An Exposition
UPON THE
PREFACE
OF
Sr GEORGE RIPLEY,

Canon of *Bridlington*.

TO pass over his Prologue which is Adhortatory to the desirously studious of this Art, and the beginning of the Preface, which is his Address to God, who is the only Giver of Wisdom, to bestow upon him true Understanding, that he might lead his sinful Life to the glory of him, being over-swayed from what he was naturally, by him who is the Foun-

tain of all Goodneſs; I ſhall take up his Pattern for a Precedent rather of Imitation, than a Subject of Expoſition.

And firſt, as touching thoſe who ſhall bend themſelves to this Science; Let them reſolve that they undertake a moſt admirable piece of Work, in which (though far be it that I ſhould think that God beſtows upon any of us what we enjoy for our own Merits, but of his free Grace, yet withal) let me exhort any one who ſhall ſet his Studies this way, to addreſs himſelf to the Author and Fountain of Goodneſs for his help, that he may have grace to honour God in the uſe of ſo great a Talent: For I perſwade my ſelf, that whomever God ſhall appoint to be Heir of ſuch a Talent, that he will give him a heart to improve it aright; or elſe he will add to his Judgment for the abuſe of ſo great a Bleſſing.

For whoever ſhall be wanton and diſſolute, and live without the fear of God, what may he not do with ſuch an Art? unleſs God reſtrain him, as certainly he will, hiding this Secret from him, or making it to him a ſnare and trap to betray his Life into

into the hands of covetous men of the World, as many have found it by ſad experience. Therefore the Lord give both me and thee that grace, that he may be continually before our Eyes, The Alpha and Omega of our Thoughts, Words and Actions: Even ſo Amen.

In the Beginning, when thou madeſt all of nought, a globous matter, and dark, under confuſion, by him the beginning, &c.

FIrſt then caſt thine Eyes upon the Works of God, and behold that work of his hands: Conſider how the glorious work of Creation was begun by him, even by Chriſt, for whoſe ſake this very Science is communicated unto the Sons of Men, as *Bernardus Treviſan* witneſſeth, who in his Epiſtle to *Thomas* of *Bononia*, ſaith of this work, That it is done (*Chriſti Gratia*) for Chriſts ſake.

Conſider how out of one Maſs the Lord God by his powerful Command made all things to appear that are in Heaven or in Earth; the heavenly Bodies with their Influences above, and the earthly Matter below,

below; which by the Rotation of the Heavens produce all ſublunary products, through the word of his Mouth.

Above all which and in all which God is, he is the Maker and the Lord of all, above all, bleſſed for ever, who hath purchaſed to himſelf a People, and redeemed them, and they ſhall reign with him for ever and ever.

For as of one Maſs was made all things, right ſo in our practice muſt it be.

APply all this to the work of this Maſtery Analogically and Allegorically: for as the Lord made all the works which we ſee, ſo he did lay them all under his powerful word of Command, by which they continue to be what they are, and are carried with an uniform motion to that firſt Pattern or Draught of things.

All

All our Secrets of one Image muſt ſpring.

AS then out of one mixed confuſed Maſs all things had an actual exiſtence according to their ſeveral kinds, ſo out of one Image all theſe Secrets muſt flow: Truth doth not conſiſt in Heterogeneity, but in Unity; for God is one, and his works uniform; and the more Noble any thing is, the nearer to Simplicity.

As in Philoſophers Books, whoſo liſt to ſee.

TO this the Sentences of the Philoſophers concur, as many as have truly underſtood the *Secret*, as *Morien* often and plentifully witneſſeth, *Geber*, *Treviſan*, and many others: The thing is but one in kind, though two in number; and though more things are uſed, yet till they be all brought to an oneneſs of Nature, they are not fit to enter into this work.

Our Stone is called the Lesser World.

AND therefore our *Stone* is resembled to Man, who although he have a Wife different from him in Sex, yet one with him in kind; in which sence it is called the *Microcosm*, or Less World: for indeed, next to Man, who is the Image of God, it is the true little System of the Great World: I shall not particularize here how, for in its place it will fall in seasonably.

One and Three.

THis *Stone* is also called *Trine* or *Trinity in Unity*, from the Homogeneity of the Matter, as *Trevisan* saith: Our *Stone* is made of one Root, that is, of two Mercurial Substances, *&c.* This *Trinity* is discerned in the Components; for first there is the Body, which is *Sol*, and the Water of *Mercury*, in which besides its Mercuriality, there is a spiritual seed of *Sulphur*, which is the secret Fire. This is the *Trinity*, these are called the Body,

Body, the Soul, and th[e Spirit; the Body
is the dead Earth, wh[ich increaseth not
without the celestial V[ertue; the Spirit is
the Soul of our Air or [Chameleon, which
is also of a two-fol[d composure, yet
made one inseparabl[y; the Soul is the
Bond of *Mercury*, w[ithout which our
Fire never appears, [nor can appear, for
it is naked, it inhab[its the *Fiery-Dra-*
gon, and it yields his [Soul to the true *Sa-*
turnia, and is embrac[ed by it, and both
become one together[bearing the stamp
of the most High, ev[en the Oriental *Lu-*
cifer, the Son of the M[orning: This Soul
is *Chalyb's* Magical Vo[latile, and very ten-
der, the true Minera [of *Sol*, out of which
Sol naturally proceed[s, which I my self
know to be true, an[d have spoken of it
in my little Latin Tre[atise, called *Introi-*
tus apertus ad occlusu[m Regis palatium:
This is true *Sulphur*, [which is imbibed by
the Mercuriality of [*Saturnia*; and notes
it with the Regal Sig[net, and being uni-
ted and revived into [a Mineral Water by
the Mediation of *Di[ana's* Doves; it is the
sharp Spirit which i[n the Water moves
the Body to putrefie. Thus is the *Trinity*

propor-

proportionable, to wit, three Natures in the firſt Mixture, the Work is carried an end to perfect Complement diſtinctly, according to the Vertue of a Body, Soul, and Spirit: for the Body would be never penetrative, were it not for the *Spirit*, nor would the *Spirit* be permanent in its ſuper-perfect Tincture, were it not for the Body; nor could theſe two act one upon another without the Soul, for the *Spirit* is an inviſible thing, nor doth it ever appear without another Garment, which Garment is the Soul. In this it exerciſeth its vertue: this *Soul*, as it is drawn from the *Saturnia*, ſolid and dry, is named our Air, or rather the Chameleon, which is an airy Body, changing its hue according to every Object it beholds, ſo our Air is of an aſtoniſhing Nature, out of which I know all Metals may be drawn, yea even *Sol* and *Luna*, without the Tranſmuting *Elixir*, of which in my little Latine Treatiſe (which was the Congeſt of mine own experience) I ſpake fully.

This Air being diſſolved into Water Mineral, hath in it two of our *Trinity* united ſo really that in a ſhort digeſtion, the

ſpiritual inhabiting inviſible *Sulphur* will without addition congeal the *Mercury* in which it is, and make a viſible congelated ſubſtance of *Luna* and then *Sol*.

Thus this *Trinity* is indeed *Unity*, one being Gold mature, fixt, and digeſted in act, the other Gold volatile, white, and crude, yet (in *poſſe*) to be made moſt fixt and ſolid by naked digeſtion. It is not then a deluſion that Philoſophers ſpeak and write, for truſt me (*Viderunt nudam ſine veſte Dianam; ſciens loquor*) I know I ſpeak true, which the Sons of Art do know, and can teſtifie with me.

Magneſia alſo.

THis *Stone* is by the Philoſophers called their *Magneſia*, their *Adrop*, *&c.* with many more names, and is indeed their Stone in the firſt true mixture of the true matter; for it is the true ſeed, and will produce, with the co-operation of external Fire, in a patient expectation of the time of Nature, which is not long to him that underſtands it.

Of

*Of Sulphur an*d *Mercury.*

FOr that which is d[one by Nature in] many years and a[ges, in the bowels] of the Earth, decocti[ng *Mercury* alone,] without addition; Art[to make the work] ſhort, firſt impregnate[s *Mercury* with a] ſpiritual ſeed of *Sulphu*[r, by which it be-] comes powerful in t[he diſſolution of] Metals, and then add[s to it mature *Sul-*] *phur*, by which the w[ork is ſhortened;] and out of theſe two P[arents of one Root] is brought forth a Nob[le Son of a Regal] Off-ſpring, that is not [ſimply Gold, but] our *Elixir*, ten thouſa[nd times more pre-] cious.

*Proportionate by Natu*re *moſt perfectly.*

YEt all this Work [of the Artiſt is on-] ly to help Natu[re; we can do no] more, yea we have [profeſſed and will] profeſs, that we do onl[y adminiſter unto] Nature herein: for all t[he Works of God] are intire, we can but [behold them and] admire them; and ther[efore we ſeek our Prin-]

Principals where Nature is, and amend Nature in its own Nature. Nor do we make the ſimple believe, which is the Trade of Sophiſters, that we by our Extractions and Manual Operations upon Vegetables, Minerals, Urines, Hair, or the like, intend to make our ſo highly prized Elixir; but out of ſuch things in which Nature hath put it, we by Art do make it appear by revealing what was hidden, and hiding what was manifeſt.

But many one marvelleth, and marvel may, and muſeth on ſuch a marvellous thing.

