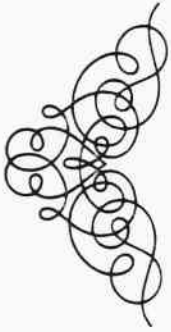


LA LUMIERE DU CHAOS

par

LOUIS GRASSOT

Amsterdam: 1784

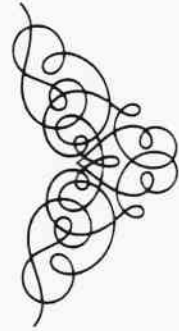


Translated from the French

by

J.W. HAMILTON-JONES

London: 1953



LIGHT EXTRACTED FROM CHAOS

PREFACE

Philosophy took birth with the beginning of the World. At all times men have thought, reflected and meditated to find ways to live as a community, but self-preservation is not without interest and we may well think men forgot about this being so much occupied by their surroundings; subject to so many vicissitudes, the butt of so much that is bad, men seek to enjoy those things which surround them. Without doubt they have sought means to prevent illness and also the remedies which will restore them to good health and preserve it for as long as possible to which end they lend a willing hand in order to escape disease. Neither have men failed to reason

upon the Beings of the Universe and to meditate deeply to discover that fruit of life and that source of riches capable of bringing man near to immortality; that they are not mistaken in this is supported by the fact that in our days there exists a man named M. de St. Germain, one of the most famous adepts of the century, who with this precious treasure which he possesses has attained the age of more than four centuries, and is still alive, free from all those infirmities usually brought on by old age, and enjoying a fortune to his taste. Secondly, it was announced in the Journal Encyclopedique de Bouillon on 1st. February 1783, on the subject of the transmutation of metals that in England by means of the powder of projection this work had been demonstrated. Neither can we doubt the fact, it having been effected in the presence of magistrates and other responsible witnesses above suspicion, who affirm the truth of this experiment.

Practical demonstration of a treasure of this nature is not novel, but it is nevertheless usually confined within a very small circle of people, who think that because God has not given this knowledge freely to all men, He does not wish it to be divulged, and therefore those who possess the secret make it known but to very few selected friends. Hermes Trismegistus, or the "Thrice Greatest", the first amongst all the Philosophers known to be distinguished, would not communicate this work except to the elite, after having proved them to possess both prudence and discretion, and those passed it on to others who were worthy, and of similiar qualifications.

How is it possible to communicate from age to age these admirable secrets, and at the same time to conceal them from the public eye? If it were done through an oral tradition there would be the risk that it would be lost for future use, memory being too feeble a thing in which to place complete trust, and traditions of this kind become obscured by the passage of time; the further they get from their source the more impossible it becomes to fathom

the dark chaos in which they are wrapped. There is no other way but to have recourse to hieroglyphs, symbols, allegories, fables and similar methods which are susceptible of many different explanations, which serve to inspire changes in interpretation, and thus to instruct some people whilst others remain in complete ignorance. This is the method chosen by Hermes and after him all the Hermetic philosophers have done the same, causing amusement to the people by fables, as says Origen, and these fables together with the names of the Gods used in the country serve to veil their philosophy. It is now time for this Veil to be rent so that light may appear from chaos, and be shown in all its brilliance; Hippocrates must break his silence because I regard it like a theft which man commits against society, to conceal the discoveries which he has been able to make which would promote happiness and a general preservation from maladies.

I hope that those who apply themselves to this science will appreciate the trouble I have taken to compile this small book in the most intelligible manner possible.

The whole operation of the grand philosophical work has been made difficult of access and wrapped up in allegories. Maybe I shall not merit the approbation of those great subtle and penetrating minds whose knowledge embraces all things; who know all without ever having learnt anything; who discuss every subject and arrive at a conclusion without knowing the cause; therefore it is not to such people that one gives lessons because to them properly belongs the name of Sage, even more so than to Democritus, Plato, Pythagoras and other Greeks who went to Egypt to breathe the Hermetic air and draw on the science of which this book treats. When one needs light on a subject which is difficult to believe for the sole reason that it is rare and extraordinary it is prudent to remember this verse from Lucroce:-

"Although reasoning cannot discover the cause, it is true."

The first man to conceive the idea of flying in the air, was ridiculed as soon as he mentioned it and treated as a senseless fool, but this did not prevent many other people from seeking the means and not being discouraged, although they were told it was an impossibility. Now, in our days, we see with great satisfaction that M. de Montgolfier has found success in his enterprise, which proves that everything which is conceived by the spirit in man is possible, and that it all depends on finding the means of arriving at our object and working on true principles.

If the incredulous and prejudiced will take the trouble to follow step by step the route which I shall mark out, they will see, to their great astonishment, the true banishment of the spirit of unbelief and fear, which may have been occasioned by their experience with a number of puffers and charcoal burners who do not succeed in their experiments because they work on false theories and do not know the First Matter without which one can do nothing and should never undertake any enterprise because this knowledge is the fundamental and general basis of the Philosophical work.

