A Breviary of *ALCHEMY*

OR A

COMMENTARY

UPON

Sir *GEORGE RIPLET’S*

RECAPITULATION:

BEING

A Paraphrastical Epitome

of his Twelve *GATES*.

Written by

Æyrenæus Philalethes *ANGLUS,

COSMOPOLITA.*

LONDON,

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in Little Britain, MDCLXXVIII.
Sir George Ripley's Recapitulation.

I.
For to bring this Treatise to a final end;
And briefly here to conclude these secrets all:
Diligently look thou, and to thy Figure attend,
Which doth in it contain these secrets great and small:
And if thou it conceive, both Theoretical and Practical,
By Figures and Colours, and by Scripture plain,
Which wittily conceived, thou mayest not work in vain.

II.
Consider first the Latitude of this precious Stone,
Beginning in the first side noted in the West,
Where the red Man, and white Woman be made one,

A 2
Sponser
Sir George Ripley's Recapitulation.

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II. Sir G. Ripley's Recapitulation.

Spons'd with the Spirit of life to live in love
and rest:
Earth and water equally proportion'd, that
is best;
And one of the Earth is good, and of the
Spirit Three,
Which Twelve to Four also of the Earth may
be.

III.

Three of the Wife, and one of the Man thou
must take:
And the least of the Spirit there is in this
Dispensation,
The rather thy Calcination for certain shalt
thou make:
Then forth into the North proceed by obscu-
ration
Of the red man and his white Wife called
Eclypse;
Lossing them, and altering them betwixt
Winter and Vere,
Into Water turning Earth, dark, and no-
thing clear.

IV.

From thence by Colours many one into the
East ascend,
Then shall the Moon be full, appearing by
day-light:
Then

V.

And as in the West was the beginning of thy
practice,
And the North the perfect mean of profound
alteration:
So in the East after them is the beginning
of speculation.
But of this course up in the South the Sun
maketh consummation.
There be the Elements turned into Fire by
Circulation.
Then to win to thy desire, thou needest not
be in doubt,
For the Wheel of our Philosophy thou hast
turn'd about.

A 3

VI.
Sir G. Ripley's Recapitulation.

Then is she passed Purgatory, and her course at an end:
There is the rising of the Sun appearing white and bright;
There is Summer after Vere, and Day after Night:
Then Earth and Water which were black, be turned into Air,
And Clouds of darkness over-blown, and all appeareth fair.

III.

Three of the Wife, and one of the Man thou must take;
And the legs of the Spirit there is in this Dispensation,
The rather thy Calcination for certain shalt thou make:
Then forth into the North proceed by obscurcation
Of the red man and his white Wife called Eclypfection;
Losing them, and altering them betwixt Winter and Vere,
Into Water turning Earth, dark, and nothing clear.

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From thence by Colours many one into the East ascend,
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For the Wheel of our Philosophy thou hast turn'd about.

A 3  VI.
But yet about again 2 times turn thy wheel,
In which be comprehended all the secrets of
our Philosophy
In Chapters Twelve, made plain to thee, if
 thou conceivest them well;
And all the secrets by and by of our lower
Astronomy,
How thou shalt Calcine Bodies, perfect, dis-
solve, divide, and putrifie,
With perfect knowledge of all the Poles which
in our Heaven been
Shining with Colours inexplicable, never
were gayer seen.

VII.
And this one secret conclusion know with-
onen fail,
Our Red Man tessel not, nor his Wife,
until they tessel be;
Therefore if thou lift thy self by this craft to
avail,
The Altitude of the Bodies hide, and show
out their profundity,
In every of thy Materials destroying the first
Quality,
And

Sir G. Ripley's Recapitulation.

And secondly Qualities more glorious in
them repair anon;
And in one Glass, with one Reg'ment Four
Natures turn to One.

VIII.
Pale and black with false Citrine, unperfect
White and Red,
The Peacock's Feathers in Colours gay, the
Rainbow, which shall over-go
The spotted Panther, the Lyon green, the
Crow's Bill blew as Lead;
These shall appear before the perfect White,
and many other moe
Colours; And after the perfect white, gray
and false Citrine also:
And after these, then shall appear the bloody
red invariable;
Then haste thou a Medicine of the third or-
der of his own kind multiplicable.

