

Sigismond BACSTROM

**Bacstrom's
Alchemical Anthology**

[*Essay on Alchemy*]

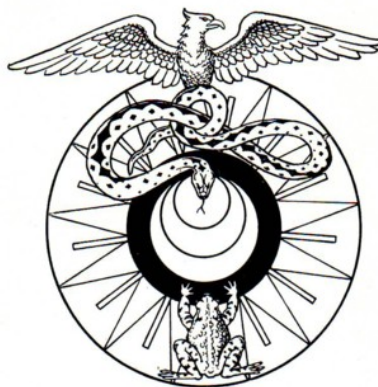
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Essay On Alchemy

by

Sigismond Bacstrom

**Together with Extracts from the Great Early
Alchemists**



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INTRODUCTION

DR. SIGISMOND BACSTROM, M.D., flourished towards the latter part of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries. He was, evidently, of Scandinavian origin, judging by his name, and certainly, for a part of his life, he was a ship's surgeon. As some doubt is cast upon this fact by A.E. Waite in *The Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross*, the following extract will confirm it. In a publication entitled *Voyages and Travels, in all Parts of the World*, by John Pinkerton, Vol. 1, 1803. Published: Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, Paternoster Row, there appears:

“An account of a voyage to Spitzbergen in the year 1780, by S. Bacstrom, M.D., communicated by the author to the editor of the *Philosophical Magazine*, July 1799.

“Such has been my passion to visit foreign climes, that I have been no less than fifteen voyages, one of them round the world.

“I engaged myself as surgeon on board the *Rising Sun*, William Souter, Master --- a well appointed stout ship of 400 tons burthen”.

None of Bacstrom's alchemical works was ever published by himself, although H.P. Blavatsky, in *Lucifer* (a Theosophical monthly magazine) commenced the publication, in serial form, in February 1891, of a book entitled:

“*The Golden Chain of Homerus*, that is: a description of nature and natural things. How and from what they are generated, and how they are destroyed again, and what the subject is which generates, destroys and regenerates things.

“Frankfurt and Leipzig, 1723, translated from the German by Sigismond Bacstrom, M.D., 1797.”

The publication of the installments was discontinued owing, probably, to the death of Blavatsky which occurred at about that time.

Interest in Bacstrom derives from his account of an extraordinary happening which occurred to him when he was in the Island of Mauretius, he being, at that time, the doctor on the ship Harriet under Captain Daddy, bound for New York. According to his own account, whilst in Port Louis, he met with a French doctor by the name of Petit Radel who had fled from France during the Revolution. Dr Radel introduced Bacstrom to Comte Louis de Chazal, and de Chazal very promptly initiated Bacstrom into a Societas Rosae Crucis, administering the appropriate oath of allegiance, issuing a certificate of Membership and certifying as follows:

“I have initiated and received Mr Sigismond Bacstrom, Doctor of Physic, as a practical member and Brother, above an Apprentice, in consequence of his solid learning, which I certify by my name and seal:

Mauritius, 12 Sept. 1794,
De Chazal, F.R.C.”

There are two very good reasons for this initiation; the first is given in Bacstrom;s account of the incident in which he writes:

“As he” [the Comte] “perceived by frequent conversation when we were alone... walking in his extensive gardens, or alone together in the library, that I knew the theory of the Lapis Philosophorum, and was well acquainted with the classic authors, he initiated me and communicated to me his practical labours, and I wrote down from his mouth the whole procedure of the Lapis Animalis as he had worked it”.

The second reason springs from the well-known tradition amongst the Rosicrucians who always strove to initiate “a son” into the mysteries before passing to the Great Beyond, in order to preserve the continuity of the Order and the knowledge it possessed. This desire finds expression in the fourth Clause of the Obligation as follows:

“I do hereby promise that I will instruct, for the benefit of good men, before I depart this life, one, or two persons at most, in our secret knowledge, and initiate and receive such persons as a member apprentice into our Society, in the same manner as I have been initiated and received; but such person only as I believe to be truly worthy and of an upright well meaning mind, blameless conduct, sober life and desirous of knowledge”.

The Comte de Chazal died in 1795, at the age of 97 years, the year following Bacstrom’s Initiation. Perhaps, it was due to a foreknowledge of his approaching end that prompted the Comte’s desire to work the process again from the beginning, for the instruction and benefit of his new disciple, but such was not to be, for we learn from Bacstrom:

“He offered me 30,000 Spanish dollars if I would stay with him one year to work the process once more from the beginning, but having already received orders from the President of the Colonial Assembly (i.e., the sanculotte Government of the Island) to go on board the Harriet bound for New York, I durst not stay, and when the worthy old man heard that of me, he wept like a child”.

In a letter written to Alexander Tilloch, dated 16 March 1804, Bacstrom gives some interesting information about Comte Louis de Chazal. He was the most sensible, learned, and opulent man on the Island. He possessed the power of observing events at a distance, and recorded in a journal everything that went on in Paris at the time of the French Revolution, although physical communication between France and Mauritius was completely cut off at that period.

He kept records of his magical experiments and the cures he had effected by means of animal magnetism, electricity, galvanism, etc., which were attested by the most respectable people on the Island. He had a rich collection of gold medals, precious stones, crude, ct, and set. His library contained more than one thousand volumes in all languages, and he possessed a laboratory and apparatus including astronomical and mathematical instruments.

He had obtained the Lapis Philosophorum and the Pierre Animale. By the first he acquired what he possessed and by the second, which he always carried on his person when making magical experiments, he preserved his health to the age of 97.

Permitting Bacstrom to handle the substances, he performed the transmutation of quicksilver into gold.

He told Bacstrom that he had succeeded in making the Philosopher' Stone at his first attempt in the second year after his arrival at Port Louis, agreeable to the instructions he had received in Paris in the year 1740, and that he would find Elias Ashmole's *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum* a great assistance.

Such are some of the particulars which Bacstrom gives of his Master in Alchemy.

The above information was published by the late Arthur Edward Waite, partly in his book entitled *The Real History of the Rosicrucians*, in 1887 and partly in *The Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross*, in 1924. The present writer has other sources of information, viz., some of the manuscripts to which Mr Waite refers as being jealously guarded in Theosophical hands.

It is certain that Bacstrom resided in London and probable that his letter to Alexander Tilloch was written from there. Bacstrom has left the details of some discussions he had with

a certain Mr Ford, who was interested in Hermetic subjects, these notes being dated from Mary-le-Bone, 8 April 1805.

There is also the record of a “second conversation with Mr Ford when he was at my house and drank tea with us on Good Friday, April 1805”.

Bacstrom translated many treatises on Alchemy from German, French, and Latin, into English, usually with his own comments interspersed as he went along with his text.

It appears that these translations were circulated to his friends or, perhaps, to a group of students which he probably had around him, because the manuscripts were copied by different people. Many of the manuscripts and the copies have survived to the present day. Bacstrom himself wrote a fair round English hand of the period. Many of his papers are at present in the United States. There is one complete Ms. of his which was evidently designed along the lines of *Fasciculus Chemicus* by Arthur Dee (a son of the famous Dr John Dee), published by Elias Ashmole, which may have served Bacstrom as an example to follow. Bacstrom’s work is entitled “*Essay on Alchemy by Sigismond Bacstrom, together with extracts from the great early Alchemists*”. This is the book now offered to the public in honour of this worthy student of the occult, whose labours have never been recognized except by the few who had the good fortune to come under his personal influence, or to derive assistance from his written manuscripts. We have taken the liberty to change the name and now present the work under the title of:

Bacstrom’s Alchemical Anthology

It is interesting to speculate upon the source of de Chazal’s information. Bacstrom tells us that he learned from the Comte that he [the Comte] has received instruction from Paris in 1740. The Comte de St Germain was very active in European countries at that time, and his immense work for Masonry and in Mystical societies is known and recognized.

He was undoubtedly the last of the great Masters of Alchemy to be seen in Europe, and the probability is that in 1740 he was actively connected with the Rosicrucian Lodge or Society, into which de Chazal was introduced in the same manner in which he afterwards received Bacstrom.

Startling developments were taking place in chemistry when Bacstrom was alive. The discovery of oxygen by Priestley in 1774 caused chemists to change their opinion on the theory of the fire element in nature which had been held for thousands of years, and was the basis upon which all the old fire philosophers had worked. Now, with the demonstrated isolation of oxygen, the universe had become much more tangible, much more materialistic. The atomic theory followed in 1808, and Alchemy finally gave place to modern chemistry, “the wise daughter of a foolish mother”, in the view of contemporary chemists.

That Bacstrom was not altogether happy about the new developments is indicated in a comment he wrote at the time as follows:

“...if you reason and reflect upon the stupendous effects and power of the corporified fire or universal agent of God and Nature; the more you consider and reason upon it, the more you will be convinced that it must be so and can be no otherwise. Depend on it, modern chemistry will gradually be obliged to return to this truth known in primitive ages.

“(1) Omnipresent, invisible, tranquil, unmanifested, universal agent, contained in the flint and steel and surrounding air, by night as well as by day, filling boundless space, in every atom of matter and space.

“(2) Manifested in light by electrical motion, by the Sun and fixed stars or suns and by comets, likewise by electrical machines, by the diamond in the dark, by friction, by the flint and steel, and further, by concentration, manifest in warmth and heat.

“(3) By further agitation and circular motion, manifested in burning flame of fire; as we find by burning glasses and by the flint and steel, but the omnipresent universal agent, the unmanifested tranquil fire must not be withdrawn but must be admitted to feed or support the fire, and it must be supplied with a subject to act upon, i.e., fuel, or else it returns to its first omnipresent state of universality, from when nevertheless, it may be remanifested by motion, by the electrical machine, or, by the flint and steel, or by any other suitable motion or action, in straight lines, by friction, or by hammering, or by circular motion. That principle will reappear everywhere, provided it is not excluded by excluding atmospheric AIR (and it is manifested in heat, in fire, or in fire and light. This is the vital principle that animates atmospheric air) in the character of spiritual or incorporeal nitre, by Sendivogius called the nitre of the philosophers, and by the moderns called oxygen. When extended in humidity it becomes universal aerial acid and when it meets with a suitable magnet, it becomes corporified nitre”.

In ancient civilizations, e.g., Ancient Egypt, all scientific knowledge was confined to the priesthood and the temples. Doubtless they arrived at the necessity for secrecy, by a realization that knowledge, in the hands of those who have no high code of conduct, is highly dangerous to the individual and the state. It is known that the Egyptian civilization was of long duration, and there is little doubt that the priests and rulers of that land were mighty men of magic and science. Moses profited by their teaching: he never betrayed it, but used it to promote a similar culture amongst the Hebrews. These arts, embraced in the Kabbalah, were as jealously guarded amongst the Jews as they were amongst the Egyptians. Let it be noted that the philosophy of the Egyptians and the Jews, was based upon the conception of a spiritual as well as a physical universe --- “as above, so below”. They recognized a spiritual power in the universe of which the physical world was merely the transient husk. They

regarded man also, as a Spirit, temporarily the prisoner in a house of flesh. Furthermore, they knew how to bridge the consciousness between the spiritual states and the physical waking awareness.

It is possible that modern discoveries along materialistic lines will make it necessary for scientific knowledge to be secretly guarded, as being too dangerous for indiscriminate dissemination, in fact, Governments are already preventing the customary interchange of knowledge amongst scientists themselves --- scientific secrets have become official secrets. Perhaps, this is a step towards a reversion to old customs, and young men will be sworn to secrecy before their scientific instruction begins.

Experiments with radioactive substances have indicated to the modern investigators, that certain metals are undergoing a process of transmutation in nature, which can be observed. The despised fire in nature of the Alchemists is intruding itself upon the notice of the moderns. Here is the solar electric force on its way out of manifestation. Chemists know of the cycle in atmospheric changes which causes nitre to ascend and descend constantly, thereby forming the food upon which the flora thrives: is it not possible, probable, and even certain, that, in the light of modern investigation, the metallic kingdom is subject to the same kind of metamorphosis, although the cycles are much longer. To the Alchemists the idea was completely rational. As Bacstrom remarks in his admirable preface, they sought "the cause of the cause" and let it be remarked, they were deeply spiritual men who approached the Throne of Grace at the commencement of all their labours. The Alchemists observed the beginning of the metallic cycle in nature of which the modern chemists are witnessing the end. A recent example of the old school was Dr R.W. Councell, M.D., who wrote an admirable textbook on the subject entitled *Apologia Alchymiae* which can safely be recommended to those who seek an introduction to the hermetic arts, Although this wise

doctor performed some experiments in his laboratory, his life was cut short by death before he succeeded in his quest.

H. P. Blavatsky once addressed an open letter to the “Gentlemen of the French Academie” entitled “Alchemy in the Nineteenth Century” from which the following excerpts are illuminating:

“Let us compare the Chinese system with that which is called Hermetic Science. The twofold object which both Schools aim at is identical; the making of gold and the rejuvenating and prolonging of human life by means of the menstruum universal and lapis philosophorum. The third object or true meaning of the ‘transmutation’ has been completely neglected by Christian Adepts; for being satisfied with their belief in the immortality of the soul, the adherents of the older Alchemists have never properly understood this question. Now, partly through negligence, partly through habit, it has been completely struck out of the summum bonum sought for by the Alchemists of Christian countries. Nevertheless it is only this last of the three objects which interests the real Oriental Alchemists. All initiated adepts despising gold, and having a profound indifference to life, cared very little for the first two.

“Both these Schools recognize the existence of two elixirs: the great and the small one. The use of the second on the physical plane transmutes metals and restores youth. The great Elixir, which was only symbolically an elixir, conferred the greatest boon of all: the immortality of consciousness in the spirit, the Nirvana which, in the sequence of evolution, precedes Para-Nirvana, or absolute union with the One Essence.

“The principles which form the basis of the two systems are also identical, that is to say: the compound nature of the metals pass back to their basic elements.

“Both Schools of Alchemy are closely allied to astrology and magic.

“They both make use of a fantastic phraseology. In his *Magie Naturalle* Baptista Porta tells us this clearly: ‘I do not promise you mountains of gold nor the philosophers’ stone, nor even that golden liquor which renders immortal him who drinks it... all that is only visionary; for the world being mutable and subject to change, all that it produces must be destroyed’.

“In other words, this stone contains: the secret of the transmutation of metals, that of long life, and of **CONSCIOUS IMMORTALITY**.

"Outside of the Schools of Adepts, almost unapproachable for Western students, there does not exist in the whole world, and more especially in Europe, one single work on Occultism, and above all on Alchemy, which is written in clear and precise language, or which offers to the public a system or a method which could be followed as in the physical sciences. All treatises which come from an Initiate or from an Adept, Ancient or Modern, unable to reveal all, limit themselves to throwing light on certain problems which are allowed to be disclosed to those worthy of knowing, while remaining at the same time hidden from those who are unworthy of receiving the truth, for fear they should make a selfish use of their knowledge”.

We should pay some attention to the learned of the Middle Ages, for by the Hermetic Arts the old Alchemists claimed to have produced a wonderful medicine for human beings, which would restore frail bodies to perfect health and preserve that health until the final inevitable dissolution. This medicine known to them as *Aurum Potabile* was derived from a metalline base, but many philosophers hint that their base was not always the gold of the mine, but another, more crude, substance which nevertheless in the evolutionary process becomes gold is left to Nature and her *Archaeus*.

Some of the philosophers say they used gold as the basis for their work, but they first reduced it to a sulphur by dissolving it, which is said to be a slow process and made the work almost interminable. It is described as being reserved for the Grandees of the Earth.

The medicine was known to the Arabs as Elixir, and to the Greeks as the Ambrosia and Nectar of the Gods. The Romans also knew of it and borrowed these names from the Greeks. In India it is still called Soma Juice or the Juice of the Moon, and in China it is known as the Golden Pill.

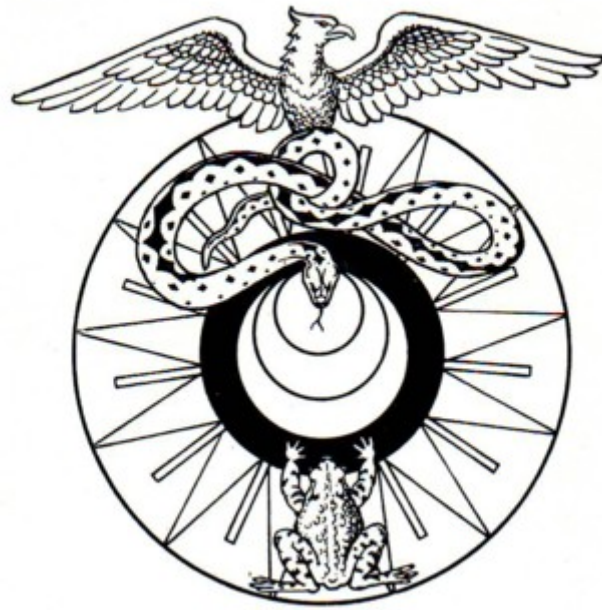
This is the lost secret of Medicine, the reward of a properly prepared person who dares to seek it, or to supplicate it at the hand of the Most High. Pearls are never cast before swine, nor will the unprepared ever safely pass the door which divides the profane from the Occult, The penalty has always been death, for this medicine, when elaborated, can as easily poison as heal, and it is as well to know it in the beginning.

Following the publication of John Dee's *Hieroglyphic Monad* and the *Epistles of Ali Puli*, this work by Dr Bacstrom, M.D., is now submitted for consideration by those interested in Alchemy.

In the Name of the Master.

J.W. Hamilton-Jones

London, February 1960.



PREFACE

The following extracts selected from numerous authors, contain a full elucidation of the *hidden art* on which so many thousand volumes have been written. The writings of these Philosophers, as they call themselves, and many of them were well entitled to that appellation, are for the greater part, indeed we may say all of them, written with studied ambiguity, to conceal the art, a disclosure of which, they were persuaded, could not fail to prove prejudicial to mankind, though eventually it would be far otherwise. The obscurity, however, which pervades their writings, ought not to be wholly ascribed to their wishes to conceal their knowledge. It is true that much of it may be attributed to that love of mystery which held the diffusion of knowledge to be impious and wicked because, forsooth, a bad use of it might be made by bad and impious men; and it is equally true that the fables and metaphors they made use of in the communication of that portion they were willing to communicate were often so ill chosen, so absurd, inapplicable and contradictory, that no person, but the one who had the ingenuity to devise them, could ever comprehend what they were intended to convey --- but the principal cause of the veil that covers these writings, continuing so impenetrable, is the change, the happy change, that Philosophy has undergone, since the dark ages, which has tended to render writings, that in themselves were obscure even to the philosophers of the time, who yet, had a perfect knowledge of the systems of the day, almost incomprehensible to those who make themselves acquainted only with the modern systems.

