest rock oil abundantly,
So out of our precious stone if you be wise,
Oil incombustible and water you shall draw,
And thereabouts you need not at the coals to blow.

Do this with heat easy and nourishing,
First with moist fire and after that with dry,
Drawing out the phlegm with patience,
And after that the other Natures wisely,
Dry up thine earth till it be thirsty,
By Calcination, else you labour in vain,
And then make it drink up the moisture again.

Thus you must oftentimes make Separation,
Dividing your waters into two parts,

So that the subtle from the gross you take,
Till the earth remain below in colour blue,
That earth is fixed to abide all woe,
The other part is spiritual and flying,
But you must turn them all into one thing.

Then oil and water with water shall distil,
And through its help receive moving,
Keep well these two that you not spoil,
Your work for lack of due closing,
And make your stopple of glass,
Melting the top of your vessel together with it,
Then Philosopher-like it is shut up.

The water wherewith you may revive the stone,
Look you distil before you work with it,
Oftentimes by itself alone,
And by this sight you shall well know,
When it is quit from feculent faeces,
For some men can it with Saturn multiply,
And other substances which we defy.

Distil it therefore till it be clean,
And thin like water as it should be,
As heaven in colour bright and shine,
Keeping both figure and ponderosity,
Therewith did Hermes moisten his tree,
Within his glass he made it grow upright,
With flowers coloured beautiful to sight.

This water is like to the venomous Tyre,
Wherewith the mighty miracle is wrought,
For it is a poison most strong of ire,
A stronger poison cannot be thought,
At apothecaries therefore it is often sought,
But no man shall be intoxicated by it,
From the time it is elixerated into medicine.

For then it is the miracle true,
It is of poison most expulsive,
And in its workings does marvels show,
Preserving many from death to life,
But look you meddle it with no corrosive,
But choose it pure and quick running,
If thou thereby will have winning.

It is a marvellous thing in kind,
And without it nothing can be done,
Therefore did Hermes call it his wind,
For it flies up from Sun and Moon,
And makes our stone to fly with it soon,
Reviving the dead and giving life,
To Sun and Moon, husband and wife.

Which if they were not by craft made quick,
And their fatness with water drawn out,

So the thin was severed from the thick,
You should never bring this work about,
If you will speed therefore without doubt,
Raise up the birds out of their nest,
And after again bring them to rest.

Water with water will accord and ascend,
And spirit with spirit, for they be of one kind,
Which after they be exalted make to descend,
So shall you divide that which Nature formerly did bind,
Mercury essential turning into wind,
Without which natural and subtle Separation,
May never complete profitable generation.

Now to help you in at this gate,
The last secret I will tell to you,
Your water must be sublimated seven times,
Else no kindly Dissolution shall be,
And you shall not see putrefying,
Like liquid pitch, nor colours appearing,
For lack of fire working within your glass.

There are four fires which you must understand,
Natural, unnatural, against Nature also,
And elemental which does burn the brand.
These four fires we use and no more,
Fire against nature must do your bodily woe,
This is our Dragon as I you tell,
Fiercely burning as the fire of hell.

Fire of nature is the third menstrual,
That fire is natural in each thing,
But fire occasional, we call unnatural,
As heat of ashes, and baths for putrefying,
Without these fires you may nought bring to Putrefaction,
For to be separate,
Your matters together proportionate.

Therefore make fire within your glass,
Which burns the body more than fire Elemental,
If you will win our secrets,
According to your desire.
Then shall your seeds both rot and spire,
By help of fire occasional,
That kindly after they may be separated.

Of Separation the Gate must thus be won,
That furthermore yet you may proceed,
Towards the Gate of secret Conjunction,
Into the inner Castle which will you lead,
Do after my counsel if you will speed,
With two strong locks this Gate is shut,
As consequently you shall well know.

The end of the Third Gate.

Ripley's Fourth Gate

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THE FOURTH GATE - CONJUNCTION

After the chapter of natural Separation,
By which the elements of our Stone be dissevered,
Here follows the chapter of secret Conjunction,
Which Natures repugnant joins to perfect unity.
And so them knitteth that none from the other may flee,
When they by fire shall be examined,
They be together so surely conjugated.

And therefore Philosophers give this definition,
Saying this Conjunction is nothing else,
But a copulation of dissevered qualities,
Or a co-equation of principles, as others tell,
But some men with Mercury that the Apothecary sells,
Meld bodies which cannot divide their matter,
And therefore they slip aside.

For until the time the soul be separated,
And cleansed from its original sin with the water,
And thoroughly spiritualised,
The true Conjunction you may never begin.
Therefore the soul first from the body twin,
Then of the corporeal part and of the spiritual.
The soul shall cause perpetual conjunction.

Of two conjunctions the philosophers do mention make,
Gross when the body with Mercury is reincrudate,
But let this pass, and to the second take heed,
Which is as I have said, after separation celebrated,
In which the parties be left with least to colligate,
And so promoted unto a most perfect temperance,
That never after amongst them may be repugnance.

Thus Separation causes true Conjunction to be had,
Of water and air, with earth and fire,
But that each element into other may be laid,
And so abide for ever to your desire,
Do as do daubers with clay or mire,
Temper them thick and make them not too thin,
So do up drying, you shall the rather win.

But manners there be of our Conjunction three,
The first is called Diptative by Philosophers,
Which between the agent and patient must be,
Male and female, Mercury and Sulphur vive,
Matter and form, thin and thick to thrive,
This lesson will help thee without any doubt,
And our Conjunction truly to bring about.

The second manner is called Triptative,
Which is Conjunction, made of things three,
Of body, soul and spirit, that they not strive,
Which trinity you must bring to unity,
For as the soul to the spirit must bonded be,
So the body must the soul to him knit,
Out of thy mind let not this lesson flit.

The third manner and also the last of all,
Four Elements together which join to abide,
Tetraptative certainly the Philosophers do call it,
And especially Guido de Montano whose fame goes wide,
And therefore in most laudable manner this tide,
In our Conjunction four elements must aggregate in due proportion,
Which first were separated asunder.

Therefore like as the woman has veins fifteen,
And the man has but five to the act of their fecundity,
Required in our Conjunction first I mean,
So must the man our Sun have of his water three,
And nine his wife, which three to him must be.
Then like with like will joy have for to dwell,
More of Conjunction I needeth not to tell.

This chapter I will conclude right soon,
Therefore gross Conjunction charging thee to make but one,
For seldom have strumpets children of them bore,
And so you shall never come by our stone,
Without you let the woman lie alone,
That after she has once conceived of the man,
Her matrix be shut up from all others then.

For such as add ever more crude to crude,
Opening their vessel letting their matters cool,
The sperm conceived they nourish not but delude themselves,
And spoil their work each time.
If you therefore wish to do well,
Close up your matrix and nourish the seed,
With continual and temperate heat if you will speed.

And when your vessel has stood by five months,
And clouds and eclipses be passed each one,
The light appearing, increase your heat, then believe,
Until bright and shining in whiteness be your Stone.
Then may you open your glass anon,
And feed your child which is born,
With milk and meat, aye more and more.

For now both moist and dry is so contempered,
That of the water earth has received impression,
Which never after that asunder may be separate,
So water to earth has given ingression,
That both together to dwell have made profession,
And water of earth has purchased a retinue,
They four made one never more to strive.

Thus in two things all our intent does hang,
In dry and moist, which are two contraries.
In dry, that it bring the moist to fixing,
In moist, that it give liquefaction to the earth also,
That of them a temperament may thus go forth,
A temperament not so thick as the body is,
Neither so thin as water without miss.

Loosing and knitting thereof be two principles,
Of this hard science, and poles most principal,
How be it that other principles be many more,
As shining fanes which I shall show,
Proceed therefore unto another wall,
Of this strong Castle of our Wisdom,
That in at the fifth Gate you may come.

The end of the Fourth Gate.

Ripley's Fifth Gate

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THE FIFTH GATE - PUTREFACTION

Now we begin the chapter of Putrefaction,
Without which pole no seed may multiply,
Which must be done only by continual action,
Of heat in the body, moist not manually.
For bodies else may not be altered naturally,
Since Christ doth witness, unless the grain of wheat die in the ground,
Increase may thou not get.

And likewise unless the matter putrefy,
It may in no way truly be altered,
Neither may thy elements be divided kindly,
Nor the conjunction of them perfectly celebrated,
That thy labour therefore be not frustrated,
The privitie of our putrefying well understand,
Before ever you take this work in hand.

And Putrefaction may thus be defined, after philosophers sayings,
To be the slaying of bodies,
And in our compound a division of things three,
Leading forth into the corruption of killed bodies,
And after enabling them unto regeneration,
For things being in the earth, without doubt,
Be engendered of rotation in the heavens about.

And therefore as I have said before,
Thine elements commixed and wisely coequate,
Thou keep in temperate heat,
Eschewing evermore that they be not incinerate by violent heat,
To dry powder, unprofitably rubificated,
But into powder black as a crow's bill,

With heat of the Bath or else of our dunghill.

Until the time that ninety nights be passed,
In moist heat keep them for any thing,
Soon after by blackness you shall espy,
That they draw close to putrefying,
Which after many colours you shall bring,
With patience easily to perfect whiteness,
And so thy seed in his nature will multiply.

Make each the other then to hug and kiss,
And like as children to play them up and down,
And when their shirts are filled with piss,
Then let the woman to wash be bound,
Which often for faintness will fall in a swoon,
And die at last with her children all,
And go to purgatory to purge their filth original.

When they be there, by little and little increase,
Their pains with heat, aye, more and more,
Never let the fire from them cease,
And see that thy furnace be apt therefore,
Which wise men call an Athanor,
Conserving heat required most temperately,
By which thy matter doth kindly putrefy.

Of this principle speaks wise Guido,
And sayeth "by rotting dieth the compound corporeal",
And then after Morien and others more,
Upriseth again regenerated, simple and spiritual,
And were not heat and moisture continual,
Sperm in the womb might have no abiding,
And so there should be no fruit thereof upspring.

Therefore at the beginning our stone thou take,
And bury each one in other within their grave,
Then equally between them a marriage make,
To lie together six weeks let them have their seed conceived,
Kindly to nourish and save,
From the ground of their grave not rising that while,
Which secret point doth many a one beguile.

This time of conception with easy heat abide,
The blackness showing shall tell you when they die,
For they together like liquid pitch that tide,
Shall swell and bubble, settle and putrefy,
Shining colours therein you shall espy,
Like to the rainbow marvellous to sight,
The Water then beginneth to dry upright.

For in moist bodies, heat working temperate,
Engenders blackness first of all,
Which is the assigned token of kindly Conjunction,
And of true Putrefaction: remember this,
For then perfectly to alter thou can not miss,
And thus by the gate of blackness thou must come in,

To light of Paradise in whiteness if you wilt win.

For first the Sun in his uprising shall be obscured,
And pass the waters of Noah's flood on earth,
Which was continued a hundred and fifty days,
Ere this water went away,
Right so our waters shall pass (as wise men understood),
That you with David shall say,
"Abierunt in sicco flumina" : bear this away.

Soon after that Noah planted his vineyard,
Which royally flourished and brought forth grapes,
After which space you shall not be afraid,
For it likewise shall follow the nourishing of our stone,
And soon after that 30 days be gone,
You shall have grapes right as ruby red,
Which is our Adrop, our Ucifer, and our red lead.

For like as souls after pains transitory,
Be brought to Paradise, which ever is joyful life,
So shall our stone after his darkness in Purgatory be purged,
And joined in Elements without strife,
Rejoice the whiteness and beauty of his wife,
And pass from darkness of purgatory to light of Paradise,
In whiteness Elixir of great might.

And that you may the rather to putrefaction win,
This example take you for a true conclusion,
For all the secret of Putrefaction rests therein,
The heart of oak that hath of water continual infusion,
Will not soon putrefy, I tell you without delusion,
For though it lay in water a hundred years and more,
Yet should you find it sound as ere it was before.

But if you keep it sometimes wet and sometimes dry,
As thou may see in timber by usual experiment,
By process of time that oak shall utterly putrefy,
And so likewise according to our intent,
Sometimes our tree must with the Sun be burnt,
And then with water we must make it cool,
That by this means to rotting we may bring it well.

For now in wet, and now again in dry,
And now in heat, and now again to be in cold,
Shall cause it soon to putrefy,
And so shall thou bring to rotting your gold,
Treat thy bodies as I have thee told,
And in thy putrefying with heat be not too swift,
Lest in the ashes thou seek after your thrift.

Therefore your water you draw out of the earth,
And make the soul therewith to ascend,
Then down again into the earth it throw,
That they oftentimes so ascend and descend,
From violent heat and sudden cold descend your glass,
And make your fire so temperate,

That by the sides the matter be not vitrified.

And be you wise in choosing of the matter,
Meddle with no salts, sulphurs nor mean minerals,
For whatsoever any worker to thee does clatter,
Our Sulphur and Mercury be only in metals,
Which some men call oils and waters,
Fowls and bird, with many other names,
So that fools should never know our stone.

For of this world our stone is called the ferment,
Which moved by craft as nature does require,
In his increase shall be full opulent,
And multiply his kind after thine own desire,
Therefore is God vouchsafe you to inspire,
To know the truth, and fancies to eschew,
Like unto you in riches shall be but few.

But many men be moved to work after their fantasy,
In many subjects in which be tinctures gay,
Both white and red divided manually to sight,
But in the fire they fly away,
Such break pots and glasses day by day,
Poisoning themselves and losing their sight,
With odours, smokes, and watching up by nights.

Their clothes be bawdy and worn threadbare,
Men may them smell for multipliers where they go,
To file their fingers with corrosives they do not spare,
Their eyes be bleary, their cheeks lean and blue,
And thus I know they suffer loss and woe,
And such when they have lost that was in their purse,
Then do they chide, and Philosophers sore do curse.

To see their houses is a noble sport,
What furnaces, what glasses there be of diverse shapes,
What salts, what powders, what oils, or acids,
How eloquently of Materia Prima their tongues do clap,
And yet to find the truth they have no hope,
Of our Mercury they meddle and of our sulphur vive,
Whereon they dote, and more and more unthrive.

For all the while they have Philosophers been,
Yet could they never know what was our Stone,
Some sought it in dung, in urine, some in wine,
Some in star slime (some thing it is but one),
In blood and eggs : some till their thrift was gone,
Dividing elements, and breaking many a pot,
Shards multiplying, but yet they hit it not.

They talk of the red man and of his white wife,
That is a special thing, and of the Elixirs two,
Of the Quintessence, and of the Elixir of life,
Of honey, Celidonie, and of Secondines also,
These they divide into Elements, with others more,
No multipliers, but will they be called Philosophers,

Which natural Philosophy did never read or see.

This fellowship knows our Stone right well,
They think them richer than is the King,
They will him help, he shall not fail,
To win for France a wondrous thing,
The holy Cross home will they bring,
And if the King were taken prisoner,
Right soon his ransom would they make.

A marvel it is that Westminster Kirk,
Which these Philosophers do much haunt,
Since they can so much riches work,
As they make boast of and avaunt,
Drinking daily at the wine due taunt,
Is not made up perfectly at once,
For truly it lacketh yet many stones.

Fools do follow them at their tail,
Promoted to riches wishing to be,
But will you hear what worship and avail,
They win in London that noble city ?
With silver maces (as you may see),
Sargents awaiteth on them each hour,
So be they men of great honour.

Sargents seek them from street to street,
Merchants and Goldsmiths lay after them to watch,
That well is him that with them may meet,
For the great advantage that they do catch,
They hunt about as does a dog,
Expecting to win so great treasure,
That ever in riches they shall endure.

Some would catch their goods again,
And some more good would adventure,
Some for to have would be full fain,
Of ten pounds one, I you ensure,
Some which have lent their goods without measure,
And are with poverty clad,
To catch a noble, would be full glad.

But when the Sargents do them arrest,
Their pockets be stuffed with Paris balls,
Or with signets of St Martin's at the least,
But as for money it is pissed against the walls,
Then they be led (as well for them befalls),
To Newgate or Ludgate as I you tell,
Because they shall in safeguard dwell.

Where is my money become, saith one ?
And where is mine, saith he and he ?
But will you hear how subtle they be anon,
In answering that they excused be,
Saying of our Elixirs we were robbed,
Else might we have paid you all your gold,

Though it had been more by ten-fold.

And then their creditors they flatter so,
Promising to work for them again,
In right short space the two Elixirs,
Doting the Merchants that they be fain,
To let them go, but ever in vain,
They work so long, till at the last,
They be again in prison cast.

If any them ask why they be not rich ?
They say that they can make fine gold of tin,
But he (say they) may surely swim the ditch,
Which is upheld by the chin,
We have no stock, therefore may we not win,
Which if we had, we would soon work enough,
To finish up Westminster Kirk.

And some of them be so devout,
They will not dwell out of that place,
For they may without doubt,
Do what them list to their solace,
The Archdeacon is so full of grace,
That if they bless him with their cross,
He forceth little of other mens loss.

And when they there sit at the wine,
These monks they say have many a pound,
Would God (saith one) have some were mine,
Yet care away, let the cup go round,
Drink on saith another, the mean is found,
I am a master of that Art,
I warrant us we shall have part

Such causes Monks evil to do,
To waste their wages through their dotage,
Some bringeth a mazer, and some a spoon,
Their Philosophers gives them such comage,
Behighting them winning with damage,
A pound for a penny at the least again,
And so fair promises make fools fain.

A Royal medicine one upon twelve,
They promise them thereof to have,
Which they could never for themselves,
Yet bring about, so God me save,
Beware such Philosophers no man deprave,
Which help these Monks to riches so,
In threadbare coats that they must go.

The Abbot ought well to cherish this company,
For they can teach his Monks to live in poverty,
And to go clothed and monied religiously,
As did Saint Bennet, eschewing superfluity,
Easing them also of the ponderosity of their purses,
With pounds so aggravated,

Which by Philosophy be now alleviated.

Lo who meddles with this rich company,
Great boast of their winning they may make,
For they shall reap as much by their Philosophy,
As they of the tail of an ape can take,
Beware therefore for Jesus' sake,
And meddle with nothing of great cost,
For if thou do, it is but lost.

These Philosophers (of which I spoke before),
Meddle and blunder with many a thing,
Running in errors ever more and more,
For lack of true understanding,
But like must always bring forth like,
So hath God ordained in every kind,
Would Jesus they would bear this is mind.

They expect of a Nettle to have a Rose,
Or of an Elder to have an apple sweet,
Alas, that wisemen their goods should lose,
Trusting such doctrines when they them meet,
Which say our Stone is trodden under foot,
And makes them vile things to distil,
Till all their houses with stench they fill.

Some of them never learned a word in Schools,
Should such by reason understand Philosophy ?
Be they Philosophers ? Nay, they be fools.
For their works prove them without wit,
Meddle not with them, if you would be happy,
Lest with their flattery they so thee till,
That you agree unto their will.

Spend not thy money away in waste,
Give not to every spirit credence,
But first examine, grope and taste,
And as thou provest, so put your confidence,
But ever beware of great expense,
And if the Philosopher do live virtuously,
The better you may trust his Philosophy.

Prove him first, and him appose,
Of all the secrets of our Stone,
Which if he know not, you need not to lose,
Meddle you no further, but let him be gone,
Though he make ever so piteous a moan,
For then the Fox can fagg and faine,
When he would to his prey attain.

If he can answer as a Clerk,
How he has not proved it indeed,
And you then help him to his work,
If he be virtuous I hold it merited,
For he will thee quite if ever he speeds,
And thou shalt know by a little anon,

If he have knowledge of our Stone.

One thing, one glass, one furnace, and no more,
Behold if he does hold this principle,
And if he do not, then let him go,
For he shall never make thee a rich man,
Timely it is better you forsake him,
Than after with loss and variance,
And other manner of unpleasance.

But if God fortune you to have,
This Science by doctrine which I have told,
Reveal it not to whosoever it craves,
For favour, fear, silver or gold.
Be no oppressor, lecher not boaster bold,
Serve thy God and help among the poor,
If you wish this life to continue long.

Unto thyself your secrets ever keep,
From sinners, who have not God in dread,
But will cast you in prison deep,
Till you teach them to do it indeed,
Then slander on you shall spring and spread,
That you do coin then will they say,
And so undo you for ever and aye.

And if you teach them this cunning,
Their sinful living for to maintain,
In hell therefore shall be your winning,
For God will take disdain of you and them,
As thou nought could therefore you faine,
That body and soul you may both save,
And here in peace to have your living.

