

COLLECTANEA HERMETICA

EDITED BY

DR. WYNN WESTCOTT,

S.M. of the Soc. Ros. in Ang., Master of the Quatuor Coronati Lodge.

VOLUME III.

A Short Enquiry concerning the HERMETIC ART

BY

A LOVER OF PHILALETHES.

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PREFACE BY

NON OMNIS MORIAR

AN INTRODUCTION TO ALCHEMY
AND NOTES BY S. S. D. D.

NOTE BY THE EDITOR OF THE SERIES.

THE first volume of the *Collectanea Hermetica* has been well received; indeed the *Hermetic Arcanum* of Jean d' Espagnet could not fail to interest Alchymic students. There could be no doubt that the second volume of the series, *The Divine Pymander*, of Hermes Trismegistus, would also secure an even greater distribution. In now issuing a reprint of the *Short Enquiry concerning the Hermetic Art*, by A lover of Philalethes, with a Preface by "Non omnis Moriar," and an "Introduction to Alchymy," by my friend, S. S. D. D., great confidence is felt that this third volume will be equally successful.

W. WYNN WESTCOTT, M.B., D.P.H.

PREFACE.

THERE is great reason to believe that this *Enquiry into the Hermetic Art*, first published in 1714, led to the composition of the still more extended and more spiritually conceived volume, the *Suggestive Enquiry into the Hermetic Mystery and Alchemy*, which was published anonymously in 1850. This latter volume, which has for many years been unprocurable, and which cannot yet be reprinted by any one unless with the consent of the survivor of the two authors, is an almost complete review of Alchymy on the spiritual plane.

The volume before us has a distinct reference to the science of Alchymy referred to the plane of human improvement, although it is also definitely concerned with the equally possible, though almost incredible power of transmutation upon the material plane.

This *Short Enquiry* was written with especial reference to the Kabalistic work, now almost unprocurable, the *Æsch Mezareph*, which is a tractate connecting physical alchymy with the Kabalah—so well known to refer to divine, human and cosmic conceptions; and which system of philosophy has been so very largely used by the late Madame Blavatsky to support and corroborate the wonderful system of human and universal genesis partly unveiled in her great work, *The Secret Doctrine* of the adepts of the Eastern World. With her wonderful intuition she perceived that the published and still extant Kabalistic treatises were but debased copies of the more true Chaldee Hebrew doctrine; for she indeed was never entirely initiated into either of the branches of the still extant Kabalistic and Hermetic secret societies. From the Eastern Light which had dawned upon her so generously, she could indeed criticise, but could never fully comprehend the nature of Kabalistic illumination.

Dr. Anna Kingsford, the other eminent modern Theosophist or seeker after the true conception of the Divine, although but slightly familiar with the Indian school of thought, was somewhat fully in communion with the doctrines called Hermetic—or by collateral descent,—Rosicrucian.

The anonymous author of this *Short Enquiry* was definitely a Rosicrucian adept, and although his common name has not transpired, yet his identity was known to the initiated occultists of his day, and the records of his progress inscribed in the unpublished roll of his branch of the Rosicrucian fraternity.

The *Suggestive Enquiry* chose instead of *Æsch Mezareph*, two other ancient discourses upon Alchymy as the text for its instruction; these were the "Aureus, or Golden Tractate of Hermes," and the "Six Keys of Eudoxus," which formed one of three portions of the famous *Hermetic Triumph*, the other two fragments being named the "War of the Knights," and the "Discourse of Eudoxus and Pyrophilus." The earliest edition, known to me, of these curious tracts, is the French translation of "Limojon de Saint Didier," dated 1699; besides this, there is still procurable the English version of 1723.

It is intended to reproduce these curious essays in succession to the *Æsch Mezareph*, which is already in preparation, and which is certain to interest all true students of the occult sciences, because it points out the analogies between alchymic tenets and the allegorical explanation of many passages in the Old Testament of the Hebrews.

In order to assist fellow students in their investigations, I have added here a summary of the *Short Enquiry*, and have prevailed upon the learned Soror S. S. D. D., to contribute an "Introduction to Alchymy," which will be found pregnant with meaning by those who have the divine afflatus, although to the ordinary reader, who takes up an Hermetic book only from curiosity, her essay will need to be studied with the closest attention.

SUMMARY.

THE anonymous author commences with a definition of Alchymy, and proceeds to argue that there must be a sound basis for the science because so many authors of different eras and widely separated countries have all agreed upon the essentials of the doctrine and of the art, and that in many instances almost identical results have been described by adepts wholly unknown to each other, although contemporaneous. He very properly urges that the decision of the truth or error of these doctrines can only be rightly judged by other persons who have actually investigated these researches, and the negative evidence of those who have failed, and the

judgment of those who have not searched for themselves, is not any criterion by which such intricate forms of philosophy should be estimated. He further insists that the great learning and lives of pious zeal of many of those who gained success in alchymy should demand an *à priori* confidence in the tenets they demonstrated and sought to unfold. Leaving for the time the thread of the argument, he regrets the failures and wasted energies of many who, in defiance of the warnings of true adepts, and in disregard of the conditions which they laid down as essential to success, yet intruded themselves upon this psycho-spiritual path. He points out especially three requirements which were always insisted upon as necessary to attainment of the summum bonum, *viz.*, a virtuous life, pure and unsullied by sensual enjoyment from birth to the time of trial, a certain freedom from ordinary social and business liabilities, and the inherent power to comprehend the language of symbol and allegory.

He then warmly supports the alleged necessity for the use by alchemists of symbolism and illustration rather than the plain language of exoteric science ; remarking most truly that to the pupil who has in himself the power to succeed, the light of intuitive perception will surely dawn, and that so will he be enabled to appreciate the ideals intended to be conveyed, and at the same time will acknowledge the wisdom of such revealing as is present in the works of the true adepts.

The *Enquiry* then passing superficially to the Asiatic or material plane, yet at all times preserving the actual scheme of spiritual manifestation, considers the grand doctrine of contrast, alluding to the essential differences between Perfect and Imperfect metals, and thus introduces the ideal of the Triune. There are three principles of manifestation and of matter, and even three processes of transmutation. The Universal Solvent or bond of union is then considered, the snowy splendour of Unity standing between the two contrasted forces which form the Dyad. (See the *Sepher Yetzirah*.) This subject is largely commented upon, and allusion is made to the Process even upon the plane of matter, requiring a "Means Mineral" between the two material forms. Many illustrations are then given, notably the doctrines of Sir George Ripley, a Canon of Bridlington, famous alike as a churchman and as a chemist, who formulated the ideal of the Green Lion as a type of the third element—the Means—by which alone could the extremes be knit in perfect association.

Returning once more to the help of the student, the *Enquiry* recommends that such as mean to succeed should

study not only *one* real master in his published works, but several; because each author took care that by one book alone the whole secret could not be learned; and that this was not only to stimulate research and cultivate the intuition, but also lest any unworthy person should obtain so great an acquisition as transmutation, which could be misused as well as turned to good account.

Our author then becomes discursive and suggestive and elucidates (or reveals) the meaning and intention of several symbols and paraphrases, such as the terms "Doves of Diana" and the Caduceus of Hermes, and some of the Kabalistic allegories such as the story of Naaman, Elisha and Gehazi.

Becoming still more useful to the learner, our author reverts to the requirements and aims of students, telling them plainly that the Great Secret is almost unattainable by study alone, and that a Master is needed, and that a Master will be forthcoming to him or her who has the inherent faculty of culture upon the Alchymic basis; and finally he ends his discourse by encouraging the learner in his efforts by showing the analogies between the seed of gold reproducing gold, and the grain of wheat by which alone is a crop of Wheat to be obtained. The Solar heat of nature in her working to produce a crop for man's needs and benefit, is also a type of the Hidden Fire by which the alchymist is able to separate the impure from the pure, and to produce the mystic gold from amongst the dross of worldly mind and common matter.

In conclusion, he states, that although the adepts made such free use of allegory, symbol and simile in order to disguise their secret, yet if a man's intuition do but take a firm grasp of one of them, the mystery of a whole series unfolds itself, and the discovery of matters, means and process is achieved, alike on the material plane, and in that higher world where we find Rest in God alone.

N. O. M.; R.R. et A.C.

AN INTRODUCTION TO ALCHEMY.

By S. S. D. D.



WRITERS on Alchemy are in the habit of making so many prefatory remarks on their own account, that their books stand in very little need of preface; unless indeed, the Editor undertakes to reveal the secrets which the Author is so careful to conceal. I must at once say I am not prepared to do this, but to one thing, I can with advantage call your attention, which is that the study of Alchemy, above all other branches of Occult science, demonstrates the value of Analogy in our search after the real meaning of the mysteries of man and his relation to the Universe. The process of transmutation, which displays a series of colours, recalls the Religion of the Egyptians, symbolising as it did, the blackness of night, the rainbow colours of dawn, the whiteness of noon, and the red glow of evening. The first stage of this symbolism alludes to the blackness of ignorance, the chaotic darkness of men who reject the keys to the secret of the Universe, which are to be found in the rainbow colours; to the vibrations of sound, to scents, tastes, feelings, and subtle psychical impressions. When a man's mind begins to grasp the order and relation of such sense impressions as these, he bids fair to pass from the darkness of ignorance to the white light of wisdom, and perhaps eventually to attain to the imperial purple which clothes the elect.

To do this he must, within himself, possess the divine gift of *wonder*; for it is through this faculty that he raises

himself above the cares of life. The man whose curiosity carries him from the contemplation of the manifestation to the contemplation of its causes, is the man whose instincts are preparing him to undertake the Great Work.

Content is fatal; the man who is content with anything, who does not feel in his most successful moments, during the most sacred earthly joys, a keen sense of want and disappointment, can never hope to find the Stone of the Wise—true wisdom and perfect happiness.