WHereas thoſe who work upon other matters than the true, do betray their ignorance herein moſt foully, that they do not conſider the poſſibility of Nature, but work after their Fancy; as though out of combuſtible ſubſtances filthy in their nature, and made up of Heterogeneities, might be produc'd a pure perfect Metallick Subſtance, by reaſon of its unſeverable Unity invincible, and by vertue of its tranſcendent Excellency cleanſing and fixing all leporous and fugi-

fugitive bodies in the Mineral Kingdom, and reducing them to the Anatical proportion of perfectly digeſted *Sol* or *Luna*, according to the quality of the Medicine. When therefore their Principles are not ſound, their Concluſion is always deceitful, and then they not knowing Nature in her Operation, but interpreting the words of the crafty and envious Philoſophers, according to the Letter, do ſtand admiring at the Unconformity of their Work to the Promiſes of the Philoſophers, at leaſt as they underſtand their Books; they admire what this *Stone* is, if it be a Truth, or a Conceit; and why they (as well as any) do not attain it if poſſible: Such meditations uſually fill the minds of unſucceſsful Alchymiſts, who though they be (as they eſteem themſelves) very Judicious, yet cannot ſtumble upon this unhappy *Stone*.

What

What is our Stone, &c.

THey marvel at the uncouth difficulty of the thing, nor can they almoſt tell what to judge of what they read; foraſmuch as all Philoſophers ſay it is a very eaſie thing.

For Fowls and Fiſhes to us do it bring, every Man it hath: And it is in every place, in thee, in me, &c.

AND in very deed the Antient Wiſe Men have ſo written, and do ſtill write the ſame; as to wit, That it is found in a Dunghil, according to *Morien*; and for the eaſineſs of the charge, they all write plentifully; ſo that in reſpect of time and coſt, *Artophius* and *Flammel* ſay it is but the play of Children and work of Women; and therefore one Excellent Philoſopher, writing of this Maſtery, titles his Treatiſe, *Ludus Puerorum*; that is, Childrens Play.

To

To this I anſwer, That Mercury it is I wis.

YEt truſt me, though the wiſe men thus write, and it be true, there is notwithſtanding ſomething to be added to their Sentence, according as the Author of *Novum Lumen* well obſerved, as namely, That this Art is eaſie to him that underſtands it, as *Artephius* plainly expreſſeth; but to him that is ignorant of it, there is nothing can appear ſo hard; *The Wiſe Man*, ſaith *Sendivogius*, *finds it in a Dunghil, but the Fool cannot believe that it is in Gold.* I for my part (through the great mercy of God to me an unworthy and unthankful Creature) I know the Art to be true, and not that only, but alſo very eaſie; and I wonder that men of ſo great parts have ſtudied for it ſo long in vain; only this I am confident of, it is the gift of God; nor is it *in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but in God that giveth mercy:* In which reſpect I am bold, to the glory of God, to confeſs that I have the Art, and have Natures Operations in theſe ſo hidden Secrets, before mine

mine eyes at this preſent writing, which I ſee hourly with admiration of the infinite Glory, in the beholding of ſuch a great Glory in the Creatures, which, truſt me, will raviſh the Beholder, to ſee ſuch a deſpiſed Infant as our *Mercury* is, to grow into ſo ſtrong a *Heroe*, which the World cannot purchaſe.

But not the Common, called Quick-ſilver by name.

YEt the difficulty is not over when once it is known that the whole Secret conſiſteth in *Mercury*; for what more frequent among the Sophiſters than to cry, *Our Mercury, &c.* and yet in the Work of Nature they are as blind as Moles? The cauſe is, for that Nature hath produced a Mineral Juice in the bowels of the Earth, which doth anſwer to moſt of the Philoſophical Deſcriptions of their Water; as namely, that it is mineral, quick, current, without humectation, ponderous, and the like; which when the vulgar Alchymiſts read, they apply it to this naughty *Mercury*, which for in-

ward Qualities hath nothing in it like ours.

Some there are, who truſting to the Sentence of moſt of the Wiſe Men who have written concerning this Art, do reject *Mercury* vulgar in word, when as indeed they dote as much upon it as others, whenas by their mock-purgations they handle *Mercuries* divers ways by Sublimation, Precipitation, Calcination Manual, even to a black ſubſtance, like to Soot or Lamp-black, by diſtillation from ſundry *Faces*, after grinding with Vinegar, by Calcination with Waters-fort, by Lotions innumerable, changing *Mercury* into ſundry forms, and after quickning him: By all which Operations they imagine themſelves ſecure of the Secret of our *Mercury*, whenas all ſuch ways indeed are but Sophiſms; and yet *Mercury* ſo abuſed is one and the ſame vulgar *Mercury*.

So that upon this Rock more have ſtumbled than upon any other, & yet will ſtumble, till they know how to diſtinguiſh our *Mercury* from Common, and our preparations from that of the vulgar Sophiſters

ſters, which have no likeneſs one to another.

But Mercury, without which nothing being is.

FOr our *Mercury* is Eſſential and Radical to our Body, and partakes of the nature of it intirely, and therefore it is ſaid to be that *Mercury* without which nothing is; for all things are diſtinguiſhed by Philoſophers by three Principles, (although ſome Simples have not three, but only by Analogy) among which the moſt eſſential is *Mercury*, for the humidity of all things concrete is called their *Mercury*, which is moſt intire to all things, foraſmuch as all things owe their beginning unto Water.

So then as the proper ſpecifick *Mercury* of all things is ſo Eſſential unto them that nothing is without it, ſo our *Mercury* is ſo conſubſtantial with our Body, that it is one in kind with that *Mercury* of which it was by coagulation concrete, which vulgar *Mercury* is not; and therefore the Body is incrudate by this *Mercu-*

ry, and ſends forth its Seed by mixture with it, through the co-operation of requiſite temperate external heat.

All Philoſophers record and truly ſain the ſame.

TRuly this I could confirm by infinite Teſtimonies of Philoſophers, ſince there never wrote any who was indeed a true Artiſt, but he hath affirmed the ſame: *Geber*, *Artephius*, *Haly*, *Rozinus*, *Flammel*, *Sendivogius*, the Author of the Roſary, *Treviſan*, with many others, which would be very tedious to name.

So that indeed this Work of mine I wrote not becauſe enough hath not been written before, for I do but ecchо to the Voice of all Philoſophers, who have left upon record ſuch clear Teſtimonies of the co-operation of Art and Nature herein, that if Wit were capable of this attainment, the Art would have been common ere now; and I do verily admiringly adore the Wiſdom of God herein, that an Art ſo true, ſo natural, ſo eaſie, ſo much deſired and ſought after, ſhould yet be ſo

ſo rarely found, that the generality of Men, Learned and Unlearned, do laugh at it as a Fable: it is therefore most certainly the Gift of God, who is and ever will be the Diſpenſer of it, according to his good pleaſure.

But ſimple Searchers putteth them in blame, ſaying they hid it.

MOſt injurious are they therefore to the well-deſerving Philoſophers, who becauſe they cannot underſtand their Writings, and through the miſ-underſtanding of the poſſibility of Nature, do commit foul miſtakes in their operations, and therefore reap a ridiculous Harveſt, they then blame the falſity of Authors, or at leaſt accuſe their difficult writing, not conſidering that Philoſophers owe them nothing, and whatever they write for the information of the ſtudious, it is not of debt, nor yet of Covetouſneſs, for they poſſeſs the greateſt Treaſure in the World; nor laſtly of Ambition, for many ſuppreſs their names: it is of Love therefore, and of deſire to be help-

helpful to the Studious; which Love to requite with reproaches, is a token of great ingratitude.

Moreover, it is to be underſtood that the moſt wiſe GOD hath a ruling hand herein, and all Sons of Art have their Commiſſion as it were given them; they write and teach according to that permiſſion which the Creator of all things hath given them. I may ſpeak it experimentally, that when my ſelf have had one intent, I have been ſo over-ſwayed with unpremeditated thoughts in the very writing, that I have taken notice of the immediate hand of God therein, by which I have been carried beyond what I intended.

And truly it is not our intent to make the Art common to all kind of men, we write to the deſerving only; intending our Books to be but as Way-marks to ſuch as ſhall travel in theſe paths of Nature, and we do what we may to ſhut out the unworthy: Yet ſo plainly we write, that as many as God hath appointed to this Maſtery ſhall certainly underſtand us, and have cauſe to be thankful unto

unto us for our faithfulneſs herein. This we ſhall receive from the Sons of this Science, whatever we have from others: therefore our Books are intended for the former, we do not write a word to the latter.

But they be blame-worthy which be no Clerks, and meddle with Philoſophy.

MOreover, we write not our Books for the information of the illiterate, as though any vulgar mechanick Diſtiller, Alchymiſt, or Sophiſter, ſhould readily carry away the Golden Fleece; or as though any covetous man, who makes Gain his utmoſt end, ſhould readily gather the Apples of the *Heſperides*; nor yet that any, though Learned, ſhould by once or twice overly and ſlight reading (as the Dogs lap the Water of *Nilus*) ſtraight-way be made a Philoſopher: Nay verily, the majeſty of this Science forbids ſo great impiety; it is the gift of God, and not of Men: Our Books are for thoſe who have been or intend to be converſant about the ſearch of Nature; we hint

the way; prayer to God and patient perſiſting in the uſe of means, muſt open theſe Doors. Let therefore profound Meditation, accompanied with the Bleſſing of God, Furnaces, Coals, Glaſſes, and indefatigable pains, be thy Interpreters, and let them ſerve for Commentaries upon our Writings. So I did, ſo I adviſe thee; and the Bleſſing of God attend all ſtudious vertuous Searchers in this way.