The Ancients pretended to much more knowledge than the Moderns lay claim to. The knowledge that certain invariable effects followed certain causes was not enough in their eyes:

the cause of the cause was also to be explained! Nor was this difficult with men who were allowed to make whatever use of words might best suit their dogmas. When they had traced effects to their causes, through as many links as they were able, they always came to *first principles* and *elements*, and these were invariably the same! --- whatever was the subject on which they treated! The most ancient *first principles* were *Sulphur* and *Mercury*, and to these in process of time was added *Salt*; but all and each of these were composed of the four elements, *Fire, Air, Earth, and Water*! The former, as employed by the *Sophi*, were mere *terms of art*, and very often had no relation whatever to the substances now known by these names. They were generic terms for certain principles predominating or supposed to predominate, in the subject of which they treated --- a kind of Proteus to which they could give any shape, and by which they explained to their own satisfaction at least, the most intricate operations of Nature. Hence not only minerals, but vegetables and animals were all composed of the same principles; salt, sulphur, and mercury! Nor was this a difficult thing to comprehend when once the disciple made himself acquainted with the powers of *Archaeus*, the workman employed by Nature in all her operations! It is true these Philosophers often disagreed in their detail of these intricate operations, but as all of them landed in the same elements, they were all *sound at bottom* and in general were perfectly satisfied with each other!

But however defective their philosophy might be, certain it is their knowledge in some particulars went far beyond what the moderns, with all their advantages, can pretend to lay claim to. Their prime and grand Arcanum was the *Philosophers' Stone* --- a secret which they concealed with much care, and which yet they were anxious should be discovered by a few, from their writings. And the only wonder is that it has not, long ere now, become as common as any other art. Their claim to this knowledge is not allowed by the moderns, but those who deny it cannot have examined the evidence with sufficient care: indeed many who talk most

confidently on this topic are by no means qualified to give an opinion of the smallest weight, on the question, and in fact are much less entitled to be considered Philosophers than those ancients whom they affect to despise.

A slight cursory reading of a few of the Authors, who have written on this art, will not enable any inquirer to discover where harmony exists among them; much less will it enable him to reconcile differences which arise from the different ways in which they have respectively chosen to handle their subject. His knowledge cannot be acquired in a few months, no, nor even in a few years --- and yet when once it is acquired it may be communicated to another, who has made himself a little acquainted with the old philosophers, in a few hours. The great difficulty in reading their writings is to distinguish between their abstract, ideal principles, and those which are corporeal, tangible, and actually employed in the work. The most candid among them admit, without any disguise. That though they talk so much about the *elements*, meaning the four elements, that with them the Artist hath nothing to do. He must leave Nature to work with these as she pleases; nor need he trouble himself with making the principles; salt, sulphur, and mercury, but take such as nature will provide him with, ready made. What then are the substances which the Alchemists employed as their mercury, sulphur, and salt? It is true that what one makes to be his mercury another puts for his salt; that in their mode of Philosophizing they are often put one for another; and that all of them are given innumerable names and to each of them often the same name --- but it is equally true that however various the appellations are that are given to them, each of them are described, times innumerable, by their own proper characters and properties, in the writings of the Philosophers; and that in number they are but *three* answerable to the three principles --- held by the ancients to be the first products of their four elements. It is true it is called “one thing”, “two”, “three”, “four”, and “five”, but these expressions, are mere quibbles, intended not merely to puzzle the ignorant, but to

surprise the Adepts who might chance to see the work; for many wrote on this art, more for the purpose of showing to others who possessed the secret, that the author also knew it, than from any desire to communicate knowledge to the ignorant --- and what is worse, many wrote and published books who knew nothing whatever of the subject.

The passages selected for the following pages are such as relate most directly to the three principles or materials, the Furnace and Vessel, the work itself and signs which accompany it, and multiplication and transmutation. The remarks included between crochets [in this manner] are no part of the text of the Authors quoted, but are introduced as helps to explain the passages in which they occur.

Part I. The first principle, the ground work and foundation of the whole art is *Gold* --- common pure gold, without any ambiguity or double meaning. This is “Our Sulphur”.

Part II. The second is *Mercury*, not common quicksilver, however, but that substance to which the Philosophers have given the name of “*Our Mercury*”, “*Our Diana*”, “*Our Moon*”, “*Our Luna*”, “*Unripe Gold*”, and many other names.

Part III. The third is what they call their “*Secret Fire*”, “*Our Mercurial Water*”, “*Dissolving Water*”, “*Fire against Nature*”, “*Spirit of Life*”, “*The Moon*”, “*The Priest*”, etc.

The *first* being well purified, and the *second* properly prepared, they are then joined together, and the compound which is called Rebis is then reduced to powder and mixed with the third. Thus are all the three principles united in proper proportion. Selections respecting the union of the former, form Part IV in the following pages --- Part V consists of selections respecting the union of the three principles --- Part VI of the furnace and vessel in which the matter is digested or concocted.

Part VII is passages which more or less include all the former, but are more full as to the mode of procedure and the effects that follow.

Sigismund Bacstrom, M.D.

PART I
OF SULPHUR
SOL

Sendivogius

The invisible tinging spirit is the pure fire of *GOLD*... the father of the Stone is *Sol*.

Pandora

As *Gold* is the most perfect of all the metals so *Gold* contains the tincture of Redness --- Silver a tincture of perfect whiteness.

Rosarium

He who knows how to make a tinging venom from *Gold* and its shadow that is *Luna* [i.e. common silver] obtains our Stone.

Alanus

He that knows not how to extract the Soul from the body of *Gold* or of *Silver* and to return it to the body, wholly deviates from the right path.

Laurentius Ventura

You will never arrive at any perfection unless *Sol* and *Luna* [our Moon] be united into one body.

Whosoever will obtain a true work let him take the *heat of Sol* and the *Moon's spittle* [Join the two in Rebis].

Artephius

You must extract a living and incombustible water, and then congeal or coagulate it with the *perfect body of Sol*.

Eyraeneus Philaletha

Whosoever desires to enjoy the secret Golden Fleece, let him know that our Gold-making Powder (which we call our Stone) is only *Gold* digested into the highest degree of purity and subtile fixity, whereto it may be brought, by nature and a discreet Artist; which gold, thus essentificated, is called *our gold* (and is no more vulgar) and is the period of the perfection of nature and Art... Let Gold therefore be the one true sole principle of Gold making... This doth in our work supply the place of the male, therefore it is joined [in rebis] to our *white and more crude gold* [The Regulus of Antimony and Mars is called unripe].

The Same

Sulphur doth, in his work, supply the place of the male [observe the Sol is here called Sulphur], and whosoever undertakes the transmutation art without it, all his attempts will be in vain; for all the Wise men affirm, that there can be no tincture made without its *Latten* before called Sulphur, which Latten is *Gold without any double speaking*... In Gold, [common fine Gold], which is the gold of the Sophi, the tincture of goodness lies hid.

D'Espagnet

Whosoever seeketh the art of perfecting and multiplying metals, out of the nature of metals, goes in error, for from metals must metals be derived even as from man, man... Perfect bodies [Gold or Silver] are endued with a more perfect seed, and under the hard bark of the perfect metals the perfect seed lies hid --- *In auro semina sunt auri, quamvis abstruse recedant longuis.*

The Same

They that hold *sulphur* and *mercury* to be the matter of the Stone, by the name of *sulphur* they understand *Sol* and

common Luna... He that seeks for a physical tincture without Sol or Luna, loseth both his cost and pains; for Sol affordeth a most plentiful tincture of redness, and Luna of whiteness, for only these two are called perfect, because they only are filled with the substance of purest sulphur, perfectly clarified by the skill of Nature.

Artephius

Nature is to be amended by its own like nature, that is *Gold* or *Silver* are to be exalted in our water.

Sendivogius

Although thou shouldest have the first matter, according to the Philosophers, yet would it be unprofitable for thee to multiply that central salt *without Gold...* The Philosophers' stone or tincture, is nothing else but *Gold digested to the highest degree*: for vulgar gold is like an herb without seed, which when ripened will bring forth seed... Gold, may yield fruit, and seed, in which it multiplies itself, by the industry of a skilful artist, who knows how to exalt Nature... The body which yields the seed is Gold: Luna or silver, not the common [but our Silver, the Regulus of Antimony and Mars], is that which receives the seed of the Gold. [This Luna is the garden in which the solar scion is planted].

Water Stone of the Wise

Mercury, the terrestrial body of gold must be dissolved, destroyed and putrefied, and deprived of all its powers [its native properties].

Eraeneus Philaletha

Whatever any sophist may suggest or any sophistical author may affirm, let none take you from this ground: viz., that as the end you look for is Gold, so let Gold be the subject on which you operate and no other.

Metallurgia

Since the Alchemists can obtain this sulphur they may rejoice! All agree that the *sulphur of the Philosophers comes out of gold*. This is the foundation of their universal medicine: this is the little golden book which Trevisan says he won [discovered] with great soul-labouring, and which dropped out of his hands into the fountain, after which he saw it no more... The King alone enters the fountain [the Regulus of Antimony and Mars when rebis is made], out of which he received his beginning and essence in the mines... This is *the rose-coloured blood of the lion* which, according to the *Turba*, must be united with the *gluten of the Eagle*.

Vade Mecum Philosophicum

By “*the Root*” Count Bernard Trevisan means the same that Ripley does by “*the basis of the work*”; namely, the *mature sulphur, which is in gold, perfectly digested*... This root is the chiefest principle in our work... It is so called because it has the effect to introduce perfection or determination, and brings the other principles to its own perfection. Therefore it is denominated by Ripley “*the Fire of Nature*” and “*the Father of the third menstruum*”, and not without reason; for this one principle determinates and glorified the two other principles.

Augurellus

Seek not the principles of Gold any where else; for in Gold is the seed of Gold: though being close shut up it retires deep and is to be sought by us with tedious labour.

Raymund Lully

Two [metals] are more pure than the rest, namely, gold and silver, without which the work cannot be begun or finished; because in them is the purest substance of sulphur, perfectly united by the ingenuity of Nature. Out of these two bodies,

prepared with sulphur or arsenic, our medicine may be extracted.

Trevisan

The subject of this admired science is *Sol* and *Luna*, or rather Male and Female. The male [Sol] is hot and dry, the female [our Luna] cold and moist.

Ripley

Like as the Fire of brenning the principle is, so is the principle of gilding, Gold, I wys.

If you intend to make Gold and Silver by craft of our Philosophy, thereto neither eggs nor blood thou take, but *Gold and Silver*, which naturally calcined, wisely and not manually.

A new generation will forth bring,
Increasing their kind as doth each thing.

Eyraeneus Philoctetes

Seeing the perfection of *matter* is *form* why should any studious in Philosophy neglect to contemplate the perfection of *Gold*... If its permanency and beauty be not such as to captivate his thoughts and hands from working on tings impure and fading, I must tell him his offspring will not be long lived, for such as the tree is, such is the fruit... This *form* is called *sulphur*.

Bacon

Sol, which is our *sulphur*, is reduced into Mercury by Mercury.

Geber

That *Gold* is the tinging sulphur appears by this: that being mixed with Argent vive by sublimation it transforms it into a red colour.

Avicenna

Gold being the most noble among metals, the most compact, perfect, and fixed, if it be dissolved and separated in most little parts it becomes spiritual and volatile like the Mercury and that by reason of its heat; and then it hath a Tincture without end, and that tincture is called the hot masculine sperm.

Rhasis

We truly do dissolve Gold that it may be reduced into its first nature, which is to say Mercury.

Sawtre

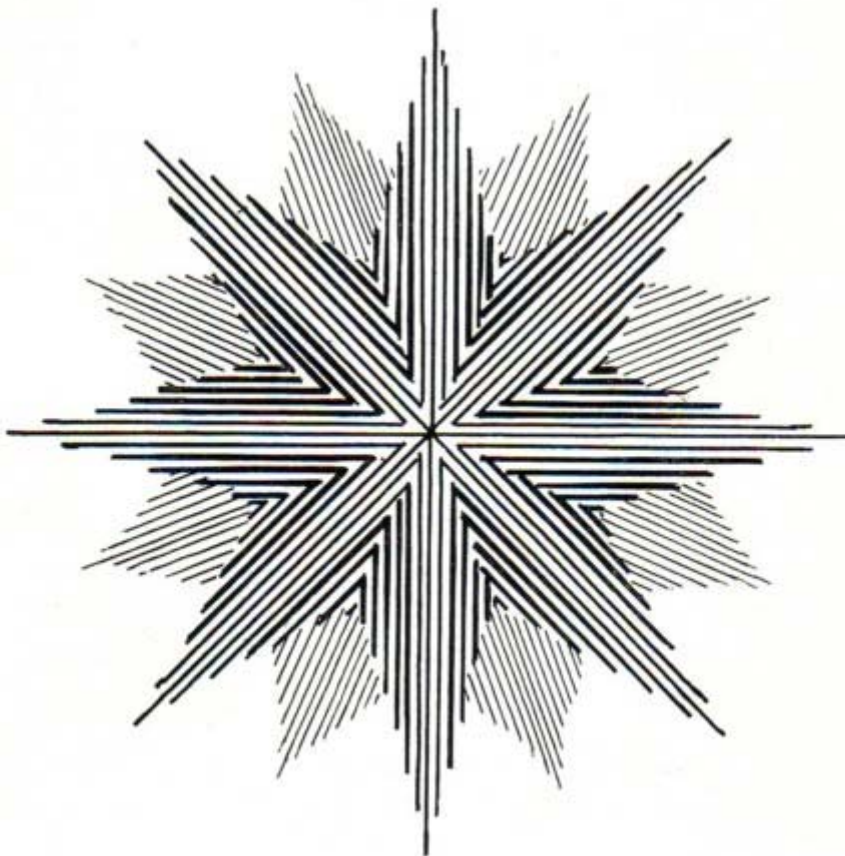
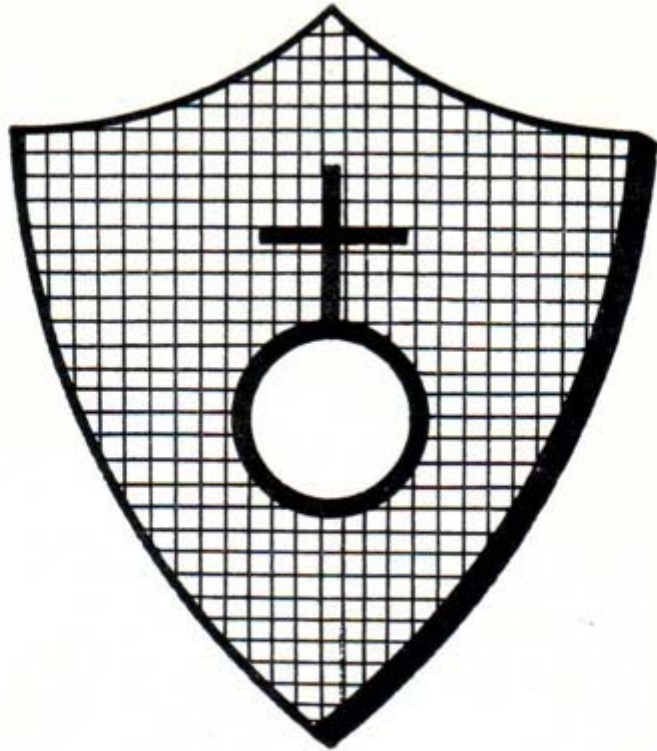
All Sol is brass, but all brass is not Sol... Therefore use always the nobler member, that is to say *Sol*; for it is the *kind of kinds*, and *Form of Forms*: it is the first and last in metals, and it is among them in their natures as the Sun is among the Stars [It can communicate light to them].

Hydrpyrographum Hermeticum

My son thou oughtest to choose no other Body for thy work but Gold, for all other bodies are rank and imperfect; and therefore the philosophers do make the choice of Gold before all other things... the most perfect, illuminating all other bodies and infusing life into them... Therefore my son observe that the red philosophical sulphur is in the Gold... All the philosophers do witness that their red sulphur is Gold.

Johannis De Monte Raphaim

If you wish to obtain the greatest secret you must endeavor not only to purify vulgar gold, but also to tinge it so that it may become seven times more red... To make Sol still more perfect than it is naturally is not in the power of Nature, but this may and must be accomplished by an intelligent artist if he wishes to obtain the jewel of knowledge.



PART II
OF OUR MERCURY
THE REGULUS OF ANTIMONY AND MARS

Metallurgia

They err who advise Gold to be amalgamated wit common mercury, or with antimonial or some other running mercury made of a metal; endeavoring to preserve the same in a quick, fluid mercuriosity by all kinds of foolish processes --- endeavoring to find out the Arcanum of our Tincture without taking away the first life, notwithstanding the Philosophers declare that *Our mercury is not a living* [i.e., a *fluid or running*] *but coagulated mercury* [i.e., a *regulus*].

Vade Mecum

A crude immature and coagulated Mercury vive, not yet fixed, is the destroyer of the perfect bodies [Gold and Silver] for truly it destroys them, incrudates and softens them, and renders them fit for our work. It is the offspring of Saturn and is acknowledged as such by the Philosophers, and it is the only and greatest secret in the whole art.