Finally, I beg the reader to be persuaded that I have no other interest in view than to demonstrate the Truth to those who aspire to know it, and I desire, with all my heart, that those who unhappily lose their time in working with substances which are foreign and out of line, will receive enlightenment by reading this book and come to know the true and unique subject of the philosophers; and that those who already know it but are ignorant of the great point of the dissolution of the stone, and the coagulation of the water and the spirit of the body which is the completion of the universal medicine, will be able here to apprehend the secret operations which are described so accurately.

LIGHT OUT OF CHAOS

or

THE HERMETIC SCIENCE

of the Great Work of Philosophy by
which our Ancient Sages produced
The Source of Riches and of Good Health
THE KEY TO NATURE



Out of every material thing there is produced a cinder, from the cinder there is made a salt, from the salt there are separated water and the mercury, out of the mercury there is produced or prepared an Elixir or a Quintessence. The body is reduced to cinder so that it may be cleansed of its combustible parts; to salt to separate it from its earthliness; to water to purify and putrify; to spirit so that it may become Quintessence.

Thus the salts are the keys both of art and of nature; unless they are known it is impossible to imitate nature in her operations; it is necessary to know their sympathy and their antipathy towards metals as well as amongst themselves; properly there is only one Salt of Nature, but it divides into three sorts to form the principles of bodies; these three are Nitre, Tartar and Vitriol, all other salts being composed of them.

Sublimation, precipitation and coction are three methods which Nature uses in the perfection of her works; by the first she takes off the superfluous humidity which would suffocate the fire and prevent its action in the earth, which is its Matrix.

By precipitation she returns the humidity to the earth of which the vegetable kingdom and the heat have deprived it. Sublimation is performed by the elevation of the vapours into the air where they are condensed into clouds. The second method is done by the rain, with rain and fine weather alternating; a continuous rain would drown everything, perpetual fine weather would dry up everything. Rain falls in drops because if it were precipitated in volume all would be destroyed; no gardener water his seed from a full jet; it is thus that Nature works and distributes her blessings with weight, measure and proportion.

Coction is a digestion of the crude humour instilled in the bosom of the earth, a maturation and a conversion of this humour into aliment through the medium of her secret fire. These three operations are so linked together that the end of one is the beginning of the other.

Sublimation has for its object the conversion of a heavy thing into a light one, and exhalation in vapours, to attenuate a gross and impure body, to cast off its faeces, to make the vapours take up the virtues and properties of superior things, and, in effect, to relieve the earth of a superfluous humour which would impede her productions.

No sooner are these vapours sublimed, than they are condensed into rain, and, spiritual and invisible though they be, they immediately become a dense and aqueous body and fall upon the earth to imbibe it with that celestial nectar with which they have become impregnated during their sojourn in the air. As soon as the earth receives them, Nature works to digest and to cook them.

The water contains a ferment, a vivifying spirit which trickles from the superior parts upon the inferior by which the superior were impregnated during their wandering in the air, and which they now in turn deposit in the bosom of the earth. This ferment is the seed of life without which men, animals and vegetables would neither live nor multiply; everything in Nature breathes this

thing and man does not live by bread alone but by this aerial spirit which he absorbs ceaselessly.

Only God and His minister Nature, know how to bring the material elements, the principles of bodies, into obedience; art does not know how to attain this without the three which become tangible as a result of the resolution of mixed bodies. Chemists name these Sulphur, Salt and Mercury; these are the principles and elements; Mercury is formed by a mixture of water and earth; Sulphur of earth and air; Salt of air and water condensed together.

The fire of Nature is joined as a formal principle; Mercury is composed of a fat viscous earth and a limpid water; Sulphur of an earth very dry and very subtile mixed with humidity of the air; Salt, in fact, of gross pontic water and a raw air which is found enclosed therein.

Here is the explanation of subterranean physics by Becher, upon this subject.

Nature is very simple in her operations, therefore it is necessary to imitate her if we would be successful in the enterprise; she has but one principle, and also there is but one fixed spirit, composed of a very pure incombustible fire which remains as a radical humidity in all mixed bodies; it is more perfect in gold than in any other substance, and only the philosophers' mercury has the property and virtue to extract it from its prison, to corrupt it and to render it fit for generation; quicksilver is the principle of volatility, of malleability and of minerality; the fixed spirit in gold can do nothing about this; gold is humected, reincrudated, and volatilized and brought to putrefaction by the operation of mercury, and this is digested, cooked, thickened, dried and fixed by the operation of the philosophical gold which renders it, through these means, into a metallic tincture.

One is the philosophical mercury the other is the sulphur; this sulphur is the soul of all bodies and the principle in the extraction of their tincture, but common mercury is deprived of it and

gold and silver vulgar have but sufficient for themselves. The mercury appropriate to the work must, therefore, first be impregnated by an invisible sulphur so that it will be more disposed to receive the visible tincture of the perfect bodies and afterwards be able to communicate it with profit.