IX.
Thou must divide thy white Elixir into parts
Two,
Before thou Rubifie, and into Glasses Two
let them be done,
If thou wilt have the Elixirs for Sun and
Moon, so do, A 4 With
Sir G. Ripley's Recapitulation.

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With perfect knowledge of all the Poles which in our Heaven been
Shining with Colours inexplicable, never were gayer seen.

VII.

And this one secret conclusion know without fail,
Our Red Man testeth not, nor his Wife, until they test him;
Therefore if thou list thy self by this craft to avail,
The Altitude of the Bodies bide, and shew out their profundity,
In every of thy Materials destroying the first Quality,
And secondary Qualities more glorious in them repair anon;
And in one Glass, with one Regiment Four Natures turn to One.

VIII.

Pale and black with false Citrine, unperfect White and Red,
The Peacock's Feathers in Colours gay, the Rainbow, which shall over-go
The spotted Panther, the Lyon green, the Crow's Bill blew as Lead;
These shall appear before the perfect White, and many other moe Colours;
And after the perfect white, gray and false Citrine also:
And after these, then shall appear the bloody red invariable;
Then haste thou a Medicine of the third order of his own kind multiplicable.

IX.

Thou must divide thy white Elixir into parts Two,
Before thou Rubifie, and into Glasses Two let them be done,
If thou wilt have the Elixir for Sun and Moon, so do, And
6 Sir G. Ripley's Recapitulation.

With Mercury then ther melt, multiply unto a
great quantity soon:
And if thou hast not at the beginning en-
ough to fill a Spoon,
yet thou mayst them so multiply, both the
White, and the Red,
That if thou live'st a Thousand Years, they
will stand thee in stead.

X.

Have thou recourse into thy Wheel therefore;
I counsel thee,
And study him well to know in each Chap-
ter truly;
Meddle with no Fantastical Multipliers;
but let them be,
Which will thee flatter, and falsly say they
are cunning in Philosophy:
Do as I bid thee, then dissolve those fore-
said Bases wittily,
And turn them into perfect Oyls with our
true Water ardent
By Circulation, that must be done accord-
ing to our intent.

XI.

These Oyls will fix crude Mercury, and
convert Bodies all

Sir G. Ripley's Recapitulation. 7

Into perfect Sol and Lune when thou shalt
make Projection.
That Oyly Substance pure & fixt, Reymond
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 Election;
And that he will for one of his at Dooms-
day me ken,
And grant me in his Bliss to Reign with
him for ever, Amen.
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A Breviary of Alchemy; or A Commentary upon Sir George Ripley's Recapitulation: Being a Paraphrastical Epitome of his XII Gates.

Stanza I.  Position I. That the Art is most certainly true. Which wittily conceiv'd, thou mayest not Work in vain. Whence observe the Truth and Certainty of the Art; so Father Hermes, It is true (faith he,) without falshood, certain, and most true; That which is above, is like that which is beneath; and that which

A Breviary of Alchemy, which is beneath, is like that which is above, to bring about the Miracles of one thing. So Trevisan, Flammel, Dionys. Zachary, and others, affirm upon their own Experience: And so this our Author in his Epistle to King Edward; his Conclusion of the Admonition concerning erroneous Experiments, and other places of these his Twelve Gates, that I need not enlarge on this Subject.

Stanza II.  Position II. Our Work is made of Three Principles. Where the Red Man and the White Woman are made one, &c. Thence it is evident, that our Operations are made of Three Principles, yet of one Essence; the Red Man, the White Wife, and the Spirit of Life: By the latter; the two former are Espoused or made One. This is that which Trevisan calls his One Root, and Two Mercurial Substances, crude at their taking, and extracted out of their Minerals: This our Author else-where calls his Trinity and Unity, the Trinity respecting the Substances as they are severally; the
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the Unity respecting their Essence, which
is entirely Homogenial; Therefore it is
added, that they live in love and rest
without repugnancy, which could not be
were they not Essential and Radically
the same; For likeness of Nature is the
Caufe of Love, and Oneness of Essence
the true ground of Union; among dif-
frent Substances can only be expected
Confusion, if not Destruction.

Position III.