It is necessary that it be freed from all superfluous and burning sulphur with which it is joined in the mine [being found in the state of a sulphuret], after which that which lies hidden n the center thereof will be manifested... The sign of its right preparation is a beautiful whiteness, like the purest silver, a heavenly brightness and a wonderful glittering on the face of its fractures when broken, like the polish of a bright sword... in its crude state it is a poison... a thousand names have been given to it... Ripley calls it a *Green Lion* which devours *the Sun*... In the *Turba Philosophorum* it is called *Sea-water* in which the *perfect body* is decocted until it [the sea-water] is congealed... It is *the offspring of old Saturn*, for which reason it has by some been called Venus, and

principally for this reason --- because she hath been connected with the warlike *Mars* and been caught by Vulcan in the act [Iron is added in preparing the regulus]. It has also been called a wood and has received the name of Diana. It is likewise called the *Philosophical Mercury*... and by *Artephius a middle substance* --- because neither a mineral [crude Antimony] nor a [malleable] metal... It is, moreover, a middle substance between the body [Gold] and the *Spirit* [secret Fire], between *earth* and *water*. Compared to the *perfect body* it is pure spirit, but compared with the mineral water [or secret fire] it is a body, and in truth a *hermaphroditical* body... This is the true Protheus, the most wonderful of all concrete bodies [N.B., a *concrete*]. When joined with the perfect body they melt incredibly fast in a [comparatively] low heat, and the perfect body is quickly changed, and even suddenly transformed, into the appearance of mercury [being readily dissolved in the fused Regulus of Antimony and Mars]; and though in the air it be *congealed* [when cold] the whitening of the *Red laton* is already conspicuous.

Sendivogius

We do not say, that the Mercury of the wise is a common thing and that it is openly named, but the matter from which the Philosophers extract their Sulphur and Mercury is common enough. The Mercury of the Philosophers [Regulus of Antimony and Mars] is not found in the earth, but must be prepared by art, by joining the Sulphur [of Mars] to the Mercury [of Antimony]. He never shows himself openly, in his naked form. He is put under a disguise by Nature [it is found in the form of a sulphuret]. We say Sulphur and mercury are the minera of our Venus in a crude state [i.e., common Sulphur and Antimony]; and this Mercury has a power to unlock, kill and revive the metals, which power it has received when from the acid sulphur of its own nature.

Eyraeneus Philaletha

The father of our Hermaphroditical body is a metal [Mars] and his mother a mineral [crude Antimony]; take then the most beloved daughter of Saturn, whose arms are a *circle Argent*, and on it *a sable cross*, on a black field, which is the signal note of the great world, espouse her to the most warlike god who dwells in the house of Aries [In astrology Aries is given to Mars as one of his houses], and thou shalt find the *Salt of Nature*. With this Salt acuate thy Water.

The Same

They [the Magi] took the offspring of Saturn in hand... the stylanx or trier of Gold... They found in this child of Saturn [Antimony] no actual Sulphur, but only potential... Therefore they sought farther for an active Sulphur, and that most thoroughly, and at length they found it in the house Aries. This Sulphur is most greedily received by the child of Saturn... it draws it to itself like a *magnet*, and swallows it up in its own belly and hides it, and the Omnipotent hath imprinted his royal seal thereon.

Nodus Sophicus

Place your whole foundation on the *Salt* [the salt of Nature], as in the salt is the principal secret, so much concealed by the old masters.

Incertus Macrocosmus

In the first degree the Stone is called Adrop, Philosophical lead, *Antimony*. In the second [when the Sulphur of Mars has been joined to it] it is called the *Philosophers' water*, the *Philosophers' Mercury*.

The Same

The body of [our] salt, on account of its fiery spirit is called Mercury. By the Eagle the Philosophers understand

mercurial water, and by salt they understand Saturn, [i.e., the offspring of Saturn, the Regulus of Antimony and Mars].

Sendivogius

Our Azoth is the seed of all metals and has been formed by Nature nearly of an equality of the Elements and metallic concordance. Therefore in this alone, and in no other thing, the strongest power is to be looked for and to be found. In all Nature there is but one thing from which our art proceeds, and this is mercury, but not vulgar running mercury. It is a stone and no stone, and is only called a stone by way of similitude.

1. Because its minera or Ore, when dug out of the mine in its matrix, is truly a stone and a hard dry subject [Ore of Antimony] which can be pounded and reduced to a powder like a stone.

2. Because after the destruction of its [natural] form, (which must be taken from it as a stinking burning sulphur) and dissection of its parts natural, it must finally be digested [with the other elements of the Lapis] into a Stone, fixed and permanent in the fire and fusible like wax.

Now if you know for what you inquire, you must certainly know this our stone; for you must possess the seed of that which you wish to generate or multiply. Therefore bend your mind entirely to the first *metallic concrete* which Nature has brought to a metalline form, but left unripe and imperfect. In this [when you have called in the aid of the warlike god] you will find our salt, Mercury, and Sulphur, tender and highly pure. In this *Our Diana* you will also find the saline mercurial water inclosed in the Fountain.

Anonymous

Having found the true subject, the true root of potable gold, you must observe that for its preparation and solution not the body of gold [not gold itself in this first work] but the

primum ens of Gold [viz., Mars] which contains within itself that medicinal fiery element, conquering and penetrating all things, is to be taken.

Artephius

Antimony is a mineral participating of saturnine parts and has in all respects the nature thereof. This saturnine antimony agrees with old and contains in itself *argentum vivum*, in which no metal is swallowed up except gold; and gold is truly swallowed up by this antimonial argent vive... for *this water* is friendly and agrees with the metals, whitening gold, because it contains in itself white or pure argent vive.

The Same

Now this water is a certain middle substance, clear as fine silver [the Regulus of Antimony and Mars].

Eyraeneus Philaletha

The whole secret of our preparation is, that you take that mineral which is next of kin to gold and to mercury, [Antimony]; impregnate this with volatile gold, which is found in the reins of Mars --- with this purify your mercury, until seven times are past; then it is fitted for the King's bath. Yet know that from seven times to ten, the mercury [Regulus of Antimony and Mars] is made better and better.

Sendivogius

There is granted unto us one metallic substance which hath a power to consume the rest, for it may be considered their water and mother. Yet there is one thing, namely the radical moisture of the sun [Sol] and moon [Luna] that withstands it, and is bettered by it. That I may discover it to you, it is called chalibs, or Steel [Regulus of Antimony and Mars]... There is another chalibs [common Antimony], which resembles this, created of itself by Nature, which knows how to draw forth,

by virtue of the sun beams, [viz., the volatile Sol of mars], that [philosophers' mercury, the Regulus of Antimony and Mars] which so many men seek after, and this [crude chalibs, mature Antimony], is the beginning of our work [for with it, by means of Mars, we make our sophic chalibs].

Incertus

The Philosophers' Lead is not Lead Ore [or common lead] but the stellated regulus of Antimony.

Eyraeneus Philaletha

Take that thing [the Regulus of Antimony and Mars] which we please to call gold, but it is not gold [not yet ripe gold] yet it is in truth gold [our unripe gold]. It is metallic and proceedeth from a mineral [Antimony]. Art by the help of Nature reneweth this. It sheweth an ugly face to a fool, but to a son of art, is appears admirable. It is *stellar-white*, [the regulus must be pure and *stellated*] and tender in its youth and to many people appears mean and vulgar, nay most people deem it a thing of no value. From this is made a thing of great worth [the perfected Red powder of projection]; shew that thing to a Goldsmith and he will swear it is gold [having the appearance of a splendid deep coloured gold calx] but sell it not if you be wise, for it is the basis of many-fold secrets. [When once obtained you have only to feed and multiply it, and this you may do ad infinitum].

Cato Chymicus

The four seasons of the year in our work are as follows: the winter is the *Ravens-head*; spring brings the *White Dove* or *Swan*; the summer *citrine*, and autumn perfect *Redness*.

Boerhaave

The term *menstruum* seems to have had its rise thus: Lully and other ancient chemists observing the most kindly

solutions to be made by a digestion with a heat no greater than that of the human body, in about 40 days, they termed this space of time a philosophical month, and the solvent employed a *menstruum* intimating that the body performed the dissolution by a menstrual digestion. This term, indeed, was at first appropriated to the solvent for the Philosophers' stone, but afterwards came to be applied generally to all solvents.

All minerals of a metalline nature are solid menstrual, and especially Antimony which dissolves metals with as much ease as fire thaws ice. But there is no method yet known of recovering the metals with which Antimony has once been fused: all of them except gold, being lost in cupellation therewith, which furnishes reason to suspect that it destroys the metalline *Form*.

This is certain, that nothing is better suited to alter the nature of metals than Antimony. Whence I cannot but suspect the Adepts made use of antimony as a menstruum in the preparation of their stone; nor do I believe there is a better way to obtain that secret. At least were I to go in quest of it, I should willingly begin my inquiries with this property of antimony.

Eyraeneus Philoctetes

Beware of *common sulphur*, which in no wise is fit for our intent, being an enemy to metalline love; capable indeed of vitiating, but not really marrying a virgin mercury [Antimony], but being ambitious and powerful enough to compel, usurps the throne, [being joined with antimony in the sulphuret] and truly possesseth the same in peace, till the right heir [first Mars and afterwards Sol], comes, who is stronger than he, who dispossesseth and casts him out, and takes possession himself. Let thy work therefore in practice be to assist the right heir [separate the common Sulphur by means of Mars].

Hydropyrographum Hermeticum

All the metals have their rise from water, the root of all metals. Therefore they are reduced into water, as ice by heat is reduced into water, because it hath been water before... It [our Water] disposeth the bodies [of gold r silver] readily. It is father and mother; it openeth and shuteth, and reduceth metals into what they were in the beginning. It disposeth the bodies and coagulates itself along with them. *The spirit* [our secret fire] is carried upon the water [i.e., is added to it]: that is, the power of the spirit is seen to operate there, which is done when [or after] the body is put into the water [i.e., the secret fire must not be added till after you have made Rebis]... One of the greatest secrets, my son, is to free this stone or mercury vive from its natural bonds... that is to reduce and dissolve it into its primogenial water [the natural crude Sulphur must be separated from it and the Sulphur of Mars substituted] for unless this is done all will prove but lost labour...

Let him who by Divine assistance obtaineth this blessed water render thanks to God, for he hath the Key in his hands wherewith he may open the fast locks of all metallic chests... This blessed water is called, by the philosophers, the daughter of Pluto, having all treasures in her power. It is also termed the white, pure, delicate, undefiled virgin Beja, without which no generation nor increase can be effected. And therefore the philosophers espoused this delicate pure virgin to Gabricius, to the end they might raise fruit [first joining them in Rebis and then by adding the secret fire]... Although Gabricius be costlier and more esteemed by the world than Beja yet he alone can produce no fruit.

To this virgin and blessed water the philosophers have, in their books, given many thousand names. They call it heaven, celestial water, celestial rain, the dew of heaven, May dew, water of paradise, parting water, aqua regia, a corrosive aqua fort, sharp vinegar, brandy, quintessence of wine, growthful

green juice, a growing mercury, a viridescent water and *Leo viridis*, quicksilver, menstruum, blood, urine, horse piss, milk, virgin's milk, white arsenick, silver, Lune, juice of Lune, a woman, feminine seed, sulphureous vapouring water and smoke, a fiery burning spirit, a deadly piercing poison, and basilisk that killeth all, a venomous worm --- serpent --- dragon --- a scorpion devouring his children, a hellish fire, a sharp salt, sal-ammoniac, common salt, sharp soap, lye, a viscous oil, ostrich stomach devouring and concocting all, an eagle --- vulture, bird of Hermes, a melting and calcining furnace --- with innumerable names of birds, beasts, herbs, juices, etc.

Leona Constantia

Let the two heroes Saturn [Antimony] and Mars [iron] fight together. Though the former is peaceably incline let them have three or four violent assaults [viz., by the addition of Notre in the crucible when making the Regulus]. After this they will be reconciled, and as a token thereof they will erect a glorious banner, resembling a star.

Multum In Parvo

The Chalibis of Sendivogius is the Regulus of Antimony and Mars, which is the first and the coagulated Mercury of the Philosophers; but it must be highly pure... The philosophers' Mercury, which dissolves Gold and Silver, is a dry mercury otherwise it could not be coagulated with the perfect metals.

Johannis De Monte Raphaim

Old Saturn presents us with a brilliant ore produced in its mine out of the first matter of all metals... In Antimony and in vitriol [viz., Sublimed Mercury formerly held to be a white Salt] is much good... This universal mercury [viz., of old Saturn] is nothing else, [N.B.] but the *Astral Salt* which some have called heavenly.

Marrow of Alchemy

The substance which we first in hand do take:
'Tis mineral, to Mercury of kin
Which a crude Sulphur in the earth doth bake ---
Vile to the sight yet glorious within
'Tis Saturn's child what need you any more?
Conceive it right, for this is our first door...

This is our Dragon...
This their Green Lion, which with charms they spell'd
Hoping at length his fury for to tame.
On Cadmus sociates they let him prey
And by his might they found he won the day
The fray was over, lo a morning star
From out the earth was seem for to appear...
The salt, in Saturn's offspring it is found...
The sulphur in the house of Aries seek
This is the magic fire of the wise
O heat the King's bath...
This kingly work th' Almighty *seals*, to teach
The prudent, that the royal infant here
Is born, whom straight they diligently search
And by *the Star* to him they are brought near...
This substance is stellate...
This is *our steel*, our true hermaphrodite:
This is *our moon*... our unripe gold...
Old Saturn's son let two parts taken be
Of Cadmus one, and these so long be sure
By Vulcan's aid to purify, till (free from faeces) the
metalline part be pure
This shall be done in four reiterations
The Star shall teach you perfect operations.

PART III
OF THE SECRET FIRE
SUBLIMATE OF MERCURY

Nodus Sophicus Enodatus

Our Philosophical mercurial water [secret Fire] is the Key whereby all coagulated, fixt and unfixt metallic and mineral bodies are radically and physically dissolved and reduced into their first principle. This mercurial water has been kept very secret by all the philosophers, as the secret of the whole art.

Dienheim

When this spirit [Mercury] has been *sublimed* [converted into sublimate] it is called, *the water which washes and cleanses itself*; because [I the work] it ascends with its most subtil essence and leaves its corrupting particles behind. This ascension the Philosophers have named Distillation, Washing, Sublimation.

Flamel

Or whole secret and work is made with Our Water, and from it and by it we obtain all that we require. It dissolves the body, not by a common solution, as the ignorant think, who look for a clear water like that of rain, but by a true philosophical solution, so that the body is converted into an unctuous and viscous water [azoth] out of which the metals were originally formed.

Nodus Sophicus Enodatus

How this *philosophical water* or *fire, water of mercury*, is to be prepared, the philosophers have carefully hidden. Raymond Lully has written better of it than others, but in a disguised manner.

Flamel

The life of all things is *the water*. His water makes a solution of the body, and the spirit [rebis] and gives life to dead things.

Mathaeus Erben von Brandau

Whoever wishes to work by my advice... let him learn to make *vitriol* and *nitre*, before he attempts this secret work, otherwise he will fail in practice. [He means the Sophic vitriol, Sublimed Mercury, in which, however, there is no vitriolic acid. Several salts were anciently called vitriols to which that name is not now given].

Anonymous *Verbum Dismissum*

The quicksilver used by Philosophers is purified from its terrestrial stench and filth by a philosophical *sublimation*.

Artephius

The whole of this secret is... Antimony, and a *mercurial sublimate*.

Radix Chymiae

When Mercury is sublimated with Roman or blue Vitriol and common salt, the mercury ascends from them snow white, and carries up with him the Quinta Essentia of the Vitriol, so that in such a sublimate the Quinta Essentia of Vitriol is invisibly concealed, although the sublimate appears snow-white [such was the opinion of the old chemists]. If you want this mercury to conquer the Gold he requires seven or nine Eagles, that is: 7 or 9 *sublimations*. [We know that when rightly performed one sublimation makes it as perfect as a hundred].

Dr T.M. Faustius

The clearest and best description how to prepare the secret Fire, according to the practice of former times: Sublimed Mercury is dissolved in Aquafort, the Aquafort is then distilled from it, and the calx is sublimated snow-white --- and there remains behind, in the bottom of the vessel part of the Mercury burnt and foul. The pure Sublimate, is dissolved again in fresh Aquafort, distilled and sublimed again, and this purification and sublimation is repeated 3 times, or until after sublimation no faeces are left behind --- and this they called *quinta essentia mercurii et vitrioli*, and of the same nature as gold. [All that is wanted is a pure muriate, or oxymuriate of mercury].

Artephius

Our *moist fire*, by dissolving and *subliming* that which is pure and white, casts forth or rejects, its faeces or filth, like a voluntary vomit... The pure and white substance ascends upwards, and the impure and earthly remains fixed in the bottom... This must be taken away and removed because it is of no value, taking only the middle white substance, rejecting the foeculous earth which remains below, [and also any light flowers which may rise into the neck of the subliming vessel]. The clear, white, pure, and clean matter is wholly and only to be taken and made use of...

This *sublimation* is without doubt, the Key of the whole work... In this *whiteness* [Sublimation] the Antimonial and Mercurial soul, is by a natural compact infused into and joined with the spirits of Sol and our Luna... In this *whiteness* is the soul infused into the body [this is the priest that joins the male and female in an indissoluble union]... and in this is our Philosophical sublimation [effected], not in the impure Mercury of the vulgar, which has none of the properties which adorn our mercury drawn from is vitriolic

caverns [sublimed from salt and vitriol, as was anciently the practice --- *vitriol* being then considered indispensably necessary].

It is most certain therefore in this art that the soul extracted from the bodies [Gold and our Luna] cannot be made to ascend, but by adding to it a volatile matter [our secret Fire].

Eyraeneus Philaletha

I will tell thee, and that faithfully, what kind of water this is, it is the water of *Salt Peter, which is known as Mercury*. [It is a salt white like Salt Peter, but known to be mercurial}... Our water is truly pontick. Serene, *Christaline*... we make it by art [by sublimation]... Whosoever hath once made up our water nothing remains to be done but to cast in a clean body [rebis] in a just quantity, shut the vessel and so let it stand till the complement of the work.

Water Stone of the Wise

The Philosophers have written much of a *vaporous* water, which they have called the *fire of Wisdom*, and they have said that this is *material* or *elemental*, but [yet] an *essential* or *supernatural* fire, sometimes called a *Divine fire* --- this is our *aqua Mercurii*, which is excited by the help of common external heat, administered by Art.

Eyraeneus Philaletha

Especially and before all things be careful in your *internal heat*, viz., the proportion of your water [the Philosophical mercurial Water] for your sulphur [Sol]. This you must add and supply to it in the beginning of your work... This performs all the work within, and without this your external heat is of no value.

Benedictus Figulus

When the Philosophers speak of mercury, understand *our mercury*; by the water understand Mercury *sublimated from its proper salt and coagulated into a salt* [Sublimed Mercury].

Clangor Buccinae

The Water [secret Fire] is the *Spirit* which purifies, subtilizes, and whitens the body.