Many chemists sweat blood and water to extract a tincture from common gold; they imagine that by the force of the torture they give it, they will discover the secret of its augmentation and multiplication but:

"The hungry plowman is cheated by vain hopes".
because it is impossible that the solar tincture can be entirely separated from its body; art does not know how to destroy in this metallick genus that which Nature has united so well; and if they could succeed in extracting from gold a liquor both coloured and permanent, by the force of fire or by the corrosion of strong waters, the result would be regarded as a part of the body and not as its tincture because that which properly constitutes the tincture, cannot be separated from the gold.

OF THE PRIMARY SUBSTANCE

which is the only substance to be used to make

THE POWDER OF PROJECTION

The source of health and riches, twin bases upon which the happiness of this life is sustained, are the objects of this art which has always been a mystery; and those who treat of it, have at all times spoken of it as a science, the practice of which has something of the supernatural about it, for its results are miraculous both in themselves and in their effects.

In spite of all the information which one may give conducive towards the knowledge of the primary substance, the Great Architect of the Universe, Creator of all Nature, Whom the philosophers propose to imitate, alone can illumine and guide the human soul in the search for this inestimable treasure, as well as in the operation of this art.

Therefore, if you desire to succeed, seek in His name and you will find a substance which is the daughter of the sun and of the moon, which contains within itself the four Elements as well as the three Kingdoms of Nature through which everything exists. This matter has no fixed or determined shape except that it is flat, green, membranous, gelatinous, without root or branches; in fact, its shape and the manner in which it is produced as well as its essence, have made men give it the names of sperm of the earth; Heavenly blossom or Nostoc; in effect she resembles a green sperm which is spread over the earth in particles or fragments of unequal size. She is found in the uncultivated parts of the earth which are slightly moist and mossy and abound in long, narrow, stony and sandy pathways, near to the mountains;

in fact, she is to be found everywhere. She must be gathered before sunrise in the spring after the 21st. of March until the 21st. of April, and in the autumn after the 21st. of September until the 21st. of October. That which one gathers in the spring-time is the female, and that of the autumn is the male; it is desirous to gather the greenest. Understand that you will put into work the quantity you have gathered in each season. I must tell you that the essence of this substance is held in the air with the celestial body, having both masculine and feminine qualities, of firm and strong virtue, fixed and permanent and that it is carried by the air into the bosom of the earth which serves it as a matrix, thence to corporify it; therefore the sun and the moon produce it from their fecundity; which circumstance has caused the Hermetic Philosophers to give it the name of Son of the Sun and of the Moon, this name belongs to it more properly than all the others, and it has been given to hide it and conceal it from the eyes of the vulgar. It is necessary, therefore, before one is able to understand anything, to know this matter, the pure and the impure, the clean and the foul, because nothing in Nature can give that which it does not possess; and for this reason things are not, and cannot be, different from their nature or from their principles.

Take therefore, the part which is nearest and which is most perfect, and it will suffice; leave the mixed and take only the simple, because it is there where one finds the quintessence and by these means you will make the medicine which some people will call quintessence which is the principle which cannot perish, is permanent and always triumphant. It is a brilliant light which truly illuminates every soul who has come to know it; here is the knot and the bond of all the elements, which contains in itself the spirit which nourishes all things and the means whereby Nature is stirred throughout the entire universe; this sprouting fountain is the commencement and the end of all her operations.

I counsel you therefore to reject every other thing as useless and to take only this water which burns, whitens, dissolves and coagulates, which purifies and fecundates; do not apply yourself to anything else but to give your matter the requisite cooking, without becoming impatient at the length of the time, otherwise you will perform nothing.

Observe that the terms they employ such as; to dissolve, to tinge, to whiten, to calcine, to cool, to sprinkle, to dry, to coagulate, to imbibe, to cook, to fix, to humect, to distill, all signify the same thing which is to cook the substance until it be perfect; take note also that to draw out the soul, the spirit or the body, signify nothing else but the aforementioned calcinations which are the operations of Venus with the fire necessary for the extraction from the soul of the spirit.

THE FIRST OPERATION

In order to procure the mercury and the Elixir Philosophical, you must reject all other substances and take that venerable matter of the Philosophers which contains in itself everything necessary to arrive at the goal of your desires and after you have separated the heterogenous parts in rain water or fountain water, you will also separate it from any foreign humidity, using double linen, and you will place it in a glass vessel which must be round or oval with a neck as long as the palm of the hand but narrow like the neck of a bottle; it is necessary that the glass be of equal thickness in every part, without knots or grain so as to be resistant; you will close this hermetically and lute it with the seal of seals; observe that all your operation must be made in the same vessel, so as to imitate Nature in your work which is the only way to produce everything.

You will now place your glass in the earth so that your matter can there ferment and then dissolve, calcine, tinge, whiten, sprinkle, dry and rubify, in fact, cook, so as to give you this Powder of Projection which will make you happy, and reward you for your pains.