The happy are sufficiently rare, however, for me to hope that few of my readers will be deterred from the study of Alchemy by what I have said. We have all been taught to look with horror upon Medusa's head, with the serpents twisting round its face, the terror of which turned all to stone who gazed upon it. But we must, if we would learn the secret wisdom of the ages, learn to long for a glance from those wonderful eyes, which will bestow upon us the gift of indifference to personal joys and sorrows. For the wise man must be as a precious stone; a centre of light to all that approach him; giving joy to others, because he contains the image of the highest joy in himself; desiring nothing from the world, drawing his inspiration from the supernal light—that "Wisdom Goddess" who wears the serpent crowned head upon her shield.

Well has Robert Fludd said, "Be ye changed from dead stones into living philosophical stones. Be equal with God. Ye hear all these things but ye believe not. Oh miserable mortals, who do so anxiously run after your own ruin."

Then the philosopher points out the futility of the ordinary man of petty aims and weak will, never gaining the goal of the higher, or for the matter of that, the lower Alchemy.

"Oh thou miserable one, wilt thou be more happy?

Oh thou proud one, wilt thou be elevated above the circles of this world?

Oh thou ambitious one, wilt thou command in Heaven above this earth, and thy dark body?

Oh ye unworthy, will ye perform all miracles?

Know ye rejected ones, of what nature it is, before ye seek it."

So it comes to the old, old teaching, GNOTHI SEAUTON, Know thyself; until by deep thought and meditation, words have become more than words to thee; until thou hast analyzed them, separated them, transposed them into every conceivable form, and finally extracted from them, their quintessence and spiritual meaning, thou wilt understand no word that the ancient philosophers speak to thee.

Take now the loose meaning attached to such a word as imagination; in these materialistic days it has become synonymous with extravagant fancy, if not with lying: but hear what Paracelsus says of imagination as an occult manifestation of power: "Man has a visible and invisible workshop. The visible one is his body, the invisible one his imagination. . . . The imagination is a sun in the soul of man acting in its own sphere, as the sun in our system acts on the earth. Wherever the latter shines, germs planted in the soil grow, and vegetation springs up; the imagination acts in a similar manner in the soul, and calls forms of life into existence. . . . The Spirit is the master, imagination the tool; and the body the plastic material. Imagination is the power by which the will forms sidereal entities out of thoughts, it can produce and cure disease."

Perhaps this passage will give new light to those who have lately treated this faculty with such contempt, in dealing with the subject of hypnotism.

In truth, Imagination is the power of forming images in our minds. It is the development and intensification of an idea, which first exists, is then conceived passively in the thought sphere; then the mind (perceiving the idea can be used) brings desire into play, which is developed into an act of Will, and this converts the passive conception of the idea into an active Imagination. So begins the magical process, the rest it is not for me to divulge.

I will only add on this subject the saying of Eliphaz Levi, that, "The first matter of the Magnum Opus is both within and about us, and the intelligent will, which assimilates light, directs the operations of substantial form, and only employs chemistry as a very secondary instrument."

The *Suggestive Enquiry*, published a century later than the work under our consideration, points out the method which should be employed in the exhaustive analysis of the nature of man, so necessary to the completion of the great work. He says:—

"Metempsychosis takes the human identity (or consciousness) from animal existence to the ethereal elements of its original formation."

That is, in thinking inwardly with calm and philosophic mind we can pass from the manifested life we see and feel, to the motive power of that life; and finally to the cause of the motive power; from the mundane to the supra-mundane; from the intellectual to the intelligible; from the earth to the firmament; from water to the fiery rays of heat emerging from the central light which is the source of all things.

The same book continues, "These elements are the universal fundamentals of nature: only in the Human form can they attain that supremacy of reason which returns to its first cause."

Reason is the light which guides us. Let me hasten to add how necessary it is to distinguish between the false reason, and the Heavenly Reason which we perceive when intuition is purified; and we rise above the lower passions. The false reason is merely an image set up by our unbalanced forces to justify us in evil doing. Well has it been said, that when we find ourselves seeking to justify ourselves by giving reasons for our actions, we have been doing something we are secretly ashamed of.

True Reason is the clear light descending upon us from that which is above all pretence. It was a communion with this faculty, that Saint Thomas à Kempis

desired when he told those who would detain him, he must leave them, as one was waiting for him in his cell. False reason seeks to justify itself with much argument; Pure Reason knows Truth, and can afford to be silent.

So continues the *Suggestive Enquiry* "In the Human form only is it possible to comprehend the Divine form; when it has done so by a triplicate growth of Light in the understanding consciously allied, it emanates a fourth form, truthful, godlike, being the express image of its person magically portrayed."

I think I have said enough to show that the Alchemist undertakes no light task. I can hold out no hope of success to those who still retain an absorbing interest in the world. *In* the world Adepts may be, but not *of* it. Alchemy is a jealous mistress, she demands from pupils no less than life; for her sake you must perform the twelve labours of Hercules; for her you must descend into Hell, for her sake you must ascend into Heaven. You must have strength and patience, nothing must terrify you, the joys of Nirvâna must not tempt you; having chosen your work, you must to this end purify yourself from perishable desires, and bring down the light of the shining ones, that it may radiate upon you here on earth. This is the work of the Alchemist; his true ideal is also the highest ideal of Eastern Theosophy; to choose a life that shall bring him in touch with the sorrows of his race rather than accept the Nirvâna open to him; and like other Saviours of the world, to remain manifested as a living link between the supernal and terrestrial natures.

S. S. D. D.—R. R. *et* A. C.

A SHORT ENQUIRY CONCERNING THE HERMETIC¹ ART.²

THIS Art, of bringing all Imperfect Metals to Perfection, hath been asserted for Truth, by Men of almost every Degree, in most Ages of the World ; many of whose Books are extant.

They have declared, that they have made and possessed this great Treasure, which not only brings all Imperfect Metals to the Perfection of Sol and Luna³ (according to the Quality of the Medicine), but healeth all manner of Diseases in Human Bodies, even renewing Youth and prolonging Life.

Those Authors, from Age to Age, have justified one another's Testimony⁴ ; alledging, as a farther Proof of the Art, that all that have understood it, have written most agreeingly of it, though contemporary, and unknown to one another in Person, or by Writing.

How far these Men's Writings have obtain'd, a very little Enquiry may serve ; for most men look upon these (Alchymic) Books only as Cunningly-devised Fables, and the Art itself as altogether impossible.⁵

To which the (Alchymic) Authors answer, That it is not Lawful, nor Commendable to reprobate an Art, by Judges who are ignorant of its Laws as well as the Facts ; and that the Ignorant Negative of such, is by no means sufficient to set aside the Affirmative Knowledge of so many Men of Unquestionable Credit, Piety, and Virtue,—supported by Arguments and Circumstances of Uncontestible Force.

From which, together with the Excellency of the

Things themselves (*viz.*, Long Life and Riches, *vide* the “Way to Bliss”*), many have been induced to believe and seek after this Art.

Tis the Melancholy View that I have taken of these Men, that have occasioned the putting my own Thoughts into the Order you find them, hoping no Master will be offended, nor any Inquirer displeased.

When I compare, I say, the variety of these Men’s Fortunes, Capacities and other Qualifications, with those the *Philosophers* have laid down for men like to succeed, it fills me with Pity, and makes me almost tremble to rehearse the words of Norton,† *viz.* :—

“That of a Million hardly three,
Were e’er ordain’d for Alchymy.”

O sad Tidings to such Men! whose impair’d Healths, injured Fortunes and barren Practice, renders them more unfit every day than other, and instead of attaining that which should crown their Labours with success, are at length in danger of *denying*, if not *cursing* the Art itself.

I would pretty thoroughly enquire from whence this ill success, which attends the generality of Enquirers, proceeds, and accordingly shall mention a few chief Impediments,⁶ in my Opinion.

First; But few of those that seek this Art, are qualified according to the *Philosophers* for attaining it; for they assert, That to find it requires the whole Man;‡ as well as that, when found, it possesses him: Also that it is never found of any by Chance or by accidental Tryals, and casual Experiments; and that unless the

* An anonymous Alchymic Essay, written in the time of Queen Elizabeth, published by Elias Ashmole, 1658; this famous antiquary also issued Alchymic books under the title of “*James Hasolle, Qui est Mercuriophilus Anglicus.*”

† Author of *Crede Mihi* or *The Ordinall of Alchymy*, written about 1477.

‡ See *The Hermetic Arcanum* of Espagnet, paragraph 4.

Mind* be kindled with a Beam of Divine Light, it will not be able to penetrate this most hidden Science.

These with many more Cautions, are plentifully set down in their Books, on purpose to inform and reform a great many Persons too rashly concern'd in these things; and yet how few take their Advice! undertaking this Study with much less than half the Man; constantly trying Experiments that have no Authority but their own idle Fancy; and consequently have Minds, in respect to this Science, as dark as Midnight.

Then add to these an almost Insuperable Difficulty, (hard enough to be overcome by those that can spare even the whole Man and are very cautious in their Practice, as having a pretty good Understanding of Natural Things in general, and of the Mineral Kingdom in particular) and that is the Subtilty of Stile so peculiar to Hermetick Philosophers.

Of this they often warn us, telling us also, that if it were not for this, they could not disclose, and at the same time hide their Secret. And though this be a Paradox, that at the same time they give light, they darken, yet they affirm it for Truth, with many other things hard enough to be understood; which yet must be understood before any one can profit by them, witness *Geber*,† *Sendivo*,‡ &c.

Also *Norton* has given a hint of this mysterious way of writing,⁷ and which indeed sufficiently shews that it will obscure, whether we can discern its Instruction or not, *viz.* :—

“ If you consider how the Parts of Works
Be out of Order set by the Old Clerks.”

* The Adept, like the poet, is born not made.

† Geber, the Arab alchemist, died about 740 A.D., his real name was Abu Musa Jafar al Sofi.

‡ Michael Sendivogius lived about 1636, was the editor of the *Dialogue between Mercury, Nature and the Alchemist*, and other works designed if not completed by his Master, Alexander Seton.