But though it Mercury be.

YEt is not the knot untied, nor difficulties overcome, when once a man hath learned to ſing this thredbare Song in Philoſophy, *Eſt in Mercurio quicquid quærunt ſapientes:* for what *Sophiſter* who cannot make ſo great a clatter in theſe general terms as a ſon of Art? the greateſt difficulty is to know what this *Mercury* is, that is ſo deſirable and effectual,

Yet

Yet wiſely underſtand wherein it is, and where thou ſhalt it ſeek.

THerefore let me adviſe every ſtudious Searcher of this hid *Science*, to conſider warily with himſelf what he ſeeks and would find; nor that only, but in what he would find it: for truſt me it is not in this *Science* as ſome do imagine, that our *Arcanum* may be made out of any thing, nor yet out of any baſe thing: But in the knowing of the true Principle, conſiſts the firſt true ſtep to Perfection, according to the Poet, *Dimidium facti qui bene cœpit habet.*

Elſe I counſel thee take not this work in hand.

BUt he who knows not this our Ocean in which our Water hath its flux and reflux, and our Fountain out of which he may draw this Water for his uſe, let him forbear this, as a moſt dangerous *Science*, for he may only expect loſs in it, but no profit.

For

For Philoſophers flatter Fools with fair ſpeech.

NOr let any expect comfortable Direction in our Books, who know not the true Matter, nor the true Keys by which our Matter is brought forth from darkneſs into the light; for verily though we write for the inlightning of a 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 indure the ſplendor of our Moon. To ſuch we propound rare tricks, ſuiting to their ſordid fancy: to the covetous, an eaſie way without expence, in an inconſiderable time; to the lazy Book-men, a play, without tedious toil; to the unſtable, raſh, haſty multiplicity of Diſtillations.

But liſten to me, for truly I will thee teach.

BUt to thee, ſuppoſing thy qualifications to be Honeſty, Secreſie, Studiouſneſs and Indefatigableneſs, we will ſhew the Truth; yet ſo, that it may be hid

hid from the Vulgar, yet plain enough to an induſtrious attentive Reader.

Which is this Mercury moſt profita[ble]

PHiloſophers have hidden much under the *Homonymium* of *Mercury*, ſo that it is no hard matter for thoſe that peruſe their Books to miſtake them; yea as many as God will have excluded from this Art, ſhall certainly miſtake.

For many things are by them named by the name of *Mercury*, which are altogether uſeleſs in this Maſtery; and many Proceſſes have they deciphered which themſelves never did. I for my part ſhall not tread in their metaphorical ſteps, but ſhall herein candidly follow the path of profound *Ripley*, whoſe Text I annex to my Diſcourſe as I go, becauſe it is an elaborate Piece, in excellent Method; on whom I do not ſo much comment, for I write mine own experimental Knowledge, but rather intend this Treatiſe for a Light to that excellent Light in Alchymy; theſe Labours of mine being intire of themſelves: Only to help thee to my

utmoſt

utmoſt, I have confined my Diſcourſe to his Method, which I might (as other Philoſophers have done) have ſcattered here and there confuſedly.

Being to thee nothing deceiveable.

AS then I have choſen *Ripley*'s Method to follow, ſo will I imitate his Ingenuity, and do ſolemnly profeſs not to be deceiveable to thee in any thing, though I ſhall not ſo unfold the Myſteries, that bare reading ſhall ſuffice to ſhew the unveiled *Diana*.

Know therefore aſſuredly, that when the Philoſophers ſay, That their Matter is every where, *&c.* This they ſpeak only for the blinding of all ſuch who taking the Philoſophers meaning according to the bare ſound of their words, do reap Trifles inſtead of Treaſures. I ſhall therefore let you underſtand that this ſubject of the Philoſophers is conſidered either in reference to its Matter, or formal Vertue; in reference to the former, it is a concrete of Water, as all other Compounds are; in reſpect of the latter, it participates

ticipates of a Celeſtial Virtue, and that in a high degree in both reſpects. It is ſaid to be in every place: for the original matter, which is Water, paſſeth equally through the whole Family of Concretes: and for the celeſtial Influence, it is ſo univerſal that nothing is hidden from the heat of it: ſo that indeed in this ſence it is ſaid to be every where. Moreover, the *Stone* being the *Syſtem* of the great World, doth in ſome way or other repreſent every thing which is or can be perceived by man; I mean in reference to ſome or other operation, colour or quality, and therefore the Wiſe have deſcribed it almoſt by all things imaginable, for to every thing in ſome or other circumſtance it hath reſemblance.

It is more near in ſome things than in ſome.

YEt to ſpeak properly for information, and not to conceal the Secret, we profeſs that there is but one kind in which our *Stone* is found, and in number two: underſtand me not as the Philoſopher finds things in his firſt laborious Preparation,

paration, for ſo one of the two ſubjects which being of one kind enter the ſupernatural work of Generation of our fiery *Stone*, I ſay our crude Sperm flows from a Trinity of Subſtances in one Eſſence, of which two are extracted out of the Earth of their Nativity by the third, and then become a pure milky Virgin-like Nature, drawn from the *Menſtruum* of our ſordid Whore.

Take heed therefore what I to thee write.

AND now I call God to witneſs that I will ſhew you a great Myſtery: our Stone is in one part of a perfect nature, which we would exalt into a more then moſt perfect, and for this end we ſtand in need of our true Fountain, which I have elſewhere deſcribed, and ſhall not now repeat: This Fountain hath three Springs, and theſe are three Witneſſes which teſtifie to the Artiſt of the truth of his proceedings; theſe are the Spirit, the Water, and the Blood, and theſe three agree in one; the Water is a Mercurial Bond, which the Sophiſters can behold ſo far as the

the outward ſhell reacheth, but the wiſe man can behold his hidden ſecret Centre: the Blood is of our *Green Lyon*, which is indeed the greeneſt or raweſt of the three: for it hath no manner of Metalline *Sulphur*, no not a grain, and therefore is *Totally Volatile*, and it is more raw than the common Water, and yet it is called the Blood, for a moſt ſecret reaſon, becauſe it is the ſeat of the Life, which is the Spirit, as Blood in man is the ſeat of his Life; yea the Spirit by this Soul of our *Green Lyon*, is made manifeſt, and is united to it, ſo that though it be very green or unripe, yet that inhabits it, which is both pure and ripe, and can and will digeſt it with the Water, and make both become life with life: Now the Spirit is nothing elſe but a Chaos, the Wonder of the Wonders of God, which every man almoſt hath, and knows it not, becauſe as it appears to the World it is compact in a vile deſpiſed form; yet is it ſo uſeful, that in humane Affairs none can want it: to the Philoſopher it appears united to the Blood, that is, of our *Green Lyon*, which truly is not a Lyon till the ſpirit

ſpirit be joyned with it, and then it is made able to devour all Creatures of its kind.

And theſe three agree in one, they are not abſolutely one, mark that; our Fire is not of the matter, and yet it is united with the matter, as if it were of one form with it; and there is an agreement in one, though not a radical union; for the ſpirit (which is the Fire) is ſeparable from the Water and the Blood; and then is our Lyon actually Green, but ceaſeth then to be our Lyon, but is the true matter to multiply Emeraulds more glorious than natural.

For if to thee Knowledge never come,
Therefore yet ſhalt thou me not twite.

ANd now indeed if any be ignorant, let him be ignorant; I know not what more to ſay, and not tranſgreſs the ſilence of *Pythagoras*. I have told you that our matter is two-fold, crude and fixed; the fixed is by Nature perfected to our hands, and we need only to have it made more then

then moſt perfect, which Nature alone could never perform; nor is there any thing that can thus exalt Tinctures, but our diſſolving Water, which I told you floweth from three Springs; the one is a common Well at which all draw, and of which Water many uſe; this Well hath in it a Saturnine droſſineſs, which make the Waters unuſeful; theſe frigid ſuperfluities are purged by two other Springs, through which the Water of this Well is artificially cauſed to run: theſe Springs make but one Well, whoſe Waters appear dry, the humidity being ſealed; the Well it ſelf is ſurrounded with an Arterical Wall, the ſtony bottom abounds with the First *Ens* of Mineral *Salt* and *Sulphur*, which acuate the Water of the firſt Well, whoſe primary quality is Coldneſs; being thus acuated, it becomes ſo powerful a *Menſtruum*, and ſo pleaſant to the Metals, that for its peculiar Vertue it is choſen for to be the Bath of the Sun and Moon.

VINEGAR

acetum

For I will truely now thee excite to underſtand well Mercuries three.

BUt becauſe one Book never is ſufficient in this Maſtery, to diſcover all that is to be known, and other Authors write variouſly of *Mercury*: Attend further what I have to ſay to thee concerning this point.

We have in our work properly three *Mercuries*, of which one is to be by the Philoſopher prepared, of which I have ſpoken; and this being joynd with the perfect Body, and ſet to digeſt, the Glaſs is ſhut, and then in this firſt Compoſition is the Matter called *Rebis*, that is, (two things) to wit in Number, for you may yet ſeparate each from other in its intire nature.