Now in this Chapter I have taught you,
How you must putrefy your body,
And so to guide you that you be not caught,
And put to durance loss and villany
My doctrine therefore remember wisely,
And pass forth towards the sixth gate,
For thus the fifth is triumphate.

The end of the Fifth Gate

Ripley's Sixth Gate

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THE SIXTH GATE - CONGELATION

Of Congelation I need not much to write,
But what it is, I will to you declare.
It is the induration of soft things of colour white,

And the fixation together of spirits which are flying,
How to congeal, you need not much to care,
For Elements will knit together soon,
So that Putrefaction be kindly done.

But Congelations be made in divers ways,
Of spirits and bodies dissolved to water clear,
Of salts also dissolved twice or thrice,
And then congealed into a fluxible matter;
Of such congealing, fools fast do clatter,
And some dissolve, dividing the Elements manually,
And congealing them after to a dry powder.

But such congealing is not to our desire,
For unto ours it is contrary,
Our congelation dreads not the fire :
For it must ever stand in it unctuous,
And so it is also a tincture so bounteous,
Which in the air congealed will not relent to water,
For then our work were spoiled.

Moreover congeal not into so hard a stone,
As glass or crystal, which melteth by fusion,
But so that it like wax will melt anon
Without blast: and beware of delusion,
For such congealing accords not to our conclusion,
As will not flow, but run to water again,
Like salt congealed, then labour you in vain.

Which congelation avails us not a deal,
It longeth to multipliers, congealing vulgarly,
If you therefore wish to do well,
(So that the medicine shall never flow kindly,
Neither congeal, without you putrefy it first)
First purge, and then fix the elements of our stone,
Till they together congeal and flow anon.

For when your matter is made perfectly white,
Then will the spirit with the body be congealed,
But of that time you may have long respite,
Or it congeal, like pearls in your sight,
Such congelation be you glad to see,
And after like grains red as blood,
Richer than any worldly good.

The earthly grossness therefore first mortified,
In moisture blackness is engendered;
This principle may not be denied,
For natural philosophers so say, I declare,
Which had, of whiteness you may not miss;
And into whiteness if thou congeal it once,
Then have you a stone most precious of all stones.

And like as the moist did putrefy the dry,
Which caused in colour blackness to appear,
So the moist is congealed by the dry,

Engendering whiteness shining with might full clear,
And dryness proceeding as the matter whitens,
Like as in blackness moisture does him show,
By colours variant always new and new.

The cause of this is heat most temperate,
Working and moving the matter continually,
And thereby also the matter is altered,
Both inward and outward substantially,
Not as do fools to their sophistical sight;
But in every part all fire to endure,
Fluxible, fixed and stable in tincture.

As Physic determines of each digestion,
First done in the stomach in which is dryness,
Causing whiteness without question,
Like as the second digestion causes redness,
Completed in the liver by temperate heat,
Right so our Stone by dryness and by heat,
Is digested to white and red complete.

But here you must another secret know,
How the Philosophers child in the air is born,
Busy you not to blow at the coal too fast,
And take this neither for mockery or scorn,
But trust me truly, else is all your work forlorn,
Without your earth with water be revived,
Our true congealing you shall never see.

A soul it is, being betwixt heaven and earth,
Arising from the earth as air with water pure,
And causing life in every lively thing,
Incessant running upon our four fold nature,
Enforcing to better them with all its cure,
Which air is the fire of our Philosophy,
Named now oil, now water mystically.

And by this means air which we call oil or water,
Our fire, our ointment, our spirit, and our Stone,
In which one thing we ground our wisdoms all,
Goes neither in nor out alone,
Nor the fire but the water anon.
First it leads out, and after it brings in,
As water with water, which will not lightly twin.

And so may water only our water move,
Which moving causes both death and life
And water to water doth kindly cleave,
Without repugnance or any strife,
Which water to fools is nothing rife,
Being without doubt of the kind of the Spirit,
Called water and that which leads out.

And water is the secret and life of every thing
Of substance found in this world,
For of water each thing has its beginning,

As is shown in women, when they are unbound,
Of water called Albumen, which passes before if all be sound,
First from them running,
With grievous throes before their childing.

And truly that is the most principal cause,
Why Philosophers charge us to be patient,
Till in time the water be dried all to powder,
With nourishing heat, continual, not violent;
For qualities be contrary of every element,
Till after black in white be made a union,
Of them for ever, congealed without division.

And furthermore, the preparation of this conversion,
From thing to thing, from one state to another,
Is done only by kindly and discrete operation of Nature,
As is of sperm within the mother;
For sperm and heat, are as sister and brother,
Which be converted in themselves as nature can,
By action and passion at last to perfect man.

For as the bodily part by nature was combined,
Into man, is such as the beginner was,
Which though it thus from thing to thing was altered,
Not out of kind, to mix with other kind did pass,
And so our matter spermatical within our glass,
Within itself must turn from thing to thing,
By most temperate heat only nourishing it.

Another natural example I may tell you,
How the substance of an egg by nature is wrought
Into a chicken without passing out of the shell,
A plainer example I could not have thought,
And their conversions be made till forth be brought,
From state to state, the like by like in kind,
With nourishing heat : only bear this in mind.

Another example here also you may read,
Of vegetable things, taking consideration,
How every thing grows of its own seed,
Through heat and moisture, by natural operation,
And therefore minerals be nourished by the administration
Of radical moisture, which was their beginning,
Not passing their kind within one glass.

There we turn them from thing to thing again,
Into their mother the water when they go,
Which principle unknown, you labourest in vain.
Then all is sperm ; and things there be no more,
But kind with kind in number two,
Male and female, agent and patient,
Within the matrix of the earth most orient.

And these be turned by heat from thing to thing
Within one glass, and so from state to state,
Until the time that nature does bring them,

Into one substance of the water regenerate:
And so the sperm with his kind is altered,
Able in likeness his kind to multiply,
As does in kind all other things naturally.

In the time of this said natural process,
While that the conceived sperm is growing
The substance is nourished with his own menstrual,
Which water only out of the earth did spring,
Whose colour is green in the first showing;
And from that time the Sun hides his light,
Taking his course throughout the North by night.

The said menstrual (I say to you in counsel)
The blood of our green Lion and not of vitriol,
Dame Venus can the truth of this tell to you,
At the beginning, to counsel if you call her,
The secret is hid by Philosophers great and small,
Which blood drawn out of our green Lion,
For lack of heat had not perfect digestion.

But this blood called our secret menstrual,
Wherewith our sperm is nourished temperately,
When it is turned into the corporeal faeces,
And so become perfectly white and very dry,
Congealed and fixed into his own body,
Then decocted blood to sight it may well seem,
Of this work named the milk white diadem.

Understand now that our fiery water thus sharp,
Is called our menstrual water,
Wherein our earth is loosed and naturally calcined,
By congelation that they may never twine,
But yet to congeal more water you may not hesitate,
Into three parts of the acute water said before,
With the fourth part of the earth congealed and no more.

Unto that substance therefore so congeate,
The fourth part put of crystalline water,
And make them then together to be disposed,
By congelation into a miner metalline,
Which like a new slipped sword will shine,
After the blackness which first will show,
The fourth part then give it of water new.

Many imbibitions it must have yet,
Give it the second, and after the third also,
The said proportion keeping in your wit,
Then to another the fourth time look you go,
Therefore pass not the fifth time and the sixth,
But put two parts at each time of them three,
And at the seventh time five parts must there be.

When you have made imbibition seven times,
Again you must turn your wheel,
And putrefy all that matter without addition,

First abiding blackness if you will do well,
Then into whiteness congeal it up each deal,
And after by redness into the south ascend,
Then have you brought your base to an end.

Thus is your water then divided into two parts,
With the first part the bodies be putrefied,
And to your imbibitions the second part must go,
With which your matter is afterward denigrated,
And soon upon easy decoction albificated,
Then is it named by Philosophers our starry stone,
Bring that to redness, then is the sixth gate won.

The end of the Sixth Gate.

Ripley's Seventh Gate

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THE SEVENTH GATE - CIBATION

Now I turn my pen to write of Cibation,
Since it must here the seventh place occupy:
But in few words it will be expedited,
Take heed therefore, and understand me wisely;
Cibation is called a feeding of our dry matter,
With milk and meat, which moderately you do,
Until it be brought unto the third order.

But give it never so much, that you it glut,
Beware of dropsy, and also of Noah's flood:
By little and little therefore you to it put
Of meat and drink, as seems to do it good,
That watery humours not overgrow the blood,
To drink therefore let it be measured so,
That you never quench it from that kindly appetite.

For if it drink too much, then it must have
A vomit or else it will be sick too long from the dropsy
Therefore thy womb thou save,
And from the flux, or else it will be wrong,
But rather let it thirst for drink along
Than you should give it overmuch at once.
Which must in youth be dieted for the nonce.

And if you diet it (as nature does require) moderately,
Till time that it be grown to age,
Keeping it from cold, and nourishing it with moist fire,
Then it shall grow, and wax full of courage,
And do to you both pleasure and advantage;
For it shall make dark bodies whole and bright,
Cleansing their leprosy through its might.

Three time must you also turn about your wheel,

Still keeping the rule of the said Cibation,
And then as soon as it does feel the fire,
Like wax it will be ready unto liquation:
This chapter needs no longer protestation,
For I have told you the diet most convenient,
After thine elements be made equipolent.

And also how you shall bring thy gold to whiteness,
Most like in figure to leaves of the hawthorn tree,
Called Magnesia, as I have told before,
And our White Sulphur without combustibility,
Which from the fire will never fly away.
And thus the seventh gate (as you desired)
In the uprising of the Sun is conquered.

The end of the seventh gate

Ripley's Eighth Gate

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THE EIGHTH GATE - SUBLIMATION

Here of our Sublimation a word or two
I have to speak, which is the eighth gate.
Fools do sublime, but you do not sublime so,
For we sublime not in the way they do,
To sublime truly therefore you shall not miss,
If you can make they bodies first spiritual,
And then your spirits (as I have taught you) corporeal.

Some do sublime Mercury from vitriol and salt,
And other spirits from scales of iron and steel,
Calcined from egg shells, and from quicklime,
And in their manner yet sublime they right well,
But such subliming accords never a deal,
To our intents, for we sublime not so,
To true subliming therefore, now I will go.

In Sublimation first beware of one thing,
That thou sublime to the top of the vessel;
For without violence you shall not bring it down again,
But there it will abide and dwell.
So I tell you it rejoices with refrigeration,
Keep it down therefore with temperate heat,
Full forty days, till it wax black and brown.

For then the soul begins to come out
From his own veins, for all that is subtle,
Will with the spirit ascend without doubt,
Bear in your mind therefore, and think on this,
How here eclipsed be your bodies,
As they do putrefy subliming more and more into water
Until they be all borne upwards.

And thus when they have spued out their venom,
Into the water then it does appear black,
Becoming spiritual each deal without doubt,
Subliming easily in our manner,
Into the water, which does bear it:
For in the air our child must thus be born
Of the water again, as I have said before.

But when these two by continual Sublimation,
Be laboured so with heat both moist and temperate,
That is all white and purely made spiritual,
Then heaven upon earth must be reiterated,
Until the soul with the body be incorporated,
That earth become all that before was heaven,
Which will be done in seven Sublimations.

And Sublimations we make for three causes,
The first cause is, to make the body spiritual,
The second is, that the spirit may be corporeal ,
And become fixed with it and consubstantial,
The third cause is, that from its filthy original
It may be cleansed, and its saltiness sulphurious,
May be diminished in it, which is infectious.

Then when they thus together be freed from impurities,
They will sublime up whiter than the snow;
That sight will greatly comfort you :
For then anon perfectly you shalt know,
The spirits shall so be thrown down,
That this eighth gate shall to thee be unlocked,
Out of which many are shut and mocked.

The end of the eighth gate

Ripley's Ninth Gate

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THE NINTH GATE - FERMENTATION

True Fermentation few workers understand,
That secret therefore I will expound to you.
I travelled truly through many a land,
Ere ever I might find any that would tell it me :
Yet as God would, evermore blessed be he,
At at last I came to the perfected knowledge thereof,
Take heed therefore what I thereof do write.

Fermentations in divers manners be done,
By which our medicine must be perpetuated,
Into clear water - some looseth Sun and Moon,
And with their medicines make them to be congealed;
Which in the fire when they be examined,

May not abide, nor alter with complement:
For such fermenting is not to our intent.

But yet more kindly some other men do,
Fermenting their medicines in this way -
In Mercury dissolving both Sun and Moon,
Till time with the spirit they will arise,
Subliming them together twice or thrice;
Then Fermentation therewith they make;
That is a way, but yet we it forsake.

Some others there be which have more sense,
To touch the truth in part of fermenting -
They amalgam their bodies with Mercury like pap,
Then thereupon their medicines relenting;
These of our secrets have some hint,
But not the truth with perfect complement
Because they neither putrefy, nor alter their Ferment.

That point therefore I will disclose to you,
Look how you did with your imperfect body -
Do so with thy perfect bodies in each degree,
That is to say, first you putrefy them,
Destroying their former qualities utterly,
For this is wholly to our intent,
That first you alter before you ferment.

To your compound make ferment the fourth part,
Which ferments be only of Sun and Moon,
If you therefore be master of this art,
Your fermentation let thus be done,
Fix water and earth together soon,
And when your medicine as wax do flow,
Then upon amalgams look you it throw.

And when all that together is mixed,
Above the glass well closed make your fire,
And so continue it till all be fixed,
And well fermented to your desire,
Then make Projection after thy pleasure
For that is medicine each deal perfected,
Thus must you ferment both red and white.

For like as flour of wheat made into a paste,
Requires ferment, which we call leaven of bread,
That it may have the kindly taste,
And become cordial food to man and woman,
So you shall ferment your medicine,
That it may taste of the Ferment pure,
At all assays for ever to endure.

And understand that there be Ferments three,
Two be of bodies in nature clean,
Which must be altered as I have told you;
The third most secret of which I mean,
Is the first earth of his water green:

And therefore when the Lion does thirst,
Make him to drink till his belly burst.

Of this a question if I should move,
And ask of workers, what is this thing ?
Anon thereby I should them prove,
If they had knowledge of our fermenting:
For many a man speaks with wondering,
Of Robin Hood and of his bow,
Which never shot therein I trow.

For true Fermentation as I tell you,
Is the incorporation of the soul with the bodies,
Restoring to it the kindly smell,
With taste and colour by natural compacting together,
Of things dissevered, a due re-integration,
Whereby the body of the spirit takes impression.
That either the other may help to have ingression.

For like as bodies in their compaction corporeal,
May not show out their qualities effectually,
Until the time that they become spiritual,
No more may spirits abide with bodies steadfastly,
Till they be fixed together with them proportionally,
For then the body teaches the spirit to suffer fire,
And the spirit the body to enter to your desire.

Therefore you must ferment your gold with gold,
Your earth cleansed with his own water, I mean,
Nought else to say but element with element,
The spirit of life only going between,
For like as an adamant as you have seen
Draws iron to him, so does our earth by kind,
Draw down to him his soul borne up with wind.

With wind therefore the soul lead out and in,
Mingle gold with gold, that is to say,
Make Element with Element together run,
Till time all fire they may suffer,
For earth is Ferment without nay to water,
And water the earth unto,
Our Fermentation in this way must be done.

Earth is gold, and so is the soul also,
Not common, but ours thus elementary,
And yet thereto the Sun must go,
That by our wheel it may be altered:
For so to ferment it must be prepared,
That it profoundly may be joined,
With other natures as I said to you.

And whatsoever I have here said of gold,
The same of silver I will you understand,
That you putrefy them and alter (as I have told)
Ere you take in hand to ferment your medicine.
Forsooth I could never find anyone in England

Who could teach me to ferment in this way ,
Without error, by practice or by speech.

Now of this chapter needs to treat no more,
Such I intend prolixity to eschew;
Remember well my words therefore,
Which you shall prove by practice true,
And Sun and Moon look you renew,
That they may hold of the fifth nature,
Then shall their tincture evermore endure.

And yet a way there is most excellent,
Belonging unto another working,
A water we make most redolent,
All bodies to oil wherewith we bring,
With which our medicine we make flowing,
A quintessence this water we call,
Which heals all diseases in man.

But with my base, after my doctrine prepared,
Which is our calx this must be done,
For when our bodies be so calcined,
That water will to oil dissolve them soon
Make you therefore oil both of the Sun and Moon,
Which is ferment most fragrant for to smell,
And so the ninth gate of this Castle is conquered.

The end of the Ninth Gate.

Ripley's Tenth Gate

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THE TENTH GATE - EXALTATION

We proceed now to the chapter of Exaltation,
Of which truly you must have pure knowledge,
But little is different from Sublimation,
If you conceive it right I you ensure,
Hereto accords the holy scripture,
Christ saying thus - "if I exalted be,
Then shall I draw all things unto me".

Our medicine if we exalt so,
It shall be thereby ennobled,
That must be done in two manners,
From time the parties be disposed,
Which must be crucified and examined,
And then bury together both man and wife,
To be after revived by the spirit of life.

Then up to heaven they must be exalted,
There to be in body and soul glorified,
For you must bring them to such subtlety,

That they ascend together to enter,
In clouds of clearness uniting together with Angels,
Then shall they draw as you shall see,
All other bodies to their own dignity.

If you therefore will exalt the bodies,
First you augment them with the spirit of life,
Till in time the earth be well subtilized,
By natural rectifying of every Element,
Exalting them up into the firmament,
Then much more precious shall they be than gold,
Because of the quintessence which they do hold.

For when the cold has overcome the heat,
Then into water the air shall be turned,
And so two contraries together shall meet,
Till either with the other right well agree,
So into air the water as I tell thee,
When heat of cold has got domination,
Shall be converted by craft of our circulation.

And of the air then fire you shall have,
By loosening, putrefying and subliming,
And fire you have of the earth material,
Thus by craft dissevering your elements,
Most especially well calcining your earth,
And when they be each one made pure,
Then do they hold all of the first nature.

In this way therefore make them be circulated,
Each into other exalting by and by,
And all in this one glass surely sigillate,
Not with thine hands, but as I teach you naturally,
Fire into water, then turn first hardly,
For fire is in Air, which is in water existent,
And this conversion accords to our intent.

Then furthermore turn on your wheel,
That into earth the air converted be,
Which will be done also right well,
For Air is in water being earth, trust me,
The water into fire, contrary in her quality,
Soon turn you may, for water is in earth,
Which is in fire, conversion true is this.

The wheel is now near turned about,
Into air turn earth which is the proper nest,
Of other Elements there is no doubt,
For earth is in fire, which in air takes rest,
This circulation begin you in the west,
Then into the south, till they exalted be,
Proceed duly, as I have taught you in the figure *.

In which process clearly you may see,
From one extreme how to another you may not go,
But by a mean, since they in qualities contrary be,

And reason will show that it be so,
As heat into cold, with other contraries more,
Without their means, as moist to heat and and cold,
Examples sufficient before this I have told.

Thus I have taught you how to make,
Of all your Elements a perfect circulation,
And at the figure example to take,
How you shall make this foresaid Exaltation,
And of your medicine in the Elements true graduation,
Till it be brought to a generative temperate,
And then you have conquered the tenth gate.

The end of the tenth gate.

Ripley's Eleventh Gate

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THE ELEVENTH GATE - MULTIPLICATION

Now I proceed to declare Multiplication,
Which is by Philosophers in this way defined,
Augmentation it is of the Elixir indeed,
In goodness and quantity both for white and red,
Multiplication is therefore as they do write,
That thing that does augment medicines in each degree,
In colour, in odour, in virtue, and also in quantity.

And why may you multiply this medicine infinitely,
Forsooth the cause is this,
For it is fire, which kindled will never die,
Dwelling with you, as fire does in houses,
Of which one spark may make more fire this way,
As musk in pigments and other spices more,
In virtue multiplied, and our medicine right so.

So he, who fire has less or more, is rich,
Because he may multiply it so hugely,
And so is he rich, who has in store any part,
Of our Elixir which can be augmented infinitely -
One way if you dissolve our powders dry,
And make often times of them Congelation,
Thereof in goodness then you make Augmentation.

The second way both in goodness and quantity,
It multiplies by iterated Fermentation,
As in that chapter I showed plainly to thee,
By diverse manners of natural operation,
And also in the chapter of our Cibation,
Where you may know how you shall multiply,
Your medicine with Mercury infinitely.