The method for producing this effect is to make a hollow in a cellar as large as the circumference of your vessel and to insert it so that it is buried up to half its belly in the earth; now erect round about it two hemispheres in the form of the belly made of oak cut through the middle; you will leave it in this natural furnace during seven months, which will produce for you the white powder with which you can transmute base metals into silver; and for the red powder you must leave it five months more; this makes a year for the production of the red powder, with which you can transmute metals into fine gold.

As there are different sorts of earth which according to their nature are more or less warm, it may be that at the end of the time your matter will not have reached its degree of perfection, in which case you will leave it for a longer period so that it may become so, and the artist, by his industry, could suppliment this lack of heat, but with much wise precaution.

The Phases through which the Substance passes during the time of its fermentation.

The preparation is composed of four parts; the first is the solution of the material into mercurial water; the second is the preparation of the Mercury of the Philosophers; the third is corruption; the fourth is the creation of the philosophical sulphur. The first is made by the mineral seed of the earth; the second

volatilises and spermatises the body; the third makes the separation of the substances and their rectification; the fourth unites and fixes, which is the creation of the stone.

Philosophers have compared the preparation to the creation of the world, which was first a mass, a chaos, an empty earth without form and dark, which had nothing in particular but everything in general; so that by the first digestion the body is dissolved, the conjunction of the male and female and the mixture of their seeds is made; this is followed by putrefaction and the elements are resolved into one homogeneous water. The sun and the moon are eclipsed in the head of the Dragon, and the whole world at last turns and re-enters into its ancient chaos and dark abyss. The first digestion is made as in the stomach, by a low heat more appropriate to corruption than to generation.

In the second digestion the spirit of God is carried upon the waters, light begins to appear, waters are separated from waters; the moon and the sun re-appear, the elements come out of chaos and constitute a new world, a new heaven and a new earth; the young crows change their feathers and become doves; the eagle and the lion are re-united in an indissoluble bond.

This regeneration is made by the fiery spirit, which descends in the form of water to wash the matter from its original sin and to carry the golden seed into it; for the philosophers water is a fire; but direct your attention so that the separation of the waters is made by weights and measures for fear that those that are under the heavens do not drown the earth or that in lifting too great a quantity, the earth is not left too dry and too arid.

The third digestion furnishes a warm milk to the new born earth and infuses into it all those spiritual virtues of a quintessence which binds the soul and body through the medium of the spirit. The earth now hides a great treasure within its bosom, and begins to resemble the moon and afterwards the sun; take note here that

in the Hermetic philosophy, the moon signifies silver, and the sun, gold; the first is named earth of the moon, and the second earth of the sun; they are born to be united in an indissoluble marriage, because neither of them fears the greatest heat of the fire.

The fourth digestion attains all the mysteries of the world; by it, the earth becomes a precious ferment, which changes all into perfect bodies, just as yeast changes all dough into its own nature; it has acquired this property in becoming a celestial quintessence; its virtue, which emanated from the universal spirit of the world, is a panacea or a universal medicine for all the maladies of creatures which can be healed. This secret fountain of the Philosophers, in which you make your matter ferment, will give you this miracle of art and nature simply by a repetition of the first work.

The whole philosophical process consists of the solution of the body and the congelation of the spirit, and all is done by the same operation. The fixed and the volatile are perfectly mixed, but this cannot be done if the fixed is not first made volatile; finally they are united and by reduction become absolutely fixed.

By these means, the superfluties of the stone are converted into a veritable essence; but he who should separate anything from our subject, knows nothing of the philosophy, because all that is superfluous, unclean, feculent, in fact, the whole substance of the composition is perfected by the action of our secret fire.

This information should open the eyes of those who, in making an exact purification of the elements and the principles, are persuaded the one should take the subtle and reject the gross; they do not know that the fire and the sulphur are hidden in the center of the earth and that it is necessary to wash it perfectly with its spirit in order to extract its balm, the fixed salt which

is the blood of our stone; here you see the central mystery of this operation which will not be accomplished until you have made a suitable digestion and a slow distillation.

The operative principles which are also called the keys of the work or the regimen, are four in number, the first is the solution or liquefaction; the second, the ablution; the third, the reduction; and the fourth, the fixation. By solution the bodies are reduced to the first matter and become raw again by coction; then the marriage is made between the male and female, and the crow is born. The stone is resolved into the four elements blended together; heaven and earth unite to bring Saturn into the world. Ablution is made to whiten the crow and to bring Jupiter to birth out of Saturn; this is done by changing the body into spirit. The work of reduction is to return the spirit to its body of which it was deprived by volatilization and to nourish it with a spiritual milk in the form of dew, until the infant Jupiter shall have developed the force of Hercules.

During these last two operations, the dragon, now descended from heaven, becomes furious with himself. He devours his tail and swallows it little by little until at last he is changed into stone.

Such was the dragon of which Homer speaks. He is the true image and the veritable symbol of these two operations.