Theſe two being joyned, do operate ſo within the Veſſel till the Compound become a black Powder, which is then called the Aſhes of the Platter.

This Powder relenteth into a black Broth, which is called *Elixir*, or Water extracted by Elixation, which is reiterate Liquefaction. This

This Elixir is divided into a more ſubtile part, which is called *Azoth*, and the groſſer part is called *Leton*, which is by *Azoth* waſhed and whitened.

In *Rebis* the Matters are confuſed, in *Elixir* they are divided, and in *Azoth* they are conjoyned with an inſeparable union.

The Keys which of this Science be.

THeſe *Menſtruums* or *Mercuries* are the very Keys of this Science: The firſt is the Philoſophers Key, the other two are Natures Keys.

Reymund his Menſtrues doth them call.

THey are called by the wiſe men *Menſtrues*, in three reſpects: firſt for the ſecreſie of them; as thoſe Lunary Tributes of Women are hid from common view, ſo theſe *Mercuries* from vulgar Searchers. Secondly for the Prognoſticks of them; as thoſe in Women betoken maturity to conceive, ſo theſe are called *Menſtrues* becauſe they are fit for

procreation. Thirdly in regard of the office of them; as thoſe in Women are accounted nutritive for the Embrion, ſo our Child is nouriſhed by theſe to perfect age and ſtrength.

Let me add a fourth reaſon, and that is, in reſpect of the time; the Philoſophical Preparation will hardly give thee thy firſt *Menſtruum* fit for thy uſe in leſs than a month. And after conjunction thy firſt *Menſtruum* will begin to hold of the nature of the Body in another month, and then thou ſhalt ſee a ſhow of the ſecond *Menſtruum*; but wait till another month, and thou ſhalt ſee thy ſecond *Menſtruum* compleat; then yet wait a third month, and thou ſhalt ſee a ſhow of the third *Menſtruum*, which in the fourth month will perfectly exuberate, and then with it thou ſhalt ſoon ſee perfected *Sulphur* of Nature, for it is Fire of Nature; and in this firſt Exaltation is the white Stone perfected.

Without

Without them truly no Truth is done.

HE then that knoweth not the Secret of our *Menſtruals*, let him forbear the practice of the Work, for verily he may expect nothing but a ſophiſtical Deluſion inſtead of the true Work of Nature: He is like a man that would enter an inacceſſable Caſtle without a Key, or ſhoot in a Bow without a ſtring.

But two of them be ſuperficial.

NOw that you may know our Secrets exactly, we ſhall faithfully diſcover unto you our Experience, as cordially as a Brother may declare to a Brother; and ſhall reveal what I never found yet revealed in any Author.

There are in our *Mercury* three Mercurial Subſtances, which may well be called *Menſtrues*, the one the more groſs part, (which though it be a Water, yet it being the moſt palpable part, and viſible, may be termed the Body of the Water: the laſt is a Fiery Form, which is the

Blood of *Cadmus*: this is a real inviſible form, which is eſſentially and formally *Sol Volatile*: the ſecond is the mean Soul, which Philoſophers without Equivocation call *Saturn*'s Child; the middle ſubſtance of theſe three, are made into one wonderful *Mercury*, which hath not its like in the world.

Now for the ſuperficiality of the two firſt *Menſtrues* or *Mercuries*, and the eſſentiality of the third, know and underſtand, for our ſpeech will be very myſterious: Know I ſay, what it is to be ſuperficial, and what eſſential: Eſſence you know is inviſible, and more formal then material, which doth actuate the matter, and ripens it; but that which is ſuperficial is viſible, and may be ſeen, and is more material and paſſive: Now thoſe two firſt which are ſuperficial, are the Water and the Blood, the eſſential *Menſtrue* is the Spirit, which all are in one; yet diſtinguiſhed in number, though not in kind.

The third Eſſential to Sun and Moon.

SO then two are material paſſive ſubſtances, which are united in our ſophical *Mercury*; the third is an active eſſence which is hid in our *Mercury*, which is eſſential to Sun and Moon, becauſe it is a Fire, which is *Sol* volatile; and as the Artiſt may govern this *Mercury*, it will digeſt the paſſive Principles either into *Sol* or *Luna*, at the Philoſophers pleaſure.

Their Properties I will declare right ſoon.

I Shall by and by in its place deſcribe to you all the Properties of theſe three *Menſtrues*, when I come to it; in the mean time take notice that by this *Mercury* in which are three *Mercuries*, or *Menſtrues*, the perfect Bodies will be calcined, and then diſſolved into *Mercury*, which is not then ſo properly called a *Menſtrue*, for it is the Fruit it ſelf, called *Azoth*, or Virgins Milk; which is a digeſtion beyond the *Menſtrues*.

And Mercury of Metals eſſential,
Is the Principle of our Stone material.

THe Bodies when they are diſſolved do tranſmute the foreſaid *Mercuries* by their own ferment, into their own nature, for the Fire of Nature aſſimilates all that nouriſheth it to its own likeneſs; and then our *Mercury* or *Menſtrue* vaniſheth, that is, it is ſwallowed up in the Solary Nature, and all together make but one univerſal *Mercury*, by intimate union, and this *Mercury* is the material Principle of the Stone; for before our *Mercury* (as it was compounded of three *Mercuries*) had in it two which were ſuperficial, and the third eſſential to *Sol* and *Luna* only, not to the Stone: for Nature would produce theſe two out of it, by artificial decoction: but when the perfect Bodies are diſſolved, they tranſmute the *Mercury* (that diſſolved it) and then there is no more repugnancy in it, then is there no longer a diſtinction between ſuperficial and eſſential, but all is become eſſential: And this is that one matter of the Stone, that

hat one thing which is the ſubject of all Wonders.

In Sol and Luna our Menſtrues are not ſeen.

WHen thou art come to this, then ſhalt thou no more diſcern a diſtinction between the Diſſolver and the Diſſolved; for the Water ſhall neither aſcend nor deſcend, go out nor in alone, but the Fire of Nature ſhall accompany it, and the colour of the mature *Sulphur*, which is unſeparably joyned, ſhall tincture thy Water.

It appeareth not but by effect to ſight.

SO that thou ſhalt never ſee them ſevered one from the other, but ſhalt diſcern them by the effect, and by the eye of thy mind more then of thy body Therefore ſaith the Philoſopher, *Azoth* and Fire are ſufficient for thee in the middle and end, but not in the beginning, for then they are not our *Mercury*, that is our univerſally united *Mercury*. But in the

the firſt days of the Stone, there appear four Elements, of which three are in the *Mercury* ſublimed, and one in *Sol*, which is counted all for Earth till it be diſſolved, and then it fermenteth the *Mercury*, and makes the three qualities of it, which it hath, drawn from three ſubſtances to unite into one *Mercury* which hath all in it one eſſential property, and that is Solary, which firſt will ſhew the Moon in the full, and is the true one matter of all our Secrets, our one Image out of which ſprings white and red, not bare *Sol* and *Luna*, as will ſpring out of our *Mercury*, which we prepare with our hands, but the white and red Elixirs, which ſhew that this *Mercury* which Nature hath made in the Glaſs, without our help, is far beyond that *Mercury* which we prepared with a laborious toil.

This

This is the Stone of which we mean;
Who ſo our Writings conceiveth aright.

AND verily he that hath well ſtudied our Books ſhall underſtand that this general one *Mercury* which we call *Azoth* is indeed our Stone, which wanteth only digeſtion, for it is inſeparably united, not in a Dyptative Conjunction, which is barely a mixture of the Sun with our *Mercury*; or Triptative, which is a mixture and union of the Body, Soul, and Spirit, which is before Putrefaction; but Tetraptive, which is the Anatization of qualities, which is the firſt degree of the white Stone, which will then grow higher and higher, till the Moon come up to the full.

It is a Soul and Subſtance bright.

THis Stone or Virtue multiplicative is not in relation to the matter, but the form, which doth make the matter to receive and after impreſs Tinctures: for who could believe that *Sol*, in which the vir-

virtue is but unary, I mean only ſufficient for it ſelf, ſhould by the addition of our *Mercury*, which in reference to its material parts, is below the degree of *Sol*, and needs digeſtion, and that only to maturate it to the height of *Sol*, I ſay that by the mixture of thoſe two Venerial Tinctures, ſhould be multiplied in a manner infinitely.

Of Sol and Luna a ſubtile Influence.

WEre it not that this Tincture which in the *Mercury* is *Sol* and *Luna*, were as a Soul, that is, a ſpiritual thing, it were impoſſible; it is therefore the very *Dos fœcunditatis* which is in Minerals (which doth appear in their Lunary and Solary Tinctures) which was put and planted on and in them, in the firſt Benediction of (*Creſcite & Multiplicamini*) which increaſing is in ſome things *juxta quantitatem*; This is in quality.

Whereby the Earth receiveth reſplendence.

SO then the matter of Minerals is a dead paſſive thing, in which there is included a Light which is cloathed (*vitali Aura ætheria*) as I may ſpeak; this form of Light is it which doth actuate and ſpecificate or determine the matter; and this ſplendor or Light is in all Metals, *Sol* or *Luna*, which are conſpicuous more eminently in thoſe two perfect Bodies *Gold* and *Silver*, but are in other Mineral Bodies more Clouded and Eclipſed with an earthly fæculent interpoſition between the fulgor and the ſuperfluities, which is the Imperfection of ſuch Bodies; and is accompanied with a rawneſs and inconſtancy in the *Fire*, the Impure carrying away the Pure.