But if you will both loose and eke ferment,

Both more in quantity and better will it be -
And in such ways you may augment it soon,
That in your glass it will grow like a tree,
The tree of Hermes named seemly to see,
Of which one pip in a thousand will multiply,
If you can make your projection wisely.

And just as with Saffron when it is pulverised,
By little and little if it be tempered with liquor,
When with much more liquor dilated,
Tinges much more of liquor in quantity,
That being whole in his gross nature :
So shall you see, that our Elixir, the more it is made thin,
The further in tincture it fastly will run.

Keep in your fire therefore both morning and evening,
So that you do not need to run from house to house,
Among thy neighbours to seek or borrow your fire ,
The more you keep, the more good shall you win,
Multiplying it always more and more within your glass,
By feeding with Mercury unto your lives end,
So shall you have more than you need to spend.

This matter is plain, thereof I will write no more,
Let reason guide you,
Be never the bolder to sin therefore,
But serve thy God the better in each tide,
And while that you shall in this life abide,
Bear this in mind, forget not I thee pray,
As thou shalt appear before God at domesday.

His own great gifts therefore and his treasure,
Dispose you virtuously, helping the poor at need,
That in this world you may procure to yourself,
Mercy and grace with heavenly bliss to merit,
And pray to God devoutly that he lead you,
In at the twelfth gate, as he can best,
Soon after then you shall end your conquest.

The end of the eleventh gate.

Ripley's Twelfth Gate

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THE TWELFTH GATE - PROJECTION

In Projection it shall be proved if our practice be profitable,
Of which it behoves me the secrets here to move,
Therefore if your tincture be sure and not variable,
By a little of your medicine thus you may prove,
With Metal, or with Mercury as pitch it will cleave,
And tinge in Projection all fires to abide,
And soon it will enter and spread full wide.

But many by ignorance do mar what they made,
When they make Projection on uncleansed metals,
For because of corruption their tinctures must fade,
Which they would not first take away from the body,
Which after Projection be brittle, blue and black.
That your tincture therefore may evermore last,
First see you cast your medicine upon ferment.

Then brittle as glass will your ferment be,
Upon bodies cleansed and made very pure,
Cast that brittle substance and soon you shall see,
That they shall be curiously coloured with tincture,
With all assays for ever shall endure,
But profitable Projection perfectly to make,
At the Psalms of the Psalter example thou take.

On 'Fundamenta' cast this psalm 'Nunc dimittis',
Upon 'verba mea', then cast 'Fundamenta' believe,
Then 'Verba' upon 'diligam', conceive me with your wits,
And 'diligam' upon 'attendite', if you wish to thrive,
Thus make you Projections, three, four, or five,
Till the tincture of the medicine begin to decrease,
And then it is time for Projection to cease.

By this misty talking I mean nothing else,
But that you must cast first the less on the more,
Increasing ever the number as wise men tell you,
And keep you this secret unto yourself in store,
Be covetous of cunning it is no sore burden,
For he that does not join the Elixir with bodies made clean,
Surely does not know what projection does mean.

Ten if thy multiply first into ten,
One hundred that number will assuredly make,
If one hundred into an hundred be multiplied,
Then ten thousand is that number if you count it wisely,
Then into as much more ten thousand to multiply,
Is a thousand thousand, I say,
Which multiplied into as much more, is a hundred millions.

That hundred millions being multiplied likewise,
Into ten thousand millions, as I do say to you,
Making so great a number I know not what it is,
Your number in Projection thus multiply always.
Now child through your courtesy for me that you pray,
Since I have told you our secrets all and some,
To which I beseech GOD by grace you may come.

Now you have conquered these twelve gates,
And all the Castle you hold at your will,
Keep your secrets in store to yourself,
And the commandments of God look you fulfil,
See you continue your glasses still in fire,
And multiply your medicines always more and more,
For wise men do say, that store is no sore.

The end of the twelve gates

Ripley's Recapitulation of the Twelve Gates

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RECAPITULATION

So to bring this treatise to a final end,
And briefly to conclude all these secrets here,
Diligently look at, and attend to your figure,
Which contains in it all these secrets great and small,
And if you conceive it, both theoretically and practically,
By figures and colours, by scripture plain,
It wisely conceived, you may not work in vain.

Consider first the latitude of this precious stone,
Beginning in the first side noted in the West,
Where the red man and the white woman be made one,
Espoused with the spirit of life to live in rest,
Earth and water equally proportioned, that is best,
And one part of the earth is good, and of the spirit three,
Which twelve to four also of the earth may be.

Three of the wife, and one of the man you take,
And the less of the spirit in this dispousation,
The better your Calcination for certain you shall make,
Then forth into the North proceed by obscuration,
Called the Eclipsing of the red man and his white wife,
Loosening them and altering them between winter and spring,
Turning earth into water, dark and nothing clear.

From thence by many colours into the East ascend,
Then shall the Moon be full appearing by day light,
Then is the purgatory passed, and her course at an end,
There is the uprising of the Sun appearing bright,
There is Summer after Spring, and day after night:
The earth and water which were black be turned to air,
And clouds of darkness blown over, and all appears fair.

And as the beginning of your practice was in the West,
And in the North the perfect mean of profound alteration,
So in the East after them is the beginning of speculation,
But of this course the Sun makes consummation up in the South,
There the elements are turned into fire by circulation,
Then to win your desire you need not be in doubt,
For the wheel of our philosophy you have turned about.

But turn your wheel about again two times,
Which being comprehended all the secrets of our philosophy,
In twelve chapters made plain to you, if you conceive this well,
And all the secrets by and by of our lower Astronomy,
Of how you shall calcine bodies, perfect, dissolve, divide, and putrefy,

With perfect knowledge of all the poles which be in our heaven,
Shining with inexplicable colours, never were a scene more gay.

And thus our secret conclusion know without fail,
Our red man tinges not, nor his wife, until they be tinged,
Therefore if you will lift yourself by this craft to avail,
Hide the altitude of bodies, and show out their profundity,
Destroying the first quality in every one of your materials,
And repair anon in them secondary qualities more glorious,
And in one glass, and with one rule, turn four natures into one.

Pale and black with false citrine, imperfect white and red,
The Peacock's feathers in gay colours, the rainbow which shall go over,
The spotted panther, the lion green, the Crows bill blue as lead.
These shall appear before you perfect white, and many more others.
And after the perfect white, grey, false citrine also,
And after these, there shall appear the red body invariable,
Then you have a medicine of the third order of his own kind multipliable.

You must divide your white Elixir into two parts,
Before you rubify, and into two glasses let these be done,
If you will have your Elixir for Sun and Moon do both so,
And multiply these soon into Mercury to great quantity,
And even if you had not at the beginning enough to fill a spoon,
Yet may you so multiply both white and red,
That if you live a thousand years, they shall stand you in stead.

Therefore I counsel you have recourse to your wheel,
And study well to know each chapter truly,
Meddle with no phantastic multipliers, but let them be,
Who will flatter you, feigning to be cunning in Philosophy,
Do as I bid you, them dissolve these aforesaid bases wisely,
And turn them into perfect oils with our true ardent water,
By circulation that must be done according to our intent.

These oils will fix crude Mercury and convert all bodies,
Into perfect Sun and Moon, when you shall make Projection,
That oily substance pure and fixed which Raimund Lully did call,
His Basilisk, of which he never made so plain detection,
Pray for me to God, that I may be one of his elect,
And that he will at domesday know me for one of his,
And grant me his bliss to reign with him forever. Amen

End of the Recapitulation.

Philalethes exposition of Ripley's Vision

This interesting exposition of a short poem of Sir George Ripley entitled his 'Vision', which uses symbolic ideas also explored in the *Ripley Scrowle*, is included in **Philalethes**, Eirenaeus. *Ripley Reviv'd: or, an Exposition upon Sir George Ripley's Hermetico-Poetical Works. Containing the plainest and most excellent Discoveries of the most hidden Secrets of the Ancient Philosophers, that were ever yet published. Written by Eirenaeus Philalethes an Englishman, stiling himself Citizen of the World.* London, Printed by Tho. Ratcliff and Nat. Thompson, for William Cooper at the Pelican in Little-Britain. 1678.

[Back to Ripley's works](#) . [Information on Ripley](#).

The Vision of Sr George Ripley, Canon of Bridlington, Unfolded.

When busie at my Book I was upon a certain Night,
This Vision here exprest appear'd unto my dimmed sight:
A Toad full Ruddy I saw, did drink the juice of Grapes so fast,
Till over-charged with the broth, his Bowels all to brast:
And after that, from poyson'd Bulk he cast his Venom fell,
For Grief and Pain whereof his Members all began to swell;
With drops of Poysoned sweat approaching thus his secret Den,
His Cave with blasts of fumous Air he all bewhited then:
And from the which in space a Golden Humour did ensue,
Whose falling drops from high did stain the soyl with ruddy hue.
And when his Corps the force of vital breath began to lack,
This dying Toad became forthwith like Coal for colour Black:
Thus drowned in his proper veins of poysoned flood;
For term of Eighty days and Four he rotting stood
By Tryal then this Venom to expel I did desire;
For which I did commit his Carkass to a gentle Fire:
Which done, a Wonder to the sight, but more to be rehearst;
The Toad with Colours rare through every side was pierc'd;
And White appear'd when all the sundry hews were past:
Which after being tinted Ruddy, for evermore did last.
Then of the Venom handled thus a Medicine I did make;
Which Venom kills, and saveth such as Venom chance to take:
Glory be to him the granter of such secret ways,
Dominion, and Honour both, with Worship, and with Praise.
Amen.

An Exposition upon Sir George Ripley's Vision.

Written by Æyrenæus Philalethes, Anglus, Cosmopolita

The Vision of George Ripley, Canon of Bridlington, Unfolded.

This Vision is a Parable rather or Enigm, which the Ancient Wise Philosophers have been wont to use often in setting out their secrets; this Liberty is granted to all men for to make use of Enigmatical expressions, to decipher that which is indeed mysterious. The Ancient Egyptians taught much by Hieroglyphicks, which way many Fathers of this Science have followed; but most especially they have made use of Mystical or Cabalistical descriptions; such is this. But to the thing in hand.

A Toad full ruddy I saw.

Here we have a Toad described, and in it the whole secret of Philosophers: The Toad is Gold; so called, because it is an Earthly Body, but most especially for the black stinking venemosity which this operation comes to in the first days of its preparation, before the whiteness appear; during the Rule of Saturn, therefore it is called the ruddy Toad. To this Authors assent with one accord; when they say our stone is nothing else but Gold digested unto the highest degree, to which Nature and Art, can bring it; and again the first work, saith another Philosopher, is to sublime Mercury, and then into clean Mercury to put clean bodies: many witnesses I could bring, yea the whole current of writers run this way: And what if some subtle Philosophers seem to deny this, on purpose to deceive the unwary? We shall not make it our work to reconcile them; (though we might) for many of them wrote very enviously, on purpose to ensnare; all of them wrote mysteriously, as much as they could to darken the truth: and at the best none of them were but men, and described things according to their apprehensions in Philosophy, none of them wrote in everything the naked truth; for then the Art would become so easie, that it would be condemned. But what needs

words? we know the Truth, and we know by a secret Character, true Writers from Sophisters; and we need no Arguments being eye-witnesses our selves, and know that there is but one truth; not but one path, even the beaten path in which all who ever have attained this Art have trodden, nor can we be deceived our selves; nor would we deceive others.

Did drink the juice of Grapes.

This Toad is said to drink the juice of Grapes according to the Philosopher, the body, saith he, is not nobler than Gold, nor yet the water more precious than wine. This water they call sometimes Aqua Ardens, sometimes Acetum Acerrimum, but most commonly they call it their Mercury; this denomination I shall not insist upon; but shall assure you that is only deciphers Mercury, even that Mercury, of which I writ in my little Latine Treatise, called Introitus apertus ad oclusum Regis palatium; in that I discovered the whole Truth fully and nakedly, and if not too plainly, I am sure plain enough. I shall not here repeat; to that I remit the Reader.

This juice of Grapes this Toad is said to drink; that is not only in the gross Conjunction, which is an Impastation of the body, with the Water to the temper of Dough or Leaven, which the Water readily doth: such affinity there is between the Water and the Body; as the Philosopher saith, this Water is friendly and pleasant to the metals. But over, and besides the Water soaks Radically into our Body; being circulated upon it, according as the Philosopher saith, When its own sweat is returned to the Body, it perforates it marvellously. Thus the Body drinks in the Water, or Juice of Grapes, not so much then when they are first mingled: but most especially, when by Decoction it pierceth radically to the very profundity of it; and makes it to alter its Form; This is the Water which teareth the Bodies, and makes them no Bodies, but flying Spirits like a Smoak, Wind or Fume, as Artephius speaketh plentifully. This operation is performed in a short while, in comparison of Subterranean operations of Nature, which are done in a very long time; therefore it is that so many Philosophers say, that it is done in a very short time, and yet it is not without cause, that so many of the Philosophers have complained of the length of this decoction. Therefore the same Artephius who had said, that this fire of the Water of our Mercury, doth that in a short time above ground, that Nature was in performing in a 1000 years, doth in another place say, that the tincture doth not come out at once, but by little and little each day, and hour, till after a long time the decoction be compleat, according to the saying of the Philosopher: Boyl, boyl, and again boyl, and accompt not tedious our long decoction.

So fast.

So then this expression here, that the Toad doth drink in the Juice of Grapes so fast, doth not imply but that this work must have the true time of Nature; which is indeed a long time, and so is every decoction at least: so they will seem to the Artist who attends the fire day by day, and yet must wait for the fruit with Patience, till the Heaven have showred down upon the Earth the former and latter Rain: yet be not out of heart, but attend until the compleatment, for then a large Harvest will abundantly recompence all thy toyl.

Till over-charged with the Broth, his Bowels all to brast.

It follows in the Vision, that at length the Toad (over-charged with the broth) did burst asunder; This broth is the same which the fair Medea did prepare, and pour upon the two Serpents which did keep the Golden Apples, which grew in the hidden Garden of the Virgins Hesperides.

For the Vinegre of the Philosophers being circulated upon the Body, doth engender a substance like unto a bloody Broth, and makes Colours of the Rainbow, to appear in the ascension and descension upon your Lyon, until the Eagles have at length devoured the Lyon, and all together being killed with the Carion of the Carcasses become a venomous Toad, creeping on the Earth, and a Crow swimming in the midst of the dead Sea.

The Juice of Grapes then, which is our Mercury, drawn from the Chameleon or Air of our Physical Magnesia, and Chalybs Magical, being circulated upon our true Terra Lemnia; after it is grossly mixed with it by Incorporation, and set to our fire to digest, doth still enter in and upon our Body, and searcheth the profundity of it; and makes the occult to become manifest by continual ascension and descension: till all together become a Broth; which is a mean substance of dis severed qualities, between the Water and the Body, till at length the Body burst asunder and be reduced into a Powder, like to the Atoms of the Sun, black of the blackest and of a viscous matter.

And after that, from poisoned bulk he cast his venom fell.

This Reduction of the Body, thus in this water ingenders so venomous a Nature, that truly in the whole World there is not a ranker Poyson, or stink, according as Philosophers witness: And therefore he is said to cast his fell venom from his poisoned bulk; in as much as the exhalations are compared to the Invenomed Fume of Dragons, as Flamell in his Summary hath such an Allusion. But the Philosopher (as he adds in his Hieroglyphicks of the two Dragons),

never feels his stink, unless he break his Vessels, but only he judgeth it by the colours proceeding from the rottenness of the Confections.

And indeed it is a wonder to consider, (which some Sons of Art are eye-witnesses of) that the fixed and most digested Body of Gold; should so rot and putrify, as if it were a Carcass, which is done by the admirable Divine virtue of our dissolving Water, which no Money can purchase. All these operations, which are so enlarged by variety of expressions, center in one, which is killing the quick, and reviving the dead.

For grief and pain whereof his members all began to swell.

This venomous fume of exhalations returning upon the Body, cause it to swell all over according to the saying of the Philosopher; The Body in this Water puffeth up, swelleth and putrefieth as a Grain of Corn, taking the nature living and vegetable, therefore for this cause this Water is in this sence called by the Philosophers their Leaven, for as Leaven causeth Past to swell, so this fermented the body, and causeth it to tumefie and puff up; it is also called venom, for as this venom causeth swelling, so this Water by its reiteration uncessantly upon our body. This operation is uncessant from the first incitation of the matter, even until compleat putrefaction; for the Toad doth always send forth his exhalations (being rather called the Lyon), till he be over-come in part: and then when the Body begins a little to put on the Nature of the Water, then it is compared to two Dragons, one winged, and the other without wings: and lastly when that stinking Earth appears, which Hermes calls his Terra Foliata, or Earth of Leaves, then it is most properly called the Toad of the Earth; from the first excitation, even to the last of this putrefaction; which exhalations are at the beginning for a time White, and afterwards become Yellowish, Blewish, and Blackish, (from the virulency of the matter) which exhalations hourly condensing, and ever and anon running down like little veins in drops, do enter the Body marvellously, and the more it is entred; the more it swells and puffs up, till at length it be compleatly putrefied.

With drops of poisoned sweat, approaching thus his secret Den.

The following two Verses then are but a more Ample description of this work; of volatilization which is an ascension, and descension, or circulation of the confections within the Glass. Which Glass here called the secret Den, is else-where called by the same Author, a little Glassen-tun, and is an oval Vessel; of the purest White Glass, about the bigness of an ordinary Hen-Egg, in the which about the quantity of an ounce of 8 drachms of the confection, in all mixed is a convenient proportion to be set, which being Sealed up with Hermes Seal, the Glass having a neck about 6 fingers high, or thereabouts, which being thin and narrow; is melted together Artificially, that no Spirits can get out, nor no Air can come in, in which respect it is named a secret Den.

Also it is called a secret Den, because of the secretness of Ashes or Sand, in which in a Philosophical Athanor it is set, the doores being firmly shut up, and a prospect left to look in by a Window, either to open a little, as much as is convenient sometimes, as occasion requires, or else with Glass put into it, to admit the view of the Artist; together with a light at hand to shew the colours.

His Cave with blasts of fumous Air, he all bewhited then.

Which Glass, Nest, and Furnace being thus secretly ordered, the Artist must in the first place expect to be in Prison a long time, as Bernard Trevisan saith, for the Concave of this secret place, will be so bewhited with the fumes which ascend, that an Artist rules his work more by skill and reason, or the eye of the mind, then of the Body, for the Spirits arising like a smoak or Wind, sticketh to the Concave of the Glass, which is above the Sand or Ashes, and there by degrees, there grow drops which run down and moisten the Body below, and reduce as much as they can of the fixed, and so the Body by the Water, and the Water by the Body alter their colours.

And from the which in space a Golden Humour did ensue.

In so much that at length, the whole Vessel will seem as though it were all over gilded with Gold, for the exhalations will be Yellow, which is a sign of true Copulation of our Man and Woman together, but before this Yellow, and with it there will be an obscuring of the White brightness of the Fume, with mixture of Colours, Dark, obscure and Blewish.

The space is not long, for all the several passages are conspicuous before 40 days; for in that space from these Colours, are demonstrating Signs of Corruption and Generation, which is given us by the biting, and fiery Nature of our pontick Waters, and the resistance of our Bodies; in which Fight the Body is over-come, and killed, and dying yields these Colours: which is a Sign that the Eagles now are getting the Mastery, and our Lyon hath also a little infected them with his Carcass, which they begin to prey upon. This Operation is by Ingenious Artists called Extraction of Natures, and Separation, for the Tincture begins now to be separated from the Body. Also Reduction to

the first matter; which is Sperm or Seed, which by reason of its double Nature is compared to two Dragons. I shall not enlarge in this Vision, but briefly unfold what is briefly laid down.

Whose falling drops from high did stain the soyl with ruddy hue.

These colours of the Mercury, do affect the subsident fixed Body, with sutable colours and the Bodies from these exhalations, be Tincted with a ruddy colour, which Flamel expresseth to this purpose, that these two Natures, or Dragons do bite one another very cruelly; and never leave from the time they have seized one upon another; till by their slaving Venom, and mortal hurts, they be all or a gore bloud, and then being stewed in their own Venom, are changed into a fifth Essence.

And when his Corps the force of vital breath began to lack.