Ludus Puerorum

The Water is purifying and is the efficient cause of the purity of the whole body and of the Medicine. The water [secret Fire] operates two things in the *earth* [rebis]. It washes and tinges it. While it washes it is called water, and when it tinges it is called Air.

Incertus

Distilled Vinegar is not the Vinegar of the Philosophers. Their most sharp vinegar is the secret Fire, which extracts the essence from antimony, that is from the Regulus of Antimony and Mars and forms Azoth.

Pandora

I [says Mercury] am the Father of all the metals, a viscous water and a sulphurous earth. I am found in the depths of the mines, where I was born: from me do all metals proceed. When I am in my natural running form, common quicksilver, I perform some operations; but were I sublimed I could perform wonderful operations... I am the *living water, Lac virginis*, and every secret is in me.

H. Von Batsdorff

According to the ancients, not a Balneum Maria, nor ashes, nor sand, but the Fire of the *Calx vive* [one of the names given to the secret Fire], or *the heat of our mercury* [not *our Diana* but the *sublimed salt*] is the right fire.

Bernard Trevisan

In our Art we employ a twofold heat --- that of *the sulphur* [Sol] and that of *the Fire* [the secret Fire] that the one may assist the other. But the fire is not of the substance of matter [not common combustible matter]... though it augments the work. Were it so it would daily increase the work [leaving an incombustible residue] which is erroneous. The fire which Nature requires governs, in a peculiar manner, the whole art, and we can add nothing else. By a vehement fire [that is combustion] the principles are not *reciprocally altered among themselves* [which is the effect sought nor are they moved. Let there be made, therefore, a fire continual [not needing to be replenished] digesting, not violent [not that of actual combustion], subtil, inclosed [viz., in the glass], aerial, surrounding [embracing the whole matter], altering and not burning. So may God love me, as I have told thee the whole construction of *the Fire*. Consider, therefore, my words and ruminare on them one by one. Verily *the Fire* comprehends the whole Art.

The Same

In our work we must attend to the weight of the sulphur in the Mercury. And since, as I have before said, the element of *fire*, which does not predominate in Mercury, *in its crude state* is the very thing that digests the matter, it is necessary that everyone, who would become a true philosopher should know how much more subtle the element of fire is than the other elements [viz., of our compound], and what proportion of it [by weight viz.] is necessary to conquer them...

Now for a conclusion... lend an attentive ear. Our work is made from one root and from *two mercurial substances*... conjoined by THE FIRE in friendship, as the matter itself requires, assiduously boiled until out of the two one is made [viz., by means of the conjunction effected by the “inclosed” secret fire].

The Same

Our *sulphur* [Sol] when it is joined with its water [our Luna] or Mercury doth by little and little consume and drink up the same *by the help of* THE FIRE.

The Same

I deny not that a drossy and impure mercury may and ought, *by a simple salt*, to be *sublimed* or purged once or oftener, according to a due philosophic experience... For there are *sublimations of mercury* from its own proper bodies which are conjoined and mingled with it, by an amalgamation with it in its most inward parts, from which being oftentimes raised and reunited, rejects and loses its superfluities, and is not confounded in its nature; and afterwards it is very agreeable to the Philosophic work, and powerful to dissolve metallic species.

Ripley

Thy *water* must be seven times *sublimate*,
Else shall no kindly dissolution be,
Nor putrefying shall thou none see
Like liquid pitch, nor colours appearing,
For lack of fire within *thy glass working*
... Therefore make *fire thy glass within*,
Which brenneth the bodies more than fire Elemental...

Botulphus

That gentle fire, which is the White Fire of the Philosophers; is the greatest and most principal matter of the operation of the Elements.

Laurentius Ventura

The whole art is comprehended in... Sol, Luna, and Mercury... In two of these is found the sulphur white and red... the tinging rays... but the Stone of Mercury unites and binds them both [The Stone of Mercury is the White Fire].

Leona Constantia

Everyone knows how to boil over a fire, but if they know how to *boil FIRE in water* their knowledge would shew them a different work from that of the kitchen.

Artephius

The error in this work is chiefly to be attributed to ignorance of the true fire, which is one of the moving principles that transmutes the whole matter into the true philosophers' stone... In a short time that fire, without any laying on of hands will complete the whole work... And by the means of this our fire the medicine will be multiplied --- if joined with the crude matter --- not only in quantity but also in quality or virtue. Therefore seek out this fire with all thy industry for having once found it thou shalt accomplish thy desire, because it performs the whole work, and is the true Key of all the Philosophers, which they have never yet revealed.

PART IV

REBIS

Eyraeneus Philaletha

We have three conjunctions, all which must be known by him who intends to complete this mastery. The first is gross... it is the amalgamation [by fusion] of *Sol* with our *Mercury* [the Regulus of Antimony and Mars] which, because the mixture is made of two things, is called conjunction diptative; and the Compound is now called *Rebis*, that is, two things, according to the verse. *Res Rebis est una confecta*. In this mixture there are two nature the one more active which is the Mercury, the other more passive which is *gold*... These two then must be mixed... this is a manual work [performed in a crucible], and the last manual work, next to the putting and sealing of it in the egg.

Incertus

The beginning of this Art is One only thing [Rebis] composed of two substances --- a fixt [Sol] and an *unfixed* [our Luna]. One [Sol] is the seed, the other is and remains the Mother. The one is the *Red fixed servant*, the other is the *White Wife*. One is the Mercury [the Regulus of Antimony and Mars], the other is *the sulphur* [i.e., Gold].

Pandora

As gold is the most perfect of all the metals, *so gold contains the tincture of redness* --- *silver a white tincture*, tinging with perfect whiteness.

With these bodies the mercury is mixed [i.e., with either of them] and is fixed [by its digestion afterwards with the secret Fire].

Sendivogius

The invisible tinging spirit is the pure fire of *gold*. This is concealed and caught in the center of the coagulated salt [the Salt of nature --- our Mercury].

Our art is nothing else but an equal mixture of the powers of the elements, of heat and dryness --- cold and humidity; a natural equality; a union of the man [Sol] and his wife [Diana], though the man proceeded from the woman. This is a conjunction of the fire of nature [Sol] with the Radical humidity of the metals [our Mercury].

Flamel

Take thy beloved son [Gold], more beloved than all thy other children, and marry him with his own sister Beja, who is an amiable and tender daughter [our Mercury]. Gabricius is the husband, Beja is the Wife She corrects and ameliorates Gabricius, because he proceeded originally from his wife; and although Gabricius is of a warmer constitution than Beja yet no conception can take place without Beja. Now when Gabricius and Beja lie together in the bed [the crucible] he quickly dies, for Beja conquereth Gabricius, holds him fast and encloses him in her body, so that not the smallest atom of him remains visible --- with so much love and sympathy does she embrace him, conceive by him, and divide him into the smallest invisible particles.

Johan de Monte Snyder

The universal medicine which cures all human and metallic diseases is concealed in gold and its magnet [the Regulus of Antimony and Mars], the Chalibs of Sendivogius.

Laurentius Ventura

These two are Sol [Gold] and Luna [our Luna]. You will never obtain perfection unless Sol and Luna be united into one body.

Dyonisius Zacharias

The mercury that contains both metallic sulphurs [the Sulphur of Mars in the Regulus and the Sulphur of Sol] is called *animated mercury* [rebis]. After this central intimate conjunction, it is the *genuine animated mercury of the Philosophers*.

Incertus Macrocosmus

From a motive of Christian Charity I will illustrate this [the animated Mercury] a little as I sincerely pity honest well inclined searchers of this Divine and true art, who lose their money and precious time and but seldom obtain any thing. I will therefore point out what is to be done with this matter that it may be brought to a fruit bearing joyful issue.

When you have got the true matter [Antimony], the viscous water, as the most experienced philosophers call it, you must coagulate it into a *saline body*; [make a Regulus of Antimony and Mars] in this body [called by many the *salt of Nature*] lies concealed a fiery *mercurial spirit* [derived from the Mars] but this is not common quicksilver [it is the Mercury of the philosophers]. The metals of the philosophers are not the vulgar metals, as gold, Silver, Mercury, Lead --- The body of the salt, on account of its fiery spirit is called mercury. By *the Eagle* they understand *mercurial water* [secret Fire] and by salt they understand Saturn [the Regulus of Antimony and Mars].

The true matter has been named by various appellations by the philosophers, though in truth it is one thing, Rebis --- the

Philosophers' mercury... the hermaphrodite. [When the Regulus of Antimony and Mars is animated with Sol].

Mathaeus Erben von Brandau

Whosoever wishes to work by my advice, let him attend to what I have written, and consider well what my *Venus* is [viz., the regulus of Antimony and Mars called Venus because of her first connexion with Mars in forming the Regulus] which must be married to the King [gold] that no abortus be generated. Let him learn to make cinnabar [viz., Rebis, because when Gold is joined to our Luna the two are fitted to produce by the after digestion with secret fire, the Red tincture: this he should understand] before he attempts this secret work, otherwise he will fail in practice.

Eyraeneus Philaletha

First take thy body which is Gold and the water [the Regulus of Antimony and Mars] which is Mercury, the one [Gold] ready made by nature to thy hand, the other thou must prepare... Mix these together in due proportion.

We have in our work properly three mercuries [gold: the Regulus of Antimony and Mars: and secret Fire] of which one [the Regulus] is to be prepared by the philosopher. This being joined with the perfect body, and set to digest, [the secret Fire being first added] the glass is shut, and then, in this first composition, is the matter called *Rebis*.

Sendivogius

If *Gold* couple eleven times with our *Chalibs*, it sends forth its seed, and is debilitated almost unto death. The *Chalibs* conceives and bears a son more excellent than his father; for when *the seed* is put into its own *matrix* it purifies it, and makes it a thousand times more fit and apt to bring forth the best and most excellent fruits. [The Tincture is more excellent than gold, having redundant virtue]...

If thou give our Old man [i.e., the Philosophers' *Saturn*, viz., the Regulus of Antimony and Mars] Gold or Silver to swallow, so he may consume them... thou shalt have a medicine to cure the leprosie [of the imperfect metals]... Seek for that hidden thing out of which is made, after a wonderful manner, such a moisture or humidity [Regulus of Antimony and mars] as doth dissolve gold without violence; yea, as sweetly and naturally as ice doth metal in warm water. [Gold does so in the *sophic mercury* when you make *Rebis*]. Nothing is so friendly to this as gold.

Helvetius

Elias the Artist hath told me, that the Chalibs of Sendivogius, is the very mercurial metallic humidity whereby, or by the help of which, an Artist can, without using any corrosive, extract the first *Solar* and *Lunar* rays, and separate them from their bodies [Gold and Silver] in an open crucible in the fire [joining the chalibs with Gold or with Silver, not with both at once, but with either of them, to make *Rebis*].

Raymund Lully

The *perfect body* [Sol] must first be calcined in the water [our Mercury] and therein reduced to an impalpable powder [be divided per minima] before you take the second water [our mercurial water or secret Fire] to unite therewith in its due proportion.

Kalid

Sol or Luna must be calcined philosophically with the *first water* [our Luna that the perfect body [viz, the Sol or Luna vulgar] may be opened and become porous to enable the second mercurial water [the secret Fire] to have the readier ingress.

Metallurgica

When, by our art, we make the perfect sulphur [Sol] to re-enter the womb of his mother [the Regulus of Antimony and Mars] uniting him [in rebis] to that body whence he had his origin, he may again be born a second time. In this operation the sulphur of Sol is united with the sulphur of Mars concealed in the *animated mercury* [the Regulus of Antimony and Mars] but not yet bearing rule therein: so that sulphur [gold] is here united with sulphur [Mars] and the one is mended by ye other.

Vade Mecum

Pure gold is of most difficult and hard fusion, but with *Antimony* it melts in a moderate fire... If you mix Gold with Regulus of Antimony the Gold forgets its pristine stubbornness in the fire, and now melts, like lead or tin, in a small heat. *Silver* [which may be used in place of gold] though difficultly fused *per se*, yet when mixed with it [the Regulus of Antimony] the two soften each other to such a degree that separately to melt them would require ten times more heat.

Bloomfield's Blossoms

Join thou in one body with a perfect unity
First the *Red man* and the *white woman* these twain:
One of the *man's* substance and of the *woman's* three
By liquifaction... which conjunction is called diptative.

Kelly

Now what is meant by *Man* and *Wife* is this
Agent and patient, yet not two but one,
Even as was Eva, Adam's wife I wiss
Flesh of his flesh and none of his bone.

Rhasis

Make the marriage between the Red husband and the
White wife and thou shalt have the mastery.

PART V
OF THE THREE PRINCIPLES

Dienheim

As an egg is composed of 3 things, the shell, the white, and the yolk, so our Philosophical Egg composed of a body, soul, and spirit. Yet in truth it is but one thing [one mercurial genus], a trinity in unity and unity in trinity --- Sulphur, Mercury, and *Arsenic*.

Flamel

They say that the three things are of one nature, of one matter and essence, one water and one root --- and they verily tell the truth.

Basil Valentine

The three principles of the Universal are but one thing --- the true spirit of mercury and Anima sulphuris, with the Spiritual salt, untied under one heaven and dwelling in one body. This is the Dragon and the Eagle [Regulus and secret Fire], the King, the Lion [Sol] --- The green lion [Regulus of Antimony and Mars], the Spirit [secret Fire], and the body [Gold].

Anonimus Verbum Dismissum

Compose therefore our most secret stone from these three things and nothing else, for in no other things are contained that which so many seek after. This amalgama or natural composition, when managed in the right manner, you may say in truth is but one thing --- our stone. This whole composition is a mixture whose price and value is inestimable. This is *our Brass* mentioned in the *Turba*.

The Turba

Know ye that no true tincture can be made but from our Brass, that is from our confection which is made of *three things*. Employ these and you must get the mineral stone.

Pandora

Our tincture or medicine cannot be made from any other substance, but only from our brass; that is from our confection or Amalga: that is out of our metals Sol or Luna and their souls, by means of our Spirit which is Mercury [that is secret Fire].

Water Stone of the Wise

Seek *three* in one things, and one in *three*. Open these and shut them up again and you have the whole art. *Solve et coagula*. The Spirit [secret Fire] will give the soul to the body. The Spirit attracts the soul and returns it to the dead body [i.e., to the purified Sol], and at length the three remain united.

Laurentius Ventura

One thing [the secret Fire] containeth and conjoins the medicine, two compose it [the Regulus of Antimony and Mars and Gold joined in Rebis] therefore three are joined in one body. This magistry proceedeth from one root [mercurial] which is expanded in more than one, but must be reverted into one.

The Same

The stone contains three things. The whole art is comprehended only in three things; that is in Sol, Luna, and Mercury [Gold: the Regulus of Antimony and Mars and the secret Fire] with the cause of their preparation. In two of these bodies [in Rebis] alone, is found the Sulphur of the Philosophers, white and red, in which wise Nature preserves

the seed --- and in this only are contained the tinging rays, by the aid of our gold; but the *Stone of Mercury* [secret Fire] unites and binds them both. As it consists of three species the name *alberus* or *albar-aeris* has been given to the substance, which is composed of three things, that is, earth [the Regulus of Antimony and Mars], water [the philosophical mercurial water or secret Fire], and fire [the Fire of Nature, viz., Sol]. As the egg hath got a shell, the white and the yolk, and out of these three, one distinct thing, the chick is generated by the nourishing heat of the hen, so, in like manner, our composition is governed, and by putrefaction becomes Air, which is the spirit. The Stone is *one* in trinity and *three* in unity, because therein are contained a body, a soul and a spirit. The body fixes, the soul revivifies, and the spirit tinges [not one without the other, but all three united perform these necessary operations --- dissolving, putrefying, quickening, tinging, and fixing].

Tauladanus

According to the testimony of all philosophers there are *three* parts belonging to the Elixir, viz., soul, body, and spirit.

1. The soul is nothing else but the ferment or the *form* of the Elixir [Sol].

2. The body is the paste or matter [viz., *our moon*, the Regulus of Antimony and Mars].

3. The third part of the Stone is the Spirit [our mercurial water or secret Fire].

The two first names must be taken from metals alone, namely the *Form* from gold or silver --- the *matter* from Saturn, Jupiter, Venus and Mars. [Our moon is sometimes called *lead*, *tin*, *Venus*, and must be joined to Mars]. The Spirit being the seat and vehicle for the Soul [the Sulphur of Sol] infuses the soul into the body [our Luna]; and these two extremes, soul and body [before united in rebis] are

conjoined by the spirit [secret Fire] with an indissoluble bond.

If this mediator were taken away the soul [of the volatilized Gold] could never be centrally and permanently united with the body [the Regulus]. Nothing but this spirit, this dry liquor [secret Fire], attenuates or dissolves the *Form* [Gold] and the *matter* of the Stone [the Regulus of Antimony and mars] and reduces them to a spiritual nature. This spirit is called by the Philosophers: Heaven, Dissolving Mercury, Menstruum, Azoth, Quintessence and a hundred other names.

Alanus

He that knows not how to extract the soul from the body of Gold or of Silver, and to return it to the body wholly deviates from the right path. This is done as follows:

The soul of the body of gold or of silver is extracted by the *spirit of Mercury* [secret Fire]; and by this means the spirit of Mercury is exalted and ameliorated, and the soul [volatilized gold] is united with the spirit; and the body of *Venus* or *Jupiter* receiveth the united soul and spirit and thereby receives a perfect life --- and by this the imperfect metals are perfected and revived [Venus or Jupiter here mean the Regulus of Antimony and Mars].

Sendivogius

There is a stone and yet it is no stone [Antimony] wherein the whole art lieth concealed. Nature has formed it but has not brought it to perfection. You will not find it above ground: it groweth only under the foundation of the mountains. In this subject lies the whole art.

Whosoever hath the *fumes or vapours of this thing* [the Regulus of Antimony and Mars] and *the golden splendour of the Red Lion* [Gold], with a *highly pure mercury* [secret Fire],

and knoweth the *red sulphur* in this composition, he has the foundation of the whole art.

Pandora

From me [says Mercury] do all the metals proceed. In my natural running form [common quicksilver I perform some things, but *when sublimed* I can perform wonderful operations. Whosoever shall join me with my *brother* [Gold] and my *sister* [our Diana] shall have cause to rejoice all his life. I shall then be able to kill and revive myself and all metallic bodies.