Three Substances make only Two Natures,
Earth and Water.

Earth and Water equally proportion'd,
that is best. Here it is evident, that
these Three Substances make up but Two
Natures of Earth and Water: The Man
and Wife are both Bodies or Earths; the
one fixed and ripe; the other Volatile
and unripe, and by Mixture make a Brit-
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his Preface expresseth it. The White Wo-
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Moon by all Philosophers; and by this
Author

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Author in his Doctrine of Proportions;
One of the Sun, and Two of the Moon,
till altogether like Pap be done.

Position IV.

From equal Pondus of Earth and Water,
Three of Water to One of the Earth is
good, but equal is best.

Then make the Mercury Four to the Sun,
Two to the Moon, &c. as it should be.
in Figure of the Trinity. And so we come
to take notice of the Doctrine of Propor-
tion between the Earth and Water, e-
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thor in his Chapter of Calcination. This
is the surest and best proportion, speaking
of equal Pondus of Earth and Water; and
gives the Reason, because Solution will
be sooner made, viz.

The more thy Earth, the less thy Water be,
The sooner and better Solution shalt thou see.

And here he affirms the fame of Calci-
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Three of the Water to One of the Earth,
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The Unity respecting their Essence, which is entirely Homogenial; Therefore it is added, that they live in love and rest without repugnancy, which could not be were they not Essentially and Radically the same; For likeness of Nature is the Cause of Love, and One of the true ground of Union; among different Substances can only be expected Confusion, if not Destruction.

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have room to be sufficiently dilated in the Water, and the Body opened by it; and this is the Pondus of Roger Bacon, which requires a longer time before the quick be kil’d; and by consequent, the reviving of the dead must be longer in doing; for Calcination is nothing else, but a killing the moist with the dry; till which be done, there is no reviving of the dry by the moist, but they have one and the same Operation and Period of time; for one dies not, but the other revives: nor doth the Dragon die, but with its Sister.

Position V.
The White Wife in the first Conjunction is to be Three to One of the Red Man.

And Free of the Wife, and one of the Man thou take, &c. From the Pondus between the Earth and Water, come we to view the Proportion between the Man and his Wife; Here the Pondus is laid down Three to One, and so there are Four parts of Earth to Four of Water, or more, until Twelve; that is, Three of Water to One of the Earth. This also is clear from the Chapter of Conjunction, where the Woman is allow’d 15 Veins to 5 of the Man, as to the Act of their Fecundity, which is interpreted of the first Conjunction by himself, that the Man must have but 3 of Water, and his Wife 9, which is 12 of Water to 4 of the Earth; by which it is evident, that the Woman is to exceed her Husband in a three-fold Proportion.

Or Two to One after Reymund: Or Four to One according to Alanus; but Three to One is best.

However, in Reymund’s Doctrine of Proportions cited by our Author in his Gate of Calcination, One of the Sun is joyn’d with Two of the Moon, which make Three of the Body; and to these are added Four of Mercury, which is One more of the Spiritual than of the Corporal part; and this the Author compares to Trinity and Unity, both are good; Yea, and Alanus prescribes Four parts to One, which may be done, but Three to One is best and equal Pondus of Spirit and Life, for compleating of the Marriage between this Royal Pair, the Sun the Husband, and the Moon the Wife: Of this speaks this Author.
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Author in his Gate of Solution; One in Gender they be, but in Number not so; The Father is the Sun, and the Moon the Mother, the Mover is Mercury.

This Compound according to its various Considerations, hath many Relations, and as many Denominations; Sun and Moon, Man and Wife, Body, Soul and Spirit, Earth and Water, Sister and Brother, Mother and Son, with many others; but its Proper Name is Magnesia.

Quest. What is the Red Man? what his White Wife? What the Spirit of Life?

It may be here questioned, what this Red Man is? what his White Wife? and what the Spirit of Life? for that is the only knot in understanding the Writings of Philosophers, whose various Expressions, and seeming Contradictions herein, do obscure the Art wonderfully: Yet however they seem to differ in their Writings, they mean all one thing, if well or rightly understood.

Answer 1st. What the Red Man is?