But before the renovation of these Natures, they must in the first place pass through the Eclipse, both of the Sun and Moon and the darkness of Purgatory, which is the Gate of Blackness, and after that they shall be renovated with the light of Paradise.

This Allegorically is called Death, for as a man will resist violence, which entrencheth upon his life as long as he can, but if his Enemies are many and mighty, at length they grow too mighty for him, and he begins to fail both in strength and courage, and so Paleness, the Harbinger of Death, doth stand as it were on his lips, so our Body or Man the Sun, like a strong Champion, doth resist long, till he be wounded, and bleed as it were all over, and then dies, at whose death blackness doth begin to appear, as of old the Ravens were foretellers of Man's death approaching: for this Reiteration of Rotation of the Influences of the Heaven of it, together with heat still drying up and soaking in the Moisture as fast as it falls, brings it at last naturally to die and corrupt, as any other thing doth.

And then the Corps begin to lack breath; that is, the Fumes begin to cease: for with oft ascending and descending the Spirits are somewhat fixed, and turned into Powder or Dust, and are now in the bottom of the Vessel, drawing fast to Putrefaction: Nor do they for a time ascend, but remain below.

Wherefore govern your Fire, that your Spirits be not so exalted, and climb so high that the Earth want them, and they return no more: For this Operation is, as Morien saith, a drawing out of Water from the Earth, and again a returning of the same to the Earth, so often and so long till the Earth putrefie.

This dying Toad became forthwith like Coal for colour black.

This is the final end of the Combat, for herein in this Earth of Leaves all are reconciled, and final Peace is made; and now one Nature embraceth another, in no other form but in the form of a Powder impalpable, and in no other colour but black of the blackest.

From henceforth Natures are united, and boil and bubble together like melted Pitch, and change their forms one into another. Take heed therefore lest instead of Powder Black of the Blackest, which is the Crows Bill, you have an unprofitable dry half red Precipitate, Orange-coloured, which is a certain sign of the Combustion of Flowers, or Vertue of the Vegetative Seed. On this very Rock I have stumbled, and do therefore warn you.

Thus drowned in his proper Veins of poisoned Flood.

It appears by all that hath been said, and by the undoubted Testimony of all Philosophers who have been Eye-witnesses to this Truth, that the work is not so tedious, nor so chargeable, but that in the simple way of Nature the Mastery is to be attained: for when once the true body is Impasted with its true Leven, it doth calcine it self, and dissolve it self for the dissolution of the Body into a black and changeable coloured Water, which is the sign of the egression of the Tincture, is the Congelation of the Spirits into this lowest Period of Obscurity, which is this black Powder like unto Lamp-Black, this is the Complement of Eclipsation, which Contrition begins soon after the Colours, Yellowish, Blewish, etc.

For term of Eighty Days and Four he rotting stood.

This Calcination begins with these Variation in Colour about the two and fortieth day, of fiftieth at the farthest, in a good Regimen: After which comes putrefying Corruption, like to the Scum of boiling bloody Broath or melted Pitch; but Blackness in part, to wit, Superficial, begins about the fortieth day after the stirring up of the matter, in case of right Progress and Regimen of the Fire, or about the fiftieth at farthest. But this drowning of him in his own Poyson, and stewing him in his own Broath, is the intire Blackness and Cimmerian utter Darkness of compleat Rottenness, which according to the Author, is for the space of eighty four days. This time is not certainly agreed upon by Authors: But in this they all agree, they prescribe so long time until the Complement. One writes, That this Blackest Black indures a long time, and is not destroyed in less than five months. Another writes, That the King when he enters into his Bath pulls off his Robe, and gives it to Saturn, from whom he receives a Black Shirt, which

he keeps forty two days: And indeed it is two and forty days before he put on this Black Shirt instead of his Golden Robe, that is, be destroyed as touching his Solary Qualities, and become instead of Fixt, Citrine, Terrene, and Solid, a Fugitive, Black, Spiritual, Watery, and Flegmatic Substance: But Putridness begins not till the first Forms be put off; for so long as the Body may be reduced into its former Nature, it is not yet well ground and imbibed: grind therefore and imbibe, till thou see the Bodies to become no Bodies, but a Fume and Wind, and then circulating for a season, thou shalt see them settle and putrifie.

Saturn then will hold the Earth, which is Occidental, Retentative and Autumnal, in the West; then proceed to the North, where Mercury holdeth the Water, where the Matter is Watery and Flegmatick, as it is Winter, and the North expulsive. But they who divide the Operation into Saturn's Rule, and after him succeeding Jupiter, ascribe to Saturn the whole of Putridness, and to Jupiter the time of variety of Colours. After Jupiter, who holds but twenty or two and twenty days, comes Luna, the third Person, bright and fair, and she holds twenty good days, sometimes two over and above: In this Computation it is good to count from the fortieth or fiftieth day of the first beginning of the Stone, to the fourteenth or sixteenth day of Jupiter's Reign, wherein in the washing of Laton there is still Blackness, though mixed with variety of gay Colours, which amounteth to the sum of days allowed by the Author in Putrifaction, to wit, Eighty four days. Accounting intire Blackness, with Augurellus, after four times eleven days and nights, which make four and forty: Or, according to another Philosopher, which saith, In the first Fifty Days there appears the True Crow, and after it in Threescore and Ten Dayes the White Dove; and after in Fourscore and Ten Days the Tyrian Colour.

By Tryal then this Venom to expel I did desire;
For which I did commit his Carkass to a gentle Fire.
Which done, a Wonder to the sight, but more to be rehearst;
The Toad with Colours rare through every side was pierc'd;
And White appear'd when all the sundry hews were past:
Which after being tinted Ruddy, for evermore did last.

I shall add my own Sentence: Mix thy two Natures well, and if thy matter be pure, both the Body, and the Water, and the internal Heat of thy Bath as it ought to be, and the external Fire gentle, and not violent; yet so that the Matter may circulate, the Spiritual Nature on the Corporal, in six and forty or fifty days expect the beginning of intire Blackness; and after six and fifty days more, or sixty, expect the Peacocks Tayl, and Colours of the Rainbow; and after two and twenty days more, or four and twenty, expect Luna perfect, the Whitest White, which will grow more and more glorious for the space of twenty days, or two and twenty at the most: After which, in a little more increased Fire, expect the Rule of Venus for the space of forty days, or two and forty; and after it the Rule of Mars two and forty days more; and after him the rule of Sol flavus forty days, or two and forty: And then in a moment comes the Tyrian Colour, the sparkling Red, the fiery Vermilion, and Red Poppy of the Rock.

Then of the Venom handled thus a Medicine I did make,
Which Venom kills, and saveth such as Venom chance to take.

Thus onely by Decoction these Natures are changed and altered so wonderfully to this blessed Tincture, which expelleth all Poyson, though it self were a deadly Poyson before the Preparation, yet after it is the Balsam of Nature, expelling all Diseases, and cutting them off as it were with one Hook, all that are accidental to Humane frail Body, which is wonderful.

Glory be to Him the Grantor of such secret Ways,
Dominion and Honour both, with Worship, and with Praise. Amen.

Now God only is the Dispenser of these glorious Mysteries: I have been a true Witness of Nature unto thee, and I know that I write true, and all Sons of Art shall by my Writings know that I am a Fellow-Heir with them of this Divine Skill. To the Ignorant I have wrote so plain as may be, and more I had written if the Creator of all things had given me larger Commission. Now to Him alone, as is due, be all Honour, and Power, and Glory, who made all things, and giveth knowledge to whom he listeth of his Servants, and conceals where he pleaseth: To Him be ascribed, as due is, all Service and Honour. And now, Brother, whoever enjoyeth this rare Blessing of God, improve all thy strength to do him service with it, for he is worthy of it, who hath created all things, and for whose sake they were and are created.

The Bosom Book of Sir George Ripley

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The Bosome-Book
of Sir George Ripley,
Canon of Bridlington.

Containing

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

London,
Printed for William Cooper, at the Pelican in Little Britain. 1683.

The Bosome-Book of Sir George Ripley. The whole Work of the Composition of the Philosophical Stone, of the great Elixir, and of the first Solution of the gross Body.

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

The making of our Gum or green Lyon.

Then put all these cold Liquors thus filtered into a fit Glass Vessel, and set it into Balneo Mariae to evaporate in a temperate heat, which done our Sericon will be coagulated into a green Gum called our green Lyon, which Gum dry well, yet beware thou burn not his Flowers not destroy his greeness.

The Extraction of our Menstue, or blood of our green Lyon.

Then take out the said Gum, and put it into a strong Retort of Glass very well Luted, and place it in your Furnace, and under that at the first, make sober Fire, and anon you shall see a faint Water issue forth, let it waste away; but when you see a white Smoak or fume issue forth, then put too a Receiver of Glass, which must have a very large Belly, and the mouth no wider then it may well receive into that the Neck of the Retort, which close well together that no fume issue forth of the Receiver. Then encrease your Fire by little and little till the fume which issueth be reddish, then continue the greater Fire, until drops like blood come forth, and no more fume will issue forth, and when that leaveth bleeding let it cool or asswage the Fire by little and little, and when all things are cold, then take away the Receiver, and close it fast suddenly, that the Spirits vanish not away, for this Liquor is called, our blessed Liquor, which Liquor keep close stopped in a Glass till hereafter. Then look into the Neck of the Retort, and therein you shall find a white hard Ryme as it were the Congelation of a Frosty vapour or much like sublimate, which gather with diligence and keep it apart, for therein are contained great Secrets which shall be shewed hereafter, after the great Work is ended.

The Creation of our Basis.

Then take out all the Feces which remaineth in the Retort, and are blackish like unto Soot, which Feces are called our Dragon, of which feces Calcyne one pound or more at your pleasure in a fervent hot Fire in a Potters or Glass-makers Furnace, or in a Furnace of vente (or a Wind Furnace) until it become a white Calx, as white as Snow, which

white Calx keep well, and clean by it self, for it is called the Basis and Foundation of the Work, and it is now called Mars, and our white fixed Earth or ferrum Philosophorum.

The Calcination of the black Feces called our black Dragon.

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

The Solution of the said Feces.

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

The Separation of the Elements whereof the first is the Air, and is also counted our Ardent-Water, and our Water Attractive.

Then put all the said putrified Menstruum into a Still of fine Venice Glass fit for the quantity thereof, put on the Limbeck, and close it to the Still with a fine Linnen Cloth dipt in the White of an Egg, and then set it in Balneo Mariae, put to the Receiver, which must be of a great length that the Spirit respire not out again, and with very temperate heat separate the Elements one from another, and then the Element of Air will issue forth first, which is an Oyl.

Our Ardent Water or Water Attractive is thus made.

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

By often rectifying the Ardent Water, there will come Aer in a white Oyl swimming above the Water, and there will remain behind a yellow Oyl which with a stronger Fire will also come over. Put Sublimate beaten small upon a Plate of Iron, and in the Cold it will dissolve into Water, and filter it then, and put upon it some of the Ardent Water, and it will draw to it self all the Mercury in the form of a green Oyl swimming aloft, which separate and put into a Retort, and distill first a Water, and afterward will come a green thick Oyl which is the Oyl of Mercury.

The Flood or Water of the Stone.

Then draw out the Flood or Water of the Stone by it self in another Receptory, which Liquor will be somewhat white, and draw it with a very gentle Fire of Balneo, until there remain in the bottom of the Still, a thick Oily substance like unto liquid Pitch, keep this Water by it self in a fit Glass very close stopped.

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

Our Mans Blood is thus made and rectified.

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

The Oyl or Fire, or the Earth of the Stone.

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

The Fiery Water.

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

The Earth.

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

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

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

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

Take the Cerus or Cream of the finest and purest Cornish Tinn moulten, reduce it into fine white Calx, put it into a fit Glass Still, and thereupon pour a convenient quantity of our Mercury, when it is our Lunary perfect, then distil that Mercury from the Calx again, and imbibe it therewith again, and again distill and reiterate this work until the Calx is become subtil and Oylly, yea and so subtil indeed, that it will flow upon a Plate of Copper Fiery hot as Wax, and not evaporate, which then will convert Copper into fine Silver, for the softness and neshness of the Tinn is taken away by the benefit of our Mercury confixed unto it by Virtue of which, it is made indurate and clean that it may agree with hard Bodies in fusion and in Malleation even as pure Silver. This work is very gainful and easie to be dealt withal, use it therefore until thou be Rich, and then I pray thee for our Lords sake go to the great work, which is hear truly set forth unto thee, according as by Practice I have wrought and proved the same. For the which thank God.

The Oyl which is the Element of Fire, and our red Mercury.

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

The work of Putrifaction.

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

The digestion of the white Stone.

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

Another Secret Accurtation of Sr. George Ripley.

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

The digestion of the Red Stone.

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

The Preparation of the Ferment to the white-Stone.

Then take Silver well purged from all Metalls, and other filth that may be joyned with it, and dissolve it in as much of our Lunary, which is our Mercury as the quantity of your Silver is, and in no greater quantity as near as you may, and set it upon warm Ashes close covered, and when it is thoroughly dissolved, the whole Liquor will be green, then rectifie our Mercury, clean from it again twice or thrice, so that no drop of our Mercury be left with it, then seal up the Oyl of Luna in a Chemia, and set it in Balneo to putrefie, until it shew all Colours, and at the last come to be Christaline white, which then is the white Ferment of Ferments.

The Fermentation of the white-Stone.

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

The Inceration of the White-stone.

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

The Preparation of the Red-ferment.

Then likewise take Gold very purely, first purged from all other Metals that may be joyned with it, with ten parts of Antimony, and then dissolve it in our Mercury or Liquor Solutive, as before you did the Lune, and when it is perfectly dissolved the Liquor will be Citrine; then in like manner, rectifie from it again our Mercury or Liquor Solutive, and then Seal up the Oyl of Gold Ferment in a Chemia fit for it, and set it in Balneo to Putrefie, which likewise will become black, and must stand still unremoved in digestion, until it become white, which then remove into a stronger Fire without opening the Glass, and then keep it until it change Colours and become Citrine, which then is also Ferment of Ferments for the Red-work.

The Fermentation of the Red-stone.

Then to the other half of the Stone before rubified, digested, and reserved for the Red-work, put so much of the

foresaid Gold Ferment as may contain the 4th part of the said Stone, and then fix them as you did the white-Stone, under Fire in a fixatory Vessel which will be then very well done in two or three days.

The work of Inceration for the Red.

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

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

The Multiplication or Increase of the Vertue and Goodness of the aforesaid White and Red Stones.

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

The way of Projection.

Because it is very combersom to melt a thousand thousand parts of any Body, when you will make Projection thus do. Take 100 ounces of Mercury first washed with Salt, and Vineger, and put it into a Crucible, and set it over the Fire, and when that doth begin to Wax hot, put in one ounce of your Elixir or Medicine thus prepared as afore taught you, upon that hundred parts of the cleansed Mercury, and all the said Mercury shall become Medicine, project, one ounce of that Medicine upon another 100 ounces, of other washed Mercury, and it shall all also be converted into Medicine, again the 3 time project one ounce of this congealed Mercury, upon another 100 ounces of washed Mercury, and all shall be converted into Medicine, then project, the 4th time 1 ounce of this, last congealed Mercury, upon another 100 ounces of other washed Mercury, and all that shall be converted into Gold or Silver, according as your Stone was prepared, to the white or red, praised be God.

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

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

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

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

This is the pleasant and dainty Garden of the Philosophers, which beareth the sweet smelling Roses white and red, abbreviated out of all the Work of the Philosophers, containing in it nothing superfluous or diminished, teaching to make infinitely Gold or Silver according as the Medicine was prepared, having Vertue to heal also all Grieffs and Sicknesses as well proceeding of cold as of hot Causes through the subtilty of his Nature, above all other Medicines of Physitians, for it comforteth the Healthy, strengthneth the weak, and maketh the Aged seem Young, and driveth away all Grief, and putteth venom from the Heart, it moysteth the Arteries and joynts it dissolveth all things in the Lungs, it cleanseth the Blood, it purgeth the Pipes, and keepeth them clean, and if the Sicknes be of one Months continuance, it healeth it in one day, if of one Years continuance, it healeth it in 12 days, and if the grief be very old, it healeth in one Month. To conclude, whosoever hath this Medicine, he hath an incomparable Medicine above all Treasures of the World, Praise God.

A short work of George Ripley

'A short Worke That beareth the Name... of George Ripley', is included in Elias Ashmole's *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum*, 1652, pages 393-396.

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Take Heavy, Soft, Cold, and Drye;
Clense him, and to Calx grind him subtilly:
Dissolve him in Water of the Wood;
If thou can do any good
Thereof, take a Tincture
And Earthly Calx good and pure.
Of this maist thou have with thy travaile,
Both Mercury, Water, and Oyle;
Out of the Ayre with Flames great,
Fire into the Earth doth Creepe;
In this Worke if thou wilt winn,
Take heed wherewith thou dost begin,
And in what manner thou dost work,
For loosing thy way in the darke;
And where, with what, and how, thy matter shal end;
I tell and Councell thee as my Frend:
Make Water of Earth, and Earth of Water;
Then art thou well onward in the matter.
For thou shalt find hid in the myre,
Both Earth, Water, Ayre, and Fire:
I tell thee my Brother, I will not flatter,
Of our Earth is made our Water:
The which is cleere white as Snow;
And makes our Earth Calcine and growe.
Blackness first to thee doth shew,
As by thy practise thou shalt know:
Dissolve and Calcine, oft, and oft;

With Congelation till the Body to whitnes be brought:
Make the Body fluxible, and flowing;
With the Earth, perfect, and teyning.
Then after Ferment is once done;
Whither thou wilt with Sunne or Moone,
Dissolve him with the Water of life,
Ycalled Mercury withouten strife:
Put the Soule with the Body, and Spirite
Together in one that they may meete
In his Dammes belly till he wax great,
With giving Drinke of his owne sweate:
For the Milke of a Cow to a Child my brother
Is not so sweete as the Milke of his Mother:
This Child that is so marveilously wrought,
Unto his Heritage must be brought:
His livelyhood is so worthy a thing,
Of abilitye to spend with a King:
He that beareth all this in minde,
And understandeth these Parables all;
With Seperation he may finde,
Poore and Rich, great and small;
With our Sulphur we make our Antimony, White and Red;
And thereof we make our Mercury quick, and dead.
This is a Mettall that I speake of one of the seaven,
If thou be a Clerk read what I meane.
There is no Plannet of six neither great nor small,
But if he be put to them, he will Calcine them all.
Unto red blood he must be brought;
Else of him thou gettest right nought:
Reach him then with the Wood Water,
Man, and Woman Clothed under one hatter,
In and of them is conceived a Child
Lovely of beauty, meeke and mild;
Out of the Earth with dropps stronge,
Nourish the Child in his Mothers wombe;
Till he be come to full age;
And then make thou a Mariage,
Betweene the Daughter, and the Sonne,
And then thou hast the Mastery wonn.
The beginning of this Worke, if thou wilt crave,
In holly Writ thou shalt it have:
Both in Masse Booke and in Psalter
Yea wrighten before the Preest at the Alter:
And what is Antimony that thou shalt worke,
I have written to thee if thou be a Clerke;
Looke about before if thou canst finde
Plainely written, which maketh men blind:
Our Werke is bringing againe our Mercury,
And that Philosophers call Solucion;
And if thou loose not the uncleane body,
Thou werkest without discretion;
The Inbibition of Water, is not the loosing;
But bringing the Body into water againe turning:
That is to say into such water,
That is turning the Body into his first Matter:
The second Werke is to bring,

Earth and Water to Congealing;
The cleansing of the Third is another
Unto Whiteness; my owne Brother;
With this Water of his owne,
That is full marvalous to be knowne:
The fourth werke is distilling
Of Water, and Earth upsweating.
And thus hast thou by one assent,
Earth, Ayre, Water, and Fire; the foure Elements:
The Ashes that are in the bottome of the Vessell,
Looke thou dispise them not though left,
For I tell thee right well,
There is the Diadem of our Craft.

Verses from the Ripley Scrowle

The verses from the *Ripley Scrowle* are included in Elias Ashmole's *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum*, 1652.

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Verses belonging to an emblematicall scrowle:
Supposed to be invented by Geo: Ripley.