This breaking to pieces of the several Works, makes it almost impossible for a Tyro to make their Writings Tally; any one part not being rightly apply'd, the whole is incomplete.

Another tells us he has done this, by mixing Unusual Candor with Philosophical Subtilties, in such a manner as would render their Secret safe, tho' openly told; Nor is he wanting to admonish his Reader to be cautious in these things, *viz.*:—

“ Yet beware,
That thou mistake not; for I do aver,
A mingled Doctrine these Lines do declare;
For both ways in this Book of mine do claim a share:
Learn to distinguish every Sentence well,
And know to what Work it doth appertain.
This is great Skill, which few, as I can tell,
By all their Reading, yet could e'er attain;
And yet of Theory, this is the main.”

Wherefore 'tis obvious, there is no possibility of success, 'till it be learned to which Work their Sayings relate; which indeed is not easie, and is the top of Theory; nor can any speed upon any other, tho' never so finely spun, or fondly embraced.

And though Philosophers do sometimes affirm their Matters to be many, and their Works also; yet they very often, with equal Authority and Truth, assert the contrary; Artephius* saith:—

“ Tho' we say in many places, *take this*, and *take that*; yet we mean, that it behoveth thee to take ONE “THING.”⁸ For these things are so set down by the “envious Philosophers to deceive the Unwary. Do'st “thou, Fool, believe, that we do openly teach the Secret “of Secrets? And do'st thou take our Words according “to the literal Sound? Know assuredly, he that takes “the Words of other Philosophers according to the

* Lived about 1160, A.D.; he wrote two works, *On the Philosopher's Stone* and *The Art of Prolonging Life*: they were published in Paris in 1657.

“ordinary Signification and Sound of them, he doth
 “already wander in the midst of the Labyrinth, having
 “lost Ariadne’s Thread,* and hath as good as appointed
 “his money to Perdition.”

By means of these seeming Contradictions, bolder steps have been taken by some of them in discovering this Art, than otherwise they would have done, and even some have dared to imitate, nay, so much as to repeat.

From hence I infer, That as much has been communicated to the World as can be expected, or that God will yet suffer to be discover’d by Writing. For this Art is declared, by those that have knowingly written of it, to be under his immediate Protection. Likewise that those that come to the Knowledge of it, shall admiringly wonder at its Preservation; and that which will augment their wonder, will be, that so slender a Vail secures it; and which God makes a sufficient Guard against all the Attacks made by the unworthy. *Vide Sendivo*, etc.

Likewise, that as soon as any one discerns⁹ the Intention of the Philosophers, from the seeming Sense of the Letter, the dark *Night* of Ignorance will fly away, and a glorious *Morning* of Light and Knowledge will break forth: When *Diana*¹⁰ will unveil herself, Bathing in that most pleasant *Fountain* so much sought.

And that he will find himself in the High Road of Nature which is that *Secret Way* of Philosophers,¹¹ viz., most *easie*, *delightful* and *speedy*; in which are no Storms, no Heterogeneities, nor any Fire, but the gentle one of Generation.

Norton asserts, That there are but few clerks that comprehend this Work, it being truly Philosophical. And he saith, That in this Work you must not begin with Quicksilver¹² and Metals, as if in another Work you might; which other Work, he adds, if it be done in

* Ariadne, daughter of Minos, King of Crete, furnished to Theseus a thread by which to pass through the Labyrinth, and so reach the Minotaur, for the purpose of slaying it.

three Years, would be a blessed Chance, and which belongs to great Men; advising poor Men not to meddle with it, for that Errors in it may be committed above a Hundred ways; that it is a Work of Pain and Labour, as well as full of Perils.

That these things are so, we are sorrowfully confirm'd, by a Modern Author, as is so well known by many. *Intro-Apert*.*

Now as their Works differ, so their Waters¹³ or Mercuries differ also; for if you would calcine a perfect Metal, it must be done with Mercury; but if you would dissolve an imperfect Body (*which is in the way to Perfection*) it must be done with *Mercurial Water*, which is the Dew or Rain Water of Philosophers.

The perfect Body¹⁴ is calcin'd with a gross Humidity, and by a tedious Labour; but the imperfect Body is dissolved and purified in a much more subtile Mercury, by an easie Fire and little Toil.

And tho' this subtile Menstruum be the Mercury of the imperfect Body, yet it will (for a certain purpose) dissolve *Sol*, as warm water dissolves Ice, and will make its Body a mere Spirit.

This is the Fountain† of Chymical or Hermetick Philosophy, concerning which it is said—

“He that exactly knows the Magistry of this Water, no Words, or Secrets of Philosophers, Sayings, Writings or Enigmas, will be concealed from him. And further, that it is stupendous in its Virtues, and the things out of which it is immediately drawn, are most secret above all others; also the means of extracting it most wonderful. In the Knowledge of which, all their Fires, Weights and Regimens lie hid.”

The same Author affirms, that none can imagine its

* By Eirenæus Philalethes, whose name is unknown; *The Open Entrance to the Shut Palace of the King*, first published at Amsterdam, 1668; a masterly work of very great interest.

† See Bernard of Treves: the Fountain was a symbol specially used by him.

Splendour, except they see it, and then you will think you look upon a certain Celestial Body. Believe me, saith he, I have seen this *Snowy Splendor*.¹⁵

Sendivo not only confirms the same in Words to this effect, *viz.*, Believe me, for I beheld it, that that Water was as white as Snow, but adds, from whence it was drawn, *viz.*, From the Beams of the *Sun* and *Moon*.¹⁶

Nor is this said by him only, but by many more ; I shall instance a few.

Artephius asserts, That 'tis drawn from the Beams of the Sun and Moon, yea, that this dissolving Water is the Soul of the Sun and Moon, their moist Fire, and the only Agent in the World for this Art.

The author of *Arcanum Hermetica*,* saith, "Let thy Mercury draw its Original from both these Lights."

Flamel, speaking of the Sun and Moon, saith, "They are of a Mercurial Source, and Sulphurous Original."

Another, *viz.*, the Author of *The Way to Bliss*, saith :

"That as the Sun is the Father of all things, and the Moon his Wife the Mother, (for he sends not down these begetting Beams immediately, but through the Belly of the Moon) and this double Spirit is carry'd in a Wind and Spirit into the Earth,† to be made up and nourished."

Which double Spirit or Flame, Geber calls the immediate Matter of Metals.

You very well know, that Hermes himself, as well as most of his Followers, agree in these things ; and 'tis our Business to observe wherein they do agree. Arnold‡ says, "In our Imperfect Metal, there are the Sun, and Moon in Virtue and near Power." The Philosophick Work begins with this Heavenly Mercury, and an imperfect Body purified.

* Jean d'Espagnet : see Volume I. of the *Collectanea*.

† Compare the Emerald Tablet of Hermes Trismegistos.

‡ Arnold of Villanova, born 1245, a physician, a professor at the University of Barcelona.

“There is a pure Matter ” (saith another) “ which is “ the Matter of Gold, containing in itself the Heat that “giveth Increase.” (Fire of Generation.) This is lock’d under thick Folds in common Gold ; nor is it to be extracted, but by a strong and tedious Decoction, which is a Work liable to many Errors, and hath always occasioned those that wrought in it to complain of the length and trouble of it. But in the other Work, the Body is soon dissolved, by a sweet and kindly Bath, or moist Fire.¹⁷

As the former Path requires much Pain and Patience to effect the Work, so this requires great Skill and Application to find it out, it being deeply concealed. The Masters of these Secrets do also affirm, that these Works (which are all one in the Beginning) may be conjoin’d, and made their grand Medicine. And I have been informed, that the way of making them one is but slenderly hid. For should they but change some Words (which they affect to use in order to conceal it) of one¹⁸ Syllable, and sometimes of two, for others of three, and sometimes of four or more, it would not be difficult, for a Tyro, to conceive it. And the Reason given for this slender Covering is, that if any one should discern it, and yet be ignorant of the means of both it would be of little avail ; and that if he knew the means, he could not long remain ignorant of the Practice. So that the Knowledge of the Means seems absolutely necessary in the first place.

These Norton calls his “ Means Mineral,” which, he saith, are no other than Magnetia* and Litharge† her Brother. And he asserts that to clarify them is the foulest Work of all.

And though he makes these means two, yet he tells you how they differ, *viz.*, as a Mother from her Child, or as a Male from a Female : Which we see brings his

* Magnesia, is the oxide of the metal Magnesium, in modern chemistry ; this is not what is referred to.

† Litharge, is an impure oxide of lead ; this is not here intended.

to the general Doctrine of Philosophers, *viz.*, Agent and Patient, which seems to be their one intention, whatever Skill they use to perplex their Sayings.

Litharge, he says, is a subtil Earth, brown, ruddy, and not bright.

“ Old Fathers called it a thing of vile price,
For it is nought Worth by way of Merchandise;
No man that findeth it would bear it away,
No more than they would an Ounce of Clay.”¹⁹

He likewise saith, it is not to be sold in all Christian Ground, but thou must be fain to make it.

Magnetia is fair and bright, known by few, and is found in High Places as well as in Low and called by Plato, *Titanos*; these are the Materials to make Elixir; and addeth :—

“ This Secret never was before this Day
So truly shewed, take it for your Prey.”

Now to apply these things to the Doctrine of Philosophers; Litharge must be their Brass or Philosophical Sol; Magnetia must be understood to be their Subtil Humidity, or Philosophical Mercury; which is Living and not only so, but Inlivening; Clean and not only so, but cleansing; Volatile, and not only so, but Volatilizing, even the most fixed Body of Sol; and is the Radical Moisture of Metals.

How this is attained, is worthy our Inquiry, and whether they agree in the manner of preparing it, as well as from whence it is to be drawn, *viz.*, From the Sun and Moon; for it seems it must have the Influences of both.

But to collect these Virtues requires a Mean, as Ripley* hath it, speaking of the Green Lion,¹⁹ A

“ He is the mean, the Sun and Moon between, etc.”