The Red Man betokens the perfect Body of the Sun, or his Shadow the Moon; For Lune the Body, which is one of the Seven, is a Male, and a perfect Body,
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Verus in his Treatise, confirms the same in these words; If so be (faith be) thou be so poor that thou canst not take Gold, then take so much Silver; yet Gold is the better, as being nearer of kin to our Water and Mercury.

Answer 2. What is the White Wife?

Secondly, The White Wife, otherwise called the Moon, is a Female; it is a Coagulated Mercury, but not fixed: A Spiritual Body, flexible in nature of a Body, yet Volatile, in nature of a Spirit; It is called therefore Mercury of the Philosophers; Our Green Lyon; Our immature or unripe Gold: It is Pontanus's Fire, Artepium's middle substance, clear like pure Silver, which ought to receive the Tinctures of the Sun and Moon, his sharp Vineger, his Antimonial-Saturnine-Mercurial Argent Vive, without which Laton cannot be whitened; of which an old Philosopher faith, whiten the red Laton, by a white, tepid, and suffocated Water; of which testimony Trevisanus affirms, that nothing could be said better or clearer. This is that which is intimated in the Vision of Arius, who found a People that were Married, yet had no Children, because

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cause they married two Males together: Such are they who mix Sol and Lune, both Corporal and fixt together, whom the Spirit will never revive, because there is not conjugal Love. Joyn therefore Gabritius to his beloved Sister Beza, which is a tender Damsel, and straightforward Gabritius will die; that is, will lose what he was; and from that place where he appeared to have lost what he was, he shall appear what he was not before.

Answer 3. What is the Spirit of Life?

Thirdly, The Spirit of Life is Mercury; The Mover faith this Author is Mercury, with which the Stone is to be multiplied when it is made: And it must be true Mineral Mercury, without any foreign mixture, as Arnold resolves expressly in his Answer to Boniface: And so Ripley faith, some can multiply Mercury with Saturn, and other substances, which we define: Distil it therefore till it be clean, &c. It moreover must have all the proportions of Mercury its ponderosity, otherwise it could not be Metalline; its Humidity, otherwise the Feminine Sperm would be deficient, and its luscidity, not to wet the hand;
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Position VI.
As the West Latitude is the entrance, so
in the North is the first alteration.

Proceed then forth to the North by obscu-
ration, &c. Loosing them, and alter-
ing them, &c. The Materials being found,
and mixt according to the Proportions
 taught before, is called the West Latitude;
because in it the Sun sets, and afterwards
appears no more in his Red Robes, till he
first be cloathed with a White glittering
Robe, and be Crowned with a very bright
Oriental Diadem. Now the progress into
the North, is a discovery of the Profun-
dity of the Stone, and is compared to the
Winter, which is in the North, (chiefly)
long, tedious, cold and flabby; so will it be in this Work; the Signs are Capri-
corn, Pisces, and Aquarius; In this there
is

is a retrogradation of Sol into its first mat-
ter, in which alteration the old Form dies,
the Matter rots and putrefies; and is after
renewed in the East.

This Operation (faith Flammel) is not
perfected in less than Five Months; and the
Colours of the Compound are dark, obscure,
waterish, and at length black like Pitch;
in which blackness the Body is rotted into
Atoms; which intire blackness, and height
of corruption lasts but 2 or 3 days; and there-
fore faith Ripley in his Epistle, the third day
he shall arise; the same faith Daśtin in his
Rosary, where he allows four days for Pu-
trefaction: The same faith Effenerius the
Monk in his intire Treatise published with
Daśtin: However, the whole time of
blackness, in coming, continuing, and go-
ing away, is 150 days, although the Sun
begins to appear in 130 days, if you work
right. This I have added for the sake
of many who expect black of the blackest
in 40 or 50 dayes, mistaking Flammel
herein; who faith, the colour must be
black of the blackest, and like to the co-
LOUR of the Dragons in 40 days, which
Dragons were blackish, blewish, and yel-
lowish,
hand; which it can no sooner lose by Corrosives or otherwise; but it straightway loseth its first Mineral Proportion, and so is no longer an Ingredient of our true Tincture.

Position VI.
As the West Latitude is the entrance, so in the North is the first alteration.