I shall you tell with plaine declaracion,
Where, how, and what is my generacion:
Omogeni is my Father,
And Magnesia is my Mother:
And Azot truly is my Sister:
And Kibrick forsooth is my Brother:
The Serpent of Arabia is my name,
The which is leader of all this game:
That sometyme was both wood and wild,
And now I am both meeke and mild;
The Sun and the Moone with their might,
Have chastised me that was so light:
My Wings that me brought,
Hither and thither where I thought
Now with their might they downe me pull,
And bring me where they woll,
The Blood of myne heart I wiss,
Now causeth both Joy and blisse:
And dissolveth the very Stone,
And knitteth him ere he have done;
Now maketh hard that was lix,
And causeth him to be fix.
Of my blood and water I wis,
Plenty in all the World there is.
It runneth in every place;
Who it findeth he hath grace:
In the World it runneth over all,
And goeth round as a ball:
But thou understand well this,
Of the worke thou shalt miss.
Therefore know ere thou begin,
What he is and all his kin,

Many a Name he hath full sure,
And all is but one Nature:
Thou must part him in three,
And then knit him as the Trinity:
And make them all but one,
Loe here is the Philosophers Stone.

The Bird of Hermes is my name,
Eating my wings to make me tame.

In the Sea withouten lesse,
Standeth the Bird of Hermes:
Eating his Wings variable,
And thereby maketh himself more stable;
When all his Fethers be agon,
He standeth still there as a stone;
Here is now both White and Red,
And also the Stone to quicken the dead,
All and sune withouten fable,
Both hard, and nesh and malliable
Understand now well aright,
And thanke God of this sight.

Take thou Phoebus that is so bright,
That sitteth so high in Majesty;
With his beames that shineth soe light,
In all places where ever that he be,
For he is Father to all living things,
Maynteyner of Lyfe to Crop and Roote,
And causeth Nature forth to spring;
With his wife being soote,
For he is salve to every sore,
To bring about thys precious worke;
Take good hede unto his lore,
I say to learned and to Clerk,
And Omogeny is my Name:
Which God shaped with his owne hand,
And Magnesia is my Dame;
Thou shalt verily understand,
Now heere I shall begin,
For to teach thee a ready way:
Or else litle shalt thou wyn,
Take good heed what I say;
Devide thou Phoebus in many a parte;
With his beames that byn so bright,
And thus with Nature him Coarte,
The which is mirroure of all light:
This Phoebus hath full many a Name,
Which that is full hard for to know;
And but thou take the very same,
The Philosophers Stone thou shalt not know,
Therefore I counsell ere thou begin:
Know him well what it be,

And that is thick make it thin;
For then it shall full well like the.
Now understand well what I meane,
And take good heed thereunto,
The worke shall else litle be seen:
And tourne thee unto mikle woe,
As I have said in this our Lore,
Many a Name I wiss it have,
Some behinde, and some before;
As Philosophers of yore him gave.

On the Ground there is a Hill,
Also a Serpent within a Well:
His Tayle is long with Wings wide,
All ready to fly on every side,
Repaire the Well round about,
That the Serpent pas not out;
For if that he be there agone,
Thou loosest the vertue of the Stone,
What is the Ground thou mayst know heere,
And also the Well that is so cleere:
And eke the Serpent with his Tayle
Or else the worke shall litle availe,
The Well must brenne in Water cleare,
Take goog heede for this thy Fyre,
The Fire with Water brent shalbe,
And Water with Fire wash shall he;
Then Earth on Fire shalbe put,
And Water with Air shalbe knit,
Thus ye shall go to Putrefaccion,
And bring the Serpent to reduction.
First he shalbe Black as any Crow,
And downe in his Den shall lye full lowe:
Iswel'd as a Toade that lyeth on ground,
Burst with bladders fitting so round,
They shall to brast and lye full plaine,
And thus with craft the Serpent is slaine:
He shall shew Collours there many a one,
And tourne as White as wilbe the bone,
With the water that he was in,
Wash him cleane from his sin:
And let him drink a litle and a lite,
And that shall make him faire and white,
The which Whitnes is ever abiding,
Lo here is the very full finishing:
Of the White Stone and the Red,
Lo here is the true deed.

The Mystery of Alchymists

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The Mistery of Alchymists,

**Composed by Sir Geo: Ripley
Chanon of Bridlington.**

When Sol in Aries and Phoebus shines bright,
The Elements reviving the new Year springing
The Son by his Vertue gives Nature & Light,
And moysture refresheth all things growing:
In the season of the Yeare when the Sun waxeth warme,
Freshly and fragrante the Flowers doe grow,
Of Natures subtile working we cannot discerne,
Nor yet by our Reason we can it not know,
In foure Elements is comprehended things Three,
Animalls, Vegetabills, Mineralls must be,
Of this is our Principle that we make our Stone,
Quality and Quantity is unknowne to many one.
Quality (Father) would I faine know, Son.
Of what nature it is and what it hath in his kinde.
As Colours divers which on the ground do grow, Father.
Keep well this secret (Son) and marke it in thy minde.
Without Proportion (Father) how should I it know, Son.
This working now is far from my minde
Nature and kinde (Son) together do grow, Father.
Quality by waight (Son) shalt thou never finde.
To Separate Elements (Father) I must needs know, Son.
Either in Proportion which be more or less.
Out of our Principle foure Elements thou shalt draw, Father.
Thou shalt neede nothing else that needefull is;
Our Principle in quality is so perfectly mixed,
By vertue of the Son and his quality,
So equally Joyned, so well mixed may be.
This Principle (Father) is but one thing, Son.
Good (Father) tel me where it doth grow.
In every place (Son) you shall him well finde; Father.
By Tast and by Colour thou shalt him well know;
Fowle in the Ayer with it doe fly,
And Fishes doe swim there with in the Sea,
With Reason of Angels you may it discerne,
Both Man and Woman to governe,
With our fixed Body (Son) we must thus begin.
Of him make Mercury and Water cleare,
Man and Woman is them within,
Married together by vertue of our Fire,
The Woman in he working is full wild,
Be well aware she goe not out;
Till she have conceived and borne a Chylde,
Then all his kin on him shal lout;
In their workes they be unstable,
The Elements they be so raw;
And their Colour so variable,
As sometyme like the head of a Crow,
When he is black ye may well like,

Putrefaction must go before,
After Blacke he wilbe White,
Then Thank ye God the Chyld is borne.
This Chyld is both King and Emperour,
Through his region both far and neere;
All the World doth him honour,
By the vertue he hath taken of the Fire:
His first Vertue is White and pure,
As any Christall shining cleere,
Of White tincture then be you sure;
By vertue taken of our Fire,
His first Vesture that is so White,
Betokeneth his Virginity,
A similitude even thereto like,
And according to the Trinity:
Our Medicen is made of things Three,
Against which the Philosophers cannot say nay,
The Father, the Sone in one degree,
Corpus, Spiritus & Anima.
When Nature is with Nature, thou mayst fruite finde,
By proportion more or lesse,
In practice hereof many men be blinde,
Because they understand not what Nature is;
His second Vesture as Gold is Red,
In his Vessel bright shining,
A Daidem set on his head,
Richer than any earthly thing.
His third Vesture is Purple pure,
Like Sun-beames he shineth bright and clere,
Of Red tincture then be you sure:
By the vertue he hath taken our Fire.
My beloved Son I command thee,
As thou wilt have my love and blessing,
That unto God kneele on thy knee,
Unto him give laude and thankeing;
For theis guifts of grace geven unto thee,
To have trew knowledge of this worthy Scyence,
That many men seeke by land and sea,
And cannot finde it for any expence:
I shall shew thee my Son a hid Secret,
Beacause thou art vertuous in thy living,
Of me else shouldst thou never it weet,
And for thou art wife in thy Councell keeping,
And therefore I charge thee on my blessing,
Not to shew it to any man living,
For it is the first Principle of our blessed Stone,
Through which our noble worke is releevd,
Note well that I shew now to thee my Son,
If Sulphur be absent our worke is deprived;
Our Sulphur my Son is Water and Fire,
Constraining the Body till it be dead,
Oh hem thou hast never thy desire,
Till he be bloe as any Lead,
After all this he doth revive,
That in his Vessel before was dead;
I can no better in my reason contrive,

Then to figure him to the greate God head.
For as there dyedno more then One,
Howbeit that there be persons Three,
The Father, The Sone by might is one:
The holy Ghost make full our Trinity:
A similitude like unto our Stone,
In him ben things three which be concluded all in one,
Our Sulphur is likened to the holy Ghost,
For he is quick, called the Spirit of Slyfe,
In his working of might he is most.
He raiseth our Body from death to lyfe,
Many (my Son) with him do rife,
The holy Gospell therein is expert,
The number of my reason cannot contrive,
Multum & quantum fructum adsert:
I liken our Sulphur to the Adamant Stone,
That Steele drawes to him naturally,
So doth our Sulphur the woman,
When she from her husband would flye.
I muse greatly (Father) and mervaile in minde, Son.
Whereof this Stone is ingendered,
And also of what manner of kinde,
For I have traveled many a Country,
In vallies low and on hills high,
And spurred therefore of foes and freind,
Yet could I never that Sulphur see,
Nor in any place wat I where him to finde.
Son he is made of the Elements, Father.
That God hath given both soule and lyfe,
From Mettall he may never be absent,
For he rules both man and wife.
Father I pray you for charity, Son.
Where shall I this Sulphur finde,
For perfectly I know him not by quality,
Nor yet to fore know him by kinde.
In our Water Son keep this in minde, Father.
For there he will appear as white as snow.
Gramarcy Father to me ye be full kinde, Son.
For through your teaching full well I it know,
Now Father I pray you for charity,
The while it is in your minde,
To ken the red Sulphur that you will teach me,
And then I trust your Doctrine to finde.
White and Red Son be both one in kinde, Father.
Now hast thou all thy desire,
Keepe well this secret and close it in thy minde,
His tincture and growing is by vertue of our Fire,
For in our Fire our Stone will grow,
And there his riches he doth encrease,
And so doth no Stone that I do know,
That in the fire will put him in prease;
We liken him therefore unto the Sun,
That to all Elements giveth light.
Never sith the World was begun,
Was any but he of so much might,
Were he never of so high degree,

Saphir, Diamond or Emerald Stone,
The Turcas, or the rich Ruby,
Of all vertuous Stones set ower alone,
The greatest Carbuncle that is full of light,
May not with our Stone Compaire,
For if they in the Fire should fight,
The Carbuncle of vertue should be full bare,
To destroy our Stone, Son that will not be,
The Elements in him be so equall;
He is an Oyle incumbustible,
And of all things most imperiall.
In which Elements (Father) is our Sulphur in? Son.
Is he in all, or in any one?
In all (Son) he needes must be, Father.
For Separation of Elements make we none,
Sulphur in Elements Son we may not see,
By Nature in them he is so privily mixed,
In Elements he is a quality,
Our Stone will never else be perfectly fixed.
Quality (Son) growes also in fire,
Betwixt the White Stone and the Redd,
For many Colours there will appere,
While the tyme the Woman be dead.
Father must the Woman needes be dead? Son.
Our Stone else my Son will never be Redd; Father.
For whereas a Woman is in presence,
There is much moysture and accidence,
Wetnes and humours in her be,
The which would drown'd our Quality;
Perceive well (Son) by Noahs flood,
To much moysture was never good.
Like as quality is hid in quantity,
So must our Erth in Waters be,
The riches in him thou shalt finde,
After alteration of kinde,
His Oyle in him is congelate,
This makes our Body liquefact,
Sulphur and Oyle all of one kinde,
Which makes oure Stone rich and coloring,
I cannot tell thee Son a richer thing,
Then he is in the Fire during,
The Fire to him may do no wrong,
Sulphur of Nature makes him so strong.
How to make our Stone (Father) I would faine know. Son.
In soft heates my (Son) Elements will meete, Father.
Hast not to fast whilst they be rawe,
In the Vessell (Son) the better thou shalt him keepe,
Rule well the Fire and beware of the Lawe,
Shut well the Vessell for going forth of the Spirit;
Soe shall you all things the better keepe;
For how to get him againe it is strange to know,
It is hard for some men to make Elements meete,
Keepe well this Secret Son and God daily praise,
Put into tht Vessell Water cleare,
And set it in Fire full forty dayes,
And then in the Vessell blackness will appeare,

When that he is black he will change tyte,
Many Colers in him then will appeare,
From coulour to colour till it be white,
The it is tyme Son to change the Fire,
And melt the heat to your desire,
And if you will have him White still,
Then must you your Medicine apply,
A dry Fire put him till,
And a moyst Fire naturally,
Till he be made fixed,
For to take Mercury before his flight,
As he is by nature privily mixed,
Of fusion then he shalbe light,
And if you to his proportion take,
Fine Luna then will he make,
So micle of piercing will he be,
Both fluxible with penetrabilitie;
And (Son) if thou wilt have thy Medicine Red,
In a dry Fire thou shalt him keepe,
Ever still in one steed,
That never your Vessell come to wet.
So hard, so heavy and so peircing, Son.
(Father) this a wonderous thing,
So hot, so moyst, so light, so wet,
This greate Secret Father will I keepe,
So white, so red, so profitable,
Of all Stones most incomparable.
He may do more than any King, Father.
He is so rich Son in his working,
Gould and Silver men would faine have,
Poore and rich for it do crave,
Thay that of it have most aboundance,
Of the people have most obaisance,
To serve them both day and night,
And in the feeld will for it fight,
Therefore Son upon my blessing,
Keepe secretly this precious cunning,
Of thy Councell make neither King nor Knight,
If they knew they would set it light;
For when they have what they will,
God's curse wil come they say the untill,
For had I wist and had I wend,
That commeth evermore behinde,
Our Mercury my (Son) is white and thin,
In our Vessell shining bright and cleere,
Our Sulphur is in him within,
Burning him more then our dry Fire,
He fixes him more in one yeare,
By his naturall working I understand,
Then doth the Sonne by his dry Fire,
The years a long thousand,
In short space we may have done,
When our Medicine thou wilt assay,
Thou maist make both Sol and Lune,
In lesse space then in one day.
Father is it Water in the well springing, Son.

Or is it the Water in the river running?
Other Water (Father) can I not finde.
Noe (Son) it is of another kinde,
Howbeit it is Water cleere,
Our Sulphur in him is soe cleaving,
He may not be departed by any fire,
I tell thee the throath in this thing.
By no fire (Father) how may that be? Son.
Fire he is ever brenning, Father.
Our Sulphur is made of the Sun and such humidity
That in the Fire he is ever during.
The tyme of our working would I know, Son.
In what space might be made our Stone,
By Corne and Frut (Son) thou maist it wel know.
Once in a yeare it is afore thee done;
The Sun in the Zodiak about doth gonne,
Though the twelve Signes once in a yeare,
Soe long it is ere we can make our Stone.
Haste not too fast but rule well thy Fire, Father.
The vertue of our Stone few men can tell,
The Elements in him be so mighty,
Aboundance of treasure in him do dwell;
For in riches all Stones exceeds he.

Finis.

George Ripley's Epistle to King Edward

This is included in *The compound of alchymy. Or the ancient hidden art of archemie: conteining the right and perfectest meanes to make the philosophers stone... Divided into twelve gates... Whereunto is adioyned his epistle to the king, his vision, his wheele, and his other workes... Set foorth by Raph Rabbards.* London, 1591.

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The Epistle by George Ripley Written to King Edward 4.

O Honorable Lord, and most victorious Knight,
With grace and vertue abundantly endewed,
The safegaurd of England, and the maintainer of right;
That God you loveth, indeed he that well shewed:
Wherefore I trust this land shalbe renewed
With joy and riches, with charitie and peace,
So that olde ranckors new understrewed,
Tempestuous troubles, and wretchednes shall cease.

And therefore sith I see by tokens right evident,
That God you guideth, and how that you be vertuous,
Hating sinne, and all such as be insolent,
How that also manslaughter to you is odious,
Upon the judgement also that you be piteous:
Me seemeth ruthe it were but that you should live long;
For of your great fortune you are not presumptuous,
Nor vengeable of spirit to revenge you of each wrong.

These considered with others in your most noble State,
Like as God knoweth, and people doo witnes beare,
So entirely me mooveth, that I must algate
Record the same, and therein be no flatterer:
And not that only, but also to write here
Unto your Highnes, humbly to present
Great secretts, which in farre countries I did learne,
And which by grace to me most unworthie are lent.

Once to your Lordship such things I did promise,
What time you did command to send unto me,
And sith that I wrote it in secret wise,
Unto your grace from the Universitie
Of Louaine, when God fortun'd me by grace to see
Greater secrets and much more perfite,
Which onely to you I will disclosed to be,
That is the great Elixer both red and white.

For like it you to trust that truly I have found,
The perfect was of most secret Alchymie,
Which I will never truly for marke nor for pound
Make common but to you, and that conditionally,
That to youre selfe you shall keepe it full secretly,
And only to use it as may be to Gods pleasure,
Else in time comming to God I should abyee,
For my discovering of his secret treasure.

Therefore be you well advised and with good deliberation,
For of this secret shall know no other creature,
But onely you as I make faithfull protestation,
For all the time that herein life I shall endure,
Whereto I will your Lordship me ensure, To my desire in this my oath for to agree,
Least I to me the wrath of God procure,
For such revealing of his great gift and privitie.

If God fortune you by me to win this treasure,
Serve him devowtly with more lawde and thanking,
Praying his Godhead in life that you may so endure,
His gifts of grace, and fortune to use to his pleasing,
Most especially intending over all thing,
To your power and cunning his precepts ten
So to observe, that into no danger your selfe you bring,
But that you in glory may see him hereafter, Amen.

And yet moreover I will your Lordship to pardon me,
For openly with pen I will it never it write,
But whensoever also this precious secret, most of delight,
By mouth also this precious secret, most of delight,
How may be made perfect Elixers both red and white,
Plaine unto your Lordship it shall declared be,
And if it please you, with easie expences and respite,
I will them worke by grace of the Trinitie.

But notwithstanding for perill that may befall,
If I dare not here plainly the knott unbinde,

Yet in my writing I will not be so misticall,
But that by studie the true knowledge you may finde,
How that each thing is multiplied in his kinde,
And how the likenes of bodies metaline be transmutable
I will declare, that if you feele me in your minde,
My writing you shall finde true and no fained fable.

As Philosophers in the metheors doe write,
The likenes of bodies metaline be not transmutable,
But after he added these wordes of more delight,
Without they be reduced to their beginning materiable,
Wherefore such bodies within nature be liquiable,
Minerall and metaline may be mercurizate,
Conceive you may this science is not opinionable,
But very true, by Raymond and others determinate,

In the saide booke the Philosophers speake also,
Therein if it please your Highnes for to reade,
Of divers sulphures, and especially of two,
And of two mercuries joyned to them indeed,
Whereby he doth true understanders leade,
To the knowledge of the principle which is onely trew,
Both red, moist, pure, and white, as I have espied,
Which be neverthesse found but of verie few.

And these two things be best, he added anone
For him that worketh the Alchymie to take:
Our golde and our silver therewith to make all one,
Wherefore I say who will our pearle and Ruby make,
The said principles looke he not forsake:
For at the beginning, if his principles be true,
And if so be by craft he can them also bake,
In th'end truly his worke he shall not rue.

But one great secret right needfull to be knowne,
That though the Philosophers speake plurally,
All is but one thing you may me well trowe,
In kinde which is our base principally,
Whereof doth spring both white and red naturally,
And yet the white must come first out of the red,
Which is not wrought manually,
But natually, craft helping out of our lead.

For all the partes of our most precious stone,
As I can prove, be coessentiall and concrete,
Moreover there is no true principle but one,
Full long is was ere I therewith could meete,
Who can reduce him and knoweth his heate,
And onely kinde with kinde can well redresse,
Till filthie originall be clensed from his seate,
He likely is to finde our secrets more and lesse.

Therefore worke kinde onely with his owne kinde,
And so your Elements joyne that they are not strive.
This poynt also for any beare in minde,
That passive natures you turne into active,

Of water, fire, and wind of earth make blive,
And of the quadrangle make a figure round,
Then have thou the honie of our bee-hive,
One ounce well worth one thousand pound.

The principall secret of secrets all,
Is true proportion which may not be behinde,
Wherein I counsell thee be not superficiall,
The true conclusion if you thinke to finde,
Turne earth into water and water into winde,
Therefore make fire and beware of the flood
Of Noah, wherein many men are so blinde,
That by this science they get liittle good.

I counsell you eate and drink temperately,
And beware well that Iposarche come not in place,
Neshe not your wombe by drinking immoderately,
Least you quench naturall heate in little space,
The colour will tell appearing in your face,
Drinke no more therefore than you may eate,
Walke up and downe after an easie pace,
Chase not your bodie too sore to sweate.

