

SATURN'S PREPARATION EXPERIMENTED AGAINST LEPROSY  
OF HUMAN AND METALLIC BODIES, AND FROM WHICH AN  
OLYMPIC SOLVENT CAN BE MADE

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*translated from: "RECUEIL des PLUS CURIEUX et RARES SECRETS  
(Paris 1641)*

Distil in great quantities a good vinegar as it is the basis and foundation of this work. And, in order to fortify it the better, distil it many times upon its own fæces, afterwards mix all that has distilled with equal parts of another not dephlegmated vinegar, and make them pass together so that it may become more efficacious. The fæces which shall remain at the bottom you may put them in a retort at a good fire, by the force of which an excellent oil may be driven, which may burn itself and solve all kinds of minerals.

After having prepared this solvent, you have to take 80 pounds of litharge in powder, and not ceruse, nor minium, nor lead's calx as many artists do especially Isaac Hollandus, take this litharge and put it in several matrasses of great capacity, and pour upon it all your distilled vinegar, so that it swims ten fingers above; then, on an ash fire, you shall extract Saturn's salt by a slow digestion, and upon the fæces which shall remain after the extraction of the salt and of the crystals, you shall pour new menstruum in the same quantity as we have said, and you shall continue this until all your litharge has been re-

duced to crystals, which, to speak properly, are what philosophers call the chaos or the first metallic matter. Upon this crystalline matter you shall pour again, and for the last time, new distilled vinegar, and you shall make the whole to solve at a slow fire, and you shall filter it, so that a perfectly pure and neat menstruum is made, which, having passed through the vaporous bath, shall leave at the bottom of the alembic a matter melting like wax, which hardens at coolness even as it melts at heat.

You shall then divide this melting matter in many alembics, and shall pour upon it new menstruum, little by little, in order to nourish and moisten it little by little, which you shall do putting at the beginning but only two ounces, then three, then five, seven, augmenting it until the matter does not want to receive anything more, which you shall know when the solvent comes as sharp as it was at the beginning, so that each time you distil your imbibed matter you shall take care to continue until the phlegm comes as sharp as before, because it is thus that the child rejects its nourishing milk after its stomach has been filled up.

This matter, being thus prepared and changed into an excellent and precious gum, you shall digest it at the vaporous bath for 30-40 days, until it remains of a black colour and a stinking smell as liquid pitch, and it is from this liquid pitch that you shall drive out in the same bath an excellent phlegm, which may serve as a proper menstruum to extract from the calcinated earth a precious salt, as we shall later on say.

And, on the other hand, from the repeated distillation which you shall do of the said pitch on the sand bath, eventually giving a good fire above and below, you shall drive out, by the ordinary degrees until a most violent fire, a red and very thick oil which, when united with the preceding distillates, shall compose together a water as strong and violent as the one which is driven out from wine, and even of a higher virtue: which is called by philosophers the water of life of Saturn, whose substance is so pure and subtle that one has to keep it in a most closed vessel so that it may not exhalate. To finish the perfection of this solvent, this water of life of Saturn is to be put again on a mild bath, in an alembic of a very long neck, in which the most pure spirit of this water shall imperceptibly rise the first (. . .) After this spirit, a lacteous phlegm shall come over by a more strong bath, which may serve better than the one of which we have previously spoken, to wash your calcined matter, and eventually, by a stronger degree of fire, after having changed the receiver, you shall separate also a burning water which at the beginning shall come white and aqueous then red and oily, but this one shall be heavy and shall remain at the bottom of the vessel; you may however make it to pass over by the strength of the greater fire.

As for the earth that shall remain at the bottom of the retort as a black powder, you may solve it again by another distilled vinegar, and change it by this means into a new lapis of a sticky and gummy consistency, and finally with the aid of the

digestions and distillations above mentioned, you may take out from it spirits which are marvellously active and ardent.

Some divide this earth into 2, and although Isaac himself thus show this division, I think that it is best and briefier to calcine all the earth together, and to reverberate by a mild flame until it does become as yellow as gold, and when this earth is yellow by the cohobation of the phlegms you may again extract the salt, according to the rules and ordinary operations of the art.

Having attained to the extraction of this rare and precious salt, you shall take the first spirit which you have extracted little by little by several cohobations, and which you have afterwards kept, and you shall pour it upon this last salt, reiterating this imbibition until an ounce of salt weighs three or four of the spirit, so that it has retained the weight of armoniacal salt of this spirit, and that; to finish with, the volatile overcomes the fixt in proportion: if you do work this operation with exactitude, you shall find at the bottom an excellent earth, which you shall sublimate in an appropriate glass vessel, very clear and well sealed, where you shall have the pleasure of seeing the sublimation of a philosophical mercury in the form of a happy earth, or rather of a fair gipsy, which you shall keep as a matter of great price.

To crown this work, one part is to be taken of this mercury which you shall unite with four of the spirit of which we have spoken above, or with the same quantity of the first burning

water, to make with it a solvent of Sol and Luna, even as philosophers have imagined it, capable of reducing them into a spirit, without destroying their bodies nor losing their species; so that from this solution, truly philosophical, you may do admirable works for the health both of the human bodies and of the metallic ones. This same thing may be done both from choral or from litharge, and in this case you shall make from it, undoubtedly, the fairest and most innocent of all solvents.

"Another solvent for gold by the crystals of Saturn"

- Minium or litharge are solved into vinegar and 3 times recrystallised.
- These crystals are digested 3 or 4 days with rectified aqua vitae.
- The aqua vitae is distilled and a honey or oil remains behind.
- This is the congealed into crystals 6 parts of which are grinded with 1 part of calcined gold.
- This is digested for 40 days.
- It is distilled: first an extraneous humidity comes over, then an oil and many white fumes "which the philosophers call menstrual".
- By rectification, first an aqua vitae comes over, then the phlegm.
- The water of life is poured upon the faeces of the oil which remained behind, and this is left 2 days at the bath to digest; it does become coloured.

- By distillation and cohobation the whole of the tincture is extracted.
- The water of life is retired off at the balneum "and you shall find at the bottom an oil of gold, most excellent for health when it has been aromatised with an oil of cinnamon or in other ways."