Proceed then forth to the North by observation, &c. Loosing them, and altering them, &c. The Materials being found, and mixt according to the Proportions taught before, is called the West Latitude; because in it the Sun sets, and afterwards appears no more in his Red Robes, till he first be cloathed with a White glittering Robe, and be Crowned with a very bright Oriental Diadem. Now the progress into the North, is a discovery of the Profundity of the Stone, and is compared to the Winter, which is in the North, (chiefly) long, tedious, cold and slumberous; so will it be in this Work; the Signs are Capricorn, Pisces, and Aquarius; In this there is

is a retrogradation of Sol into its first matter, in which alteration the old Form dies, the Matter rots and putrifies; and is after renewed in the East.

This Operation (as faith Flammel) is not perfected in less then Five Months; and the Colours of the Compound are dark, obscure, waterish, and at length black like Pitch; in which blackness the Body is rotted into Atoms; which entire blackness, and height of corruption lasts but 2 or 3 days; and therefore faith Ripley in his Epistle, the third day he shall arise; the same faith Daftin in his Rosary, where he allows four days for Purgation: The same faith Effarius the Monk in his intire Treatise published with Daftin; However, the whole time of blackness, in coming, continuing, and going away, is 150 days, although the Sun begins to appear in 150 days, if you work aright. This I have added for the sake of many who expect black of the blackest in 40 or 50 dayes, mistaking Flammel herein; who faith, the colour must be black of the blackest, and like to the colour of the Dragons in 40 days, which Dragons were blackish, blewish, and yel-lowish,
like unto those as appeared before Blackness, but more glorious; For note, the Stone hath but three colours, Black, White and Red: In the first when compleated, it stays three, or four days at most; in the second as long; in the last it reposeth itself for ever, between these Periods as the Matter is moister or drier, purer or impurer, many intermediate colours appear, more then can be numbered; But Two, (viz.) Green and Yellow, are of long continuance, before the White and the Red: But many colours appear between the beginning of that Work, and the first colour of Blackness: And although several colours appear, yet are they dark, foggy, and foul coloured; by which it appears, that Blackness is the predominant, which for a space will appear like the Egyptian darkness, and is much about the same continuance: so between Blackness and the White, although infinite colours appear; yet the Basis of them being Whitenees, they are bright, and very glorious, which being only transient, pass, and go, and others come in their place, until the White be perfected.
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lowish, which colours shew that the Matter begins to rot into Atoms; which rottennese is not perfected in less than 150 days. (So as to let the Sun appear with its Rays;) First in a small Circle of Heir of a whitish Citrine; which increaseth, and changeth hue day by day, till whitenesse be fully compleated.

Position VII.

The East denoting Whiteness, is the beginning of the Stones Altitude.

Hence by Colours many into the East ascended, &c. In the Work are three Dimensions; Altitude, Latitude, and Profundity: The Altitude is the Perfection of the Bodies which is Inchoate in Whiteness, and compleat in Redness. The Profundity is the first Matter into which they are resolved; For Multiplication and the Latitude is the means through which it passeth from its Perfection to be abased; and from its abasement to its Glorification.

In this passage are infinite gay colours like

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B 4 Position
Position VIII.
The South or Redness is the complement of this Mastery.

Of this course in the South the Sun makerth Conjunction. After the White, the Fire being continued, the Compound will become Azure, Gray, and then Citrine, which will last a long time; and at last end in a bloody Redness.

Position IX.
He that supposeth his Work ended when the Stone is brought to its redness, is mistaken.

But yet again Two times turn about thy Wheel, &c. The Stone being by constant and long Decoction brought to this pass; he who thinketh the race quite run, reckons without his Hoot, and must reckon again; It is Medicine of the first Order, and must be brought to the third Order by Imbibitions and Cipation, which is a second turning round the Wheel; and by Ferment-