Also the Author of “ Hunting the Green Lion ” † saith,

* Sir George Ripley, Canon of Bridlington, lived about 1490.

† Name of author unknown. This is a short essay which has been attributed to Lully or his friend Cremer of Westminster.

“The Lion is the Priest, the Sun and Moon the Wed;
Yet they were both born in the Priest’s Bed.”

By which Green Lion another saith, “All Philosophers understand Green Gold, multiplicable, spermatick, and not yet perfected by Nature; Or Assa Fœtida, because in the very first of this Operation or Distillation, a white Fume with a “stinking smell exhales.” It was by this strong scent that Flammel knew this Subject.

That this agrees with the rest of the Philosophers, I need not enlarge to shew, it being well known to them who read their Books.

This Distillation, Hermes, as well as many others, declares must be made by a gentle Fire, by little and little, with great Discretion, lest the thick be mixed with the thin, the subtile with the gross, or the foul with that which is clean. Lully* is very famous for his witty Description of this Operation, under the Figure of Distilling of Wine, which he sometimes also calls Juice of Lunaria, from which he extracts the Sweat with a gentle Fire, in the form of a white Water.

This is also called by other Names, as Adrop, Saturn,²⁰ Brass, Leprous Gold, and Imperfect Body; and which they all agree lies in great Obscurity, saturnine and foul, in the making of which there is a great Stink; that ’tis not fixed, a Medium between a Metal, and a Mineral partaking of the Nature of both, and very crude, containing an Argent vive, which is the Basis and Ground-work of their precious Medicine. And thus, saith the Philosopher, you will come to understand how Saturn contains the greatest Secret in this Art. This is “The Golden Branch, so much conceal’d, “which all the Groves with Shadows overcast and “gloomy Vallies hide, and which will follow none, but “him that knows Dame Venus’s Birds and him to whom “of Doves a lucky Pair,” &c.—*Arcanum Hermetica*.†

* Raymond Lully, a Spanish priest, died in 1314, on the coast of Africa, being stoned to death by Mohammedans.

† Jean d’Espagnet, see paragraph 15 of the *Hermetic Arcanum*.

The Masters of this Science agree with one Voice in this, *viz.*, That this Matter must be exactly purified, and dissolved into an Argent vive, of such Virtues as are nowhere else possible to be found.

This is performed by a wonderful Cohobation ; the Number of which Cohobations are much varied : But in this they all agree, that there must be so many, till a total Dissolution and perfect Purity be known.

The time of doing this, some will have it, is hinted in *Arcanum Hermeticæ* where 'tis said, "Cause the Dragon to drink Three times the Magical Number Seven, until being drunk, he put off his hideous Garment."*

Thus, I say, Three times Seven is Twenty-One, which some will interpret Days, and to which some other Philosophers seem to agree ; but whether these are One and Twenty Days or Cohobations, he will rightly determine, who shall be blessed with the Knowledge of their "Light bringing Venus, and Horned Diana."—*Arcanum Hermeticæ*.

Likewise the Philosophers agree in the Virtues of this Water, *viz.*, that as it partakes of the Natures of both Sexes, so it acts the part of both, *viz.*, Dissolving and Congealing. For they assert, That it will Congeal itself into a Lunar or a Solar Nature, (according to the design of the Workman) without any addition whatsoever.

There are also some Cautions given concerning Proportion in Compounding the Imperfect Body, as well as with relation to its Dissolution ; for that in case of undue Weight or Measure, the Virtue will be much diminished, if not altogether spoiled. But if a due Proportion be observed, and a proper Fire given, the true Sign will follow.

The true Union between the imperfect Leprous Body, and its Water, they have deeply conceal'd, as the Philosophers own, and Searchers find ; because as they say, the rest is so easie in the Work of Generation,

* See paragraph 52 of the *Hermetic Arcanum*.

that 'tis hardly to be missed, by one that hath attain'd their wonderful Mercury, so united and purified.

Concerning which, they have declared, they have given such hints as are sufficient to an enlightened Mind; and that none shall ever dare to do it more openly, without a Curse from God.

But all have not done it with the same Candor, nor by the same Similes and Enigmas; *The New Light* * under that of Chalibs; *The Way to Bliss*, by that of the Witty Fire of Hermes, and so of the rest, Norton says:—

“Bacon † did it darkly, in his Three Letters all;
But Raimond ‡ better in his Art general.”

And since the Readers can expect no better Account from me, concerning the Means and Medium of this Wonderful Union, than the Philosophers have learnt in their Books, I must refer them for more ample Satisfaction and Information therein. For, as Norton saith:—

“Trust not therefore to Reading of one Book,
But in many Authors' Works ye may look.
Liber librum aperit, saith Arnold the great Clerk;
Anaxagoras ¶ said the same for his Work,
Who that slothful is in many Books to see,
Such one in Practice, prompt shall never be.”

The Reason he gives for thus Reading and Comparing many Books, is, that

“Every each of them taught but one point, or twain,
Whereby his Fellows were made certain,
How that he was to them a Brother,
For every of them understood each other.”

I have mentioned Norton the more, because it appears

* *Novum Lumen Chymicum*, by Seton and Sendivogius.

† Bacon, lived about 1270.

‡ Raymond Lully.

¶ A Greek philosopher of the Ionic School, born 500 B.C

to me, that he and his Contemporary Ripley, have written very Learnedly of this Art, and wonderful Agreeingly, through both writ near the same time, and very probably one in England and the other abroad; and for ought I can meet with, were not known to one another at that time. Nor can one suppose that Norton had seen Ripley's *Compound of Alchimy*, since it was written but six years before his *Ordinal*. Books of that kind especially, did not in those days come abroad quickly: Nor doth Norton, when he reckons up some that had written excellently of Proportion, take any notice of Ripley, who beyond all question hath in that excell'd.

This Harmony in Authors, that have written of the Art at the same time, and unknown one to another, a Modern Adept of the same Nation with the two before mentioned, has brought as a convincing Argument (among others) to prove its Being; and which, with me, has great Weight, and seems to serve his purpose.

This Author has profess'd to have outdone all that went before him, discovering such things, he says, as the World was barren enough before, yet his Disciples have much complain'd of their ill success; notwithstanding they have seemed to understand him more fully than the other Philosophers, insomuch that many have concluded his way of proceeding in this Art to be different from many of theirs. Nay, at length some have so ill rewarded his Candor, as to charge him with being ignorant of those things he so solemnly professeth to be true, and of which his Accusers are unworthy.

It seems he foresaw his Readers would thus misconstrue his Writings, and therefore he here and there scatters some necessary Cautions for those that would receive them.

“Nor let any expect,” saith he, “Comfortable Doctrine in our Books, who know not the true Keys, by which our Matter is brought forth from Darkness into the Light: For verily tho' we write for the Inlightening a true Son of Art, yet also for the fatal Blinding of all

“such Owls and Bats, who cannot behold the Light of
 “the Sun, nor can endure the Splendor of our Moon. To
 “such we propound rare Tricks, suiting to their sordid
 “Fancy: To the Covetous, an easie way without Ex-
 “pence: To the Hasty, Rash and Unstable, multiplicity
 “of Distillations.

“In the World our Writings shall prove like a curious
 “edged Knife ;* to some they shall carve out Dainties, to
 “others they shall serve only to cut their Fingers. ’Tis
 “the Sign of an Owl,²¹ to be blinder, by how much the
 “Sun shines brighter.—If thou wilt be heedless, thou
 “may’st sooner stumble at our Books, than at any thou
 “didst ever read in thy Life. . . . Take this from one
 “that knows best the Sense of what he has written ;
 “where we speak most plainly, there be most circum-
 “spect, (for we do not go about to betray the Secrets of
 “Nature) especially in those places which seem to give
 “Receipts so plain as you would desire, suspect either
 “a Metaphor, or else be sure that something is sup-
 “pressed which thou wilt hardly find (without Inspira-
 “tion) of thyself ; yet to a Son of Art, we have written
 “that which never heretofore was by any reveal’d.”

I might add many more Cautions of other Authors, as well as of this, concerning the Difficulties which attend the Reading of their Books ; and had not mention’d what I have, but that it appear’d the more necessary to mention some of this Author’s because almost every Body has taken up an Opinion, that he is more easily understood than the rest ; but how profitably, themselves may judge.

We should not be just to ourselves, if we should be ignorant that when any of them have made a Discovery of this or the other Part of the Work, they have not Balanced it with such Obscurities which are not easily discerned ; especially by the Unwary.

And therefore if the Students in this Art, and particularly of this Author’s Works, did believe the

* Compare, “I come not to send peace, but a sword.”

Philosophers had Cunning equal to their Skill and would but take the Advice given by them, they would not have room to Censure the Philosophers but themselves.

For what could anyone have said, more to have deter'd Inquirers from rash Conclusions, either in Theory or Practice, than this Author has done? *viz.*, "Venture not," saith he, "to practice barely upon my Words: For know that what I have only hinted, is far more than what I have discover'd; and what I have declared to thy first Apprehension, most openly, hath yet its lurking Serpent under the green leaves; I mean some hidden thing, which thou oughtest to understand; which thou, being Cocksure at first Blush, wilt neglect."

The fond Notion which Men have entertained, of understanding this Author's Writing more perfectly or easier than the rest of the Masters is to me an Argument of his great skill in that peculiar way of Writing, which the Hermetick Philosophers profess and value themselves upon, *viz.*, to be able openly to show the Art to the Sons of it, and yet secure it from the unworthy.

That this is true, all their Writings shew; for some of them have learn'd the Art from Books as they own; which could not be, if it were not taught in them. These indeed are very few in comparison to those that Learn it not, though they read the same Books, but not the same things in them. As this Author hath again excellently described such men, *viz.*, "Some I know will serve my Book, as they have served others; out of it they will read their own Phantastick Processes, which I never dreamt of, nor yet are they in Nature. Though we write in English, yet our Matter will be as hard as Greek to some, who will think they understand us well, when they misconstrue our Meaning most perversely. Nor is it imaginable, that they who are Fools in Nature, should be wise in our Books, which are Testimonies to Nature."