Whilst we were meeting under a beautiful Pine tree, said Ulysses to the Greeks, and we were there to make the Hecatombs, near to a fountain which came out of the tree, there appeared a prodigious marvel; a horrible dragon with stains on his back, sent by Jupiter himself, came out from the base of the Altar and ran to the Pine tree. In the branches of this tree were eight small sparrows with their mother who flew round about them. The dragon siezed these with fury and also the mother who was bemoaning the loss of her little ones. After this, the same God who had sent him,

made him beautiful and brilliant and changed him into stone before our astonished eyes. I leave it to the reader to interpret and to apply the moral.

SIGNS OR DEMONSTRATIVE PRINCIPLES

The colours which come upon the philosophical matter during the course of the processes of the work are black, white and red. They follow one another immediately and in that order. The beginning of the black shows that the fire of nature begins to work and that the matter is on the way to solution. When this black colour attains perfection the solution is complete, the elements are blended, the grain rots and becomes ready for generation. That which will not blacken will not become white, says Artephius, because the blackness is the beginning of whiteness and is the indication of alteration as well as of putrefaction.

The action of fire upon humidity performs everything in the work, as it does in all nature in the generation of mixed bodies.

During this putrefaction, the philosophical male, or the sulphur, is blended with the female in such a manner that they become one and the same body, which the philosophers have named hermaphrodite; this says Flamel, is the androgyne of the ancients, the head of the crow; the elements converted in this way reconcile two natures which can make our embryo in the belly of the glass and bring to birth a very powerful King who will be invincible and incorruptible. Our substance in this condition is the serpent Python, who having arisen from the corruption of the mud of the earth, must now be killed and vanquished by the arrows of Apollo through the golden sun, that is to say by our fire equal to that of the Sun.

The second principle colour is the white. Hermes says: Son of

the Science, know that the vulture cries from the top of the mountain; I am the white from the black because whiteness follows blackness. Morien calls this whiteness the white fume. Alphidius informs us that this substance or white fume, is the root of the art and the argent vive of the sages. Philelethes assures us that this argent vive is the true mercury of the philosophers; this argent vive, says he, extracted from this very subtile black, is the philosophical tinging mercury with its red and white sulphur naturally mixed together in their minera; the philosophers have given it an infinity of names.

Artephius says that this whiteness comes about because the soul of the body swims upon the surface of the water, like a white cream and that the spirits are united together so strongly that it is impossible for them to depart because they have now lost their volatility. The great secret of the art is therefore to whiten the matter; so the wise artist need occupy himself solely with the dissolution of the body with its spirit, cut off the head of the crow, whiten the black and redden the white; it is this resplendent white colour which contains in its veins the blood of the pelican; let the artist abandon all those books which only embarrass the reader and engender false ideas of the work which are useless and expensive.

The process of the work should not cost more than the price of the vessel.

The whiteness is the stone perfect at the white stage; it is a precious body which, when it is fermented will become white and full of an exuberant tincture which has the property of communicating itself to all metals; the volatile spirits having already been fixed. The new body resuscitates, white, beautiful, immortal, victorious; for this reason it is called resurrection; light of day; and by all the names which indicate whiteness, fixity and incorruptibility.

Flamel has represented this colour in his hieroglyphical figures,

by a woman having a white border to her dress, in order to show, says he, that Rebis commences to become white in this same manner; whitening first at the extremities all round in a white circle; the best philosophers say this sign is the first indication of whiteness.

As the black and the white are the two extremes, and the two extremes cannot unite except in some middle colour, the substance when passing out of the black does not become suddenly white; the grey colour is found to be the intermediary because that participates of both.

The philosophers have given this the name of Jupiter because it follows the black which they call Saturn. It is this fact which makes d'Espagnet say that air follows water after it has had seven revolutions which Flamel names imbibition. The matter, adds d'Espagnet, being fixed on the bottom of the flask, Jupiter after having overcome Saturn, siezes the realm and holds the government; at his coming the philosophical child is formed and nourished in the matrix, and, at last, being born with a beautiful face, brilliant and white, thence becomes a universal remedy for all the ills of the human body.

Lastly the third principal colour is red, which is the completion and the perfection of the stone; we obtain this redness merely by continuing to cook the matter. After the first work is completed the substance is called masculine sperm; philosophical sperm; fire of the stone; royal crown; son of the sun; minera of celestial fire.

Most philosophers commence their tracts with the stone at the red stage, so that those who read these books should not pay too much attention to them, because they are the source of many errors, until one learns how to detect the matter of which philosophers speak, the reason for their operations and the proportions of the substances which in the second work, or the practice of the Elixir, are very different from those of the first. Although the second operation is simply a repetition of the first, it is very necessary

to note that what they call fire, air, earth and water in the one, are not the same as those used in the other; their Mercury is called Mercury whether it is in liquid form or whether it is dry. Those, for example, who read Alphidius imagine, when he calls the substance of the work "red minera" it is necessary first to find a red matter before beginning the work; some therefore work on cinnabar, others with minium, others on orpiment, others with the rust of iron, because they do not know that the red minera is the perfect philosophical stone.