For what is Sol and Luna, ſaith Avicen? But Earth which is pure White & Red?

SO then *Sol* and *Luna* is more formal then material; for the matter is a groſs Terrene Subſtance, but the form of Light purifying the Subſtance, is a moſt ſubtile ſpiritual thing which doth ennoble the groſsneſs of the matter by a Fire-abiding Tincture.

Take from it the ſaid Clearneſs, and then That Earth will ſtand but in little ſtead.

BUt if this Tincture could be ſeparated from the *pondus* of the matter, the remainder would be an unprofitable Terreſtriety: Our work therefore is for to advance this Light by exaltation in the matter; which as it in its ſimplicity is but in unity, ſo it may be brought to a Virtue millenary, and gradually ſo exalted, that the matter would ſeem to be quite ſwallowed up of the form; and yet in this exaltation it is not the *moles* or *pondus* that is the Solary or Lunary Virtue, but

but a Light whoſe multiplication is not in the increaſe of *pondus*, but in the circulation of Natures, till the Heavenly illuminate the Earthly with an immediate Beam, all interpoſition being removed out of the way.

The whole Compound is called our Lead.

FOr to attain this admirable multiplication Philoſophers have found out a moſt ſubtile yet very natural Compoſition, which hath been not a little ſought for by many: this the wiſe Antients, both to deſcribe the Fountain of theſe Myſteries, as alſo to hide the Secret from the unworthy, have myſtically called their Lead.

The quality of Clearneſs from Sol and Luna doth come.

THis Lead, ſo called from the appearing baſeneſs of its original, is notwithſtanding of an admirable power, for it contains the Bath for *Sol* and *Luna*; that is, the *Sun* and *Moon* enter into it, and ſend

ſend out their Tinctures into it, which it receiveth, and like to a fertile Soil ennobleth it an hundred and an hundred fold.

Theſe are our Menſtrues, both all and ſome.

THus have I in general given you a deſcription of our *Menſtrues*, which are three, *Acetum*, *Elixir*, and *Azoth*; which I ſhall now particularly deſcribe.

Bodies with the firſt we Calcine naturally; perfect.

THe firſt *Menſtrue* we call our ſharp Vinegar, with infinite other names, which it will be tedious for to recite; and with this is made our Magical Solution of *Sol*; this, ſaith *Sendivogius*, is (*Menſtruum mundi in ſphæra Lunæ toties rectificatum ut poſſit calcinare Solem.*) In this, ſaith the noble Author of the Hermetical *Arcanum*, is made *Eclipſis Solis & Lunæ in Cauda Draconis*; this is, as *Artephius* ſaith, the only Inſtrument in the World for our Art: for it cauſeth the Sun to putrefie; that is, it loſeth its hard compaction,

ction, and makes it to be an impalpable Powder, as ſaith the truth-telling *Flammel*. In this Calcination, as all Authors teſtifie, and our own Experience hath taught us, Natures are united, Colours are mingled, and one holds of the other, and this is the period of the firſt *Menſtruum*, which ends in this Circulation.

But none which been unclean.

THis Blackneſs many erroneouſly conceive to be uncleanneſs, but it is not ſo, for it is only the Sepulcher of our King; in which, though he ſeem to have loſt what he was, yet from hence he ſhall ariſe what he never was before.

Except one.

ANd verily there is nothing of an unclean nature that entreth our Compoſition except one thing, which is the Inſtrument moving the *Gold* to putrifie; and in regard that it doth naturally incline the Body to putrifie, and is as it were the very grave of it, it is called by ſome Philoſo-

phers *Aqua fœtida*, and by ſome *Mortis Immundities*; yet indeed it is not in its own nature unclean, but made pure, as pure as the Art of the Artiſt can make it with the help of Nature, joyning Conſanguinity with Conſanguinity.

Which is uſually
Named by Philoſophers their Lyon Green.

THis hidden Body, or rather Chaos, the Philoſophers have highly extoiled and deeply concealed, but they uſually call it their *Green Lyon*, which many miſtaking apply to *Venus*, and ſome to *Vitriol*, which is all one in a manner, *Vitriol* being only Copper corroded by an embryonated Salt; but Fools, ſaith *Ripley* (in his Errors) call it the *Green Lyon*. I ſhall diſcover this Subject to you, ſo far as I dare, in this following Song.

The

The Learned SOPHIES FEAST.

WHoſo would laſting and eternal Fame
Deſerve, Learn thou the Lyon Green
to tame.
Put this before you can by Art attain,
To ſtudy him to know thou muſt be fain;
Nor is it, truſt me, for a ſtupid Fool,
Nor yet for one brought up in vulgar School:
I ſhall him therefore lively out pourtray,
Leſt from this Banquet you go lean away:
This Song I ſtile the Learned Sophies Feaſt;
Prepare your ſelf to come a worthy Gueſt:
With Mind attentive to my words give heed,
Leſt you, inſtead of Meat, on Fancies feed.
This horrid Feaſt, which we our Lyon *call,*
Hath many other Names, that no man ſhall
The truth perceive, unleſs that God direct,
And on his darkened Mind a Light reflect.

Tis not because this Subject doth consist
Of Animal Components (he that list
May well conceive) that we do therefore use
The name of Beasts; nor is it to abuse
The Readers; he whoever so doth think,
With stupid Sots himself doth hereby link.
But it's because of the 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 nam'd the Lyon Green.
Now listen, and I shall to you disclose
The Secret, which times past hath like a Rose
Been hedged so on every side with Briars,
That few could pluck it at their hearts desires
There is a substance of Metalline Race,
If you the matter view, whose louring face
A Sophister would at first sight so scare,
That he it to approach would never dare;
The form that's visible is very vile,
And doth Metallive Bodies so defile,
That none to see it could be brought to think
That thence should spring bright Phœbus Pearly Drink:
And yet, O strange! a wonder to relate,
At this same Spring naked Diana *sat.*
Who horn'd Acteon *for his ventrous peeping,*
This Spring two dreadful Beasts have in their keeping;

Which drive away rash Searchers to their wo,
Them to inchant, the Art who do not know.
Yet further for to answer your desire,
I say this subject never felt the fire
Of Sulphur Metalline, but is more crude
Then any Mineral, which doth delude
Th' unwary, and in Fire fugitive
'Tis found th'impure away the pure doth drive;
And its Components are, A Mercury
Most pure, though tender, with a Sulphur dry
Incarcerate, which doth the flux restrain,
And as in shackles doth the same detain.
This Sulphur with malignant qualities
Doth so the Mercury infect which with it lies
That though they have no fundamental union,
Yet hereby is debarr'd the sweet communion
Which otherwise would surely intercede (Lead
Between this Virgin-Nymph, which we call
And her dear Sister which in Silver streams
Runs down abundantly, then should the beams
Of bright Apollo cause the Dews which fall
From these commixed Waters, from the tall
Aspiring Mountains, gliding through the Vales,
Fire to conceive of Nature, which avails
To warm the Bath for Sol, in which he may
Descend and wash, and with fair Phebe play,

Till flesh and youth renewing, they be able
To shine with glory, aye multiplicable.
Know then this Subject, which the sure Base
Of all our Secrets is, and it uncase; (price,
And chuse what thou shalt find of greatest
Leave Sophisters, and follow my advice:
Be not deluded, for the Truth is one,
'Tis not in many things, this is our Stone.
It first appearing in a Garb defil'd,
And to dead plainly, it is Saturn's Child:
His price is mean, his venom very great,
His constitution cold, devoid of heat.
Although 'tis mixed with a Sulphur, yet
This Sulphur is combustible, to get
Another Sulphur Metalline and pure,
And mix with the Mercurial part be sure.
This Sulphur in the House of Aries seek,
There shall you find it, and this is the Greek
Fleece which with Jason Venus took
To Colchos, this is it which never Book
As yet reveal'd, and yet I will proceed,
And greater Mysteries unfold with speed.
Our Subject it is no ways malleable,
It is Metalline, and its colour sable,
With intermixed Argent, which in veins
The sable Field with glittering Branches
stains.

The

The pure parts from the impure, thou shalt never
With Fire or Water for this work dissever
Nor with the hardest Iron dig it thence,
For Steel 'gainst this affordeth no defence.
So easily as any little Boy
A Giant can suppress, this can destroy
Alcides Brest-plate, with his Target stout,
And put opposing Armies to the rout
Of Swords and Spears, O wondrous force, and yet
The Sages this have seen, when they did sit
In Council, how this Fury they might tame,
Which (as unparallel'd) they then did name
Their Lyon-Green, they suffered him to prey
On Cadmus Society, and when the fray
Was over, they with Dian's Charms him ty'd
And made him under Waters to abide,
And wash'd him clean, and after gave him Wings
To fly, much like a Dragon, whose sharp Springs
Of fiery Water th' only way was found
To cause Apollo his Harp-strings to sound.
This is the true Nymphs Bath, which we did try,
And prov'd to be the Wise Mens Mercury.

IN this Song you have the *Lyon Green* ſo deſcribed, that more I dare not, more I cannot, unleſs I ſhould pen you down the Receipt *verbatim*, which God and Reaſon forbids.

He is the mean the Sun and Moon between,
Of joyning Tinctures with perfectneſs.