As this Author hath profess'd an extraordinary esteem for Ripley, and (in many things) has imitated his Candour, yet he has so manifestly compounded it with the Craft of Norton, that it is hard to distinguish them, and which well deserves the Cautions he hath given, and his Readers' Care therein.

He has in his Books led us some part of the way under such Philosophical Vails, as have been pretty easily seen through by most that read them with Application; who no sooner discover some of his Metaphors, but overcome with joy, and exalted with an Opinion of their own Abilities, presently cry out, we have found! we have found! And what have they found? Why their way into a Labyrinth.*

For at the end of this short Walk, he hath set up one Metaphor, harder to be understood than all the rest, *viz.*, The Doves of Diana. This stands at the Entrance into a great Labyrinth, in which are abundance of Inquirers rambling at this day; many of them undiscerned by one another.

I have taken several Turns in it myself, wherein one shall meet with very few; for 'tis so large, and almost every one taking a different Path, that they seldom meet.

But finding it a very melancholy Place, I resolved to get out of it, and rather content myself to walk in the little Garden before the Entrance, wherein many things tho' not all, were orderly to be seen. Choosing rather to stay there, and contemplate on the Metaphor set up, than venture again into the Wilderness; in which I heard the Noise and Voices of several strange and devouring Creatures, (some of which I had with difficulty escaped) every one, almost, having a differing Sound.

As this Author seems to have design'd a full stop at the Pillar he hath caused to be erected, and to prevent

* There is a portion of the Royal Arch Ceremony of Freemasonry which seems related to this symbolism.—S.A.

Travellers running unawares into that dangerous and dark Wilderness, caused this Inscription to be put upon it, *viz.*, “Learn what Diana’s Doves are, which doth vanquish the Lion by asswaging him ; I say, the green Lion, which is indeed the Babylonian Dragon, Killing all things with his poison. Then at length learn to know the Caducean Rod of Mercury, with which he works wonders ;” etc. Therefore I will not step one Step farther without a Guide, for I dread going again into the Labyrinth.

This guide must be a very wise Man, indued with singular Gifts ; for he must not only tell me the Interpretation, but the Dream itself ; and by this I may judge of his Ability.

For, as Kelly saith, “Let no Man lead, unless he knows the Way.”

Therefore let none mistake my Inquiring the Way, for a Teaching of it. If any do, and suffer by it, they must blame themselves, not me ; for I am Inquiring, I say, not Teaching the Way. Masters cannot be deceived, but Searchers may.

We do not find this Enigma of Doves so frequently used as many others, and which also are very difficult to be understood. These figures, I conceive, spring from a Root of Knowledge and Learning, far above the Vulgar’s Reach : For, is not this Art, saith one, Cabalistical, and full of Mysteries ? So one of these Masters, well versed in Rabinical Learning, has told us what the name of a Dove doth signifie, as well as what it doth not, *viz.* :—“The Name of a Dove²² is never apply’d to Metals themselves (which ought to be well observed by Inquirers, many having erred after this manner) but the ministering and preparing Natures. And that he that understands the Nature of the Burnt Offering (for Purification) will not take Turtles themselves, but two young Pigeons (which are the Off-spring) or Sons of the Dove.”

And this Secret Pair he rather appropriates to Nogah (Venus) which is the Fifth amongst the Planets ; so the

Author of *Arcanum Hermiticæ* calls them the Birds of Venus. Tho' this Cabalist applies the name of Dove to Diana also.*

In the *History of Natural Things*, saith he:—"Luna "is called the Medicine for the White²³; because she "hath received a Whitening Splendor from the Sun, "which, by a like shining, illustrates and converts into "her own Nature all the Earth—that is the imperfect "Metals: And that place of Isaiah xxx. 26, may be "mystically understood of this, because the Work being "finished, she hath got a Solar Splendor.²⁴ But in that "state, the place in Canticles vi., 9,²⁵ belongs to her. "But by the same Name the Matter of the Work is "called; and so indeed, like to the Horned Moon, she is "in the first State of Consistence; and like the full "Moon in the last state of Fluidity and Purity."

In another Place he hath this Passage, speaking of two Birds, which place, I make no doubt, but the Author of *Introit. Apert.* had well considered, if not drawn his early Knowledge from, and of Argent vive, which he calls a Leopard, Water not wetting, and Jordan of the Wise Man, etc. "And he shall have "four Wings of a Bird upon his Back; the four Wings "are of two Birds, which exasperate²⁶ this Beast with "their feathers, to the intent he may enter and fight the "Lion and the Bear. And Power was given him over "them, that he may overcome them, and extract their "glutinous Blood. Of all these is made one Fourth "Beast, which is frightful and terrible and very strong. " .. Eating and breaking to pieces himself and others; .. "Treading the residue under his Feet."²⁷

This Guide I think may be depended upon, having given Demonstration of his Ability, by telling not only the Interpretation, but the Original figure itself.

More I have not met with in my Inquiry, therefore no more can be expected from me concerning this great Stumbling-block, at which so many fall into Error.

* A delightful example of mystification. N. O. M.

From these things 'tis very evident, to me, that this Art cannot be found by never so many casual Tryals, or Experiments, without a real Knowledge, as Sendivo has written, *viz.*: “Know for certain also, that this “Art is not placed in Fortune, or casual Invention, but “in real Science; and that there is but this one Matter “in the World, by which, and of which, the Philo- “sopher’s Stone is made, *viz.*, the Mercury of the “Philosophers.”²⁸

Out of what this is made, he teaches in his Treatise of Sulphur, as well as elsewhere. This is that Mercury, saith another, which the returning Sun diffuseth everywhere in the Month of March, or House of Aries; from whence also the Sulphur is to be sought. Which Sulphur, in this Work, saith Sendivo, is indeed instead of the Male; but the Mercury instead of the Female; of the Composition and Acting of these two, are generated the Mercuries of Philosophers. For as they have a double Sulphur, so they have a double Mercury, *viz.*, For the White and for the Red: Which is but seldom, and then very cautiously hinted; and these Mercuries differ, both in Colour and Quality, as may be easily gathered from their Books, by careful Readers.

The Author of *Intro. Apert.* indeed hath taught, that there are two Mercuries to the White, used in two different Works; Asserting that the Acuation of the Mercury for Sol Vulgar, must differ from that of Philosophical Sol. And further, If (saith he) “you shall in “your Decoction of Sol Vulgar, use the same Mercury “which is used in our Sol (tho’ both flow from the “same Root in general) and apply that Regimen of Heat “which the Wise Men in their Books have apply’d to “our Stone, thou art, without all doubt, in an Erroneous Way: And that is the great Labyrinth in which “almost all young Practitioners are ensnared. For there “is scarce one Philosopher, who in his Writings does not “touch both ways.”

In this, we may say of him, he hath not fallen short

of any of them: For he has so interwoven one Work with another, one Regimen with another (by way of Balance, as I said before, for Discoveries) that little less than the Knowledge of all in Theory, will prevent our falling into constant Error, in some of these particulars; even after the Field in general is known: and which happened to himself as he confesses, and which I shall mention, as it falls in my Inquiry.

These (with many more) are the Difficulties which the Inquirers after this Art have to encounter with; and which, one would think, should rather deter, than encourage, many Men from pursuing it as they do: especially considering the adverse Fortune that attends most Men, who prosecute this Study to their dying day; finishing their Lives in Ignorance and Despair. This Melancholy Prospect, I say, should leave such a deep Impression upon us, as to make us more cautiously meddle with this rare and difficult Philosophy; which without a Master or the special Favour of God, is never attain'd. As the Author of the *New Light* informs us, *viz.*, that unless God reveal it by a good Wit, or Friend, 'tis hardly known.

By the last most commonly, by the first most rarely. For as he adds, "Tho' Lully was a man of a subtile Wit, yet if he had not received the Art from Arnoldus, certainly he had been like those which find it with difficulty; and Arnoldus also received it from a Friend: Every Art and Science is easie to a Master, but not to a Scholar."

Therefore this Art is easie to none, tho' of never so quick a Wit and Parts, but to those that know it only.

The Cabalist, I have before mentioned, hath lively prefigured, wise and good Men by Elisha; and the foolish Pretenders of this Art, by Gehazi, who was indeed Servant to Elisha; but to what purpose, the History of them, in the Second Book of Kings, sheweth.

Elisha an Example of Natural Wisdom, and a Despiser of Riches: He knew how to correct and make wholesome Poisonous Waters, and to multiply Treasure

beyond the common Course of Nature: He could cure the worst Infirmities, nay, even raise the Dead: He knew how and when to blind and open the Eyes of Inquirers, also to punish Mockers, and even make Iron to swim; yea, his very Remains were efficacious after he was dead.

Gehazi labour'd in vain, and remain'd a Servant for ever; never qualified to be a Master, notwithstanding he had the Advantage of conversing with so great a one: He was Covetous, a Lyar and Deceiver; a Prattler, boasting of other Men's Deeds; Conceited and Hasty, thinking he sufficiently understood his Master, when he bids him take his Staff, and lay it upon the Dead Child, presently enterprising, though with an Heterogeneous Matter, and so able to effect nothing not discerning the Law of Nature; but Elisha apply'd a living Homogenous Agent, and then the Dead was raised. And instead of a double Portion of his Master's Knowledge (which Elisha desired and obtained by his Master Elijah) Gehazi got a Leprosie, as the Reward of his Doings.

A great deal might be observed from this History of Elisha and Gehazi, who are Notable Examples of Wise and Good Men, and their Reverse, *viz.*, Foolish and Profane; the last may talk, as Gehazi did, of procuring the supernatural Son of the Wise Man, but without being able to effect it; no more can his Successors, which are not a few even at this Day, who not only succeed him in Qualifications but Success.