D'Espagnet describes the method of making the philosophical sulphur; choose a red dragon, courageous, who has lost none of his natural force, and then seven or nine virgin eagles, fearless, whose eyes will not become dull in the rays of the sun; put them with the dragon into a clear, transparent prison, well closed up, and underneath place a warm bath, so that they may be incited to fight; they will not delay in coming to gripe; the combat will be long and very arduous, until the forty-fifth or fiftieth day when the eagles begin to devour the dragon; in dying the prison will become infected with the corruption of his blood and a very black poison, the violence of which overcomes the resistance of the eagles and they die also; from the putrefaction of these bodies, a crow will be born, who little by little will raise his head, he will stretch out his wings and begin to fly; the wind and the clouds will carry him hither and thither; fatigued by being thus tormented, he will look for a point to escape; be careful that he does not find any chinks; at last, washed and whitened by a constant rain of long duration and a celestial dew, you will see him metamorphosed into a swan; the birth of the crow indicates to you the death of the dragon.

If you wish to proceed further to the red, add the element of fire, which was lacking in the white, without touching or removing the flask, but by fortifying your fire by degrees; apply its action to the matter until the occult become manifest, the indication

of which will be a citrine colour; then govern the fire of the fourth degree gradually by its degrees, until by the aid of vulcan you see blossoms of red roses, which will change into amaranth, the colour of blood; but do not stop the work until you see all is reduced to very red and impalpable cinders. This philosophical sulphur is an earth of extreme tenuity, fieriness and dryness; it contains the fire of nature in great abundance and for this reason they have called it the fire of the stone; it has the property of opening and penetrating the bodies of metals and of changing them into its own nature; they call it, in consequence, Father of the male seed.

The three colours, black, white and red must necessarily follow one another in the order I have described; but they are not the only ones that become visible; they indicate the essential changes which take place in the substance, whereas the other colours, almost infinite and resembling those in the rainbow, are but temporary and of very short duration. They are a kind of vapour which affects the air more than the earth, which follow one another and are dissipated to make way for the three principal ones of which I have spoken.

Some strange colours which may appear are signs that the regimen is faulty and of a badly conducted work; the return of the black is a certain indication, because the crow's chickens, says d'Espagnet, must never return to the nest after they have left it; premature redness is also a bad sign, and must not appear until the end as a proof of the maturity of the grain and of the time of the harvest.

OF THE ELIXIR
Second Operation

It is not sufficient to have produced the philosophical sulphur

which I have now described; for the most part, people are misled, and cease the work at this stage, believing they have brought it to perfection; ignorance of the processes of nature and art are the causes of this error; in vain they will try to make projection with this sulphur or red stone. The philosophical stone cannot become perfect until the end of the second work, which is called elixir.

Out of the first sulphur there is made a second, from which, thereafter, one can multiply to infinity, one must therefore preserve very carefully this first minera of fire, for use when required.

The elixir, following d'Espagnet, is compounded of a triple matter; that is, of a metallic water or mercury philosophically sublimed, of the white ferment should you wish to make a white elixir, or red ferment for a red elixir, and lastly of the second sulphur, all according to the weights and proportions prescribed philosophically. The elixir must possess five qualities; it must be fusible, permanent, penetrating, tinging and multiplying; it draws its tincture and fixation from the ferment; its fusibility from argent vive, which serves as a medium for reuniting the tinctures of the ferment and of the sulphur, and its multiplication in quality comes from the spirit of the quintessence which it possesses naturally.

The two perfect metals give a perfect tincture because they contain within them the pure sulphur of nature; do not expect to find their ferment elsewhere than in these two bodies; tinge therefore your white elixir with the moon, and the red with the sun.

Mercury takes up the tincture at once and can thereafter transfer it; be careful not to make a mistake in mixing the ferments, not to take one for the other or you will lose all. The second work is done in the same flask or in one similar to the first; in the same furnace and with the same degrees of heat, but it is very much shorter.

The perfection of the elixir consists in the marriage and the

perfect union of the dry and the humid, so that they become inseparable and the the humid gives the dry the property of being fusible in a slight heat; you can make this tryal by placing a small amount on a thin plate of copper or iron and heating it, if it melts immediately without fuming, you have what you desire.

The Practice of the Elixir

Earth or red ferment, three parts; water and air congealed together, six parts; mix together and grind to make an amalgam or metallic paste of the consistence of butter, that the earth may be impalpable or insensible to the touch; add one part and a half of fire, and place all in a flask similar to the first one, having a neck twelve inches long, and seal it up perfectly; give it a fire of the first degree to digest it; you will then make the extraction of the elements by the degrees of heat appropriate to each until they be reduced into a fixed earth. The substance will become a brilliant stone, transparent and red, and will then be perfect. Take any portion you desire, place it in a crucible, put it on a gentle fire and imbibe it with its red oil drop by drop until it will melt and flow without fuming; do not fear that your mercury will evaporate because the earth will drink with pleasure and avidity that humour which is of its own nature. You now have in your possession your perfect elixir. Thank the Great Architect of the Universe for the favour conferred upon you, and see that you use it to His Glory and do not give this secret to any except those of high principles and strict morals.