Nodus Sophicus Enodatus

Attend carefully to the weight, as it is of much consequence. A correct proportion must be observed in the conjunction of the mercurial essence of the Philosophers. The ancient Arabian possessors of the Stone say thus: The weight of the Male [gold] must be singular [1 part], but that of the *female* plural [2 parts]. Take care that the woman [Regulus of Antimony and Mars] does not dominate over the *man*, nor let the husband be too powerful over the wife --- permit not the *Aqua resolvens* [the dry mercurial water, or secret Fire] be too deep [i.e., too large in quantity for the other two], that the seed or sperm [Gold in rebis] be not drowned. In regard to quality [or the *nature* of the principles] make a Unity in *Trinity* [the three principles of which the one tincture, the Lapis, is to be made, must have a metallic affinity for each other]. In the parable of the Mill, the wheels and their number denote the proportion of the *Mercury* [our Luna] and of the *Sulphur* [gold]; and the water which drives the wheels is the *menstruum* [viz., the secret Fire].

Sendivogius

These three [salt, sulphur, and mercury] are in all things, and without them nothing exists or can exist naturally in the world. But, as the ancient Philosophers have named only two

principles, that the searcher into art may not err, let him know, that though they describe only *sulphur* and *mercury* yet without *salt*, they could never have attained to this work, since salt is the Key and beginning of this sacred science... These three principles are all necessary, being the near matter, for the matter of metals is twofold --- Near and Remote. The near is Sulphur and Mercury. The remote, the four elements, out of which God only can create anything. Relinquish then the [primary] elements, for thou canst make nothing of them but only these three principles. Nor can Nature herself make anything else out of them. As thou canst produce nothing but these three principles, why labour foolishly to produce from the elements what you may find made ready to your hand by Nature. Be satisfied therefore with the three principles out of which Nature produces all things *in* and *upon* the earth... mineral... vegetable... and animal. In the animal Kingdom the body, spirit, and soul, bear a special resemblance to the work of the Philosophers. The body is earth [answerable to the Regulus of Antimony and Mars]; the *spirit* is the water [our mercurial water or secret Fire], and the soul is fire, or sulphur of *Gold*. The spirit increases the bulk of the body, but the fire is its virtue. And as there is more of the spirit in weight than there is of the Fire, the Spirit exerteth itself and overpowers the Fire and draws it to itself, and so each of them increaseth in virtue, while the earth, which is the medium between them, is increased in weight. [This passage shews how far the Philosophers have been from using the same terms in the same sense. Many of them make gold or Rebis the body; Regulus of Antimony and Mars the soul; and secret Fire the spirit. Without attending to this diversity among them we cannot find out the thread of Ariadne.

The Same

The father of the Stone is Sol [Gold], the mother is *Luna* [our *Luna*, not common silver], and the wind [viz., the volatile secret Fire] carries it in its belly --- that is the Sal

Alcali called by the Philosophers *Sal acumu nivenum* [the sharp snow white salt], the vegetating salt hidden in the body of magnesia.

Metallurgia

Mercurius Solutus [the secret Fire] dissolves the matter, *mercurius coagulatus* [Sol] coagulates and fixes, and *Mercurius corporus* [our Diana] multiplies the tincture of our fixed mercury [Sol].

The first matter [Sol and the Regulus of Antimony and Mars] is by the old Philosophers called sulphur and mercury; that is form and matter; but they conceal the medium [our secret Fire] by which these two are to be conjoined.

Theophrastus

The first matter is Sulphur, Salt, and mercury [sulphur Sol; salt, the salt of nature, Regulus of Antimony and mars; and Mercury, our mercurial dry water --- or salt, the secret Fire; and mercury, our Diana].

Vade Mecum Philosophicum

Tell me, What are the principles of the Stone? If your question concerns the genus, it is one and but one [one mercurial or metallic genus]; but if you ask how many species? *Three species* and no more than *three* enter our work... Know, that though three distinct species must enter into the composition of or Stone, yet neither of them, taken separately, is the material principle of our Stone, such as they are vulgarly known... When you have united these three species in due weight and proportion, then by a long decoction, in a duly graduated heat, it will yield you that one true principle which contains all that is required in our Stone.

Three species only are necessary in this work which Count Bernard has plainly enough indicated where he says: "Our

work is made of one root and two mercurial substances, crude but pure, extracted out of their mines". By *the Root* the Count means... *the mature sulphur which is in gold* perfectly digested... This one principle determines and glorifies the other two, which are therefore called superficial principles. Yet by them the weight is increased, and by them the death and putrefaction of the compound is effected.

Bernard Trevisan

Our *Sulphur* when joined with *is water or mercury* doth by little and little consume and drink up the same by the help of the fire...

When *three* are made one, in the form of a congealed substance, then it hath in it a true tincture... hence all they who tinge with Sol and his *shadow*, and with the *poison*, that is *Argent vive*, do perfectly complete our Stone, which we call the great and perfect gum.

Ripley

One gender they be, but in number not so.
The father is the Sun, *the Moon* truly is mother,
The *mean* [viz., of union and solution] is Mercury...

The Same

Let *the body* be subtilly filled
With mercury...
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 thy work must be begun
In figure of the Trinity.
Three of the body [viz., Rebis, i.e., 1 and our Luna 2] and
of the spirit [secret Fire] three:
And for the unity of the substance spiritual [viz., the secret

Fire]

One more [making 4 to the Sun] than of the substance corporeal.

Ripley

The second manner [of conjunction] is called Tryptative [threefold],

Which is conjunction made of things three,
Of *body*, soul, and *spirit*.

The Same

Consider first the latitude of thy [precious stone]
Beginning in the first side noted in the West,
Where the *Red Man* and the *White Woman* be made one,
Spoused with the *Spirit of Life* to live in love and rest.

Carpenter

Of Titan Magnesia [our Luna] take the clear light
Of the red gum that is so bright,
Of the philosophers the sulphur wife
I' called *Gold* withouten strife.

Of them draw out a tincture,
And make a matrimony pure
Between *the husband* and *the wife*,
I spoused with *the water of life*:
And see that none division
There be in the conjunction
Of *the Moon* and of *the Sun*,
After the marriage is begun;
And that *Mercury* the Planet
In love make them so to meet
That either with other be joined even
As a stone is engendered sent down from heaven.

Bloomfield's Blossoms

[After directions for making Rebis by joining “the Red man and the White woman” and ordering them to be reduced to dust he proceeds thus:]

In a true balance weight them equally,
With three times as much of the *fiery dragon*
Mixing altogether...

Look that thou join in one, persons three ---
The *fixt*, the *variable* and the *fugative*,
Till they together taste death and live.
The last is the Dragon fell
That shall the other twaine both slay and quell:
The *Sun* and *Moon* shall lose their light
And in mourning sables they shall them dight, etc...

Eyraeneus Philoctetes

The matter is Mercurial, the quality *sulphureous*, reconciled by *Salt* --- which also may be, and sometimes are called the *Water*, the *Spirit* and the *Blood* --- or *Body*, *Soul*, and *Spirit*... *Salt* prepares *sulphur*, *salt* and *sulphur* prepare *Mercury*, *Mercury* preserves them. So that without *salt*, *sulphur* cannot be prepared or set at liberty from his prison it being the only Key thereto; without *salt* and *sulphur* *Mercury* cannot be qualified; and without *mercury* *Salt* and *sulphur* can effect nothing, it being their proper vessel or matrix. But be sure all homogenial or the mercurial simplicity will be impossible: therefore make *the latter* Judge of the *two former*, for all metalline things are tried in a mercurial balance.

Avicenna

I advise you to work only in *Sol*, and *Luna* [our *Luna*] and *Mercury*, because the whole benefit of the Art consists in them.

Hydropyrographum Hermeticum

It is impossible for Gold and Silver to perfect other bodies that are imperfect unless *the body of the Sol* or *Luna* be born anew or regenerated by *the water* and *the Spirit*.

Ripley

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 have been gathered together into one, then you have the true Philosophers' Mercury... See therefore my son that thou diligently puttest all these matters (which though they are *three* are yet but one only) in a glass vessel, and lettest them quietly putrefy.

Johannis De Monte Raphaim

Sulphur is the father of life, *Mercury* is the fountain of life, the *salt* is the center of life... The constant companion of Sulphur is Mercury: they never quit each other, for the one needs the other. But the Salt preserves what *Sulphur* and *Mercury* produce. Thus is *Salt* the true copulator of *Sulphur* and *Mercury*.

Marrow of Alchemy

Thus is thy work with Trinity begun.
The body and the *soul* are first conjoined
And both are with the Spirit mixed; the Sun,
The *Moon*, the *Water* --- these are one in kind,
In number *three* and yet indeed but two;
For why the Sun is hid, nor light doth shew...
One ounce of *Sol*, and of the Magnet *three*,
Four ounces of the *body* make: to which
Four ounces add of *water*. These let be
Thus ordered: first let Sol his robe so rich

Be whitened by the moisture of the Moon
Which with a gentle Fire will be done.
That mass [rebis] shall then saturnine to the eye
Appear, and flexible in heat like lead;
Then pour on it of Virgin mercury [secret Fire]
The pondus due: thus is the Body red
And fixt and solid in the hidden center
But to the sight white, volatile and tender
This done, in readiness a vial glass,
Oval, or spherical, be sure to have
In which the matter put, nor out must pass
Ought of th'inclosed air, which for to save
Seal up the nick with Hermes seal and then
The spirits are secured within their den.

PART VI
OF THE FURNACE AND GLASS

H. Von Batsdorff

A single small furnace, wherein the degrees of heat can be maintained, is sufficient. Let it be safely placed where no accident can happen from fire. Place an iron pot in your furnace containing sand or ashes, and put your small glass phial therein, and do not take it out until you see the whole mass converted into a beautiful blood-red colour --- the sign of ultimate perfection.

Pandora

During the solution the fire must be gentle, but in the sublimation it must be a little increased, and towards Redness it must be strong.

Radix Chymiae

During the solution the fire must be soft, in the sublimation middling, in the coagulation temperate, in the White-making steady, in the Rubifying strong. If you are ignorant of the heat you will fail.

Laurentius Ventura

The heat must be linear unto the end of the work. When the fire is equally kept, the subject, by the action of heat, is the better altered from one nature to another, and that which was humid first will become dry, the black will become white, and the white citrine and red.

Water Stone of the Wise

Place it (the glass) in a convenient furnace and begin with a gentle, continual, airy and vaporous heat; such as a hen causes sitting on her eggs.

Pandora

Begin with a soft heat, until peace is made between the water and the fire [until the principles are united in perfect blackness].

Walchius

A slow heat preserves the natural or radical humidity. The Philosophers require a fiercer heat, such a one as the hen gives to her eggs.

Laurentius Ventura

As there are many degrees of heat, the question is how it must be --- Strong or Gentle? To this we answer that in the beginning the fire must be gentle as Lullium says: Know then that without heat nothing is generated. Intense heat is pleasant to the body. By a gentle heat the corrupting humidity is extracted... It suffices to administer a continual heat, according to the operation of our work --- that is a natural heat.

Pandora

When thou seest the fixt water [the secret Fire] without any ascending thereof fret not about the fire; only have patience until the spirit and the body are become one.

Water Stone of the Wise

Our Aqua mercurii is excited by the help of common external heat, administered by art.

Incertus

If you wish to see the sign of putrefaction it is necessary that you procure an external moving heat, for as Nature in the mines boileth by means of a gentle heat, in like manner our philosophical matter receives power to alter itself, from such a degree of artificial heat as may be able to stir up its inward power. This artificial heat must not be violent, but soft and gentle, only able to act on the most subtil particles, to raise and mix them, until the whole composition be broken, divided without any manual separation, and converted into perfect blackness.

Pontanus

Put it on the fire [i.e., in the furnace], with such a proportion of heat as shall only excite or stir up the matter, and in a short time that fire [the secret sophic Fire] will complete the whole work.

Radix Chymiae

The putrefaction of the body is the beginning of the work, and is effected by a gentle heat, so that nothing may ascend in the horse dung, i.e., in our mercury.

[The solution effected by the secret internal fire he here calls horse dung; but the *gentle heat* mentioned is that which is applied externally].

Johan De Monte Snyder

You must be particularly careful about the government of the fire, which must constantly remain in its right degree and must never cease; for if the natural heat should fail, your work will die, and an immature birth will follow, and that which is immature can only work according to its own nature.

Incertus Macrocosmus

When you have put the genuine matter in its proper vessel it then requires only a natural heat, so arranged that the external heat may not surpass the internal but only excite it to action. If the heat is too great no alteration can possibly take place. A great heat can only destroy and burn the matter so that nothing useful can come out of it. On the other hand if your heat is too small the materials will be dried up and become hard. The metallic spirits will be dormant and inactive, and cannot operate if not excited [by an external heat] and vivified by a living [internal] fire. As this is of great importance the Artist must be careful not to commit an error in this point, otherwise he will do nothing.

Water Stone of the Wise

Put a small fire under it [the glass] to excite the internal heat, as Pontanus says, as a child must be in a natural animal heat in the mother's womb.

Take care, through the whole work, that you do not increase your heat too much, especially during putrefaction; because, during putrefaction, the internal natural power begins to subtilize the body. Therefore to preserve the internal heat of the bodies from injury be careful, especially during putrefaction to keep a gentle heat.

Johannes De Padua

Be careful not to make your fire too strong. This would cause the Matter to sublime and would destroy the work. Notice what I say: if you make your fire gentle and govern it prudently that it may not exceed the internal heat [of the secret Fire] you will be certain to bring your work to perfection.

Observe then! As soon as the *internal heat* of your matter or of the body by feeling the power of the external heat

awakeneth and begins to act, *the matter has then heat enough to operate perfectly*, conformably to her own nature, and without doubt, to produce its fruit by the power of Nature within. Even if you have made the work ten times before, be not too bold with your heat, but govern it with care, or your work will be destroyed.

H. Von Batsdorff

The natural or external heat must cause the internal to awaken and to operate. The external heat must not, by too much violence, surpass the internal, or all your labour will be in vain.

Eyraeneus Philaletha

As the Stone is compared to a man, and its first humid regimen to a bath, therefore make the first degree of heat *pleasant, gentle, like a hot bath for a naked person* --- which is a lower degree of heat than he can bear, and causes but a gentle sweat.

The second degree is a little higher, whereby a copious perspiration would be induced, and this is as hot as a man can bear it.

The third degree is so much hotter as to cause a hissing and bubbling and cannot be borne long by the hand; for our composed work in this degree of heat rises in bubbles, which fall down again, rising and falling continually.

The fourth and last degree of heat, which brings dryness, cannot be borne by the fingers without burning them.

[In these degrees this author is here more candid than where he directs (in “Ripley Revived”) to use such a degree of heat as would keep “tin or lead molten”.]

The Same

I swear unto thee, upon the faith of an honest man, that if thou urge thy fire so as to make ought sublime, in the days of this regimen [that of Saturn] thou wilt destroy the work irrevocably; be content then, with good Trevisan, to be detained in prison 40 days and nights, and suffer the tender nature to remain below in the bottom [avoiding any kind of sublimation].

Laurentius Ventura

Our Stone has got its own fire, which, however, is inactive unless excited and moved by external heat.

Sendivogius

Our blessed work must be conducted agreeably to the four seasons of the year.

The first is winter --- Cold and humid.

The second, spring, is warm and humid.

The third is the warm and dry summer.

The fourth, Autumn, is the harvest or time for reaping our fruit.

The heat of the first regimen must be like that of a hen sitting over eggs to hatch chickens; or similar to the heat in our stomachs which digests our food. This heat continues until blackness --- it may even be continued until the matter is changed into Whiteness; but if this heat is transgressed and the matter be kept too hot, you will never obtain the wished for Raven's head, but either a sudden transient redness, or a red oily matter swimming on the superficies. Perhaps the matter may begin to sublime: in that case the composition may be taken out of the glass and imbibed de novo with our virgin's milk [secret Fire] and then you may recommence the

concoction with more prudence, endeavoring to avoid similar errors in the future.

When the White appears, you may increase your heat a little, to the second degree, until the matter be perfectly dried up --- which heat may be compared to that of the Sun when he goes from Taurus into Gemini. [The degree of heat now spoken of is merely comparative. If his winter heat is equal to that of a hen's on eggs when hatching them, his spring heat must have a proportional increase of temperature. This remark applies equally to what follows]: When the Stone is perfectly dry the fire must be increased again, answerable to the increase of the sun's heat when he passes into Leo.

Johannes De Padua

In the beginning of the work the first degree of heat must not be higher than the warmth of a sitting hen. In the middle of your stove you must make a door which you can open and shut, so that you can feel in the pot how quick or how gentle your heat is. Let it be such that when you touch the pot your hand may feel pleasantly warm. Attend to what I say or you will greatly damage the work. Take care, above all things, not quickly or rashly to increase your heat; for if you make your fire too intense and the external heat shall overpower and conquer the internal heat of the materials, the body would retain the spirit; or else the spirit will sublime, and especially in the end, when the body is converted into a Spirit: therefore be attentive in governing the fire rightly, or you will destroy your work.

Isaac Hollandus

There are three colours... the first two must be produced by a very low heat, which heat must be increased very gently.

Eyraeneus Philaletha

See that thy furnace be trusty, else thou mayest and wilt fail; for tho' the fire of coals do not effect anything, yet it *excites*, and the *water* [the mercurial water or secret Fire] though it be of a wonderful nature, yet it acts no farther than as it is stirred up [by the external Fire], and any intermission in this work, after it is begum, will destroy it. Therefore the wise men have called the furnace an *Athanor*, that is Immortal, shewing that from the beginning to the end the fire must not go out.

Ripley

Take heed to defend your glass from a moderate heat, and a sudden cold: make use of a moderate fire and beware of vitrification.

Metallurgia

Having prepared your principles, put them, most intimately mixed into a proper glass, so that only one third part of the glass may be filled. Shut the glass closely that nothing may evaporate. Place it in ashes, or in sand, and administer the first degree of heat --- such a heat, that, without burning your hand, you may be able to suffer it to rest on the ashes or sand, or on the upper part of the neck of the glass. Keep it in this heat, without moving or disturbing it, until complete blackness and various colours appear, and whiteness follows. It is of great moment that you do not hurry your work and burn up the matter by too much heat... Be careful of your fire that it be not too strong... you ought to have blackness with such a heat that you can hardly bear your fingers on the glass, and yet can bear the heat without burning them. This regimen must be continued till you have gone through perfect blackness into dryness, and until the matter is become snow or silver white and fixed, and the Queen is born. This is obtained by one and the same linear heat. Then you must increase your heat, but not out of reason till the matter

becomes yellow; and so continue and it will become of the most perfect deep cinnabar or carmine redness, or like unto a quiet glowing fire.