With easie fire after moving when you sweate,
Warme your bodie and make it drie againe,
By rivers and fountaines walke after meate,
At morning time visit the high mountaine,
That Phisick so biddeth I read certaine,
So high the mountaines yet doe you not ascend,
But that you may downwardes your way have plaine,
And with your mantle from colde ye you defend.

Such labour is wholesome your sweate for to drie,
With napkin, and after it see you take no colde,
For grosse humours be purged by sweate kindely,
Used Diacameron then confect with perfect golde,
Hermidocles for watery humors good I holde,
Use spericon perforat with milke of tincturiall,
And sperma Caeti with red wine, and when you wax olde,
And Goats milke sod with wine nourisheth moysture radicall.

But a good Phisitian who so intendeth to be,
Our lower Astronomie needeth well to know,
And after that to learne well urine in a glass to see,
And if it neede to be chafed the fire for to blow,
Then wittily it by divers wayes for to throw
After the cause to make a medicine bliue,
Truly telling the infirmities all on a row,
Who this can doe by his Phisick is like to thrive.

We have our heaven incorruptible of the quintessence,
Ornate with signes, Elements, and starres bright,
Which moysteth our earth by subtile influence,
And of it a secret sulphure hid from sight,
It fetcheth by vertue of his active might,
Like as the Bee fetcheth honey out of the flower,

Which thing could doe no other worldly weight.
Therefore to God be all glory and honour.

And like as yce to water doth relent,
Where it was congealed by violence of colde,
When Phoebus it shineth with his heate influent,
Even so to water minerall reduced is our golde,
As witnesseth plainly, Albert, Raymond, and Arnold,
By heate and moysture and by craft occasionate,
Which congelation of the spirits, loe now I have tolde,
How our materialls together must be proportionate.

At the dyers craft you may learne this science,
Beholding with water how decoction they make
Upon the wad or madder easily and with patience,
Till tinctures doe appeare are which then the cloth doth take,
Therein so fixed that they will never forsake
The cloth, for washing after they joynd be,
Even so our tinctures with the water of our lake,
We draw by boyling with the ashes of Hermes tree.

Which tinctures when they by craft are made perfite,
So dyeth mettles with colours aye permanent,
After the qualitie of the medicine, red or white,
That never away with anie fire wilbe brent:
To this example if you take good tent,
Unto your purpose the rather you shall winne.
And let your fire be easie, and not too fervent,
Where nature did leave what time you did beginne.

First calcine, and after that putrifie,
Dissolve, distill, sublime, discend, and fixe,
With Aqua vitae oft times both wash and drie,
And make a marriage the bodie and spirite betwixt,
Which thus together naturallie if you can mixe,
In loosing of the bodie the water congeald shalbe,
Then shall the bodie die utterlie of the flixe,
Bleeding and changing his colour, as you shall see.

The third day againe to life he shall arise,
And devoure birds, and beasts of the wildernesse,
Crowes, poppingaies, pies, peacocks, and mavois,
The Phoenix, with the Eagle, and the Griffin of fearfulnessse,
The greene Lion, with the red Dragon he shall distresse,
With the white Dragon, and the Antelop, Unicorn & Panther,
With other beasts and birds both more and lesse,
The Basiliske also, which almost each one doth feare.

In bus and nibus he shall arise and descend,
Up to the Moone, and sith up to the Sunne,
Through the Ocean sea, which round is withouten end,
Onely shippen within a little glassen tunne;
When he is there come, then is the mastrie wonne:
About which journey, great goods you shall not spend,
And yet you shall be glad that ever it was begunne,
Patiently if you list to your worke attend.

For then both bodie and spirite with oyle and water,
Soule, and tincture, one thing both white and red,
After colours variable it containeth, what souer men clatter;
Which also is called after he hath been dead
And is revived, our Markaside, our Magnet, and our lead,
Our Sulphur, our Arsinike, and our true Calx vive,
Our Sunne, our Moone, our ferment and our bread,
Our toad, our Basiliske, our unknowen bodie, our man, our wife.

Our bodie thus naturally by craft when he is renovate
Of the first order, is medicine called in our Philosophie;
Which oftentimes againe must be propertualicate,
The round wheele turning of our Astronomie,
And so the Elixer of spirits you must come: for why
Till the sonne of the fixed by the sonne of the fixer be overgone,
Elixer of bodies, named it is onely,
And this found secret poynt, deceaveth manie one.

This naturall proces by helpe of craft thus consummate,
Dissolveth Elixer spiritull in our unctuous humiditie,
Then in Balneo Mare together let them be circulate,
Like new honie or oyle, till perfectly they be thickened.
Then will that medicine heal all infirmitie,
And turne all mettals to Sunne and Moone perfectly,
Thus you shall make the great Elixer, and Aurum potable,
By the grace and will of God, to whom be all honour and glorie.

Amen. quod George Ripley.

FINIS.

George Ripley's Epistle to King Edward unfolded

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Sir George Riplie's Epistle to King Edward unfolded.

This Epistle as it was imediately written to a King, who was in his generation, both wise and valiant, so it doth comprise the whole secret, both learnedly described, and yet Artificially vailed, yet as the Author testifieth, that in this Epistle he doth plainly untie the main knot. So I can and do testifie with him, that there is nothing desirable for the true attaining of the mysterie, both in Theory and Practick of it, which is not in this short Epistle fully taught. This then I intend as a key to all my former writings, and assure you on my faithful word doubtfully or mystically, as I have in all my other writings, seeming to aver some things which taken without a figure, are utterly false, which we did onely to conceal this Art: This key therefore we intend not to make common; and shall intreat you to keep it secret to your self, and not to communicate it, except it be to a sure friend, who you are confident will not make it publick. And this request we make upon very good grounds, knowing that all our writings together, are nothing to this, by reasons of the contradictions wch we have woven into them, which here is not done in the least measure. I shall therefore in this Epistle take up a new method, and that different from the former, and shall first draw up the substance of the Philosophie couched in this Epistle, into several Conclusions, and after elucidate the same.

The first Conclusion is drawn from the ninth stave of this Epistle, the eight first staves being only complemental, and that is, That as all things are multiplied in their kind, so may be Mettals, which have in themselves a capacity of being transmuted, the imperfect to perfect.

The second Conclusion in the tenth stave is, That the main ground for the possibility of transmutation, is the possibility of reduction of all Mettals, and such Minerals as are of Metallick principles, into their first Mercurial matter.

The third Conclusion is in the eleventh stave, That among so many Metalline or Mineral Sulphurs and so many Sulphurs there are but two that are related to our work, which Sulphurs have their Mercuries essentially united to them.

The fourth conclusion from the same stave is, That he who understands these two Sulphurs and Mercuries aright, shall find that the one is the most pure red Sulphur of gold, which is Sulphur in manifesto and Mercurius in occulto, and that other is most pure white Mercury, which is indeed true quicksilver, in manifesto and Sulphur in occulto, these are our two principles.

The fifth Conclusion from the twelfth stave is, That is a mans principles be true, and his operations regular, his event will be certain, which event is no other than the true mystery.

These Conclusions are but few in number, but of great weight, the amplification, illustration, and ilucidation therefore of them will make a Son of Art truly glad.

For the first, Forasmuch as it is not for our purpose here to invite any to the Art, onely intending to lead and guide the Sons of Art; we shall not prove the possibility of Alchimy, by many arguments, having done it abundantly in another Treatise. He then that will be incredulous, let him be incredulous, he that will cavil, let him cavil; but he whose minde is perswaded of the truth of the Art, and of it's dignity, let him attend to what is in the Illustration of these five Conclusions discovered, and his heart shall certainly rejoyce.

We shall therefore briefly Illustrate this first Conclusion, and insist there are more largely, where the secrets of the Art are most couched.

For this first then which concluded in effect the truth of the Art, and its reality, he that would therein be more satisfied in it, let him read the Testimony of all Philosophers, and he that will not believe the Testimonies of so many men, being most of them, men of renown in their own time, he will cavill also against all other Arguments. We shall onely hold to Riplyes Testimony in this our key, who in the fourth stave, assures the King that at Lovain he first saw the greatest and most perfect secrets, namely the two Elixers; And in this following verse, craves his confident credit, that he hath himself truly found the way of secret Alchimy, and promiseth the discovery of it to the King, onely upon condition of secrecy.

And in the eighth stave, though he protests never to write it by pen, yet proffers the King at his pleasure, to shew him ocularly the red and white Elixer, and the working of them, which he promiseth will be done for easies costs in time. So then he that will doubt the truth of the Art, must account this famous Author, for a most simple mad Sophister, to write and offer such things to his Prince, unles he were able in effect to do what he promised, from which imputation his writings, and also the histories of him, of his fame, gravity, and worth will sufficiently clear him.

We now come to the second Conclusion, the substance of which is, that all Mettals and bodies of Metalline principles, may be reduced to their first Mercurial matter, and this is the main and chief ground for the possibility of transmutation. On this we must insist largely & fully, for (trust me) this is the very hinge on which our secrets hang.

First, then know that all the Mettals, and serveral Minerals have Mercury for their next matter, to which (for the most part, nay indeed always) there adheres, and is concoagulated an external Sulphur, which is not Metalline, but distinguishable from the internal kerne of the Mercury.

This Sulphur is not wanting even in common Argent vive, by the Mediation of which, it may be precipitated into the form of a dry powder. Yea and by a liqour (the Alchahest) well known to us, (though nothing helping of this Art of transmutation) it may be so fixed, that it may endure all fires, the Test and Coppel, and this without the addition of any thing to it, the liqour (by vertue whereof it is fixed) coming away intire, both in its Pondus and vertue.

This Sulphur in gold and silver is pure, in the other Mettals it is less pure, therefore in gold and silver it is fixed, in others it is fugitive, in all the Mettals it is coagulated; in Mercury or Argent vive, it is coagulable; in gold, silver and Mercury, this Sulphur is so strongly united, that the Antients did ever judge Sulphur and Mercury to be all one, but we by the help of the liqour, (the Alchahest) the invention of which, in these parts of the World we owe to Paracelsus (though among the Moors and Arabians it hath been and is (at this day) commonly known to the acuter sort of chemists) but this I say we know that the Sulphur which is in Mercury coagulable, and in the Mettals coagulated, is external to the nature of Mercury, and may be separated in the form of a tintured Metallick Oyle, the remaining Mercury being then void of all Sulphur, save that which may be called its inward Sulphur, and is now incoagulable of it self (Though by our Elixer it is to be coagulated) but of itself, it can neither be fixt nor precipitated, nor

sublimed, but remains unaltered in all corrosive waters, and in all digestions of heat. One way then of Mercury azating all Mettals and Minerals, is by the liquor Alcahest, which out of all such bodies as have Mercury in their constitution, can separate a running Argent vive, from which Argent vive all its sulphur is then separated, save that onely which is internal and central to the Mercury, which internal Sulphur of Mercury no corrosive can touch, Next to this way of universal Reduction, there are also some other particular wayes, by which Lead, Tin, Antimony, yea, even Copper, and Iron may be reduced into a running quicksilver, by the help of Salts, which because (being corporeal) they pierce not so radically as the forenamed liquor doth, they therefore do not spoile the Mercury of its Sulphur but that as much Sulphur as there is in common Mercury, so much also there is in this Mercury of the bodies, onely this Mercury hath specificated qualities according to the nature of the Mattal or Mineral, from which it was extracted, and from that reason (as to our work, which is to dissolve perfect species of Mettals) it hath no more vertue than common Argent vive: There is then but only one humidity, which is applicable unto our work, which certainly is neither Tin nor Copper, nor is drawn from any thing, which nature hath formed, but from a substance compounded by the Art of the Philosopher. So then, if a Mercury drawn from the bodies, have not onely the same deficiency of heat and superfluity of foeces as common Mercury hath, but also a distinct specificated form, it must (by reason of this its form) be so much the farther remote from our Mercury then common Argent vive is.

Our Art therefore is to compound two principles (one in which the salt, and another in which the Mercury of nature doth abound) which are not yet perfect, nor yet totally imperfect and (by consequence) may therefore (by our Art) be exalted which that (which is totally perfect) cannot be: and then by common Mercury to extract not the Pondus, but the celestial vertue out of the compound, which vertue (being fermental) begets in the common Mercury an offspring more noble than it self, which is our true Hermaphrodite, which will congeal it self, and dissolve the bodies; observe but a grain of Corn in which scarce a discernable part is sprout, and this sprout, if it were out of the grain, would dye in a moment; the whole grain is sowed, yet the sprout onely produceth the herb: So is it in our body, the fermental spirit that is in it, is scarce a third part of the whole, the rest is of no value, yet all is joyned in the composition, and the faeculent corporeous, part of the body comes away with the dreggs of the Mercury. But beyond the example given of a grain it may be observed that the hidden and spiritual vertue of this our body, doth purge and purifie its matrix of water, in which it os sowed, that is, it makes it cast forth a great quantity of filthy earth, and a great deal of Hydropical saline moisture. For instance thy washings (for a tryall) with pure clean fountain water, weigh first a pint of the same water, and take the exact weight of it, then wash thy compound eight or ten times, save all the faeces, weigh thy body and Mercury exactly, weigh thy faeces being very dry, then distill or sublime all that will sublime a very little quick Mercury will ascend; then put the Residue of the faeces in a crucible, set them on the coals, and all the faeculency of the Mercury will burn like a coal, yet without fume; when that is all consumed, weigh the remaining faeces, and thou shalt find them to be two thirds of thy body, the other being in the Mercury, weigh the Mercury which thou sublimedst, and the Mercury prepared by itself, and the weight of both will not recompence thy Mercury weight by farre. So then boile up thy water to a skin, in which thou madest thy Lotions, for that is a thick water: and in a cool place thou shalt have Christals, which is the salt of Mercury Crude, and no way fit for Medicines: yet it is a content for the Artists to see how the Heterogeneityties of Mercury are discovered, which no other Art save the liquor of Alcahest can do, and that in a destructive, and not a generative way as this is, for this operation of ours is made between male and female, within their own kind, between which there is a ferment which effecteth that which no other thing in the world could do. In all truth, I tell you, that if you should take our imperfect compound body, per se, and Mercury, per se, and them alone, though you might bring out of the one a most pure Sulphur, and out of the other a Mercury of Mercury, which is the nut of Mercury, yet with these thou couldst effect nothing, for fermental virtue is the wonder of the World, and it is by it, that water becomes Herbs, Trees, and Plants, Fruits, Flesh, Blood, Stones, Minerals, and everything, look then for it onely, and rejoyce in it as in a deservedly invaluable treasure; Now know that fermentation, works not out of kind, neither do salts ferment Mettals; Wilt thou know then whence it is that some fixt Alcalyes do extract a Mercury out of Minerals, and out of the more imperfect Metals, consider then, that in all these bodies the Sulphur is not so radically mixt and united, as it is in Silver and Gold. Now Sulphur is of Kin to divers Alcalyes, that are ordinarily dissolved or melted with it, and by this means the Mercurial parts are disjoyned, and the Argent vive is by fire separated. The Mercury thus separated, is spoyled of its Sulphur when as indeed there needs onely a depuration of the Sulphur by separating the impure from the pure; but these salts having separated the Sulphur do leave the Mercury worse, that is, more estranged from a Metallick nature, than it was before, for in its composition that Sulphur of Saturn will not burn, but though it be sublimed, calcined, made sugar, or vitrefied, yet by fire and fluxes it still returns to the same it was in before, but its Sulphur being (as is aforesaid) separated, will take fire, if joyned with Salt-peter, even as common Sulphur doth, so that the Salts act on the Sulphur of which they rob the Mercury; they act not on the Mercury for want of ferment which is not to be found, but onely among Homogeneall things. Therefore the ferment of bread leavens not a stone, nor doth the ferment of anyanimal or vigeatable, ferment a mettal or mineral.

So then, though our Gold thou mightest obtaine a Mercury by the help of the Liquor, of that first ens of Salt, yet that Mercury would never accomplish our work, whereason the otherside Mercury made out of Gold by our Mercury, though there be three parts of our Mercury to one of the Gold, This Mercury I say will (by continual digestion) accomplish the whole work; marvell not then, that our Mercury is more powerfull, which is prepared by Mercury; for certainly the ferment, which commeth between the compound Body and the Water, causeth a death, and a regeneration, it doth that, which nothing in the world can do, besides it severs from Mercury a terrestreity, which burns like a Coale, and an Hydropical humor melting in common water, but the residue is acuated by a Spirit of life, which is our true embryonated Sulphur of our water, not visible, yet working visibly. We conclude, that all operations for our Mercury but by common Mercury, and our body according to our Art are erroneous, and will never produce our mystery, although they be otherwise never so wonderfull. For as the Author of the Newlight saith, No water in any Island of the Phylosophers, was wholesome, but that which was drawn out of the reins of the Soll and Luna. Wilt thou know what that meanes? Mercury in its pondus and incombustibility is Gold fugitive, our Body in its purity, is called the Phylosophers Luna being farre more pure than the imperfect mettals and its Sulphur also as pure as the Sulphur of Soll, not that it is indeed Luna, for it abides not in the fire, now in the composition of these three (1) our common Mercury and the two principles of our compound there interceeds, the ferment of Luna, out of which though it be a Body, proceeds yet a specificating odor: yea and oft the pondus of it is diminished: If the compound be much washt, after it is sufficiently clean. So then the ferment of Soll and Luna interceeds in our composition, which ferment begets an offspring, more noble than it self a 1000 fold, wheas should'st thou work on our compound Body by a violent way of Salts, thou should'st have thy Mercury by farre less noble, than the Body, the Sulphur of the Body being separated and not exalted by such a process.

We now come to the third conclusion, which is that among all metaline and mineral Sulphur there are onely two, that belong to our work, which two have their Mercuries essentially united with them. This is the truth of our secrets, though we (to seduce the unwary) do seem to aver the contrary, for do not think that (because we do insinuatetwo waies, therefore) we really mean as we say, for verily (as witnesseth Ripley) There is no true principle but one. Nor have we but one matter, not but one regimen of heat, and one linear way of proceeding.

These two Sulphurs as they are principles of our work, they ought to be homogeneal, for it is onely Gold spiritual that we seek, first white, then red, which Gold is no other then that which the vulgar see, but they know not the hidden spirit that is in it. This principle wants nothing but Composition, and this composition must be made, with our other crude white Sulphur which is nothing but Mercury vulgar, by frequent cohobation of it upon our Hermaphroditical Body, so long till it be come a fiery water.

Know therefore that Mercury hath in its self a Sulphur, which being unactive, our Art is to multiply in it a living active Sulphur, which comes out of the loyns of our Hermaphroditical Body, whose father is a metal and his mother a mineral, Take then the most beloved daughter of Saturn, whose armes are a circle Argent, and on it a sable cross on a blackfield, which is the signall note of the great World, espouse her to the most warlike God, who dwells in the house of Aries, and thou shalt find the Salt of Nature, with this Salt acuate thy water, as thou best knowest, and thou shalt have the Lunary bath, in which the Sun will be ammended.

And in all truth I assure thee, that although though hadst our body Mercurialized (without the addition of Mercury of any of the metals) made per se, that is without the addition of Mercury, it would not be in the least profitable unto thee, for it is Mercury onely, which hath a Celestial form and power, which it receives, not onely, nor so much from the compound body, as from the fermental virtue which proceeds from the composition of both the body and the Mercury, by which is produced a wonderfull Creature: So then let all thy care be to marry Sulphur with Suphur, that is our Mercury which is impregnated, which Sulphur, must be espoused with our Sol then hast thou two Sulphurs married and two Mercuries of one off spring, whose father is the Sol, and Luna the mother.

The fourth Conclusion makes all perfectly plain, which hath been said before, namely that these two Sulphurs are the one most pure red Sulphur of Gold, and the other of most pure clean white Mercury.

These are our two Sulphurs, the one appears a coagulated body, and yet carries its Mercury in its belly: the other is in all its proportions true Mercury, yet very clean and carries its Sulphur within its self, though hidden under the form and fluxibilitie of Mercury.

Sophisters are (here) in a labyrinth, for because they are not acquainted with metalline love, they work in things altogether heterogeneal, or if they work upon metalline bodies they yet either joyne males with males, or females with females, or else they work on each alone, or else they take males, which are charged with natural inabilities, and females whose matrix is vitiated. Thus by there own inconsideration they frustrate their own hopes, and then cast the blame upon the Art, when as indeed it is onely to be imputed to their own folly, in not understanding the Phylosophers.