LEarn then to know this *Green Lyon* and its preparation, which is all in all in the Art, it is the only knot, untie it, and you are as good as a Maſter; for whatever then remains is but to know the outward Regimen of Fire, for to help on Natures internal Work.

As Geber *thereunto beareth witneſs.*

MOreover be not various, ſeeking that in many things which is verily but in one thing; for in all the world there is not any one ſubject but this: *Ripley*, after the Rehearſal of all his Errors, tells you, That he never ſaw true Work but one: And *Geber*, *Exacte (inquit) ſingula ſumus*

ſumus experti, idque probatis rationibus & nihil invenimus præter ſolam unctuoſam humiditatem penetrantem & tingentem, &c. And *Artephius* ſaith, There is no other ſubject in the World for this Art, naming it, although in a Philoſophick manner, wonderous ſubtilly. I counſel thee, with *Ripley*, to learn to know this one thing which I have faithfully declared, and I know what I have declared experimentally to be true: He that underſtands me will have cauſe to thank God and me for what Light I have given to *Ripley*: He that with me underſtands *Ripley* will eaſily diſcern.

With the ſecond which is an humidity
Vegetable reviving what earſt was dead.

OUr ſecond Water, or *Menſtruum*, or Fire, is our Elixir, which is an Elixation of our Matters, or drawing forth the Tincture out of our diſſolved Bodies; which doth cauſe our dead Body to riſe, and to ſpring forth in Sprigs and Branches, like to the tender Graſs in the Spring out of the Field; and this ſo long until

until an intire Triptative Union be made of Body, Soul and Spirit. In this operation our Body of the Sun hath its dead *moles* turned into a living quick active Spirit, and our Compound after death begins to ſprout, and to ſhew its true Vegetative nature, it is indowed with a green Colour, which is the ſign of the growth of all things.

Both Principles Materials muſt looſed be.

HEre your Natures are changed, and hold one of another, and become one inſeparably; that is, the Solary Nature is not to be divided from the *Mercury*, nor the Fire from the Water, but with one the other is always moved; and ſo though there yet be a *ſuperius* and an *inferius*, an *aſcendens* and *ſubſidens*, yet now *quod eſt ſuperius eſt ſicut id quod eſt inferius.*

And

And Formals, elſe they ſtand in little ſtead.

NOw between the two Extreams of *Mercury* and *Sulphur*, you have a marvellous *medium* ingendered: now the form of *Gold* is taken quite away, and it hath at preſent an accidental imperfect form, which is the mean through which it paſſeth to its tranſcendent perfection.

Theſe Menſtrues therefore know, I thee reed.

LAbour with all thy might to attain the skill of theſe two firſt *Menſtruums* Theoretically and Practically; the firſt is to be by thee prepared and proportioned in the beginning, before thou attempt any thing. When thou haſt the true Nymphs Bath, then joyn this Spouſe with her beloved Husband, and ſee if ſhe will make his Body fall to ſunder in impalpable Atoms: Then let *Saturn* be thy Chamberlain, and let him gather together theſe diſſevered members, and of them make one broth, in which is blackneſs compleat, after which followeth greenneſs; and

and then ſhalt thou know that thy Compound is by the living God endowed with a vegetable Soul.

Without the which neither true Calcination Done may be, nor true Diſſolution.

HE who knoweth not the Myſtery of theſe two *Menſtrues*, can never attain either to Calcination or Diſſolution of the Philoſophers: The Myſtery of the firſt conſiſts in the acuating of thy Vinegar, with the Blood of our *Green Lyon*, and the Soul of the *Fiery Dragon*, which is by ſeven *Eagles*, which are ſeven Cohobations and Depurations of thy feminine Sperm, till it conceive a ſpiritual ſeed, or true natural heat, to animate thy young King.

The Myſtery of the ſecond *Menſtrue* conſiſts in the true proportion of thy firſt Water, with its own Body, and the adminiſtration of true heat external, by which the combat between the *Eagles* and the *Lyon* may be ſtirred up; thus ſhall the Duel be ended, the *Lyon* rent in pieces, and the Carrion of its Carcaſs ſhall kill

kill the Eagles; and out of theſe Atoms ſhall the ſecond Water be made apparent by Diſſolution.

With the third Humidity moſt permanent.

THe third *Menſtrue* is by *Artephius* called the ſecond Water, for our ſecond he doth joyn together with the firſt; although where he doth particularize the three Fires, he doth then diſtinguiſh three *Menſtruums*.

The like courſe many Philoſophers have uſed in the deſcription of their Operations, ſome omitting the firſt, or at leaſt confounding it with the ſecond, for the greater obſcuring of the Art.

But we have (beyond what any have hitherto performed) particularly inſiſted upon the three in order, and have taken more pains in the diſcovery of the firſt, becauſe the wiſe Ancients have taken ſuch pains to conceal that moſt; and after that we have made an orderly proceeding to the ſecond, which we have in like ſort handled, and this being performed, we do now addreſs our ſelves to the third.

This

This is called by *Ripley* a moſt permanent Humidity: and note by the way, that the firſt Water is called by Authors a permanent Water likewiſe; but take notice that there is a different reaſon for each denomination; for firſt of all, all *Mercury* is Water permanent, that is, the parts have no Heterogeneity, they will not leave one another in the examen of the Fire, but either all flyes and is unconſtant, or elſe all abides and is conſtant in the tryal of *Vulcan*: and ſo is our firſt *Menſtruum*. And in this our *Mercury* and *Common Mercury* agree, beſides the identity of matter, for it is the form only that diſtinguiſheth them. But in the next place, our Water is permanent with the Body, which *Common Mercury* is not; that is, it by digeſtion doth unite, not only adhere to it, ſo that both together do make one *Individuum*, which is done by our ſecret Conjunction. But laſtly, when the Body is thus by our Water reduced, at laſt it comes that the four Elements are united in this Water. After Putrefaction and Purification, which is the laſt moſt laudable Tetraptive Conjunction,

junction, and now the Tincture is the Spirit, and the Spirit is the Soul, and the Soul is the Body, and all theſe are one.

Incombuſtible and unctuous in his Nature.

THis is our true Incombuſtible *Mercury*, for it is totally purged from all its burning fæculency; *Gold* though it be a pure Metal, in reſpect of others which are imperfect, yet compared with our Stone it hath alſo its fæces; but this when it is taken away by Putrefaction and Ablution, then becomes a total ſeparation of what is precious from what is vile, and as the Philoſopher well ſaith, In the troubles of this our ſtormy Sea, all that is pure will aſcend, and all that is impure deſcend, and will abide in the bottom of the Veſſel in the form of a combuſt Earth; then is made the new Heaven and the new Earth, pray to God then that thou may'ſt ſee when there ſhall be no more Sea. Yet I ſay before thou haſt this final Inceration, thou haſt this moſt incombuſtible *Menſtruum*, and moſt permanent, in which Nature and Art have

have conſpired and made a Puriſication, beyond what Nature alone could ever have brought to paſs.

Therefore this *Mercury*, though it be liquid and in the form of *Mercury*, it is notwithſtanding Unctuous, that is, great with Child, which Child is *Sulphur*, which *Sulphur* it will in the end bring forth, and ſhall then be ſealed up in the belly of this Infant, which is when all is fixed, and *Mercury* is then hidden under the fixity of *Sulphur*.

Hermes *Tree unto Aſhes is burnt.*

IT doth therefore naturally incline it ſelf unto Inceration, for Earth is the Nurſe of our Stone, and in it is its virtue attained, and its perfection intire, according to noble *Hermes* in his *Smaragdine* Table; *Vis* (ſaith he) *ejus eſt integra ſi verſa fuerit in terram.* By vertue of this third permanent pure incombuſtible Water, thou ſhalt at laſt attain a total Inceration; for this Water though it be wholly *Mercurial* to ſight, yet hath it in its own Bowels its own *Sulphur*, nay it is all

all *Sulphur*, and that all incombuſtible. This work is called the burning of *Hermes* Tree to Aſhes, which is done thrice; firſt, into a black unctuous Calx, as impalpable as Atoms, which are only to be diſcerned in the Sun-beams: ſecondly, into a fine white Calx, in which is the *Moon* in the full: the third, a red Calx, in which the *Sun* is Orient. Now know that the firſt Calcination is from the vertue of the *Sun*, in which the *Sun* ſeeks to riſe, but by reaſon of the equal oppoſition it finds from the water, it is beclouded, and after through the interpoſition of the Earth, totally Eclipſed.

This Fire therefore, becauſe of the mixture of it with the natural Fire of *Sol*, which is in it diſſolved, is called unnatural; the firſt Fire of our Water is called Fire againſt nature, and the Fire of the *Sulphur* of the perfect Body is called Fire of nature. In this operation, through the power and will of the Almighty, the Body which hath been ſo long dead, is by this Water quickned, and actually ſprouts like to a Vegetable; for when the pores of it are opened by

the moiſtning of our Water, it ſtraight begins to follow the Spirit upon the Fire, the Spirit then doth mount aloft; which the Body thus made tender cannot follow, but as the Poet ſaith, *non paſſibus æquis*, as a Son that is little followeth his Father. It therefore in a token of its friendſhip with the Water, doth bud forth like to the tender Froſt upon the ſurface of the Earth, and retains a quantity of the Water with it ſelf, occupying a middle room between the bottom and the top; in which reſpects the Philoſophers have called it their Soul, which to ſhew its union to the Body, riſeth no higher then it can have a root or Baſis below; and to manifeſt its love to the Spirit, it doth as it were climb after it higher and higher for its ſeaſon, until at length it return from whence it came: And verily this Soul is the Magnetical *Medium* between the Spirit and the Body, which doth deſire the Spirit as its true drink; and therefore as it grows dry, it doth attract the greater drops of ſweat, which falling to the Earth, ariſe in a pleaſant fume, and do moiſten the grow-

growing virtue with a pleaſant dew, by reaſon of which it grows every day more and more.