The Philosophers agree with one Voice, that one worthy of this Science must be strictly Virtuous, leading a holy Life, or God will not prosper him: He must have a competent Understanding, or he will not be able to conceive: He must be Diligent and Laborious, or he will not be able to work out what he conceives; and he must be private or he will not quietly enjoy that which he works out. To these must be added Patience and Leisure, together with a Competent Fortune; which is the more necessary in this Study, because it requires, as is already said the whole Man to find out the means,

and then a careful Application is absolutely necessary to accomplish the Work.

The Philosophers, you very well know, take the liberty of seemingly contradicting themselves, and one another: Sometimes asserting the Work to be very easie; other times that 'tis very difficult or hard. One while, that 'tis short; then again that 'tis very tedious. Again, that 'tis done with little Expense, and an easie Labour; then complaining of the charge and Toil. Sometimes affirming their Matter to be but one only thing, other times that 'tis compounded of several. One while the Work is to be done with a gentle Fire, another time that 'tis not perform'd without a strong. Then again, that 'tis equal, and of the same degree; and yet that 'tis daily increased.

These are the Difficulties with many more that might be named which Inquirers lie under. And yet the Philosophers affirm, they all vanish when the Key of this Art is once attain'd, which is the Chalibis of Philosophers. No longer will a Tyro relish a false Writer, or be to seek to reconcile the true. For that as soon as the first Gate is opened, all the rest will fly open of themselves.

I fear many will be displeased and say, these difficulties are too well known to us already, we want rather to be told how we shall overcome 'em, than have them repeated to us. To these I answer, in the Philosopher's Words, Expound the Philosopher's Writings according to Nature and not to Fancy. Now they say, their stone is nothing else but Gold digested to the highest degree of purity and subtile Fixity. Many consent to this but will plead, that common Gold is not meant. In answer to which I shall add, let them read Sendivo on the Elements of Fire, The Way to Bliss, and others, and consider the Extensibility, Permanency and Purity of the Gold there spoken of. And also let them consider whether 'tis not such Gold they would produce by this Art, as is called common Gold. Then if it be common Gold you would produce, whether common Gold

be not the Natural Body for such a Production; as common Man is of producing its own Kind; common Wheat, of Wheat; and so throughout whole Nature.

Common Wheat in a Barn, is as dead as common Gold in a chest; tho' both these have a Life, *i.e.*, of Existence, and Power to increase their Kind; which Life must die, before the Power is brought to Action; and when this is done, they are properly called living Gold, and living Wheat, and not before.

Now, how comes Wheat to be so, we are pretty well apprized, *viz.*, tis sown in its proper Vessel, the Earth; it is moistened with its proper Humidity and is digested by its proper Heat, and so it grows and increases.

And if we are to take Nature for our Example, Gold must be proceeded with after the same manner; tho' the Vessel, the Humidity and Heat differ, for a Metal and for a Vegetable, yet both are liable to the Deficiencies and Excess of these things.

For if Wheat hath not a Matrix duly qualified, or hath too much or too little Humidity, and so of Heat, it will succeed accordingly. And so must the other, if Nature be the same in the one as in the other, as no doubt she is; or to what purpose are we so often recommended to the Consideration of Nature. Sendivo bids us follow Nature; waving the many Subtilties of the Philosophers, written to amuse the Unskilful Inquirers.

To conclude on this Head, if every Multiplication is from Seed; that the Perfection of every thing is its attaining a Seminal Virtue; and that nothing has this, which is imperfect of its Kind: Then it will follow, that if there be a Seminal Virtue in Metals, and that all of them are of the same Nature, the Seminal Virtue (that is the power of Multiplying) can be no where but in the most Perfect, which is Gold; *vide* Ars Metallica.

As these things are consonant to Nature, Sound Reason and the Doctrine of Philosophers, even the

most envious, I, for my part, shall make them my rule in my Inquiry : Others may do as they please.

And as the Author of the Way to Bliss has not only told us (among many others) where the Seed of Gold lies, *viz.*, in Gold ; but how it lies, *viz.*, This Seed of Gold is his whole Body loosened and softened in his own Water ; there is all your stuff and Preparation. So he hath also, with the same Candor, shewed us the Water in which it dies, and with which 'tis raised. Where speaking of the Affinity that is known between Gold and Quicksilver (in common Uses) which he calls the grand Mother of the Stone, and Spring of all her Goodness : Wherefore, says he, "When this fine and clean "Body of Quicksilver is made, by Nature and Art, yet "much finer and clearer, and again, as much more pierc- "ing and spiritual, and able to perform it ; how much "more readily will she run to her like, and devour it, the "clean, fine and spiritual, that is the Quicksilverypart of "the Metal. And if she do devour it, then it cannot be "lost, but must needs go into a better Nature, even the "Nature we desire."

This, he says, is done by the well-ordering the witty Fire of Hermes, "that here is all the Hardness, here "all the World is blinded all the rest is easie. Search "then this rare kind of Heat ; for here is all the Cun- "ning ; this is the Key of all ; this makes the Seeds and "bringeth forth : Search wisely, and where it is, in the "midst of Heaven and Earth for it is in the midst of "both these places, and yet but one indeed ; it is Earthy, "yet Watery, Airy, and very Fiery, etc. He adds, Let "the dew of this starry blood beat about the Womb, "and your seed shall joy and prosper. Muse and conject "well upon my Words, you that are fit and skilled in "Nature, for this is a very Natural Heat ; and yet all "the World is blinded. Nay indeed, if a Man would "read little, and think much upon the ways of Nature, "he might easilie hit this Art ; and before that, never."

Thus the witty Author, according to the Custom of

all Philosophers, brought us to a full stop, and left us to consider Nature, in order to remove the Remora* that so often stops Inquirers in their career.

'Twas from the Excellency and Virtue of this Fire, no doubt, that the Cabalist I have before mentioned intituled his wonderful Book, *Æsch Mezareph*,† or *Purifying Fire*.

This Fire has lain hid from many, a long time after they knew the Field in general, where the Seed was to be Sown. The fiery Furnace of Philosophers, says one of them, lay hid from me long ; but after I knew this, and how it was fitted to its proper Vessel, after a few days I beheld the admirable Brightness of our Water, which being seen, I could not but be amazed.

So Pontanus seems surprised at the wonderful Effects of this Fire, for want of the Knowledge of which he had erred so long and often ; and tells us who inform'd him of it, *viz.*, Artephius,²⁹ whose Book is extant, and read by most Inquirers, tho' not with the same success ; some interpreting his Sayings one way, and some another ; but few according to the true Sense and Meaning. Whence they have erred and will always err, unless they learn it better ; the way to learn it, is but just told above, by the Author of *The Way to Bliss*, which agrees with the Way Pontanus prescribes, *viz.*, They that should read Geber, and all other Philosophers, never so long, could not comprehend it, because that Fire is found by deep and profound Meditation only ; and then it may be gather'd from Books, and not before.

We must not only have the Knowledge of this Fire ; but, as we are often told, the true Measure of it to its Furnace ; both which seem to be remote from the Eyes of the Vulgar : When this is known, the Difficulties that attend the Radical Dissolution of the close and fixed Body of Gold vanish. And before this can be done, this stout fixed Body must be Calcined, and re-

* Query, hindrance.

† To be reprinted in a future volume of this series.

duced into as fine a Calx as possible, which is often hinted by Philosophers, but with a design to conceal it. Geber witnesses, that everything Calcined is of easier Solution, because the Parts of the Calcined Body, more subtilated by Fire, are more easily mixed with Water, and turned into Water. Without this previous Calcination, no Solution is found.

Therefore no wonder so many fail in their Attempts, to dissolve Gold in a Generative Way, by working on its Compact and Gross Body ; For as the gross Bodies of Sol and Luna are not fit for Dissolution, but only their altered and unctuous Calxes ; so Mercury, in its gross Body, is not able to do this, but in its altered more subtile and spiritual Nature ; and drawn from its Vitriolick Caverns, acuated with its pure salt and piercing Sulphur, which then overcomes all things, even itself. For it not only dissolves Sol and Luna into its own Nature. but coagulates itself into theirs, true and fixed, by a proper Heat only.

Some may say, All these are so fully taught already, that a bare repeating of them is of no use.

That they are taught already, by the Masters of this Science themselves, is my warrant for repeating of 'em ; and if you have already Learn'd these things, you have no Reason to be uneasie ; if you have not, tis your advantage to be put in mind of them, even by an Inquirer.

Sad experience sheweth, that but very few of the past or present Searchers, learn those things which they often brag the Philosophers have taught : But at length to cover their own Ignorance, they fall into Arrogance, and blame the Philosophers for hiding of them ; as is observed by (the never too much to be admired) Candid Ripley ; who, in return, only modestly reproves them, Thus :—

“ All Philosophers record and say the same ;
But simple Searchers putteth them in blame,
Saying, they hide it ; But they are Blameworthy,
Who are no Clerks and meddle with Philosophy.”

Here this good Man, in few words, justifies the true

Philosophers, and lays the blame where it ought, *viz.*, on the Unskilful Medlers with Philosophy.

What tho' he has conceal'd the Key of the Art under his green Lion, as others have done under the Doves, Chalibs, secret Fire, etc., some under one figure, some under another, which best answered their purpose, *viz.*, Concealing the Art from the Unworthy. What they have done towards Discovering of it to the Deserving, merits the greatest Acknowledgements, not Censure from Inquirers to whom they declare they are not indebted.

Nor do I affirm, that all these different Terms are synonymous, that behoves the Inquirer to satisfy himself in, from their Writing, whether they are or can be deemed so.

I have ventur'd to call the Green Lion of Ripley the Key of the Work, because his Expositor has as good as called it so. "Learn then," says he, "to know this Green Lion, and its Preparation, which is all in all the Art; it's the only Knot; untye it, and you are as good as Master: For whatever then remains, is but to know the outward Regimen of the Fire, for to help on Nature's Internal Work."