I know many pittifull Sophisters do dote on many Stones, vigitable, animal, and mineral, and some to those add the firey Angelical, Paradaical Stone, which they call a wonder working essence, and because the mark they aim at, is so

great, the Waies also, by which they would attain their Scope, they make also a double, one Way they call the Via Humida, the other, the Via Sicca, (to use their languages).

The latter way is the labyrinthian path, which is fit onely for the great ones of the earth to tread in, the other the dedalean path, an easie way of small cost for the poor of the world, to enterprize.

But this I know and can testifie that there is but one Way, and but onely one Regimen, no more Colours than ours, and what we say or write otherwise, is but to deceive the unwary, for if every thing in the world ought to have its proper causes, there cannot be any one end, which is produced from two waies of working on distinct principles. Therefore we protest and must again admonish the Reader that (in our former writings) we have concealed much, by reason of the two waies we have insinuated, which is the play of children, and the work of women, and that is decoction by the fire, and we protest that the lowest degree of this our work, is that the matter be stirred up, and may hourly circulate without feare of breaking the vessel, which for this reason ought to be very strong, but our linear decoction is an internal work, which advances every day and hour, and is distinct from that outward heat, and is therefore invisible and insensible. In this our work, our Diana is our body when it is mixed with the water, for then all is called the Moon, for Laton is whitened, and the woman beares rule, our Diana hath a wood, for in the first dayes of the Stone, our body after it is whitened grows vegetably. In this wood, are at the last found two Doves, for about the end of three weeks, the soul of the Mercury ascends, with the soul of the dissolved Gold, these are in folded in the everlasting armes of Venus, for in this season the confection are all tinted with a pure green colour, these Doves are circulated seven times, for in seven is perfecton, and they are left dead, for they can rise and move no more, our Body is then black like to a Crowes bill, for in this operation all is turned to powder, blacker than the blackest. Such passages as these we do oftentimes use, when we speak of the preparation of our Mercury, and this we do to deceive the simple, and it is also for no other end that we confound our operations speaking of one, when we ought to speak of another, for if this Art were but plainly set down, our operations would be contemptible even to the foolish. Therefore believe me in this, that because our workes are truly Natural, we therefore do take the liberty to confound the Phylosophers work, with that which is purely Natures work, that so we might keep the simple in ignorance, concerning our true Vinegre, which being unknown, their labor is wholly lost.

Let me then (for a close) say onely thus much; Take our Body which is Gold, and our Mercury which is seven times acuated by the marriage of it, with our Hermaphroditicall Body, which is in a Chaos, and is the splendor of the soul of the God Mars, in the earth, and water of Saturn, mix these two in such a pondus as nature doth require, In this mixture you have our invisible fires, for in the water of our Mercury is an active Sulphur or mineral fire and in the Gold a dead passive, but yet actual Sulphur now when that Sulphur of the Gold is stirred up and quickened, there is made between the fire of nature, which is as the Gold, and the fire against nature, which is in the Mercury, a fire partly of the one and partly of the other, for it partakes of both, and by these two fires thus united into one, is caused both Corruption (which is Humiliation) and generation (which is Glorification and Perfection:) Now know that God onely governs this way of the internal fire, man being ignorant of the progress thereof, onely by his reason beholding its operations, he is able to discern that it is hot, that is, that it doth perform the action of heat, which is decoction, In this fire there is no sublimation, for sublimation is an exaltation, but this fire is such an exaltation, as that beyond it, is no perfection.

All our work then is onely to multiply this fire, that is to circulate the body so long until the vertue of the Sulphur be augmented. Again this fire is an invisible Spirit, and therefore not having dimentions, is neither above nor below, but everywhere in the Sphere of the activity of our matter in the Vessel: So that though the material visible substance do sublime and ascend by the action of the elemental heat, yet this spiritual vertue is always as well as in that which remains in the bottom, as in that which is in the upper part of the Vessel. For it is as the soul in the body of man, which is everywhere at the same time, and yet bounded or termined in none.

This is the ground of one Sophismus of ours, (viz.) when we say that in this true Philosophical fire, there is no sublimation, for the fire is the life, and the life is a soul, which is not at all subject to the dimensions of Bodies, Hence also it is that the opening of the Glass or cooling of the same during the time of working kills the life or fire, that is in this secret Sulphur, and yet not one grain of the mettall is lost. The elemental fire then is that which any child knowes how to kindle and govern, but it is the Philosopher onely, that is able to discern the true inward fire for it is a wonderful thing, which acts in the body, yet is no part of the body. Therefore the fire is a celestial vertue it is uniformed, that is, it is alwaies the same until the period of its operation is come, and then being come to perfection it acts no more, for every Agent, when the end of its action is come then rests.

Remember then that when we speak of our fire which sublimes not, that thou do not mistake and think that the moisture of the compound which is within the Glass ought not to sublime, for that it must do uncesantly, but that the fire that sublimes not, is the metalline love, which is above and below and in all places alike. Now then for a close to all that hath been said, learn and be well advised what matter you take in hand, for an evil Crow laies an evil Egg, as the proverb hath it, let thy seed be pure, the shalt thou see a noble offspring, let the fire without be such, as in which

our confections may play to & fro uncessantly, & this (in a few daies) will produce that which thou most longest for, the Crows Bill.

Ripley's Treatise of Mercury and the Philosophers' Stone

This is contained in *Aurifontina Chymica: or, a collection of fourteen small treatises concerning the first matter of philosophers, for the discovery of their (hitherto so much concealed) Mercury. Which many have studiously endeavoured to hide, but these to make manifest, for the benefit of Mankind in general.* London, 1680.

[Back to Ripley's Works.](#)

A Treatise of Mercury and the Philosophers Stone.

by Sir George Ripley.

I will, my dearest Son, instruct thee in this Blessed Science, Which was hid from the Wise of old, to whom God was pleased to shew so much favour. Know therefore, that our Matter is the chiefest of all things in the Earth, and of least estimation and account, as will hereafter more plainly appear. For if Water incorporate it self with Earth, the Water will be lowest of all, and will (if it be not kept down) with Fire, ascend higher; and thus it may be seen, how Water will be highest and lowest. Yet true it is, that it is of least estimation, for in our Earth and Water, and in that drossie Earth, you may find some very pure and clear, which is our Seed and fifth Essence, and then that foul and drosse Earth is good for nothing else, and of no estimation. But that Water, as I said, is the chiefest, will appear many ways: Know, Son, that without Water we cannot make Bread, nor anything else, which God hath created in Nature; and hence you may easily perceive, that Water is the first Matter of all things which are born or generated in the World: for certainly 'tis manifest unto thee, that nothing grows or receiveth increase without the four Elements; therefore whatsoever is Elemented by virtue of the four Elements, it must of necessity be, that original of all things that are born or grow, should be of Water: Yet ought you not to understand, this before spoken of Water, but of that Water which is the Matter of all things, out of which all Natural things are produced in their kind. Know therefore, that the first of all Air is engendered of Water; of Air, Fire; of Fire, Earth. Now will I more familiarly and friendly discourse with thee; I'll further manifest this Mystery unto thee by degrees, lest by too much haste it happen to us according to the Proverb, That he that makes too much haste, oftentimes comes home too late. Now therefore that I may satisfie thy desire, I will discourse of the first Matter, which Philosophers call, the fifth Essence, and many other names they have for it, by which they may the more obscure it. In it for certain are four Elements, pure in their Exaltation: Know therefore, that if you would have the fifth Essence, Man, you must first have Man, and you must have nothing else of that Matter; and see that you observe this well. This I say, that if you desire to have the Philosophers Stone, you must of necessity first have the fifth Essence of that same Stone, whether it be Mineral or Vegetative; joyn therefore species with species, and Gems with Gems, and not the one without the other, nor anything contrary, which may be other than the species or proper Gems; beware therefore of all that is not Essential: For of Bones, Stones cannot be made, neither do Cranes beget Geese; which if you will consider, you'll find the profit of it, by the help of the Divine Grace; by the assistance whereof let us father proceed to speak of this blessed Water, which is called the Water of the Sun and Moon, hidden in the concavity of our Earth. Concerning which Earth know, that all that is generated must of necessity have Male and Female, from which action and passion arise, without which Generation never is. But you will certainly never receive profit from things differing in kinds. Notwithstanding, if you have this Water of the Sun and Moon, it will draw other Bodies and Humours to its own kind, by the help of the virtue and the heat of the Sun and Moon, and will make them perfect. As an Infant in the womb of its Mother, decoction of temperate heat helping it, turneth the Flowers into its Nature and kind, that is, into Flesh, Bloud, Bones, and Life, with the other properties of a living Body, of which 'tis needless to say any more. And hence you may understand, that our water changeth it self into a perfect kind, which things of its own kind: For first it will congeal it self into a substance like Oyl; then it will change that Oyl, by the means of temperate heat, into Gum; and lastly, by the help of the perfect heat of the Sun, into a Stone. Now therefore know, that out of one thing

you have three, that is Oyl, Gum, and a Stone. Know also, that when the Water is turned into Oyl, then you have a perfect Spirit; when the Oyl is turned into hard Gum, then you have a perfect Spirit and Soul; and when the Spirit and Soul are turned into a Stone, then you have a perfect Body, Soul and Spirit together: Which as it is called the Philosophers Stone and Elixir, and a perfect Medicine of mans Body; so also that which is leavened with its genus, and the fifth Essence. Know, Son, that fifth Essences are divers, one whereof is to Humane Bodies, another to Elixir, and to the imperfect Bodies of Metals: For you must consider, that the generation and growth of Metals, is not as the growth of mans Body; for a genus agrees with its genus, and a species with its species. Moreover, know that the first Matter of man, which begetteth the Flesh, Bloud, Bones and Life, is a Spermatick Humour, which causeth generation, through a vital Spirit included therein: And when the Matter is generated and congealed into a Body, extract thence the fifth Essence of that Body, wherewith you may nourish the Body. Yet Son, will I tell thee moreover, that Water, or Matter, or Seed whereof Man is begot, is not the augments of the Body. Know, Son, that if the Body be fed with its Natural food, then its first Matter will be increased, and also the Body, (viz.) the first Matter in quality, and the Body in quantity; the first Matter is that which is called the fifth Essence. Yet Know, Son, that the fifth Essence is one thing, and that the Matter of augmentation is another: and, as I said before, the increase of Metals, is not like the increase of mans Body. Although the fifth Essence, which causeth the augmentation of the Metals, may be a fit Medicine for Humane Bodies; as also the fifth Essence, which causeth the augmentation of mans Body, may be a fit Medicine for the Bodies of Metals: and therefore, as before is said, the fifth Essence is one thing, and augmentation another. You see therefore for what reason our Water is called, the first Matter and the Seed of Metal; viz. because of it all Metals are generated. Therefore you will have need of it in the beginning, middle, and end, for as much as it is the cause of all generation, because by its Congelation, it is turned into all sorts of Metals, to wit, into the first Matter of the sorts. Thence it is called, the Seed of Metals, and the *Metallick Water of Life: [*So it is in the Latine, though perhaps the words should be Vita Metallica, that is, the Water of Metallick Life, that is, of the Life of Metals] because it affords Life and Bloud to sick and dead Metals, & joyneth in Matrimony the Red man and the White woman, that is, the Sun and the Moon. It is called also Virgins Milk; for as long as it is not joyned with the Sun and the Moon; nor with anything else, except only those which are of its own kind, so long it may be called a Virgin. But when it is joyned with a Male and Female, and married with them, then it is no longer a Virgin, because it adhereth to them, and becomes one with them to whom it is joyned with to generation. But as long as it remains a Virgin, it is called Virgins Milk, the Blessed Water, and the Water of Life, and by many other Names. And now, my Son, that I may say something of the Philosophers Mercury, know that when thou hast put thy Water of Life to the Red man, who is our Magnesia, and to the White woman, whose name is Albifica, and they shall all have been gathered together into one, then you have the true Philosophers Mercury. For after that in this manner all is joyned with a Male and Female, then it is called the Philosophers Mercury, the Philosophers Water of Life, the Bloud of Man, his red Flesh, his Body and Bones. Know therefore, that there are many sorts of Milk, (viz.) Virgins Milk, Womans Milk, and also Mans Milk: For when first they are joyned in one, and she is big, having conceived, then the Infant must be nourished with Milk: But then you may know, that this Milk is not Virgins Milk, but rather the man and the womans Milk, wherewith it is always to be nourished, till it is grown to that strength, that it may be brought up with stronger and fuller food. That food which I mean is the leavening of it which gives it form, that it may perform Virile work: For until the Infant, that is, this our stone, be formed and leavened with its like, the Bloud of the green Dragon, and the red Bloud of the Red Dragon, whether it be the white Stone or the red, it will never do a perfect work. Know therefore, Son, that the first Water is that Water Rebar, which God made of Nature, and it is the cause of Generation, as I said before; but when after the conjunction which ariseth from the Marriage, it begets the Water of Life, and the Philosophers Milk, with one of which, or both, you must augment and feed your Stone perpetually.

Much more could I say to thee, Son, concerning this first Matter, but let this suffice, that setting aside impertinencies of words, we may now, Divine Grace favouring of us, proceed to the practice it self of the Philosophick Stone. See therefore, my Son, that thou diligently putttest all these Matters (which though they are three things, yet are they but one only) in a Glass Vessel, and letttest them quietly putrefie: then put an Alembick upon your Vessel, and by distillation draw out all the Water, which may be thence distilled. Try this first in Maries Bath. Then place the the Vessel in Ashes, and make a gentle Fire for 12 hours: then take the Matter out of the Vessel, grind it well by it self, without the foresaid Water, then put it again into the Vessel with Water, and stop the Vessel close. Put it in the Bath for three days, and the distill the Water as before in the Bath, and the Matter will be more black than before. Do thus three times over, and then grind it no more; but afterwards as often as you distill it, so oft pour Water on the top: but between each distillation give it so much Fire fore six hours or more, till it become indifferent dry; then pour Water on the top again, and dissolve it again in the Bath under a blind Alembick. Also in every distillation separate the Flegm, by casting away six or seven drops of Water in the beginning of each distillation. And observing this order, cause it to drink its proper Water, till it hath drink of it seven times its weight which it had at the first. But then it

will be of a white colour, and so much whiter, by how much the more of its own Water it hath drank. This is white Elixir.

Moreover, this our Water is called Homogeneous, and by many other names. Besides, know that this Water and Matter generate as well the Red Stone, as the White: Know also, when this first Matter is brought to its compleat whiteness, then the end of one, is the beginning of the other; that is, of the Red Stone, which is our Red Magnesia, and Virgins Brass, as we said at first: Son, see thou well understand these words. Our Virgins Brass, is our Gold; yet

I do not say, that all Brass is Gold: also our Brass, is our live Brimstone; but all Brimstone, is not our live Brimstone: also Quicksilver, is Mercury; but I do not say, that common Quicksilver, is our Silver: as I said before, that Water of Life which is our Seed and first Matter, is our Mercury and our Spirit of Life, which is extracted out of the blessed land of Aethiopia, which is called Magnesia, and by many other names. Besides, my Son, know that there is no perfect generation, without corruption; for corruption causeth cleanliness, and cleanliness corruption. Consider therefore, Son, our dying poison, which dyeth and is dyed perpetually; and this is our Body, or Soul, and our Spirit, when they are joynd together in one, and become one thing, which with its parts ariseth also out of one thing, besides which there is not any other, neither ever shall be. Wherefore, my Son, great folly it is for any one to believe, that any other Medicine can be turned into Gold or Silver; which Medicine will little profit thee of it self, except it be mingled with a Body, for then shall it perfect its work according to its form which it is born: For it is never born that it may of it self become a Body. Moreover, know that there is as much difference between the first Matter, which is called the Seed of Metals, and the Medicine, as is between the Medicine and Gold: For the Seed will never be the Medicine without Body, neither will the Medicine ever be a Metal without a Body. Much difference also there is between Elixir and the Medicine, as between the Masculine and Feminine Seed, and also an Infant which is generated of those in the Matrice. Now you may see, that the Seed is one thing, and the Infant another; though they be one and the same in kind, one thing, one operation, the Vessel finally one, though it be called by divers names: For a Man and Woman, is an Infant born, when as yet the Man is one thing, and the Woman another, though they be one and the same in kind: which you ought to understand in our Stone. But what I said before, that corruption is the cause of generation, and of cleanliness, is true: For you must know, that every thing in its first Matter is corrupt and bitter, which corruption and bitterness is called dying poison, which is the cause of Life in all things, as will be sufficiently manifest, if you with right reason do weigh the Natures of things. Consider well, O Son, that when Lucifer the Angel of Pride, first rebelled against God, and prevaricated the Command of the most High, be assured that this was made corrupt, bitter, and harsh to him: No less was the fall and prevarication of our first Parents Adam and Eve, whom death and condemnation followed, made to them corruption and bitterness, and likewise to us in whom the same corruption is propagated. Many more like examples I could recite, if need were: But setting aside these, to come to what is proper to our discourse; consider well, that of all precious Fruits which grow out of the Earth, their first Matter is bitter and harsh, as still retaining some footstep of the former corruption and putrefaction; which bitterness, by the means of continual action of natural heat, is with great virtue turned into sweetness. Now therefor, Son, if thou wilt be ingenious, this little will suffice whereby to find out much more, and to perceive my meaning: Consider therefore well, Son, that according to the old Proverb,

He sweet deserves not, who no bitter tasts.

But now to speak something more of our Brass; know, that Brass signifies continuance, or continuing Water: But what is farther to be considered in the nature of the name of Brass, you may easily gather from its English Tetragrammate name, that is, its name consisting of four letters, to wit, B.R.A.S. First therefore, by B. is signified the Body of our Work, which is sweet and bitter, our Olive and our Brass continuing in its form: by R. is signified the Root of our Work, and the Spring of continuing Radical Humours, which is our Red Tincture, and Red Rose which purifieth all in its kind: A. signifies our Father Adam, who was the first man, out of whom was born the first woman Eve; whence you understand, that therein is Male and Female. Know therefore, that our Brass is the beginning of our Work, our Gold and Olive, for it is the first Matter of Metals, as Man is the first Man and Woman. S. signifies the Soul of our Life, and Spirit of Life, which God breathed into Adam, and all the creatures; which Spirit is called the fifth Essence. Moreover, Son, by these four Letters, we may understand the four Elements, without which nothing is generated in Nature. They also signifie Sol and Lune, which are the causes of all Life, Generation, and augmentation of all things born in the World. In this name therefore of four letters, consisteth our whole Work: For our Brass is Male and Female, of which ariseth he who is called begot. Therefore, Son, take good notice what is signified by our sweet Brass, what is called our Sandiver, or the Salt of our Nitre, or Nitre; what also by the Bloud of the Dragon, what Sol and Lune, our Mercury, and our Water of Life, and many other things, concerning which Philosophers have spoken darkly, and in Riddles. Know therefore, Son, that our first Matter is neither Gold, nor common Silver, nor is it of corrosives, or such like outward things, which Denigrators groping in

the dark now-a-days do use. Take heed therefore, Son, that by no means you admit any thing contrary in kind; for be assured, that what a man shall have sowed, the same shall he reap. Moreover, know that when our Stone is compleated in its proper kind, then it will be a hard Stone, which will not easily be dissolved; yet if you add his Wife to him, he will be dissolved into Oyl, which is called Philosophers Oyl, incombustible Oyl, and by many other names. Know therefore, Son, that there are diverse leavenings, as well as Corporal as Spitual, (viz.) Corporal in quantity, and Spiritual in quality: Corporal leavening increaseth the weight and quantity of the Medicine, yet is not of so great power as the Medicine it self, as is Spiritual leavening; for it only increaseth the Medicine in quantity, not in virtue: but Spiritual leavening increaseth it in both; and where the Corporal ruleth above an hundred, the Spiritual above a thousand. Moreover, as long as the Medicine is leavened with the Corporal substance, it is called Elixir. There is therefore a divers manner of leavening, and a difference between the Medicine, and the Elixir; for the Spiritual is one thing, the Corporal another. Know also, that as long as it is Spiritual leavening, it is liquid Oyl and Gum, which cannot conveniently be carried about from one place to another; but when it is Corporal, then it will be a Stone which you may carry about in your Pocket. Now therefore you see what is the difference between the Medicine, and the Elixir; nor is the difference less between Elixir, and Gold and Silver, for Gold and Silver are difficult to melt, but Elixir not so, for it easily dissovles at the flame of a Candle: thence you may easily perceive, how various the differences of our composition and temperament are. Lastly, that we may say something concerning their food and drink, know that their food is of airy Stones, and their drink is drawn out of two perfect Bodies, namely out of the Sun and Moon; the drink that is drawn out of the Sun, is called liquid Gold, (or Potable, that is, that may be drank;) but that out of the Moon, is called Virgins Milk. Now, Son, we have discoursed plainly enough with thee, if Divine Grace be not wanting to thee; for that drink that is drawn out of the Sun, is Red, but that out of the Moon, is white; and therefore one is called liquid Gold, but the other Virgins Milk; one is Masculine, the other Feminine, though both ariseth out of one Image, and one kind. Son, ponder my words, otherwise if thou wanderest in the dark, that evil befalls thee from defect of light: See therefore that thou beest diligent in turning the Philosophick Wheel, that thou mayst make Water out of Earth, Air out of Water, Fire our of Air, and Earth out of Fire, and all this out of one Image and Root, that is, out of its own proper kind, and natural food wherewith its Life may be cherished without end. He who hath understanding, let him understand.