The white elixir is made the same as the red, but using only the white ferment, and the white oil.

The Tincture

The tincture, in the philosophical sense, is the elixir rendered fixed, fusible, penetrating and tinging, by the corruption and other operations which I have described. This tincture does not consist of an external colour, the colour is within the substance itself which gives tincture to the metallic form; it is like saffron in water; it penetrates into paper more easily than oil will do; it will mix very readily, like wax with wax or water with water, because the union is made between two things of the same nature. It is from this property that it has come to be an admirable panacea for all the maladies in the three Kingdoms of Nature. It searches out the radical and vital principle which it relieves by its action of the heterogenous causes which inflict it and hold it in prison, it comes to the aid of the vital principle and joins with it to throw out the enemies; they become active together and achieve a perfect victory.

This quintessence attacks the impurities in the body, as fire evaporates humidity from wood; it preserves the health and gives force to the life principle to resist any attack of illness and to separate the veritable nutriment in food from the substance which is its vehicle.

Multiplication

We understand by the philosophical multiplication, an augmentation in quantity and in quality, both the one and the other beyond all that one can imagine. That of the quality is a multiplication of the tincture through corruption, volatilization and fixation reiterated as many times as the artist may please; the second

augments only the quantity of the tincture without increasing its virtue. The second sulphur is multiplied with the same matter out of which it was made and by putting in a small piece of the first according to the weights and measures required.

There are three methods of making the multiplication; the first is to take a part of the perfect red elixir and mix it with nine parts of its red water; place the flask in the bath to make it all dissolve in water; after the solution, cook this water until it coagulates into a substance resembling a ruby; incerate this to the matter of the elixir and by this first operation the medicine acquires ten times more virtue than it had before, reiterate this same process a second time and it will augment to one hundred; a third time, a thousand, and so on always increasing ten fold.

The second method is to mix the desired quantity of the elixir with its water, always being careful of the proportions of one and the other, and after having placed it in a vessel closely sealed, dissolve it in the bath and follow the regimen of the second, successively distilling the elements by their proper fires until all becomes stone; then incerate, as in the other case, and the virtue of the elixir will augment one hundred-fold the first time, but this way is too long, reiterate as in the first to increase its force more and more.

The third method is the multiplication in quantity; project one ounce of the elixir multiplied in quality upon one hundred ounces of purified common mercury; this mercury placed upon a small fire will be quickly changed into elixir. If you throw one ounce of this new elixir upon one hundred ounces of other common mercury; this mercury placed upon a small fire will be quickly changed into elixir. If you throw one ounce of this new elixir upon one hundred ounces of other common mercury purified, it will become most fine gold; the multiplication of the white elixir is made in the same manner, taking the white elixir and its water instead of the red elixir; the more you reiterate the multiplication in

quality, the greater effect it will have in projection, but not by the third method of which I have spoken, because the force diminishes at each projection upon the common mercury; one cannot therefore push this reiteration beyond the fourth or fifth time, because thereby the medicine would become so active and so fiery that the operation would take place instantly; the duration shortens at each reiteration; consequently its virtue is sufficiently great at the fourth or fifth time to satisfy the desires of the artist, because out of the first, one grain can convert one hundred grains of mercury into gold, at the fourth, one hundred thousand, etc. One must judge that this medicine is like the seed of wheat which multiplies each time it is sown.

It should be observed that what is called red water is the red powder; which the first operation has produced; and that the perfect elixir or red oul is the red powder produced in the second operation; this must be understood in the same way for the white.

The Weights in the work

Raymond Lully advises us that this unique thing is one only thing taken individually, but two things of the same nature which make but one. If there are two or more things to mix together, it is needful to do it according to weights, proportions and measure. I have already spoken of those in the chapter on Demonstrative Signs, under the names of the Eagle and the Dragon and I have also given the proportions of the substances required in the multiplication. One should see from these that the proportions of the substances are not the same in the first and second work.

General Rules

Before putting your hand to the work in whatever way it may be, it is very desirable to have so combined all that there will be nothing in the philosophical books which you are not able to understand so that you may be successful in the operations which you propose to undertake. For this purpose it is necessary to be sure of the substance to be used; to see whether it has all the qualities and properties attributed to it by the philosophers; because they aver they have never named it by the name by which it is ordinarily known; one should remember that this matter costs nothing except the trouble of gathering it, and that the medicine which Philalethes, after Geber, called medicine of the first order, or the first preparation is made perfect without much expense in all places, at all times, by all sorts of people; but see there is a sufficient quantity of the matter, at least, twenty or thirty pounds.