And the same Author has expressly called the Chalibs so, *viz.*, I will tell thee (if thou wilt conceive) it is called Chalibs, by the Author of the New Light;* and it is the true Principle of the Work, the true Key (as it may be handled) of unlocking the most hidden Secrets of Philosophers.

Again our Chalibs is the true Key of our work, without which the Fire of the Lamp could not be, by any Art, kindled. Which he further describes thus, *viz.*, It is the Minera of Gold, a Spirit very pure, beyond others, etc.

Sendivogius calls this Matter, as well by the Name of Magnet, as Chalibs, *viz.*, To speak more plainly, says he, 'tis our Magnet, which, in our foregoing

* Sendivogius.

Treatises, I called Chalibs, or Steel. The Air generates this Magnet, and the Magnet generates or makes out Air to appear and come forth: I have here intirely shewed thee the Truth.

This Author has comprized in few Words what the Author of *Intro. Apert.* has divided into Three Chapters, *viz.*, Chalibs, Magnet, and Air; all which he has Concentrated in a Fourth, *viz.*, Chaos. The Earth, says he, is a heavy Body, the Matrix of Minerals, because it keeps them occultly in itself; altho' it brings to light Trees and animals. The Heaven is that wherein the great Lights, together with the Stars, are rowled about; and it sends down its Virtues through the Air into inferior things.

When he has gone thus far, he, in Imitation of Sendivogius's Skill and Candor, adds, But in the Beginning, all being confounded together, made a Chaos.

Behold! I have faithfully opened to you the Truth; for our Chaos, etc.

O the Harmony and Skill, as well as Candor of these two great Masters! Beg of God that he would make you Discerners and Partakers of these things. Nor let me forget most candid Ripley, who exactly corresponds with these, *viz.*:

“For as of one Mass was made all thing
Right; so must in our Practice be.
In Philosophers Books therefore, who lifts to see,
Our Stone is called the less World One and Three:
Magnesia also of Sulphur, and Mercury,
Proportionate by Nature most perfectly.”

Thus we see Ripley's One Mass, Philalethes's Chaos, and Sendivogius's Matter of the Antient Philosophers, are the same; containing Three, *viz.*, Magnet, Chalibs, Air, or Magnesia, Sulphur and Mercury: which also are called by abundance of other Names in Philosophers' Books, *e.g.*, Artephius speaking of the Compound, Magnesia, says, That 'tis compounded,³⁰ like a Man of Body, Soul and Spirit; which he thus expounds, *viz.*,

“For the Body is the fixed Earth of the Sun, which is
 “more than most fine, ponderously lifted up by the force
 “of our Divine Water: The Soul is the Tincture of the
 “Sun and Moon, proceeding from the Conjunction or
 “Communication of these two: But the Spirit is the
 “Mineral Virtue of the Two Bodies and the Water, which
 “carries the Soul, etc. Again, the Spirit therefore
 “pierceth, the Body fixeth, the Soul coupleth, coloureth
 “and whiteneth. Of these three united together, is our
 “Stone made; that is, of the Sun, and Moon, and Mer-
 “cury. Flammel says he could easily give very clear
 “Comparisons and Expositions of this Body, Soul and
 “Spirit: But then he must of necessity speak things
 “which God reserves to reveal unto them that fear and
 “love him, and consequently ought not to be written”;
 yet he is not wanting to concur with Artephius, in
 calling them the Sun, Moon and Mercury, and agree-
 ing exactly with him in his Exposition.

It would be as it were endless, and indeed needless, to
 recite all the different Expressions used by Philosophers,
 who confirm and constantly maintain this Doctrine of
 Trinity in Unity, under various Modes of Speech, and
 hard-to-be-understood Similes.

But to keep a little to that of the Green Lion, which
 is worth our Enquiry: Ripley speaking of its Blood,
 asserts this Secret to be hid by all Philosophers, *viz.* :

“The said Menstrual is (I say to thee in counsel)
 The Blood of our Green Lion, and not of Vitriol:
 Dame Venus can the Truth of this thee tell
 At the beginning, to Counsel if thou her call.
 This Secret is hid by Philosophers great and small.
 Which blood drawn out of the Green Lion,
 For lack of Heat, had not perfect Digestion.”

So the Author of *Arcanum Hermetica* saith, the most
 precious Substance is Venus, the Hermaphrodite of the
 Antients, glorious (or powerful) in both Sexes.

The Author of *Æsch Mezareph*, speaking of Venus.
 under the Names Nogah and Hod, which is a necessary
 Instrument to promote the Metalick Splendor, says, It

has more a part of a Male, than Female; and speaking of the Green Lion, he saith, Which, I pray thee, do not think is called so from any other Cause but its Colour: For unless thy Matter shall be green, not only in that immediate State before 'tis reduced into Water, but also after the Water of Gold is made of it. Why 'tis called a Lion, is hinted by another, *viz.*, Having Power to overcome, and reduce Bodies to their first Matter, and to make fixed things volatile and spiritual; whence 'tis fitly called a Lion.

Some there are who derive the Name Green from the Rawness or Unripeness of the Subject, and not from the Colour, *viz.*:—

“Whose Colour doubtless is not so,
And that your Wisdom do well know;
But our Lion wanting Maturity,
Is called Green, from Unripeness, trust me.”
The Hunting of the Green Lion.

Another says:—

“For it is because of its transcendent Force
It hath, and for the Rawness of its Source,
Of which the like is no where to be seen,
That it of them is named their Lion green.
Our subject is no ways malleable;
It is metalline, and its Colour sable.”
Sophic Feast.

These are some more of the seeming Contradictions, which Philosophers warn us not to be deceived with, but to learn to Reconcile. These Difficulties are to be overcome by Meditation only.

Now, let us try whether, or how far, 'tis possible to Reconcile these Contradictions concerning the Green Lion. The Cabalist (much admired by me) says, the Matter is actually green, both before 'tis dissolved and afterwards also: This doth not deny, but confirm, that 'tis spoke of, and considered, in divers States; and then it may not be absurd to suppose, that it may be, and is, described by one in one state and degree of Perfection, and by others in another: By one in its Impurity; by

another in its Passage from thence to its Purity (for Ripley says 'tis unclean); and by a third when 'tis Purified. For as Matters, when more or less pure or mature, are of a different Texture, so they also differ in Colour. And 'tis in this Sense, I make no doubt the Philosophers are to be understood, not only with relation to this Subject, but 'Tis not therefore every Matter which is foul or green (as Vitriol is, which Ripley says, Fools take to be their Green Lion) that intitles it to this wonderful Name; no, but it must have all the other Virtues and Powers in it, that are assigned by Philosophers: Which thing lies very obscure, and seemingly base, but it is, in its Purity and exalted Virtue, their Subject of Wonders. To produce which, this fond Minera, they tell us, must be dissolved and exactly purified, in a pure Homogeneous Water, which is its own Blood, as White as Milk; which Name some have rather imposed. This Leprous Body, Sendivo and others have called Saturn, and Saturn's Child; and what some have called Blood and Milk, he calls Urine.

Thus the Masters of this Science take the liberty to express themselves by different Similes, in order to disguise their Secret, which a mental man will discover and improve by, as soon as he shall discern any one of their Intentions; the rest follow in course, tho' varied ever so many ways, as they themselves testify.

What some have called Blood, Wine, &c., the Author of the *Learned Sophics Feast* calls fiery Water, &c., viz.:³¹

“ Their Lion green they suffer'd him to prey
On Cadmus Sociates; and when the Fray
Was over, they with Dian's charms him ty'd
And made him under Waters to abide,
And washed him clean; and after gave him Wings
To fly, much like a Dragon, whose sharp springs
Of fiery Water, the only way was found
To cause Apollo his Harp-strings to sound.
This is the true Nymph's Bath, which we did try,
And proved to be the Wise Men's Mercury.”

Here all Doubts and Difficulties end, when this is

attain'd ; so with it I shall finish this Inquiry : Having shewed my Fellow Inquirers, in what manner I have been enchain'd in it ; concluding in the Words of the aforesaid Author, *viz.* :

“ Happy are they, who shall not miss to find
 The new uprising Sun :³²
 More happy they, who, with renewed Mind,
 In God find Rest alone.”

NOTES BY S.S.D.D.

1. *Hermetic*; alluding to Hermes Trismegistos: a mythical Magus who has given his name to many treatises on western Occultism and Alchemy. The names of Hiram King of Tyre, Chiram abif and Hermes have been counterchanged; and the Kabalistic Key applied to the name throws some light on the actual meaning of the Alchemical process,—taking the Hebrew lettering CH I R M, we get the falling dew containing that principle of life reproduction—nitrogen, working in darkness upon the perfectable body. Also an expert may here discern an allusion to the wonderful power of chlorine on gold. The merest tyro in chemistry knows the famous Aqua Regia of the ancients was a cunningly manufactured liquor bearing a close resemblance to the fluid obtained by the mixture of Nitric acid and Hydrochloric acid.

2. *Art.*—The Hermetic Science being the Ethical side of Western Occultism; the Hermetic art may be regarded as the practical application of the same on all planes, from those of pure reason and exalted consciousness through those of human life down to the most material; from the regeneration and purification of the soul, to the regeneration and purification of the baser metals.

3. *To the perfection of Sol and Luna.*—These words are much in favour with masters of the mysteries who are desirous of hiding their meaning. They are used in a hundred different ways, signifying active and passive; male and female; sudden rapid vibration, and solid resisting substance; gold, and silver; red rust of iron; blue vitriol, *i.e.*, sulphate of copper, green sulphate of iron, and sulphide of antimony. Throughout the Alchemic processes they have been used to denote the force and the substance; the transmutor and the transmuted. And wise is he whose solar power has the penetrating force to discern the truth in the lunar shades with which he is surrounded.

4. *Have justified one another's testimony.*—Here we have a ray of hope, for those who have read many alchemical treatises will find that there are startling agreements in the teachings of some of the best works, such as those of Clavius, Rosenstein, Becker, Ponia and others who give more practical directions than vague writers like Geber, Bacon and Flamel.