Marrow of Alchemy

...Beware impatience do not cause
Thee through an itch of mind for to be bold,
In this thy work to transgress Nature's laws
For no man sooner errs through heat or cold
Than he who through impatience of mind
Cannot expect its time which he would find
Move not thy glass, nor open, else thou wilt
Endamage, may destroy, thy work: beside
Increase not fire rashly, lest that spilt
Thy work thou see. There's nothing al the Tide
That this thy work doth stand so much in fear
As too much fire: one hour will cost thee dear
Beware thy Spirits find not where t'exhale
For that thy work would spill, and also cause
Much hurt unto the workman. If you fail
Therein, you break one of the strictest laws
Of all this work: nor cause them so to rise
As for to break the Glass, which brittle is
Therefore as strong thy glass be sure thou get
As may be, without either knots or flaws,
Equally blown for strength, which thou shalt set
Within a ring of brass, where thou shalt cause
It to be fixt, with moistened bone-ash: this
Closely prest down a certain safe-guard is
... With gentle fire thy work assay,
For that is certain. Be not moved with haste
Thy work t'anticipate; no not a day;
But bide with patience till the black be past,
Then mays't augment thy fire, but not too much ---
Rather too little than too great, for such
The counsel is of all the Sages old.

Artephius

You need only to prepare the matter. Nature herself alone will perfect it: and if she be not hindered by some contrary thing, she will not overstep her own proper motion, neither in conceiving, nor in generating, nor in bringing forth. Therefore, after the preparation of the matter beware only, lest by too much heat, you inflame the bath or make it too hot. Secondly, take heed, lest the spirit should exhale, lest it hurt the Operator --- to wit lest it destroy the work, and induce many infirmities --- as sadness, trouble, vexation, and discontent... Decoct the composition till it be invested with a most perfect red colour.

Bacon

The vessel for our Stone is but one, in which the whole magistry or Elixir is performed and perfected... Though the philosophers often repeat that the matter is to be put into the vessel, and closed up fast, yet it is sufficient for the operator, *once* to put the said matter in, *once* to close it up and so to keep it, even to the very perfection and finishing of the work. If these things are often repeated the work will be spoiled... Thy vessel being well and perfectly closed, is never so much as once to be opened till the perfection or end of the work. So that you see the vessel it to be kept close that the spirit may not get out.

Laurentius Ventura

Secure thy vessel that the composition may not escape and fume away, and you will obtain your end.

Pandora

Mind that your door be well shut that he that is within, may not find his way out, and, if it please God, you will find everything terminate well.

Eyraeneus Philaletha

It is put into the glass and sealed up before you can attain the first degree of the Magistry.

Anonymous

Put the mercurial matter into a proper vessel, seal it and place it in its warm bed for a philosophical month until it begins of itself to ferment and putrefy.

Eyraeneus Philaletha

Be careful of the closure of the vessel, lest the spirits should fly out and the work be destroyed. Keep therefore the vessel and its ligature, nor look upon this to be of little moment... Consider how great care Nature has shut the womb of a pregnant woman... with no less industry be thou cautious in perfecting his Philosophical work, lest thy labour be in vain.

PART VII

OF THE WORK

Water Stone of the Wise

My son if you will commence the work, excepting your food and raiment no great expenses are wanted. Be of a free and independent mind, and in a safe place prepare your only matter [Rebis] and reduce it into a most subtil powder, put it into one only vessel with its water [the secret Fire] well closed, and govern it with constant never ceasing heat and the effect will follow.

Aquinas

Take the body of our first work [Rebis] with the Dragon's tail, that is virgin's milk [the secret Fire]: taking 7 parts of fresh Mercury [good secret Fire], add this to the matter according to the weight of the powders.

Pontanus

In the beginning digest and simmer it gently, taking great care that *nothing may sublime*, or, as the Philosophers say, that the woman may not rule over the husband, or the man become too potent for the woman.

Pandora

When thou seest the fixt water not ascending urge not the fire, but have patience until the spirit and the body are become one. The water [secret Fire] is the thing that makes *white* and *red*; the water killeth and quickeneth; the water dissolves, calcines and purifies, and the water putrefies... Let all your care be in the decoction of the water [the whole subject rendered liquid by the action of the secret Fire]. Boil it slowly until it changes from one colour to another, and be careful, in the beginning, that you do not burn the flowers or

blossoms, nor the greenness. Do not hurry, nor presume to do the work quickly and take care that he that is within may not find his way out.

Arnoldus De Villa Nova

The Green Lion [Rebis is here intended] remains constantly in the middle until he is killed [by the secret Fire]. Therefore, my son, I recommend nothing else to you, but to boil *our water* [secret Fire] and our brass [Rebis] until they be gradually calcined and killed --- until the colour changes and until its blackness be gone... Know also, my son, that in case a red colour should appear to thee before blackness [i.e., a premature redness] thou needest not to mind that; if thy glass be but well closed; as it must of necessity return to its own nature; for it only the effect of the occidental argent vive [Regulus of Antimony and Mars] overcoming *the gold* and conquering it, but the principle which killeth will also give life, being the father of all wonderful things.

Johan De Monte Snyder

One of our fires [the secret Fire] has a sympathy with the metallic fire --- this sets on fire the metallic sulphur and augments the element, fire, in the metallic body [Gold]. The third fire is a cold metallic fire [the Regulus of antimony and Mars] and may be compared to a mercury, as it penetrates the metal [Gold] like a spirit it promotes the action of the sympathetic fire [secret Fire] that it may penetrate the whole composition and excite the anima every where.

The cold metallic fire [Regulus of Antimony and Mars] makes the metal [Gold] porous, it opens and shuts, it is the beginning and the end, the first and last Key; it is the foundation of the whole work and may be taken for the universal menstruum and even for the first matter.

Isaac Hollandus

You may always work with two glasses, for the convenience of Multiplication --- one for the White, the other for the Red. But as the Red Stone requires a more intense heat than the White, both cannot be multiplied at once by the same heat.

Although the work for both is the same, yet there is a difference in the paradise water to be noticed. The paradise water for the White is extracted from Luna, that wherewith the Red stone is imbibed and multiplied must be extracted from Sol --- otherwise it is the same labour, but the white and red cannot be multiplied by the same degree of heat.

Incertus Macrocosmus

In the first degree the Stone is called Adrop, Philosophical Lead, Antimony [being in truth Antimony], etc. In the second degree [when the secret Fire is joined to rebis and action and reaction follow], it is called *Sal Alkali*, our Sal Armoniac, ashes of ashes, and *sulphur of sulphur*.

When it is become water it is Azoth, when *white* it is called *arsenic* and lac virginis, when *red* it is called *blood*, red *sulphur*, etc. When it is sharp it is called vitriol, alum, nitre: when the Stone has been dissolved into water, it is called *white running water*, when sublimed and white it is called *air*, and when red it is called *fire*.

It will become twice black, twice of an ash colour and twice red; and after its second redness, when it looks like red wine, or human blood, that is after putrefaction, the ancients have called it the Dragon [The names are innumerable, and often very arbitrary and contradictory.].

Isaac Hollandus

There are three colours which must of necessity appear in the Work, black, white, and red. The first two must be produced by a very slow heat, which must be increased very gently.

Eyraeneus Philaletha

We have three conjunctions... The first is the amalgamation of *gold* with *our Mercury*... The compound is called rebis... In this there are two natures, the one more active, which is the mercury, the other more passive, *which is gold*. The activity of the mercury above the Gold is because the moving virtue of *Sol is sealed*, that is, his Sulphur is imprisoned.... These two must be mixed... this is a manual work, and the last manual work next to putting and sealing of it in the egg, that thou hast, before thou hast attained the first degree of the mastery.

The next conjunction in order is when thou has *administered* and regulated [in due proportion] *thy fire* [*the secret Fire*] that thy spirits shall so ascend and circulate until they have extracted out of the fixed body [Gold] its most digested virtue, or *subtile soul*, which is *sulphurous*, or of great fieriness [The Gold is called the soul, the *sulphur*, the *fire of Nature*].

When dissolution is made, Sol then is most active, and mercury more passive; mercury then is as it were the feminine sperm, which being more crude and tender is sooner wrought upon by the [*secret*] *fire*, which Sol, the masculine sperm, feels not till it be penetrated by the mercury [Regulus of Antimony and Mars] and then it is forced to send forth its seed; for the formal principle resides mostly in the *gold*, and the material chiefly in the *water* [Regulus of Antimony and Mars] and then it is forced to send forth its seed; for the formal principle resides mostly in the gold, and the material chiefly in the water [Regulus of Antimony and Mars]. In the

one being thick of composition, the formal part is sealed; in the other the little which it has is more at liberty, and consequently sooner active.

So then by mediation of the soul [the solar principle derived from Mars and Sol] the *spirit* is made one and incorporated with the body [of the ripe and unripe Gold]; for the soul being by the spirit drawn from the body, doth naturally desire to be united with it again, and so long as it is from it, it is from home as it were on a pilgrimage. The body also naturally doth desire its soul and will as forcibly attract it as a lodestone iron...

But this conjunction doth not retain the volatility of the compound though it is so united that the parts ascend and descend together... At length not only these parts, but their elemental qualities, are so strongly permixt that the one doth not more in acting than the other doth in reisting, by which means they are not only united to follow one another, but fixt to abide fire together. This is the last and nobles conjunction in which all the mysteries of this microcosm have their Conummation. This is by the Wise called their Tetraptive conjunction... He who arrives here may sit down at the banquet with the Sun and Moon. This is the so highly commended Stone of the Wise.

The Same

Without *putrefaction* you may not expect to reap fruit from your labor... The cause of this death, or corruption or rottenness [which takes place in the subject in the glass during the third conjunction] proceeds from the action of continual heat, not so much of the external fire of the Athanor, as of the compound within itself; in which the fire against nature [the secret Fire] doth open the perfect body [Gold] by continual contrition and decoction, and so lets loose its sulphur... which is *fire of Nature*; so that between these two in continual action and passion, together with the external heat continually acting, the whole compound is

brought to corruption. The external heat doth sublime the moisture, which again of its own accord returns continually, and doth moisten the earth so long, until by reason of the heat it have drunk up the moisture wholly, and then it dies. Unless you see this rotting of thy compound, which is done in a black color, with a stinking odour and a discontinuity of parts thy labour will be in vain. You cannot expect to have a new form brought in till the old be corrupted and put off.

Gold and Mercury are two such principles that they will for ever delude those who work with tem in a sophistical way [amalgamating Gold wit common quicksilver]. They will remain the same to the end of the world unless pure gold be mixed [in rebis] with its own pure and appropriated mercury [the Regulus of Antimony and Mars] and set in a de heat of digestion [the digesting heat of the secret Fire]; a mutual action and passion will then rise between them, which, *without the laying on of hands* by the artist, will tend to a new generation. For in a convenient fire [the secret Fire assisted by external heat] in which the compound may perpetually and incessantly boil, and the subtile parts ascend and circulate upon the gross without intermission, the most digested virtue or soul of the fixed body [Gold] which is his basis of tincture will be extracted by the water [the Azoth or solar *Butyrum Antimonii*] and this will mix itself with the pure spirit [furnished by the secret Fire] of the water and with this it will ascend and return, until a total separation be made of the pure from the impure and the subtile from the gross. Then shall the body draw down its soul again, and by the power of the Most High it shall be united; and with it the spirit of life shall be also joined, so that all three shall become one, with a union indissoluble. But all this presupposeth a putrefaction or corruption of one form, else there cannot be an introduction of the other.

First then take thy body which is gold and thy water which is Mercury [our Diana]... mix these together in due proportion, as I have often told thee; then set them to the fire

[add the secret Fire] to decoct, and give them a convenient heat in which they may boil, ascend and descend perpetually, without any intermission night or day. But especially and before all things be careful in your *internal heat*, viz., the proportion of your water [the philosophical mercurial water or secret Fire] for your Sulphur. That water [or secret Fire] you must add and supply to it in the beginning of your work, in its preparation [viz., you must add this to your Rebis before closing your glass]. It is this that performs all the work within, and without this your external heat is of no value... Let your external heat be so that your compound may boil and sublime... till the vapours cease and are retained... then will the compound rot, which for its similarity is called our dunghill... Continue your decoction and the vessel shall be beclouded and thy compound shall wit constant circulation become black. This colour shall be a sign to you that you have not run your course in vain... so soon as to hast complete blackness, know that whiteness is hidden therein. But before you attain to this whiteness you must have patience and pass through many intermediate changeable colours, which will be no small cheering to the workman, who must wait without tiring till the earth and heaven be united. Then shall thy elements perfectly accord, and one colour cover thy new married soul and body; and that will be like to the most pure Lily, or sublimed salt, sparkling like to a new slipped sword in the sun beams. In this whiteness is the multiplicative virtue exalted and made apparent in its first degree, by which mercury, Lead, Tin, Copper, or Iron may be turned into pure silver in a short time.

Johannes De Padua

Know that putrefaction, although it can be brought on perfectly in 42 days, is better to take a longer time: the longer the better as hereby no damage is done, and the body [Gold] dissolves effectually; which must all be done with a gentle heat, and so the circulation and separation of the elements will be the better effected.

Flamel

Within which [furnace] is set the Philosophical egg, which is a vial containing the *prima materia*, or first agents of the Stone: that is the *Scum of the Red Sea*, and the *Fat of the mercurial wind* [the solar liquefying compound of Sol, our Mercury, and secret mercurial Fire]... Take care that with a just and equal fire you manage these proud and haughty natures... keep them in temperate heat continually.

View these dragons --- they are the true principles... That which is undermost, without wings is *fixed*, or *the male*, gold: that which is uppermost and has wings is *the female* [Regulus of Antimony and Mars], black and obscure, which strives for the mastery and dominion for many months. The first [Gold] is called *sulphur*, hot and dry; the other [our Diana] *Mercury*, Argent vive, cold and moist. These are *Sol* and *Luna* [our Luna], of a mercurial origin and sulphurous; which by a *continual fire* [secret Fire assisted by external heat] are adorned with Royal Habiliments and changed into a quintessence.

These are the Dragons and Serpents which the ancient Egyptians painted in a circle, the head devouring the tail: thereby signifying that they proceeded from one and the same things, and that it alone was sufficient, and that in its revolving and circulation, it made itself perfect.

These are the Dragons which the ancient poets feigned, did watch, without sleeping, the golden apples of the Hesperidian gardens.

These are they on whom Jason in his adventure for the Golden Fleece, cast or poured the liquor [our mercurial water or secret Fire] prepared by the Enchantress Medea [or call Medea secret Fire and her broth, Azoth].

These are the two Serpents which Hercules [our secret Fire] must strangle in his cradle... the two serpents twined

and twisted round about the Caduceus of *Mercury* by which he exercises his great power and transforms himself into all shapes as he pleases. He, saith Haly, who shall kill the one shall also kill the other, because the one cannot die without the other... Killing one another they are decocted and digested in their proper venom, which after death changes them into a living or permanent water; before which time, by their corruption or putrefaction, they lose their first natural forms, to assume afterwards a new one --- better, more noble and excellent.

These are the two seeds [Gold and our Mercury], Masculine and Feminine, which generate within the Bowels or womb of the four elements and complete all their operations. These are the Radical moisture of the metals, viz., Sulphur [Gold, and *Mercury* or *argent vive*; *not* the vulgar but ours.

These two seeds... are gathered from the dung, ordure, and putrefaction of *Sol* and [our] *Luna*. Happy are they who know how to gather this fruit; for of it an antidote may be made which has strength and power to conquer all infirmities, weaknesses, and diseases.

The dark colours which shew themselves as they signify corruption and putrefaction, so they also presage a new generation by the gnawing and dissolving of the perfect bodies [Gold or Silver]; which dissolution proceeds from external heat, joined with the *watery fire* [the dry mercurial water] and subtile poison of our mercury; which resolves into a mere cloud, viz., into impalpable powder, whatever resists it...

At the time the matter is dissolved it grows black and generates: for all corruption is generation --- therefore blackness is much to be desired. This is the black sail with which Theseus' ship returned with triumph from Crete, which was the cause of his father's death. Thus must this father

[Gold] also die, that out of his ashes another Phoenix may be born, which son may become a King.

If this blackness appear not at the beginning of your operation, whatever other colours may arise, you will fail of the Magistry... you must have a blackness which comes from the perfect metallic bodies, and cannot be destroyed in less than five Months, after which immediately follows the desired whiteness. Of you have this you have enough, but not all. [By continuing the digestion it will again dissolve, corrupt, regenerate, and at length become Red.]

Schola Philosophorum

The sign of the first perfect whiteness is the appearance of a little hair-like circle, passing over the top and appearing on the sides of the vessel, round about the matter in a kind of citrine or yellow colour.

The Seven Egyptian Seals

The Stone before it wholly parts with its blackness and becomes white, like most shining polished marble or a naked brandished sword, will put on all the colours that can be imagined. In these operations, performed by the virtue of the vegetable soul which is within it, it will grow citrine, green, red [but not the true red], yellow, blue, and orange; till being wholly overcome by dryness these carious colours shall vanish and end in this admirable citrine whiteness.

Incertus

The disposition that precedes putrefaction is of great moment. Its unerring sign is perfect blackness. In every labour it is the sulphur that causes blackness, and this in our Art and in the matter is the digestive power, which blackens of necessity. From this it appears that in order to bring on this putrefaction and true radical solution, heat as well as dryness, cold as well as humidity are absolutely necessary. Therefore

the Philosophers teach us that we must conjoin or unite the contrary qualities of the elements --- and therefore they say: The Dragon [Gold] dies but not but with his brother [secret Fire] and sister [Regulus of Antimony and Mars].

If you wish to see putrefaction you must employ an external moving heat... it must not be violent, but soft and gentle, only able to heat the most subtil particles, to raise and blend them until the whole composition be broken, divided without any manual separation, and converted into perfect blackness: for unless the subtile particles be brought to this state, they cannot be perfectly disunited. Therefore all true Philosophers say, that putrefaction is the perfection of the thing, and exhort not to be weary of putrefaction; for according to the degree of this first philosophical grinding in putrefaction, will be that of the generation and final perfection.