The terms used; conversion, desiccation, mortification, inspissation, preparation, alteration, all signify one and the same thing in the Hermetic Art. The sublimation, descension, distillation, calcination, putrefaction, congelation, fixation, ceration, are in themselves different things; but they do constitute one continuous operation in the process of the work in the same flask; the philosophers have given all these names to the different things or changes which they have seen take place in the vessel; when they saw the substance exhale a subtle fume, which went to the top of the glass, they named that ascension and sublimation; seeing the vapour descend to the bottom of the glass, they called it descension and distillation.

Morien said, in consequence; all our operation consists in drawing out the water from the earth and returning it until the earth putrifies and purifies; when they perceived that this water mixed with its earth, coagulated or solidified, that it became black

and stinking they then said it was the putrefaction, the principle of generation; this putrefaction will last until the matter becomes white.

The matter being black is reduced to powder and then commences to become grey; this appearance of cinder has given birth to the idea of calcination, inceration, etc. and when it became completely white, they called it perfect calcination; seeing the matter take a solid consistence, that it did not flow, it then answered to their congelation, their induration; for this reason they have said that the whole magistry consists in natural dissolution and coagulation, and in cooking by one regimen until the red darkens it. One should be careful not to move the glass or remove it from the central fire, because should the matter become cold all will be lost.

To give a fire of the first degree the belly of the flask must be placed in the earth up to one quarter; for the second degree the earth must cover it, half way up the belly, & etc.

The Virtues of the Philosophical Elixir

It is, according to the sayings of all the philosophers, the source of riches and of good health, because with it one can make gold and silver in abundance and effect a cure not only for all those maladies which are curable but also, by its moderate use they can be prevented. One single grain of this medicine or red elixir, will cure paralysis, dropsy, gout and leprosy, if taken daily during some few days.

Epilepsy, colic, rheumatism, inflammation, frenzy, and all other internal complaints cannot resist this life principle. It is an assured remedy for all affections of the eyes. All apothumes,

ulcers, wounds, cancers, fistulas, noli-me-tangere and all diseases of the skin will be cured by dissolving one grain in a glass of wine or water, and bathing the affected parts; it will dissolve, little by little, stone in the bladder; is an antidote for all poisons by drinking it as above advised.

Raymond Lully assures us that it is, in general, a sovereign remedy for all the ills which afflict humanity from the feet to the head; if the illness has lasted one month it will cure it in one day; if it has lasted a year, it will cure it in twelve days while in one month it will eliminate any disease whatsoever.

Arnold de Villa Nova says that its efficacy is infinitely superior to any and every remedy of Hippocrates, of Galen, of Alexander, of Avacina and of all ordinary medicine; that it rejoices the heart, gives strength and energy, conserves youth and makes old people young again; in general, that it cures all diseases whether hot or cold or humid or dry.

Geber, without making an enumeration of the maladies which it will cure, contents himself by saying that it will overcome all those diseases which are regarded as incurable by the medical faculty; that it rejuvenates the old and preserves health during many years beyond the normal span, simply by taking a piece the size of a mustard seed two or three times a week, fasting.

Philalethes adds to this, that it clears the skin of all blemishes and wrinkles & etc. that it will help a woman in labour, the child being dead, simply by holding the powder to the mother's nose, and quotes Hermes as his authority; he asserts that he himself has snatched many from the arms of death who had been given up by their doctors. You will find prescriptions for its application in all diseases by consulting the works of Raymond Lully and Arnold de Villa Nova.

A Vindication of the Great Work

The Grand work of the Sages holds the first rank amongst beautiful things; Nature, without the help of art, is unable to perform it, and art without Nature cannot venture to undertake it; it is a masterpiece which borders on the powers of the gods; its effects are so miraculous, that the health which it gives and preserves to people, the perfection which it gives to all things in Nature, and the great wealth it produces in a manner wholly divine, are not reckoned to be its highest marvels.

If the Great Architect of the Universe has made it the most perfect agent in all Nature one may say without fear that it has received the same power from Heaven in regard to morality; if it purifies the body, it clarifies the spirit; if it develops compound substances to the highest point of perfection, it can elevate our intelligence up to the highest knowledge; it is the Savior of the great world, because it purges all things from their original stains and by its virtue repairs the disorder of their temperament. It subsists in a perfect tenary of three pure principles, truly distinct, but which together make one and the same Nature. It is normally the universal spirit of the world corporified in a virgin earth, being the first production or the first mixture of the elements to the first point of their birth. It is worked in its first preparation, it pours forth its blood, it dies, it surrenders its spirit; it is entombed in its vessel, it ascends to heaven all quintessencified and judges the hale and the sick, destroying the central impurity of some and exalting the principles of others; so it is not without reason that it is called by the Sages, the Saviour of the Great World and the image of the Savior of our souls. One may justly say that it produces marvels in Nature introducing into bodies a very great purity and it also

does miraculous things in morality illuminating our spirits with the most powerful lights.

I leave the readers the liberty to supplement these results in any manner they may judge fit and convenient.

FINIS.