This Tree of ours ſome have compared to one thing, and ſome to another; ſome to a Cypreſs or Fir-Tree, which indeed may ſeem to reſemble it; others to Haw-Thorn Trees, as *Ripley* in his *Gate of Cibation*; others to Shrubs and Buſhes, others to thick Woods, and in theſe Woods, ſaith *Iambſprint*, there is a Beaſt all over black. I confeſs there is a ſimilitude between our Germination, and all theſe; others, becauſe of the Humidity of the Compound, which is ever and anon returning by drops, have likened it to a mooriſh low Bog, in which Ruſhes grow, and Toads keep; others have called it their Coral, which is indeed the fitteſt compariſon, for in our Tree there are Shoots and Sprigs, without any thing that may be properly likened to Leaves: as then Coral is an union of a Vegetable and a Stony nature, ſo is it in our Tree, (for Stones and Minerals are of one Impoſition) our Tree is Metalline, and yet through the

power of God it ſeems to Vegetate. 2ly Coral grows under the water, where one would think no Vegetable could grow; ours alſo grows in a heat in which no Vegetable but it ſelf can grow. 3ly Coral hath many Sprigs and Branches without Leaves; ſo is our Tree. 4ly Coral as it is under water hath a moſt exquiſite biting taſt, which in the Air it quickly loſeth; ſo our Stone, or Tree Metaline, in its place is of a pontique Fiery nature, but taken out, it in a ſhort ſpace loſeth the ſame irrecoverably. 5ly There are five ſorts of Coral, the common Gray, the Milk White, the Green, the Bloud Red, and the Black; ſo our Tree is at his periods of all theſe colours, and in this form, which Tree by the heat of the Fire is dryed to a Calx, which is called the Aſhes of *Hermes* Tree. Laſtly, Coral is more heavy then any other Vegetable; and ſo is our Tree beyond all Vegetables, yea and Coral it ſelf, in ponderoſity. It was not therefore a fortuitous compariſon that Philoſophers named their Maſtery the Tree of the *Heſperides*, nor is it in vain that they bring

bring in *Jaſon* pouring Broth at the Root of it to attain the Maſtery; for verily the wiſe Philoſopher (noted by *Jaſon*) ſo governing his Fire, that the Lunary or Water of the *Moon* may return to the Earth in which theſe Trees grow, the Earth will at length be ſo dryed by the heat of the *Sun*, that it ſhall afford the Tree no more moiſture; then ſhall the Tree it ſelf be calcined by the prevailing heat, into a Powder impalpable, firſt black, then white, then red. Therefore is our little Glaſs by *Flammel* in his Summary named the *Philoſophers Garden*, in which the *Sun* riſeth and ſetteth, and the Philoſophers Tree is moiſtned with the dew of Heaven day and night without intermiſſion.

It is our natural Fire moſt ſure.

THis *Mercury* drawn out of the *Sun* is the true natural heat, in the acuating and ſtirring up of which is the whole ſecret of the Maſtery; this is the honoured Salt, when this is made to appear thy operations will be ſo admirable, that they

will take up thy whole worldly content, and with their variety the time will ſeem ſo ſhort, that thou wilt not take notice of any tedioufneſs in the paſſing of it.

Our Mercury, our Sulphur, our Tincture pure.

THis is our *Mercury* which cannot be attained with money, which is nothing but *Sulphur*, and *Sulphur* which is nothing but Tincture, in which all Elements are proportioned perfectly.

Our Soul, our Stone born up with wind,
In the Earth ingendred. Bear this in mind.

THis is our Body, which is now become all Soul and all Spirit, all the pure parts are ſeparated now totally from the uncleanneſs of the dead; it is our Stone, though it be as yet volatile, yet it hath all in it eſſential to our Stone, and therefore though it fly and ſublime for the ſpace of ſeven times, yet his Nurſe is the Earth, and therefore to it as to its Neſt it returns, and in ſeven ſublimations what was before all Heaven, will now become

become all Earth. And this is the period of all the Rotations, and Natures conſummation.

This Stone alſo tell thee I dare,
Is the vapour of Metals potential.

AND now if any ſhould demand of us what our Stone is, we ſhall anſwer him, that it is *Gold* digeſted to its height of purity and perfection, through the cooperation of Art and Nature; but the means to get this, is to learn to turn thy Body into a vapour, that is, into *Mercury*, which then aſcends in form of a vapour.

How thou ſhalt get it thou muſt beware,
For Inviſible truly is this Menſtrual. (cal,
Howbeit with the ſecond Water Philoſophi-
By ſeparation of Elements it may appear
To ſight in form of Water clear.

BUt the means to attain this is not a light work, it requires a profound meditation, for this is the Seed of Gold, (which as the Poet ſang, *recluſa reſedit longius*) it is involved in many links,

and held Prisoner as it were in a deep Dungeon; so that as the noble *Sandivow* hath it, it is the work of a very wise Philosopher to let loose *Sulphur*; he that knows not our two first *Menstruals*, is altogether shut out from attaining to the sight of this third and last *Menstrue*; yet he who knows how to prepare the first Water, and to joyn it to the Body in a just *pondus*, to shut it up in its Vessel Philosophically, until the Infant be formed, and what is the greatest of all, to govern his Fire dexterously, so as to cherish Internal heat with External, and can wait with patience till he see his signs, he shall see the first Water will work on the Body till it hath opened the pores, and extracted partly the Tincture of *Sol*, which as it comes out gradually, so it contests with the first Fire against Nature, so long till they be reconciled in an imperfect *medium*; in which they, like to weary wounded Combatants, lye gasping and panting for breath, and at length dye; and then appears the second Water of the wise, which doth ascend and descend so long till it ruine the dead Car-

Carkass, and then a Soul comes into it, and it vegetates and circulates, and changeth colours so long, till Blackness vanishing there be made a perfect union and universal temperament of Elemental qualities, never more to contend together: then the whole Compound for a time appears like to a new glorious Water, glittering like Oriental Pearls, and Fish-eyes.

Of this Menstrue by labour exuberate,
With it may be made Sulphur of Nature.

THis is it which *Raymund* calls his *Mercury* exuberate, as much as to say, *Mercury* with Child; *Artephius* calleth it, the Salt pregnant, for it hath *Sulphur* actually hidden under the *Mercurial* quickness; therefore it by digestion is easily turned into our Stone, which is *Sulphur*, or Fire of Nature.

If

If it be well and kindly acuate,
And circulate into a Spirit pure,
Then to diſſolve thou muſt be ſure
Thy baſe with it in divers wiſe,
As thou ſhalt know by thy practiſe,
That point, &c.

THis *Mercury* thus renovate or new born, may by the Philoſopher be diverſly handled; for he may take his work from the Fire, and circulate and cohobate this *Mercury* by a peculiar operation, which is partly Mechanical, till he have a moſt admirable pure ſubtile Spirit, in which he may diſſolve Pearls and all Gems, and multiply them or his Red Stone, before it be united with a Metal in projection for the making of *Aurum Potabile*. And in this *Mercury* thus circulated, is doubtleſs the Myſtery of the never-fading Light, which I have actually ſeen, but yet not practically made. In a word, every one who hath this exuberate *Mercury*, hath indeed at command the ſubject of wonders, which he may imploy himſelf many ways in both admirably

rably and pleaſantly. And certainly he that hath this, needs no information from another; himſelf now ſtanding in the Centre, he may eaſily view the Circumference, and then operation will be, next to the Spirit of God, his beſt Guide. Know then, that if thou be a Son of Art, when thou art once arrived hither, thou art ſo far from being at the end of thy ſearch, (unleſs thou make *Gold* to be thy final object, and ſo thou ſhalt never come hither) that thou art but now come into the Myſtical School of the hidden wonders of God, in which thou mayſt every day ſee new Miracles, if thou be ſtudious and deſirous of knowledge, which all *Adepti* are; they prize skill before any earthly thing, and therefore refuſe Honour and Pomp, and retire only to the beholding of God and his Works, in this admirable Looking-glaſs of the moſt hidden Myſteries of Nature.

For

For ſo together they may be circulate,
That is, the baſe oyl and vegetable Menſtrual,
So that it be by labour exuberate,
And made by craft a Stone celeſtial.

YEt doth not wiſdom come naked, but with her ſhe brings riches and length of days; for this exuberate *Mercury* is an Hermaphrodite, and may without taking out of the Glaſs be circulated into a fifth Eſſence.