5. *The Art altogether impossible.*—The position taken up is natural enough. No man could with reasonable hope of success, hope to transform a fully grown elm tree into an oak, just as impossible would it seem to transmute a lump of copper into a lump of gold. But the Alchemists did not assert this to be possible, until both metals were reduced to one original basic substance, which they call Hylē and which we call Protyle in the mineral, or Protoplasm in the animal world. It was under these circumstances that they asserted transmutation to be possible; and it is in this relation we find the deep significance of the mystical death and resurrections of Osiris, Buddha and Christ. “Unless ye be born again ye cannot enter into the kingdom of perfection;” Unless the imperfect metal is destroyed, it cannot rise again into perfection. See also Eugenius Philalethes in his tract called *Euphrates or the Waters of the East*, printed in 1655.

6. *The chief impediments.*—Three out of a million men, says Norton, may be ordained for Alchemy. Now some light may be thrown on the true nature of the Art by this statement. It is no common gift that is needed, and without delay of argument I may safely assert that the proportions mentioned points at once to the fact that only persons of genius can hope to attain the perfection of this Art of Arts. It is the Art of living in the divine light; the Art of knowing, the Art of “being one” with the highest universal consciousness. No talent will give insight to the man who is unable to bring about this regeneration of his soul; no labour will avail him who has shut out the life of the universe from his little life. The man of genius, the divine artificer of his soul

must make himself, and know himself to be, one with the least of created things, and then and then only will he know what it is to be one with the Creator.

7. *This mysterious way of writing.*—For the guidance of those who propose to study ancient and mediæval writers on Alchemy, I may say that the work naturally divides itself into three parts ; and each of these into three processes, decoction, distillation, cohobation. The first part is the preparation of the Body or matter ; the second is preparation of the soul or medium ; and the third is preparation of the spirit or active principle. Take the three principles of the Alchemists, being the time honoured veils under which truth has been hid. Call the body—sulphur, the soul—salt, and the spirit—mercury. Purify each separately, then must these three become one ; they must rise ; they must fall ; they must circulate in the vessel. And this is the fourth work. This is simple enough and is the mere ordinary process of subliming with heat, cohobating the separated parts, and subliming again until the body becomes spiritual, the spirit become corporified, the impure becomes pure, and nothing is wasted, but all is found in its right place, and the perfection or right proportion is attained.

8. *Take one thing.*—Just as on the human plane you take the one man ; and reduce him in thought down to the cell unit, so the alchemists reduced their one substance to its simplest form, and found things all latent therein.

9. That is, as soon as anyone develops his power of intuition, of reading between the lines, and of understanding the oriental passion of allegory that permeates mystical and religious writers, the meaning of many statements, utterly absurd if interpreted literally, will appear plain to the enlightened mind.

10. *Diana.*—The moon goddess, answering to what has of late been called the astral body or aura ; the sensitive radiations of which convey impressions to our bodily sense organs. *The Fountain* alludes to the universal source of life and light with which it is the object of the occult student to bring his astral life into touch.

11. *The Secret Way of Philosophers*.—The philosophers know well enough that the first study for mankind is Man ; to know thyself is to know nature. To become an adept of power is to possess the key of all the secrets of nature because you possess the key to your own nature.

12. The above explains why in *this* work we do *not* begin with quicksilver.

13. This is the first practical remark, on the subject of metals, in the treatise. It may here be noted that common quicksilver dissolves into a liquid resembling water in appearance if mixed with a proportion of one to ten of nitric acid.

14. *The perfect body*.—Gold undergoes a considerable change when mixed with mercury. The imperfect body mercury can be reduced to subtil water with nitric acid.

15. Very well describes the ordinary corrosive sublimate of commerce.

16. It may here be noted that the sign of Mercury combines the lunar and solar symbols.

17. *Moist fire* describes nothing in nature more accurately than the liquid acids of commerce ; but let the student be warned that many authors expressly deny that this is the real meaning of the term.

18. See what is said previously of the words Sol and Luna, note 3.

19. There is an elaborate treatise called “The Privy Seal of Secrets, which upon pain of damnation is not unadvisedly to be broken up nor revealed to any but with great care and many cautions.” Circa 1680, in which it is asserted that “the first matter of the philosophers is a lutinous or clayey substance.”

19A. *The Green Lion*.—I here reprint an ancient receipt for the manufacture of this mystic animal, or of his prototype :—

R. Sea salt ; purify by dissolving it in dew ; expose it to the beams of the moon, uncovered in a wide basin ; cover it with a glass cover and leave it in the rays of the sun ; this repeat during forty nights and days. Put it into a large high glass body ; imbibe gradually with

very strong and clear distilled vinegar, until it is thoroughly diluted, close it, and set it to putrefy for two or three days in a gentle heat. Distil this per alembic in a sand bath, and the spirit of the vinegar will come over; when the green oil comes, change the receiver quickly. Pour back the distilled vinegar and leave it to putrefy, you will then obtain more green oil by again distilling.

20. "To make Sphæra Saturni Paracelsi. Take salt petre, 2 ounces; potass. carb. 1 ounce; Reg. Aut. Mast $4\frac{1}{2}$ ounces; tartar in crystals, 1 ounce: common salt half an ounce; pulverise separately and mix together. Put the whole into a large crucible and let it melt gently in a wind furnace. Stir with a red hot tobacco pipe and unite ingredients well, pour into an iron cone and you will find your treasure at the bottom."

21. "The Gods made blind (or mad) him whom they doom to destruction." *Quem Deus vult perdere prius dementat*

22. Dove in Hebrew is I U N H, pronounced Yoneh, and by Gematria = $10 + 6 + 50 + 5 = 71 = 8$; this multiplied by 2 (the 2 doves) = 16 which again can be reduced to 7, the number of Venus. Doves also being birds signify the sublimed metal, that is the part which flies upwards under the influence of heat.

23. Luna in Hebrew I R C H, pronounced Yaraich.

24. Isaiah xxx. 26. "Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, etc."

25. "My dove my undefiled is but one."

26. The four wings of two birds; taking this Leopard to be Mercury in its aspects of Corrosive Sublimate, which a century or two back was made by dissolving quicksilver in Aqua fortis, i.e., nitric acid, and uniting it with sea salt, containing hydrochloric acid; it is possible to understand the two birds as signifying nitrogen and chlorine gas, which with heat would doubtless "exasperate the beast."

27. The original of these scattered quotations will be found in the Latin *Kabbalah Denudata* of Knorr von

Rosenroth, the *Asch Mezareph* of which is to be republished in this series. This Alchemical portion of the work, the *Asch Mezareph or Refining Fire*, is given by Eliphaz Levi in the *Clef des Mysteres* in disjointed paragraphs, and he asserts it to be the book of *Abraham the Jew*, which revealed so much to Nicholas Flamel, and he exemplifies his explanations of its *inner* meaning with Flamel's well-known plates.

28. *The Mercury of the Philosophers*, Now though the Alchemists did use Mercury, as is proved by Norton's list of materials, yet one thing is asserted by them over and over again, and that is, that the "Mercury of the Philosophers" is not Quicksilver. The passage alluded to, in the *Asch Mezareph*, but not quoted, as the "Treatise on Sulphur," is as follows: "For that sulphur of gold and iron whose extraction is taught by many and is easy; also of gold, iron, and copper, also of gold, iron, copper, and antimony, which are gathered together by vinegar after fulmination out of the lixivium, being changed into a red oil with a moist Hydrargyrum do tinge silver."

29. The words alluded to by Pontanus are in the third chapter of the *Secret Book of Artephius*. "Antimonium est de partibus Saturni, et in omnibus modis habet naturam ejus. Antimonium Saturni, convenit Soli." See Salmon's edition.

30. Compare Note 7.

31. Our author finishes up with a poem which a learned friend of mine would call "As clear as mud." However, I will make an effort to throw light upon some of the riddles it propounds. We have seen the *green lion* may be taken to mean a certain corrosive fluid concocted from sea salt and other ingredients, this must be mixed with the Martial Cadmus and the medicine of purification or Diana. In this mixture sea salt must be used, because it contains the universal Lunar mercury or first Ens of Mercury. Ferrous sulphate or cuprous sulphate should be added to introduce the mercury of copper or iron into the resulting sublimate, indicated by

the wings alluded to in the text. The whole alludes to the making of Sal Alembroth, which contains the secret fire and stirs up matter to action.

32. The New Uprising Sun of course alludes to the material work of gold-making, and the author finishes up by a commendation of the happier state of those who find Rest in God alone. In this connection I may quote from the *Suggestive Enquiry*, printed half a century ago :—
 “What imagination is strong or hardy enough to glance into the full faith? *To be* the understanding of that Light of which all nature is the efflux. *To move* one with the First Mover and *be* his will.—Increase thyself into an immeasurable greatness, leaping beyond all bodies, and transcending time, become Eternity, and thou shalt understand God. If thou canst become higher than all height, lower than all depth, thou shalt comprehend in thyself the qualities of all creatures. Conceive likewise that thou can’st at once be everywhere. Learn to know thyself, not yet begotten, young, old, dead, the things after death and all of these together, else thou canst not yet understand God. But if thou hast shut up thy soul, blinding it, fettering it, saying I understand nothing, I can do nothing. I am afraid of the sea; I cannot climb up into Heaven; I know not who I am; I cannot tell what I shall be; What hast thou to do with God? It is the greatest evil not to know that there is a God-power latent in man.”

By the “I AM” is signified, in the *Kabalah*, the subjective unity of all; the affirmation that there is one Fountain from which all nature flows. The knowledge of this Identity with nature in its first substance is the source of miracles due to the magical accords of colours, numbers, harmonies and planetary circulations, and all manifestation of vibration. The visible springs from the Invisible. “Human power is limited only by the poverty of its Imagination and the pettiness of its Will.”

S. S. D. D.—R. R. et A. C.