Fermentation, which is a third turning round the Wheel, and brings the Medicine to the third Order, and makes it then fit for Projection, which at first it is not; For till the Medicine will flow like Wax, it cannot enter Mercury before its flight; but the Powder as it is made at first, is like Grains or Atoms, and is concealed in a far greater heat, then will make ☼ to fume, yet it abides in its form of Dust or Powder, which must be otherwise before it be fitted for Projection; therefore the Stone tingeth Mercury into a Metalline Mafs in the twinkling of an eye, as our Author faith in his Preface, even as the Basilisk kills by sight: But the Red Sulphur converteth Mercury by a digestion of time into its own Nature, (viz.) Powder, if it be joyn’d in a due proportion, and digested in a due heat: Therefore faith our Author, if you give it too much, it must have a Vomit, or it will be sick too long, but the Stone will never part with any Mercury that is joyned to it in heat; our Sulphur then is a Royal Infant, which doth both hunger and thirst; and if you can but be a Nurse to it as you ought, it will repay
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repay both your Pains and cost: Leave not then where you should begin; but go on till you bring it to the third Order, which Reynold calls his Oyls and Unguents; and so our Author likewise.

Three Properties there are in which the White and Red Sulphurs of the first Order, differ from those of the third Order.

One flows as easily as any Wax in heat, or on a hot Metal: the other in a strong heat abides a Powder.

The one is like to Glass, brittle, ponderous and shining; the other a powder like to Atoms.

The one enters Mercury like an Oyl, and Coagulates it in an instant: the other drinks up Mercury only, as the Calx of a Metal would do, but will not retain it, if the Fire be increased strong, nor turn it into Metal; but if the heat and proportion be both as they ought, by a digestion of Time, it turns it into its own Nature: And so, (as Ripley saith truly,) you may Multiply both White and Red with Mercury; That if at first you had not enough to fill a Spoon, yet in short time you may be

Our Stone must have a Specification to Metals before it will Project.

Our Red Man teyned not until he teyned be, &c. Our Red Man or King must be teyned by Ferment, before it will tinge imperfect Metals: the Ferments are only Sol and Luna, the Proportion a fourth part to the Compound let the Sulphurs be, and three parts of Sol or Luna according as the Sulphur is: or four parts Sol and Luna, and the Sulphur a fifth part; then with Mercury digesft and putrifie your Ferment, and congeal it, and again Ferment it, till it flow like Wax or Oyl; then will that Oyl fix Mercury, and turn any Metal into Perfection; which you may then Multiply at your pleasure, or you may multiply it before Fermentation: Then take the perfect Stone for your Body, and mix him with the White Wife in proportion as at first, and add the Spirit of Life,
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be stored for your whole life, were it ten times as long as it is like to be.

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as at first, and digest it till it pass the three colours, Black, White, and Red.

Thus doth our Author conclude his Erroneous Experiments also: *I never saw true work but one,* faith he. One he did, but it was after infinite Errors, and other work no Philosopher ever yet saw, which he briefly describes.

*Remember Man the most Noble Creature, &c. that is Gold; It is an error to write it,* (Remember that Man is the most Noble Creature of Earthly Composition;) *For Man is not of Earthly Composition, but Stones, Metals, and Clays, &c. are. Now because we seek the Noblest of Creatures of Earthly Composition, we must be so wise as to take it for our Principle:* For as he faith else-where; *as Fire of burning the Principle is, so the Principle of Gilding is Gold Invisible.* In this noblest Creature he faith, are the four Elements proportioned by nature, which makes it incombustible; for were any predominant, it would not abide; but as Trevisan faith, the Analytical proportioning the Elements in a metalline matter, is the very form of Gold: or that rather which gives it its form. He adds

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adds a natural Mercuriality, which costeth right nought; that is a pure, sincere Mineral Water: without adulteration, not Artificial out of Saturn, Jupiter, &c. But natural not a dear Mercury; but that which is common and cheap. He adds one of his Mina's by Art is brought, that is our green Lyon, for with our first Mense true, we Calcine only perfect bodies; but none which are unclean, except one, which is usually call'd by Philosophers the Lyon-Green, into this the clearness of the Sun, or of the Moon, secretly descends: that is, by this the Mercuriality, or profundity of the Sun and Moon are manifested by exuberation, but is hidden from fight a long time; till after putrefaction, it exuberates and appears openly, bleeding and changing colours, and at first being cloathed in a glorious Green: of which faith the Rosary, O happy Greenness, without which nothing can spring? This exuberate-Mercury is our hidden Stone, that is, Potentially, for when that appears, repugnant natures are tied to Unity, that is our Green-Lyon, or Mina, or vegetable humidity, or Mercuriality
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