Radix Chymiae

Boil our Brass with a gentle fire, until its body be destroyed and the Tincture is extracted in blackness, which is a sign of solution. When heat operates in humidity it causes blackness, but when it operates in dryness it generates whiteness.

Water Stone of the Wise

After blackness the matter becomes granulated, and appears like the eyes of fishes. Then there appears a circle round the matter, which looks somewhat reddish --- at another time white: then it looks green and yellow, like a peacock's tail; and lastly the most brilliant white appears, and after that fire and blood-red... If you perceive that before solution or blackness it sublimes like a red oil, or if a red oil should swim upon the matter, which is a very bad sign, you may take the whole composition out of the glass and dissolve it *de novo* with mercurial water which the philosophers have named *Virgin's Milk* [another name for the secret Fire], or the

milk of the first matter, or blood and sweat, that water of life which at the same time contains the strongest poison. With this mercurial water you must imbibe or humect the matter and gently boil it *de novo*, until no more ascends or sublimes in the glass, and perfect coagulation and fixation be obtained.

Incertus Microcosmus

In one month you may obtain putrefaction; in the second month perfect solution, calcinations, and sublimation --- and all this is but one and the same work. In the third month it appears like a rainbow; in the fourth the agent becomes patient and the White begins to appear. This colour lasts above two months. After this period it is not easy to commit an error in the regimen of the heat, yet you must continue until you have obtained full perfection --- a ruby red powder.

Benedictus Figulus

When you read in the books of the Philosophers “take this or that” you must understand it always of the Stone or its separate parts. When they speak of *Mercury*, understand *our mercury* [Regulus of Antimony and Mars]; by the water understand Mercury, *sublimed from its proper salt and coagulated into a salt* [secret Fire], and this is called Nitre and Sulphur by Bacon, which coagulates the mercury but he means not common Sulphur... When they say take the Philosophers’ lead [viz., our Mercury, the Regulus of Antimony and Mars] take not the green or blue vitriol or copper; for the Sun do not always take gold, nor for the moon silver.

Sendivogius

Open the pores of the body [gold] in *our water*, whereby the seed that is digested may be emitted and put into its proper matrix. Now *our water* is heavenly, not wetting the hands, not vulgar. The body is *gold*, which yields seed: *Luna* or *Silver*, not common [but our Luna] is that which receives

the seed of the Gold [i.e., it is the matrix]. Afterwards it is governed by our continual [secret] fire [which is also *our water*], for seven months, sometimes ten, until our water consumes three [the ingredients which enter into the composition] and leave *one* [the Tincture]...

Cause that there be such an operation in our earth [Rebis] that the central heat [of the Gold] may change the *water* [our secret Fire] into air, that it may go through the plains of the world, and scatter the residue through the pores of the earth; and then contrariwise the air will be turned into water, far more subtil than the first water was [the whole will be liquefied by the action of the materials on each other], and this is done thus: if thou give our Old man [*Saturn*] Gold or Silver to swallow that he also dying may be burnt, and his ashes scattered into the [mercurial] water [or secret Fire] and thou boil that water until it be enough, thou shalt have a medicine to cure the leprosy [of baser metals]. Mark that thou take not cold for hot, or hot for cold [take not common crude Antimony, but our Old man], mix natures with natures [our unripe Sol which is our Old man, with ripe Gold] and if there be any thing that is contrary to Nature separate it [take away the native sulphur from the Antimonial Sulphuret by the help of Mars] that Nature may be like Nature. Do this by fire, and not with thy hand [The Regulus is made by fire, it is joined to the gold in rebis by fire and is ultimately changed, in its whole nature, by the action and reaction of these two, in and with the *secret fire*]. Know that if thou dost not follow Nature, all is vain... This I say to you. Seek for that hidden thing [our sophic Mercury] out of which is made, after a wonderful manner, such a moisture or humidity, as doth dissolve gold without violence; yea as sweetly and naturally as ice doth melt in warm water [Gold does so in the *sophic mercury* when you make Rebis]. If you find out this you have that thing out of which gold is produced by Nature [i.e., the elements of gold are in it]. Although all the metals are all derived from this source [all being composed of the same elements], yet none of them are so friendly to it as gold; for

to other things there adheres some impurity but to gold none. Besides it [our mercury] is as it were a mother unto it [the gold].

Helvetius

Elias the Artist hath told me, that the Chalybs of Sendivogius is the true mercurial humidity by the aid of which an artist can, without using any corrosives, extract the fixt Solar and Lunar rays, and separate them from their bodies [Gold and Silver] in an open crucible in the fire [joining the Chalybs and Gold *or* Silver in rebis]; and that he can afterwards convert this volatile mercurial tincture [by digesting it with secret Fire] into a Philosophical dry tincture [the Lapis].

Radix Chymiae

The subject or matter is but one thing, but internally it is twofold --- the Philosophers' *Rebis*, or *Res bina*, a double mercury. It is likewise *Trina*, or *Tri-una* composed of salt, sulphur, and mercury, or Body, Spirit, and Soul [Rebis and secret Fire]. It is also *quadrina* wherein are earth, water, air and fire --- two invisible qualities hidden in two that are visible.

Sendivogius

It [our matter] is only one thing [Rebis] wherewith nothing is to be mixed but the Philosophical water [secret Fire] revealed to thee more than once.

Anonymous

Take the mercurial matter, put it into a proper glass, seal it and place it on its warm bed a philosophical month until it begins of itself to ferment and putrefy, and until all its humidity be consumed, and the whole be converted into a black powder or earth. In this sublimation, is completed the

true separation of the four elements. The cold and watery element is changed into a warm and dry earth, which is the *Raven's head*, and the mother of the other elements. Our work is nothing else but a changing and conversion of elements. The spiritual becomes corporeal, the liquid thick, and the water fiery. The black earth must be imbibed in its own water [that is, will liquefy itself again] in gentle heat, and must be dried up, until the black earth is sufficiently mundified and brought to *whiteness*. This is called the *White foliated earth*, the Sulphur of Nature or the *magnesia*, wherein a new conjunction of *Sol* and *Luna* has taken place, and a resuscitation of the body.

When our fruitful earth [the white tincture] is afterwards humected or imbibed [being thirsty] with its own proper water [secret Fire] it drinks that water with great avidity, until it becomes again pregnant and produces fruit an hundred fold. Proceed therefore farther with your white earth, and increase your heat moderately, until, by the continual motion of the heat it is digested into a most excellent *Redness* which is called the *Red Coral*, the *Red sulphur*, the *blood*, the *purple gold*, the *burnt saffron* [Perhaps by humecting the earth with its proper water, the author only means, that after you have *the white*, it will, by merely increasing your heat a little, again relent and liquify, and pass on to the Red]:

Repeat this rubifying three or four times [for this however there must be an addition of new matter --- the infant must be fed with his mother's milk] and you will have the most perfect Red Stone, like blood in colour, with which you may tinge mercury and all the imperfect metals into perfect gold.

It is necessary that you take of the above Red tincture or sulphur 3 parts, add thereto 1 part of pure gold, reduced into a subtile calx, and 2 parts of its water [secret Fire]. Rub these three together in a clean glass mortar, put it into a strong glass and in a graduated strong heat melt it together into a red stone [The author here points at Fermentation, but which

other Artists recommend to be done without adding any secret Fire].

Arnoldus De Villa Nova

The body [Gold in rebis] receives impression from the spirit [here the spirit means secret Fire] as matter does from form: and they act and react on each other. Therefore the body tinges not unless itself be tinged. Its earthly thickness owing to its corporeity, hath no ingress. The thin airy principle is that which tinges the gold and gives ingress; and this tincture is the sulphur of the body [of Gold] extracted by the spirit.

Gold tinges not farther than its own body until its occult inward fire or *anima* be extracted out of its fixed body and the gold be made spiritual and volatile. Our living water therefore [i.e., our secret Fire] is a fire which burns, breaks and mortifies the gold more than elementary fire; and the more the gold is mixed with our living water and scoured therewith, in a gentle heat, the more is it torn asunder, centrally opened and attenuated by our fiery living water. When the gold shall have been sufficiently triturated and made one thing with our living water, then it contains within itself the fire-bearing [or fire-abiding] tincture. After you have tinged the body by the spirit, then the body tinges, and is full of tincture and yields tincture. Therefore he who knows how to make a tinging venom from gold and its shadow that is luna [i.e., our luna] obtains our Stone; and unless he possesses this stone, made of the one and the other substance [Sol and Luna --- or Rebis and our Water], he will not have action and reaction between his principles, nor will the one tinge the other.

Basil Valentine

Hermes the Father of Philosophers possessed the art and prepared the Stone out of *mercury* [our mercurial salt], *Sol* [Gold], and *Luna* [Regulus of Antimony and Mars] of the

Philosophers. Many thousands have followed him, and I tell thee in truth that the Philosophers' Stone is composed of two species or bodies, and with Philosophical mercury you must begin and end... Our *coagulated mercury* [mark the expression --- coagulated, not running mercury], which is a mineral [Antimony], must by art be converted into water, into its prima material; that is into a mercurial water [by the action of the secret Fire on the Rebis]. It is therefore a stone and yet no stone, out of which a volatile fire in the form of water is made [viz., our Azoth], which drowneth and dissolves its volatile mother [the Regulus of Antimony and Mars] and fixt father [Gold].

Turba Philosophorum

The artists in Alchemy ought to know that it is impossible out of the body [rebis] alone to make the glorious medicine without the spirit [the secret Fire]. Nor, on the other hand, is it possible to procreate the true medicine out of the spirit alone without the body. The reason is, because our body, prepare it how you will, cannot acquire more fusibility by its own power, than what is proper to it; nor can the spirit, prepare it how you may, be altered from its own volatile nature, nor be perfectly fixed without the mediation of the body; for it is indispensably requisite that the medicine or tincture be made fusible, living, tinging, and permanent in the strongest fire; which requires for its accomplishment an equality of the elements; and to a certainty this equality or harmony of the elements can never be obtained without a conjunction of the body [rebis] and the spirit [secret Fire], for by their union both concur to this end, and the body is spiritualized at the same time that the spirit is corporified and fixed.

Clangor Buccinae

Take the black earth [rebis] finely triturated, and imbibe it with mercury [viz., our secret Fire], and place it in warm ashes to dry up. Repeat this imbibing a second, third, and

fourth time, until the earth itself be sufficiently white and fixed [The Philosophers in general follow a different practice, avoiding imbibition till they have obtained the perfect white or red]. Azoth, that is, the mercurial water and the fire, wash and whiten Laton, that is the black earth, and take away its obscurity. The preparation of the earth is always made with the water. Therefore the clearness of the earth will depend on the dealbation of the earth and its washing.

When you imbibe the black earth with the mercury [secret Fire] take care that you do not burst your glass. The imbibing must always be done on warm ashes. The time between each imbibition, to dry the matter up again, will be twenty or thirty natural days. To the dried earth put of your mercury [secret Fire] a sixth or seventh part of its weight. Seal the glass, and over a gentle heat, the vessel being placed in ashes, dry and congeal the matter, This you must repeat at least three or four times --- the more the earth shall be dissolved and congealed the more penetrating and subtile it will become. The water [secret Fire] is the spirit that purifies, subtilizes, and dealbates the body [rebis].

Flamel

The earth [rebis] with its own water [secret Fire] comes to putrefaction, and becomes pure again of itself; and when well purified the whole work, by the help of God, is well governed. Azoth and fire whiten Laton [the putrefied body] and take the blackness from it. Therefore Morienus says Whiten Laton. This is the composition of the Wise men before me. Mix, says Turba, the dryness of the black earth [rebis in powder] with the humidity of its own water [the azoth proceeding from Regulus of Antimony and Mars and secret Fire] and simmer them until they be made White, and so you will have the water and the earth made white by the water.

Rosarium (Arnoldus De Villa Nova)

Should the earth not be white enough, grind it with *water* [the secret Fire] and calcine [i.e., digest] again; for *Azoth* and *fire* wash Laton and take away its obscurity. Every preparation must be done with *the water*; therefore according to the purity of the water will be the purity of the earth, and the more the earth is washed the whiter it will be.

Marcilius Ficinus

Mercury [not the vulgar] mollifies the *gold*, and attracts the soul from the body when the gold is sublimed with the true water of life [secret Fire].

Opus Disiderabile

The concocted mercurial water is called *Oil* and Ointment, that is the perfected magistry. It is called water when it washes Laton [i.e., when the whole compound liquefies], and afterwards it is called oil when it tinges --- and *the water* is called the *spirit of life*. The Anima is tincture, which is concealed in the spirit. Therefore the soul [Gold] is sown in the foliated earth [Regulus of Antimony and Mars], which retains it. The black [the pulverized rebis] has ingress into its water [secret Fire].

Turba Philosophorum

Know ye that the Arcanum of the Golden Work is made of the male [Gold] and the Female [our Luna]. The Male I have shewn you is concealed in our Lead [viz., in the Regulus of Antimony and Mars, when these two are joined in Rebis]]. The Female is our *Auripigment* which is our lead. In this the male rejoices with the female [in rebis] for she is helpmate to the male. But the male receiveth from the female a tinging spirit [furnished by the Mars]. When you have mixed these [the Gold and the Regulus of Antimony and Mars, joining the two in rebis], put them into a glass vessel, and grind them

with the most *sharp vinegar of Ethelia* [another name for the secret Fire] and boil the whole during seven days. Beware that you Arcanum does not fume nor smoke. Take care that it cools not in the night, and, if you will, lute you glass for the greater safety.

When you see it perfectly dry imbibe it with the sharp vinegar of Ethelia [add more of the secret Fire]. Thus have I explained to you the power of our *Auripigment*, which is the female through whom our Arcanum is perfected.

Glossarius in Turba

The woman [Beja] dissolves the man [Gabricius], and the man fixes the woman in the end. Kalid, a great Philosopher, says: It is nothing but the union of the 4 elements; and it is called *one thing* when the metallic substance [rebis] of *the water* [secret Fire] become inseparably united; so that the one, a volatile spirit, and the other, a fixt body [i.e., the Gold in it is a fixt body] are in the end fixed together inseparably.

Incertus

1. The first principal solution is a reduction of the imperfect body [Antimony] into a liquor or chaos.
2. The solution of the elements is a separation of the Chaos by circulation, viz., into Mercury, Sulphur and Salt, or into Spirit, Soul, and Body, or into water, fire, or oil, and earth.
3. The Philosophical solution is a solution of the Man and his Wife during Putrefaction.
4. The solution of the ferment [Sol] is a reduction of the luminous Sulphur [of the Sol] into either the White or the Red Oil [Here the Tinctures are considered as Oils or Unguents --- when they are specificated they are Elixirs].
5. The last solution is a solution of the Stone itself, and of both Elixirs [i.e., of both fermented Tinctures] to augment

their power and efficacy [It looks as if Incertus fermented before multiplying with secret Fire].

Alphidius

When we dissolve we calcine, without any interval of time --- so we sublime and compose; for between the solution and composition of the body and spirit [Rebis and secret Fire] there is no lapse nor loss of time. Corruption and Dispensation is made in putridness in the bottom of the vessel. Putrefaction is effected in a very low heat, like that of warm and moist horse dung, and in no other heat; so that nothing may ascend; for if anything should ascend the principles would be separated, which must not be, until the male and female are perfectly united and the one receiveth the other. The sign of this, perfect solution, on the surface a black colour, which is the crude tincture, and therefore must be carefully preserved by gentle heat.

Water Stone of the Wise

Seek three in one thing and one in three. Open these and shut them up again and you have the whole art, Solve et Coagula. The Spirit [secret Fire] will give the soul [of the Gold] to the body [Rebis]. The Spirit attracts the Soul, and returns it to the dead body, until all the three remain perfectly united. The body [principally the Gold in the Rebis] must be dissolved, must die and putrefy, while the soul [the volatilized Gold and Regulus of the rebis] and spirit [secret Fire] leave the dead body. Yet after some time they reunite, during the last degree of heat, glorified in the highest perfection.

Nuysement

Repeated solutions and fixations communicate to the Elixir a power to penetrate metallic bodies. But for this it could have no ingress. Therefore the youth Hermaphroditus [the Gold is here intended though commonly the Hermaphrodite

means Rebis] and his tender Virgin *Sal Macis* [our Diana] must be dipped in the Fountain [the solution effected by adding secret Fire to Rebis], that the one may embrace the other, and that he may be able to say to her: “The time will come when my Virgin will never be separated from me, not I from her; and that our union will continue inseparably, and both our bodies possess but one heart and one face [in tincture *alba et Rubia*]. Let the Island Delus appear immovable, and let Apollo and Diana [Gold and Regulus of Antimony and Mars] dwell therein [united in one regenerated body, the Tincture].

H. Von Batsdorff

We have two fires, an *internal* [the secret Fire] and our *external*; the one without the other can perform nothing. If you wish to see a good effect from these two they must be managed with prudence... the external must not be too violent for the internal, or all your industry will be fruitless; the volatile will be separated from the fixt, and as our massa is extremely fusible, it will melt and sublime, which has happened to me several times, so that my work was spoiled and came to nothing. But, as Count Bernard says, the fire must be an equal digesting continual heat, not too violent. In your first degree of heat, during the solution, you must not hurry; for unless your body be properly dissolved, a true fixation of the volatile will never follow [There must be a slow gradual solution. If the heat be too great there will be a separation of the more volatile from the more gross part of the compound, which must not be].

Nodus Sophicus Enodatus

Count Bernard Trevisan, in his practice says: The *Fountain* [Regulus of Antimony and Mars] is as it were a mother of the *King* [Gold]. She draws him to her, and killeth him, but the King rises again from death, through her, and unites so firmly with her, that he become invulnerable.

Although Gabricius [Gold] is, in the opinion of the world, more precious and valuable than *Beja*, yet by himself he can produce nothing. That virgin *Beja*, our *blessed water*, the Philosophers have concealed in their books under many names [as *Beja*, Our Moon, Our Mercury, Our blessed water in which gold dissolves as ice in warm water, our Chalibs, our Steel, etc.].