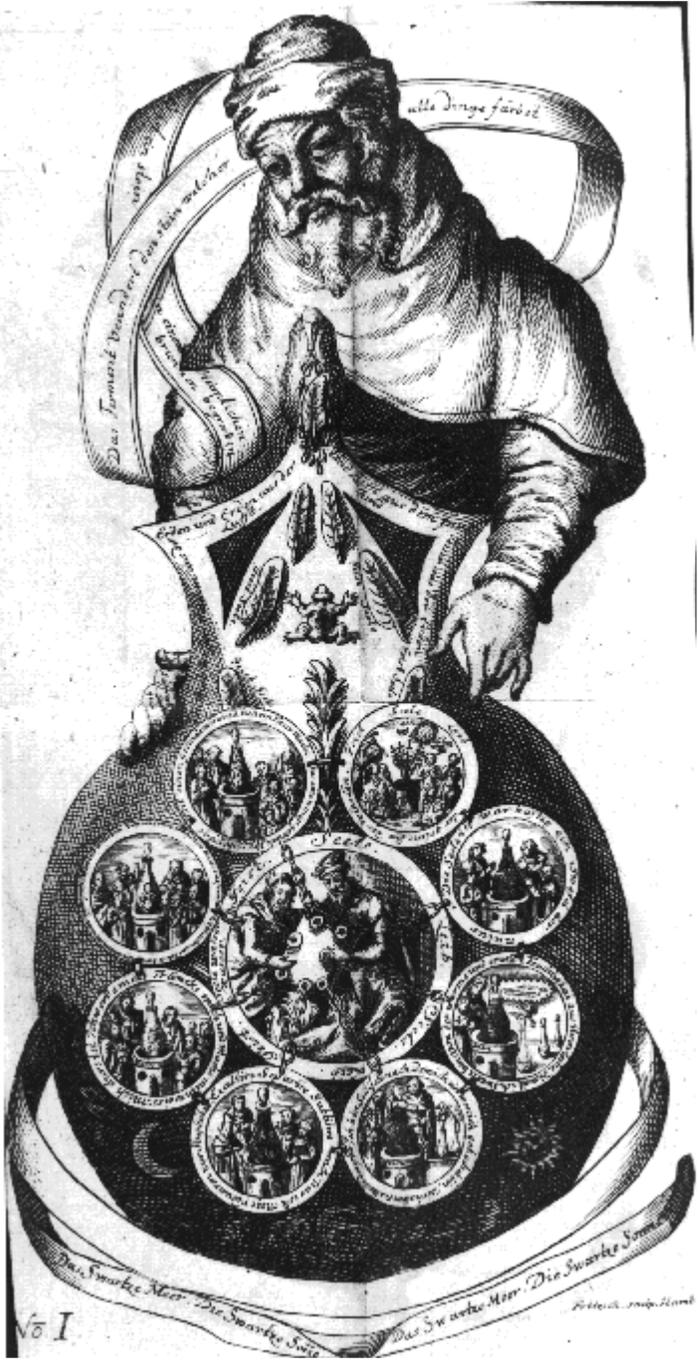
Glory to God Omnipotent.

FINIS.

The Ripley Scroll

The Ripley Scroll is an important 15th century work of emblematic symbolism. Twenty one copies are known, dating from the early 16th century to the mid-17th. There are two different forms of the symbolism, with 17 manuscripts of the main version, and 4 manuscripts of the variant form. There are very wide variations in the English text on the different manuscripts, and for the text here I have modernised and unified a number of versions. This is not a properly researched edition, but a reworking of the text into a modern readable form. I add the engravings of the Scroll printed in David Beuther, *Universal und Particularia...* Hamburg, 1718.

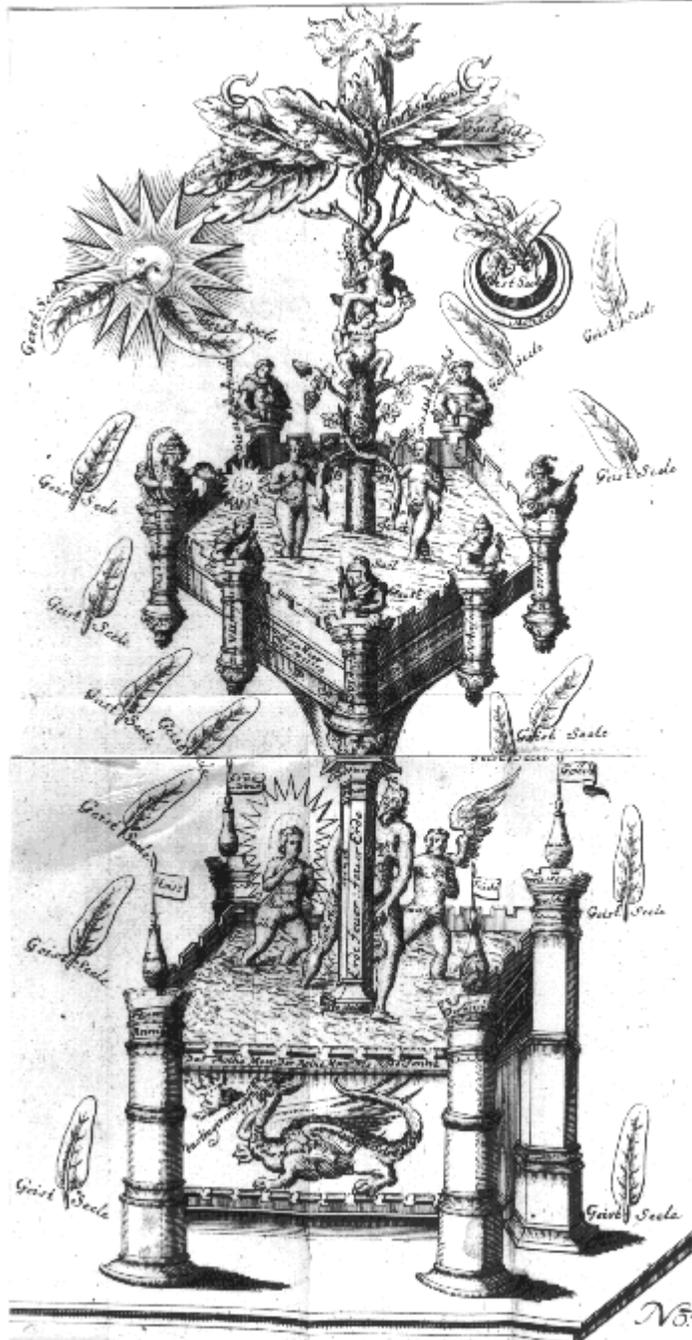
**You must make Water of the Earth, and Earth of the Air, and Air of the Fire, and Fire of the Earth.
The Black Sea. The Black Luna. The Black Sol.**



Here is the last of the White Stone and the begining of the Red.

Of the son take the light
 The Red gum that is so bright
 And of the Moon do also
 The which gum they both trowe
 The philosophers Sulphur vive
 This I call it without strife
 Kybright and Kebright it is called also
 And other names many more

Of them drawe out a tincture
And make of them a marriage pure
Between the husband and the wife
Espoused with the water of life
But of this water thou must beware
Or else thy work will be full bare
He must be made of his own kind
Mark thou now in thy mind
Acetome of philosophers men call this
A water abiding so it is
The maidens milk of the dew
That all the work doth renew
The Serpent of life it is called also
And other names many more
The which causeth generation
Betwixt the man and the woman
But looke thou no division
Be there in the conjunction
Of the moon and of sun
After the marriage be begun
And all the while they be a wedding
Give to them their drinking
Acetome that is good and fine
Better to them then any wine
Now when this marriage is done
Philosophers call it a stone
The which hath a great nature
To bring a stone that is so pure
So he have kindly nourishment
Perfect heat and decoction
But in the matrix when they be put
Let never the glasse be unshut
Till they have ingendred a stone
In the world there not such a one

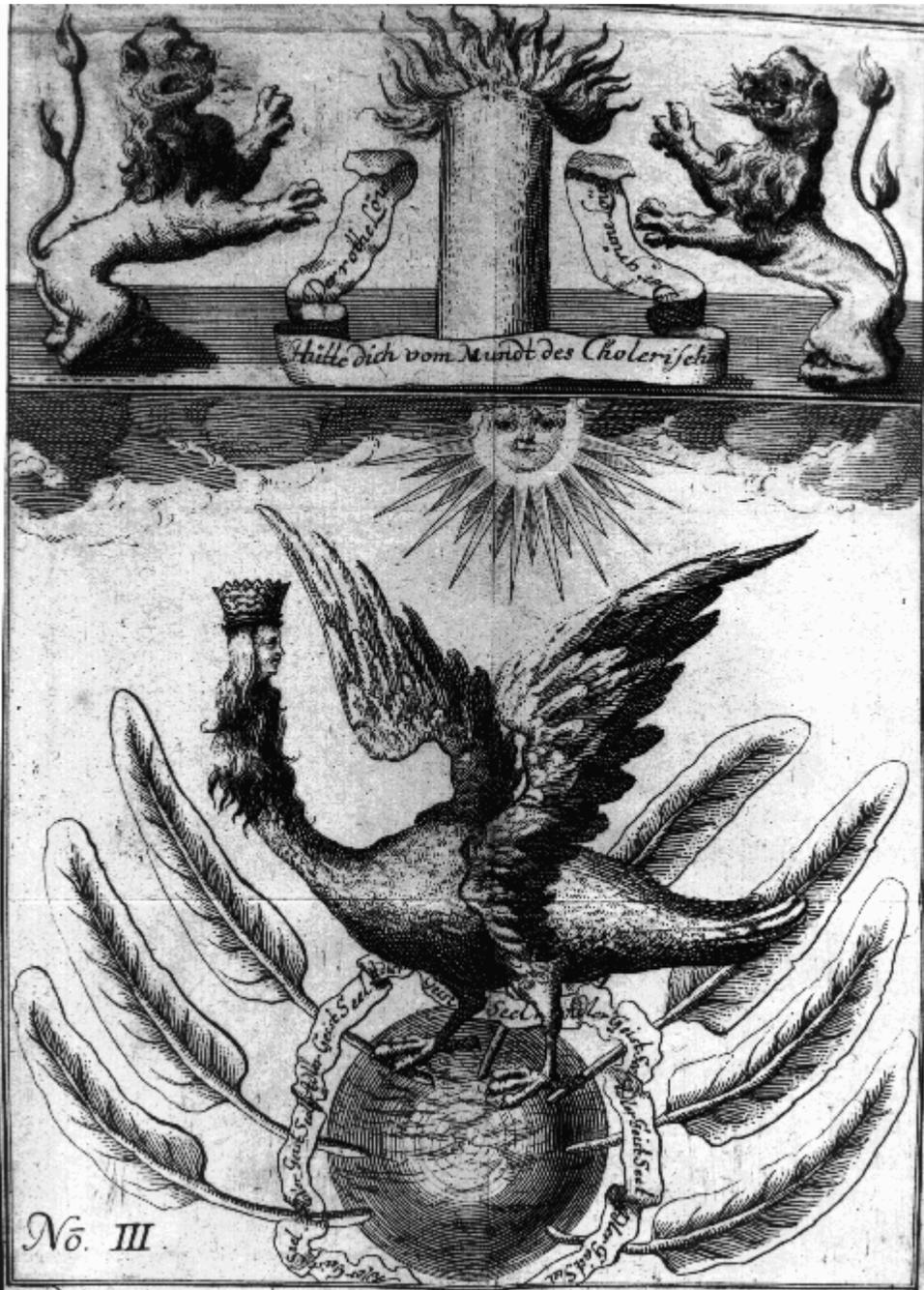


The Red Lune. The Spirit of Water. Red Sol. The Red Sea.

On the ground there is a hill
 Also a serpent within a well
 His tail is long with wings wide
 All ready to flee by every side
 Repair the well fast about
 That thy serpent pass not out
 For if that he be there a gone
 Thou lose the virtue of the stone
 Where is the ground you must know here

And the well that is so clear
And what is the dragon with the tail
Or else the work shall little avail
The well must run in water clear
Take good heed for this your fire
The fire with water bright shall be burnt
And water with fire washed shall be
The earth on fire shall be put
And water with air shall be knit
Thus ye shall go to purification
And bring the serpent to redemption
First he shall be black as a crow
And down in his den shall lie full low
Swelling as a toad that lieth on the ground
Burst with bladders sitting so round
They shall to burst and lie full plain
And this with craft the serpent is slain
He shall shine colors here many a one
And turn as white as whale's bone
With the water that he was in
Wash him clear from his sin
And let him drink a little and a light
And that shall make him fair and white
The which whiteness be abiding
Lo here is a very full finishing
Of the white stone and the red
Lo here is the very true deed.

The Red Lion. The Green Lion. The Mouth of Choleric beware.



Here is the last of the Red, and the beginning to put away the dead. The Elixir Vitae.

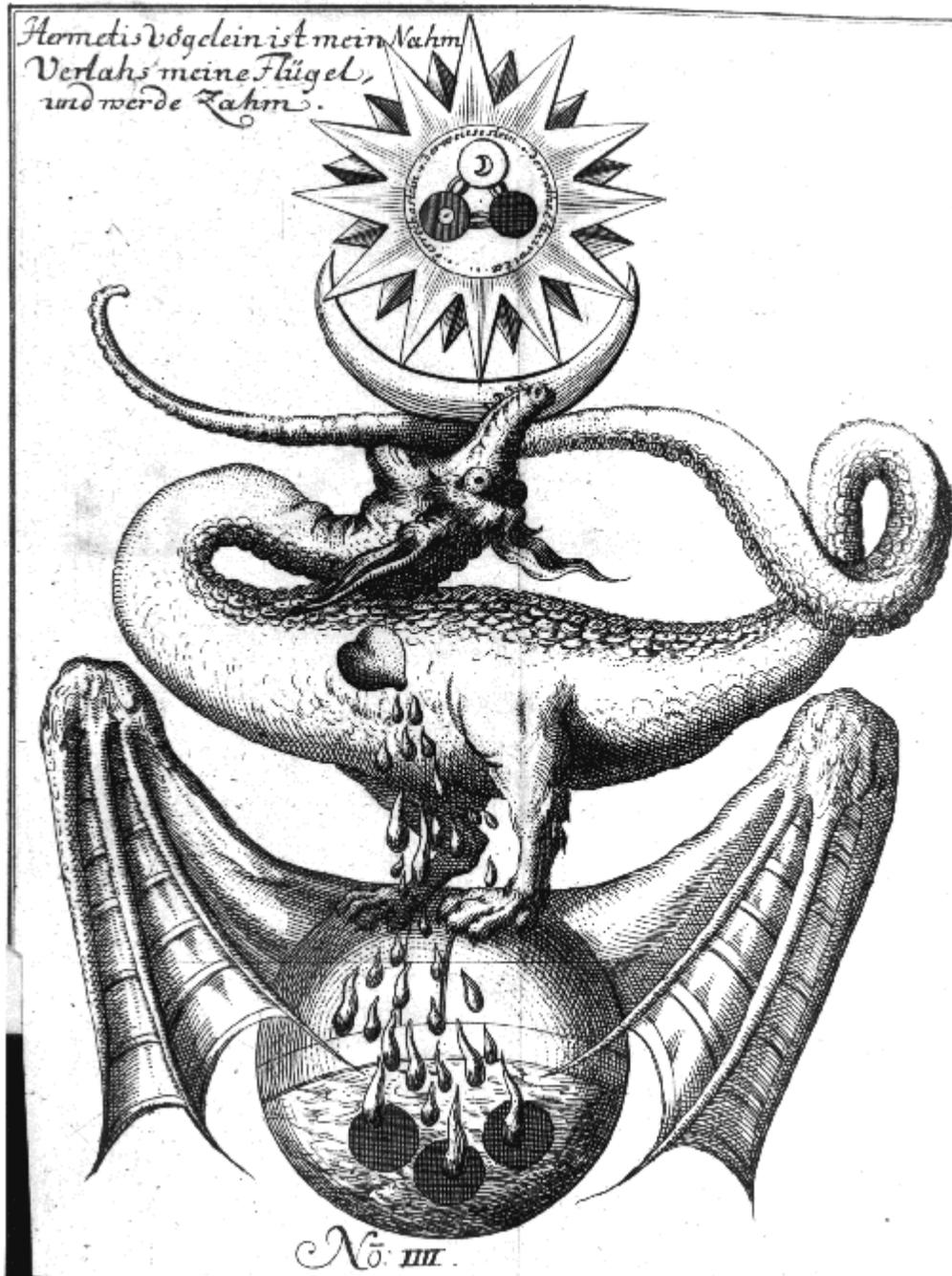
Take the father that Phoebus so high
That sit so high in majesty
With his beams that shines so bright
In all places wherever that he be
For he is father to all things
Maintainer of life to crop and root
And causeth nature for to spring
With the wife beginneth soothe
For he is salve to every sore

To bring about this prosperous work
Take good heed unto this lore
I say unto learned and unto clerk
And Homogenie is my name
Which God made with his own hand
And Magnesia is my dame
You shall verily understand.
Now I shall here begin
For to teach thee a ready way
Or else little shall thou win
Take good heed what I do say
Divide thou Phoebus in many parts
With his beams that be so bright
And this with nature him convert
The which is mirror of all light
This Phoebus hath full many a name
Which that is full hard to know
And but thou take the very same
The philosophers stone ye shall not know
Therefore I counsel ere ye begin
Know it well what it should be
And that is thick make it thin
For then it shall full well like thee
Now understand what I mean
And take good heed thereto
Our work else shall little be seen
And turn thee to much woe
As I have said this our lore
Many a name I wish he hath
Some behind and some before
As philosophers doth him give

In the sea without lees
Standeth the bird of Hermes
Eating his wings variable
And maketh himself yet full stable
When all his feathers be from him gone
He standeth still here as a stone
Here is now both white and red
And all so the stone to quicken the dead
All and some without fable
Both hard and soft and malleable
Understand now well and right
And thank you God of this sight

The bird of Hermes is my name eating my wings to make me tame.

**The Red Sea. The Red Sol. The Red Elixir Vitae.
Red Stone. White Stone. Elixir Vitae. Luna in Crescent.**



I shall you tell with plain declaration
 Where, how, and what is my generation
 Omogeni is my Father
 And Magnesia is my Mother
 And Azot truly is my Sister
 And Kibrick forsooth is my Brother
 The Serpent of Arabia is my name
 The which is leader of all this game
 That sometime was both wood and wild
 And now I am both meek and mild
 The Sun and the Moon with their might

Have chastised me that was so light
My wings that me brought
Hither and thither where I thought
Now with their might they down me pull,
And bring me where they will
The Blood of mine heart I wish
Now causeth both joy and blisse
And dissolveth the very Stone
And knitteth him ere he have done
Now maketh hard that was lix
And causeth him to be fix
Of my blood and water I wish
Plenty in all the World there is
It runneth in every place
Who it findeth he hath grace
In the World it runneth over all
And goeth round as a ball
But thou understand well this
Of the worke thou shalt miss
Therefore know ere thou begin
What he is and all his kin
Many a name he hath full sure
And all is but one Nature
Thou must part him in three
And then knit him as the Trinity
And make them all but one
Lo here is the Philosophers Stone