Water Stone of the Wise

The terrestrial body of Gold must be dissolved, destroyed, putrefied and deprived of all its powers [or natural properties], and this in the beginning of the work, assuming first a dark and afterwards a perfectly black colour, which the Philosophers have called the *Raven's head*. This commonly takes place in forty days. During this putrefaction the anima of Gold is extracted and separated, and is carried aloft and totally separated from the body, the body remaining for some time without life, and like ashes at the bottom of the vessel.

Ludus Puerorum

The whole mixture out of which our humidity is extracted is called magnesia --- and this humidity of ours we call Argent vive.

Eyraeneus Philaletha

Our Stone is made out of one thing [“For Nature doth produce metals, according to their species, out of *mercury alone*], and of four mercurial substances, whereof one [Gold] is mature, the rest [Antimony, Iron, Mercury], crude but pure; of which two [Antimony and Iron] are drawn out of a mineral by the third [viz., Mercury], which is wonderfully joined with a temperate, not violent fire, and so cocted every day, until all be made one by a natural conjunction, most secret, not manual [The last named substance, viz., Mercury is applied to extract from the others their hidden virtue to produce from

all one quintessential virtue as in union with the Muriatic acid and so becomes a fit fire for the internal operations].

Eyraeneus Philoctetes

Pursue *our Diana* [Regulus of Antimony and Mars] with great industry, whose beauty is singular and qualities excellent. She is more fair, more grave, and yet lively and more fit for generation than any other; marry her to the Sun [Gold] and their offspring shall be your reward. And for your instruction know and note it well, that *our water* or *mercury* [or *Diana*] is a compound simple. Compound in respect to quality [partaking of the qualities of its ingredients Antimony and Mars], simple in respect to matter and homogeneity [being wholly mercurial]. The matter is watery, the quality fiery, which [qualities] are, according to the doctrine of elements [which is nonsense], reconciled by air but according to the principles thus: The matter [the whole matter Rebis, viz., Sol and Diana] is *mercurial*, the quality *Sulphureous*, reconciled by *salt*; which also may be, and sometimes are, called the *water*, the *spirit*, and the blood --- or *body*, *soul*, and *spirit*. Take it either way, but be sure to understand them scientifically or practically... Salt [the salt of Nature, as our Diana is often called, is here meant] prepares Sulphur [viz., Gold], *Salt* and *Sulphur* [viz., Rebis] prepares mercury [our secret Fire], *Mercury* preserves them: so that without *salt*, *sulphur* cannot be prepared or set at liberty from his prison [the body of Gold], it being the only key thereto; without *Salt* and *Sulphur* [Rebis], *mercury* [the secret Fire] cannot be qualified; and without *mercury* [the Sophic fire] *salt* [Regulus of Antimony and Mars] and *sulphur* [Gold] can effect nothing.

Metallurgia

The matter is nothing but Argent vive and sulphur, as the Ancients say, or sulphur, mercury and salt. This can nowhere be found nearer and better for or purpose than in Saturn [not his male child, lead, but his daughter Antimony]. When

clarified and spiritualized it is the medium between running mercury and the metals [the only medium by which the two latter can be inseparably united]. It is that temperate substance between the fixed and the volatile, which is the nearest matter of the Tincture. Does not this contain the sulphur, salt and mercury spiritualized [is not this the recipient, and therefore called by philosophers the vessel, in which, when perfect solution is effected, the principles are deposited] which may very easily by the power of gold [which furnishes the sulphur] be refixed into a Tincture?

This is the heaven [or sphere of Saturn mentioned in the *Turba*] --- the mother of Sol and Luna. By mercury [the secret Fire] you must dissolve the Stone [Rebis] and reduce it into tincture by volatilization and fixation: then the true Gluten of the eagle [the Solar antimonial butter] as Pythagoras says, is produced which unites with the blood of the lion [Gold]. The Philosophers concealed this true conjunction as their greatest secret...

When by our art we make the perfect sulphur [Gold] to re-enter the matrix of his mother [our Diana] uniting him [in rebis] to that body whence he had his origin, he may again be born a second time [if the proper menstrual water, or secret Fire, necessary for his growth and nourishment, be added in due proportion].

Vade Mecum Philosophicum

I conceive this to be the sense of what you have said: I am to take the *perfect body* White or Red [common fine Gold or Silver] for the Root of my Work. This must be united in just weight with the *imperfect body* [our unripe gold], very pure and well cleansed from its terrestrial superfluities: to which I must then add a skillful proportion of pure *Mineral water* [the secret Fire]... In the first entrance of the work the *perfect body* is calcined by marriage with the *imperfect* [when the two are joined in Rebis], and so being exquisitely mixed [for the perfect dissolves in the imperfect as ice in warm water]

they are put into the philosophical egg [with the pure mineral water]. He fire is then to be administered through its degrees, boiling night and day *until the work is perfectly finished* [without performing any other operation whatever; for all the other labours of which the Philosophers speak, such as putrefaction, sublimation, distillation, circulation, and separation of elements, making black, white, and red, etc., are the operation of Nature on the matter in the glass, without any laying on of the hands of the Artist. This is the whole secret, the whole labour of this wonderful production, which the philosophers have hidden with so much care, and yet have actually unveiled in their writings, but in such a manner that the treasure shall not be obtained without labour].

Incertus Macrocosmus

The Augmentation or Multiplication of the Stone can be performed in two ways:

1. By repeated solution and coagulation. This Augmentation increases the Stone *in Virtue*.

2. The second way is by Fermentation, which increases the Stone in *quantity*. The multiplication by Fermentation is soonest accomplished. What has been resolved or opened operates the quicker when fixed by its own ferment [Gold or Silver]. It is with this as with leaven --- a small quantity leavens the whole lump.

The same takes place with the philosophic stone. When projected on imperfect metals it transmutes a large quantity of them into good gold.

The *tincture* is the *living gold* of the Philosophers and is taken from its inward *Sulphur*, which in multiplication must be caught like a vapour by the *moving* or volatile *principle*. The siccidity or dryness of the *sulphur* is the coagulating principle; and it follows that the *humidity of mercury* must be the dissolving principle and the principle of Multiplication,

whereby *the body* may be opened and multiplied; and that the moving and coagulating principle must be added to the *Anima Solis*, which is *the tincture*.

During projection the subtil informing spirit is transplanted.

If you ask which of the two multiplications above mentioned is the best and most useful, it appears by Reason and experience that the multiplication by *fermentation* [For *fermentation* we probably ought to read in these places solution and coagulation] is the truest and most certain --- for in all things that which is confirmed by its leaven is more perfect than that which is not. When this *fermentation* is properly done the event will prove that what can in the first projection tinge a hundred will in the second tinge a thousand parts, and you may exalt it as far as you wish.

The more the stone is dissolved with its soul, anima or volatile spirit, and congealed again each time, the more is the tincture multiplied not only in quantity but in virtue and subtility, and in projection will fall on or transmute a greater weight of metal.

There are various methods of multiplication. Some bring the medicine into a red powder, others into a hard brittle mass. This is of no consequence provided the work itself be right.

Arnoldus De Villa Nova

By putrefaction and frequent reiteration thereof the Philosophers' Stone is augmented in virtue. Remember this my friend!

Scotus

Multiplication is either in Virtue, which is done by alteration, or subtilization, by dissolving and recongealing ---

or in Quantity, and this is done by adding new matter [i.e., by compound fermentation].

Incertus Macrocosmus

The multiplication in quantity is nothing else but an augmentation in weight, so that you obtain more powder in quantity but neither diminished nor increased in power.

The Same

When your decoction [*Tinctura alba*] is completed you know its weight. Add to it one fourth of its weight of the *congealed water* --- we mean that *congealed water* which is *our volatile spirit*, *our Dragon's tail*, or *White sperm*, all which names mean the same thing. Put this fourth part to the Tincture in the same vessel, without taking the fixed Dragon [*Tinctura alba*] out of the vessel. Then shut the vessel very close and lute it, and decoct as before: until it is dissolved and congealed again.

Repeat the imbibition, inspiration, vivification, solution, and congelation several times with *our water*, in one and the same vessel, without ever taking the dragon out of his den, but there kill and revive him [by the means indicated] and he will each time become more spiritual than before, and a white, crystalline matter, fixt, fusible, and tinging.

Vade Mecum Philosophicum

When the perfect powder, white or red, is taken out of the Philosophical egg, it appears like the most impalpable powder, whose atoms appear more minute if possible than those in the sun's light, and yet it is very ponderous, like burnished gold [or silver]. But when united to or mixed with a perfect body of its own kind, it appears like white or red glass... easily pulverizable... The powder in its first state, whether aurific or argentific is too universal or undeterminate --- too far above specificated metallic nature [for instant

projection] and therefore must be familiarized to metals by mixture with a perfect metalline body... The Philosophers advise us to project by gradation till projection ceases --- that is, to project one part of the tincture on 10 parts, and again one part of the latter on ten, until after the last projection [no longer glass but] pure Gold or Silver comes from the fire.

If in the first state the stone should only go 1 upon 100 parts, yet by *reiterated solutions and coagulations*, the energy, penetration, and virtue of the tincture may be increased to such a degree that its extent can hardly be calculated.

If projection be made on mercury, as is mostly done, let the mercury be heated in a crucible, until its crackling noise announces its approaching flight. Then the known quantity of the fermented elixir must be projected on it which enters in an instant and tinges and fixes the Mercury... The heat must then be augmented till you perceive the matter in the crucible flow thin and clear. When poured out it will be found to be gold or silver, according to the kind of elixir... The tincture obtained by one continual linear motion, by the first circulation, is called, when perfected, *the elixir of bodies*. This must be cibated by 7 imbibitions, and with the last it must be putrefied, whitened and again congealed and fixed. It is then called *elixir of the second order*. When this is afterwards physically married with its own ferment [the perfect body], decocted, putrefied, whitened, sublimed, and exalted, it is then called *elixir of the third order*. As the first obtained tincture is called the elixir or Tincture of bodies, so the last is called *the elixir of Spirits*... The second elixir or elixir of the second order, is a middle substance, between the first and the third. When the Stone or tincture of the first perfection is imbibed or cibated, and decocted as at first, you obtain the medium or elixir of the second order; which therefore deserves to be called the spiritual elixir --- *because the first tincture has now received 7 imbibitions, and with the last of them has been putrefied and renovated*. Yet this is not

the perfect elixir of the third order, since it has not yet received the philosophical fermentation [viz., with Gold or Silver in the crucible as before directed]; after which fermentation the Elixir, like common fire, can be multiplied continually.

Many working in this Art lose their labour by making projection on impure metals... but when melted with a perfect metal, of its own species, whereby it is converted into a metallic tinging glass, then and not before it flows like wax on an imperfect ignited metal, or when thrown on heated mercury. The imperfect metals, being too far removed from perfection, the unfermented tincture does not enter fast enough, not having affinity for the imperfect metals of strength sufficient to separate their scoria in a strong heat. Therefore the powder or tincture gets confusedly mixed and dispersed among the faeces, and the hope of the deluded Artist is frustrated.

**ALLEGORICAL TERMS, WHEREBY THE
PLOSOPHERS HAVE HIDDEN THEIR SECRET
MEANING**

Pure gold without any double meaning is intended by the following terms:

The Root --- the Radix --- our mature Sulphur --- Red Brass --- Terra lemnia --- Laton --- The Red Man --- Apollo --- Phoebus --- Sol --- The King --- The Male --- The Male seed --- The Husband --- The Man --- Gabricius --- The Red Lion --- The Dragon without Wings --- The fixt Sulphur --- Our Sol --- The Toad --- Hermes' Tree --- The fire of Nature.

The Crude matter of which our female is prepared is called: Saturn --- Senex --- The offspring of Saturn --- Saturn's Child --- Saturnia --- the most beloved daughter of Saturn --- The Son of Saturn.

**THE FEMALE WHEN JOINED TO MARS, IS
CALLED**

Venus, because of her intercourse with Mars before she is married to Gabricius --- The Dragon with wings --- The Babylonian Dragon --- Mercury --- Immature Mercury --- Our Mercury --- The First Mensturrum --- The Menstrual Water --- The first Sophic Mercury --- Chaos --- White Brass --- The Woman --- The White Woman --- The Sister --- Luna --- The Moon --- Our Moon --- Beja --- Diana --- Andromeda --- Fair Phoebe --- Our Vessel --- The Matrix --- The Feminine Sperm --- Our Earth --- The Ground --- Our First Solvent --- Our First Water --- The Fountain --- Magnesia --- The Middle Substance --- The Unnatural Fire (because of the Mars contained in it) --- The Serpent --- The Sieve --- The Marble --- The Miller --- The Green Lion (or unripe gold). Sendivogius calls it Our Old Man.

THE SECRET FIRE OF THE PHILOSOPHERS HAS MANY NAMES

It is called: The Spirit --- The Spirit of Life --- The Water of Life --- The Water of Our Sea --- The Mineral Water --- The Water --- Burning Water --- Ardent Water.

The Fire --- The Secret Fire --- Fire against Nature --- The Invisible Fire --- Our Fire --- The Fire of Snowy Whiteness --
- A Fire continual, digesting, not violent, subtile, inclosed, aerial, surrounding, altering and not burning, clear, close, altering, circulating, penetrating and alive --- The Mover --- The First Agent --- Philosophical Vitriol --- That subtile Nature cleansed by sublimation --- The Fat of the Mercurial Wind --- Our Mercurial Water --- The Second Sophic Mercury --- The Venomous Fiery Dragon --- Medea --- Theseus, who had black sails on his ship --- The unhappy spring, in Ripley Revived --- The Porter or Servant of Count Bernard --- Artpehius' Map Fire --- The eagles --- The Virgins of Dastin --- The Vulture of hermes --- The Priest.

It is also called Venus --- The Nymph Venus --- The Goddess Venus born of the Froth of the Ocean (Ovid), because of the marine acid which enters into the composition of the water of Our Sea, which acid is the Alchemists' Universal Lunar Mercury.

THE FIRST MARRIAGE

To the union of Sol and Luna --- Male and Female --- Gabricius and Beja --- Phoebus and Phoebe.

The product of this union is Rebis, i.e., Res bine --- Arsenic --- Our Hermaphrodite.

THE SECOND MARRIAGE

The Priest marries them a second time in the Glass --- He is the Porter that attends the Birth --- the Fire that warms it.

When our Diana is united with the nymph Venus it forms this character [sigil: Mercury], i.e., Mercury, viz., the third and last genuine mercury of the Philosophers, called Azoth --
- The Bath of Trevisan --- The Balneum Mariae --- Sharp Vinegar --- Horse Dung --- Horse Dung --- Moist Fire ---
The Vinegar of the Mountains of Sol and Luna --- The Dragon or Serpent with three heads, born of the slime of the earth.

Give our Old Man (Our Chaos) Gold or Silver to swallow (in the First marriage); let him be burnt to ashes (i.e., after this philosophical Calcination of gold reduce the mass, when cold, to a powder); throw his ashes in the water (i.e., in the second fire, making the second marriage); boil until it is enough and you have a medicine to cure the Leprosy [of men and of metals].

OBSERVATIONS

“Know that all your progress in this work is to ascend in bus and nubi (that is in nubibus). Therefore I charge you to sublime in a continual vapour: boil night and day without ceasing”. *Exposition on Ripley’s Epistle* (p. 41).

“If any then should ask us what our natural operation of the Stone is?, we would answer: Making of active natures passive, and passive active by *continual decoction*. We *boil* continually, and when the Spirit [secret Fire] is active there is a constant ascension and descension, and the body [Rebis, Gold] is dissolved and made to ascend like a spirit; and when the body [Gold] is active the fumes by little and little *cease*, and the compound remains below, *boiling without fuming*, and thickening and at least calcining; and this is *without hands* repeated *three times*. [In blackness, Whiteness, and Redness we make 3 unctuous calces]. The fire only being kept continually; and then a Sabbath of rest and perfection is attained”. *Ripley Revived* (pp. 185, 186, 199, 253).

“It is then nothing else but a boiling of hard and dry bodies [gold or silver] in our Mercury [Regulus of Antimony and Mars] in a convenient fire [the secret Fire], so long until they be dissolved and made thin: then the same fire makes them fly, and flying they condense and return in drops on the body [the position of Gold and revived Mercury not yet dissolved] and moisten it, and by often returning, brings it to its own nature [i.e., volatilizes the Gold]”. *Ripley Revived* (p. 192).

“When thou hast the true mastery of our dissolution, thou needest not to care for congelation, for governing it with thy fire thou shalt obtain coagulation without laying on of hands”, *Ripley Revived* (p. 197, 214).

In this work Calcination, dissolution, sublimation, putrefaction, separation, conjunction, death, and regeneration are all performed in one vessel and by one linear procedure without laying on of hands. *Ripley Revived* (pp. 197, 209, 213, 214, 218, 225, 226, 233, 285, 301, 325, 327, 388); Ashmole’s *Theatrum Chemicum* (p. 319)

The first operation (after preparing the matter) is to get blackness, which will appear in the first regimen by continual decoction --- *Ripley Revived* --- The matter will flow in the vessel, as soon as it feels the fire, will ascend in fumes, condense and return to the body [Gold]. This continues till all be brought to the state of circulation --- after which the Sulphur of the body [Gold] lays hold of the spirit and soul and all congeals in the bottom of the glass, growing every day more and more black. (pp.337, 338)

Then shall the vapours cease. (p. 343)

Be now careful of your heat not to increase it, so as to hinder conjunction. *Ripley Revived* (p. 353.)

“I swear unto thee upon the faith of an honest man, that if thou urge thy fire, so as to make ought to sublime, *in the days of this regimen*, thou wilt destroy the work irrecoverably”.

Secrets Revealed (p. 96). [i.e., after the ascension and descension of the Azoth has ceased of itself conjunction begins in perfect blackness, which increases daily. If you now increase the fire you hinder this conjunction, you burn the tender matter, you destroy the work.]

In fine: Take the true material principles and put them into the glass: put the glass in such heat that the matter may boil and gently send up fumes, but only in such quantity that they may condense and return to the matter below. Continue this degree of heat till the matter ceases to sublime but still keeps slowly bubbling. It will get blacker and blacker like melted pitch. Many colours will follow and the matter at length becomes white. Then increase the heat a little and in time it will become red.

After that point you can proceed no farther without a repetition of the first work. Be cautious not to vitrify the work. *Secrets Revealed* (p. 110).

FINIS