Now the union between the two Principles, is the very true cauſe of this circulation: for though in this laſt *Menſtruum* there is an inſeparable oneneſs, yet the Components do give each their moſt noble quality to exalt the tranſcendency of our Medicine. The extreme Components of this third *Menſtruum*, are the *Sulphur* and *Mercuriality* of the ſecond; as the firſt *Menſtruc*, and *Sol* our Body, were the extremes of the ſecond. The baſe oyl, our *Sulphur* is called, for he is the unctuous Dragon, or Earth which lyes at bottom without wings, and is the Baſis as it were of the Work. The *Mer-*

Mercury is called Vegetable, for that it flyes and returns, and makes the Earth to ſprout and bud with tender branches. Theſe two (the baſe oyl or *Sulphur*, and the vegetable *Menſtruc*) at laſt make one intire indiviſible ſubſtance, which is of an Hermaphroditical quality, the Man is the Woman, and the Woman the Man; the *Sulphur* the *Mercury*, and the *Mercury* is the *Sulphur*; in this reſpect the Earth flyeth as if it were Heaven, and at length the Heaven will precipitate in the form of Earth, and then is our work at an end, there is the Harveſt in the South, when the glorified Soul is become a ſpiritual Body, which is called our Stone of Paradiſe.

Of

Of nature ſo Fiery that we it call,
Our Baſilisk, or our Cockatrice,
Our great Elixir moſt of price.
For as the ſight of the Baſilisk his object
Killeth, ſo ſlayeth it crude Mercury,
When thereupon he is project,
In twinkling of an eye moſt ſuddenly.
That Mercury then teyneth permanently
All Metals to Gold and Silver perfite.
Thus guide thy baſe both red and white.

THis Heavenly Earth is true Mineral Fire, which is then reſembled to the *Sun* in its Summer Solſtice; it is called Venom, becauſe it penetrates Metals ſo wonderfully; it is called our Baſilisk, our Cockatrice, our *Tyrian* Poiſon, though indeed it be an excellent Medicine, in which reſpect it is called our incomparable inſtim ble Elixir. But the denomination of Baſilisk it retains from its ſudden operation upon *Mercury*; for it penetrates it in projection, as warm Oyl runs into ſinking Paper, even to the profundity of it. Let thy *Mercury* therefore be taken as it is crude bought at the Apo-

Apothecaries, and thou ſhalt ſet it in a Crucible to the Fire, in ſuch a heat as the *Mercury* may not fume; and when it is ſo hot that it is ready to fly, which you ſhall diſcern by a ſpurtling noiſe, throw upon it of your Medicine as much as will teyne it, and you ſhall ſee that in a moment it will enter it, and ſtraightway the *Mercury* loſeth its flux, and ſtands congealed. Then it is to be melted by a Fire of fuſion, and you ſhall find pure *Gold* or *Silver*, according to the quality of your Medicine. But if you caſt your high Elixir in too great a quantity on *Mercury*, you ſhall find in the Crucible after projection, a brittle maſs of the quality and colour of the firſt Medicine, only of a lower virtue, which then you may project upon any inferiour Metal, and it will tranſmute it into moſt perfect. This operation is not apparent or to ſight, as is the work of Sophiſters, but it is both inward and outward, for it tranſmuteth into a perfect ſpecies, and not only to ſhew. This is the way of projection both of thy white and thy red Quinteſſences, firſt to caſt them upon *Sol* or *Luna*, according

cording as thy Medicine is, and after that to make projection on *Mercury* again and again, till you find the true extent of the virtue of your Stone.

Aurum Potabile *thus is made,*
Of Gold not commonly calcinate.

AND now I come to the ſecond reward that Wiſdom doth bring with her, and that is length of days; and here I have tranſpoſed ſome few Verſes of *Ripleys* concerning *Aurum Potabile*, that what he ſaith in this point may be repreſented in view together, Method inviting me to it. Some propound the Medicine of *Aurum Potabile* to be Extracted out of *Sol* pure, by corroding with *Aqua Regia*, and afterwards levigating it by reiterate Calcinations in the Fire, and manual Contritions. This Calx ſo ſubtilized, ſome attempt to reſolve by *Menſtrues*, (as they call them) but in vain, there being only one *Menſtruum* that hath the power to reſolve both *Gold*, and all ſublunary Bodies, to their firſt matter. *Paracelſus* the firſt Author of this, did name

name this diſſolving Water his Alkaheſt, his *Ignis Gehennæ*, his *Corroſivum ſpecifi-cum*, with many other names. This Medicine thus made of *Gold* by the Alkaheſt, as it is Philoſophical and real, ſo it is very excellent, and known only to the *Adepti*.

Yet this is not our great Medicine, for this being but a reſolution of *Gold* in its unary ſimplicity, doth afford to us only the moſt exquiſite Medicine that is in *Gold*, as it is made and left by Nature, which partly for its ſimple vertue, and partly for its Metallick determination, doth not enter our Conſtitutive Principles, and conſequently cannot touch or reach long life.

But of our Tincture which will not fade,
Out of our baſe drawn by our Menſtrue circulate.

BUt when as we have by our Art exalted *Gold* from an unary to a millenary perfection, and advanced it from its groſs corpulency to a Spiritual Tincture, which is unfading, and of all Sublunary

things the most durable, then out of this so glorious and triumphant in an universal virtue, we do make an Oyl so called by us, (though it be permiscible by mixture in any Liquor) which Oyl is the very Tree of Life, which prevails and triumphs over all the Miseries in the world. For it is not *Metallum*, but transcending all Metalline things: This Tincture is extracted out of *Gold*, not as Tinctures are drawn by the *Sal Circulatum* of *Paracelsus*, but by an universal changing of the Sickness of the Metalline off-spring, into a true posture of Health; by which means it is able to heal all Metalline Bodies from their Leprosie, and being resolved by its own Vegetable Humidity, which is our first *Menstrue*, circulated till the Water have a ferment from the Bodies, and the Bodies from the Water, it will give a Spiritual Tincture, sparkling like the flame, to tast most sweet, to smell most pleasant, the most incomparable Treasure of the whole World.

And

And for thy first ground principal,
Understand thy Waters Menstrual.

NOw I return to that which went before concerning this Medicine, which I passed over in that place, that I might here bring it in together; and indeed he who will know this Mystery, he must in the first place learn to know his *Menstrual* Waters, for without this knowledge he can never come to this Mastery; for with the third *Menstruum*, (counting three according to *Ripley*) or the second Water, (making the first and second into one, with *Artephius*) is this fragrant Ballam made: And verily the whole is but Cohobation, the first Water being cohobated so long upon the Bodies, till it receive from them a quality of natural heat; yet so as that the quality of its own Fire, which is corruptive, and so against Nature, be mingled in way of action and passion with the natural Fire. This makes a Fire innatural, and is the second Water, in which colours rise and set frequently, and then by cohobating

ting it till Fire of Nature have wholly ſubdued his Adverſary, and made a perfect peace and union with it. Then all is Fire of Nature, then the Clouds are ſcattered and the Light appears; and this is our third Water, the ſubject of wonders, which being one alone, doth from that time all operations within it ſelf, congealing, relenting, calcining, exalting, ſubliming and fixing all Elements, being linked here inviolably to the making up of that great *Myſterium magnum*, which *Paracelſus* deſcribed, but knew it not; we both know it, and have ſeen it, and what we do know and have ſeen, we do faithfully relate.

And when thou haſt made Calcination,
Increaſing not waſting moiſture radical,
Until thy baſe by oft ſubtilation,
Will lightly flow as Wax on a Metal.
Then looſe it with thy Vegetable Menſtrual,
Till thou have Cyl thereof in colour bright.

THerefore labour thou to bring thy *Gold* to a Calcination, not by Corroſives, but by *Mercury*, not into a Powder

der red and dry, but into a Calx black and unctuous, and multiply moiſture by our true Virgins Milk; then circulate theſe Natures together, till they will flow like unto Wax upon a Plate of Metal, which is the ſign of the true Tincture of *Luna*. Continue thy Fire till the fixt again relent of its own accord, till the dry become moiſt again, and till a Soul return; then ſhall thy Tincture proceed forward to a new Germination, and ſhall be indowed with a Vegetative Soul. Govern thy Bath ſweetly, until thou have a Tincture of Citrine, which is a ſign that thy Water is now impregnated with the Oyl immarceſſible.

Then is that Menſtruum viſible to ſight.

THen ſhalt thou diſcover what before was hidden, and ſee what before was inviſible, and ſhalt ſay with the Philoſopher, O Nature, how thou makeſt *Gold* volatile that was moſt fixed! Therefore have they paſſed one into another.

An Oyl is drawn out in the colour of Gold.

THis is our Virgins Milk of the *Sun*, which is yellow; with this and our perfect Tincture, we make our Blessed Oyl, which hath not its Peer among all the works of God, next to the Immortal Soul of man, the Glass of Tri-unity, the Sabbath of perfection. O happy they that attain to it!

Or like thereto out of fine red Lead.

YEt a *succedaneum* of this noble Medicine is found in the loyns of *Saturn*, in the bowels of our despised Infant, which some true and loyal Sons of Nature, through the great mercy of God, have attained without knowing our great *Arcanum*, which a man would think marvellous.

This is our red Lead, our *Mercury* effencificate and coagulated into a chaos of Spiritual Gold, and after dissolved into a quintessence as red as Bloud; which because it is made out of the very Essen-

Essential *Mercury* of our Stone, which is our first Water, I shall leave it undiscovered, which otherwise (if it might be explained without danger of prostituting the other Secret to unworthy people) I would for the good of Mankind proclaim it with Trumpets.

Which Raymund *said when he was old,*
Much more then Gold would stand in stead,

THis Oyl or Quintessence, this Balsam of Health, we do therefore prize for its wonderful virtue, not so much for that by means of it Poverty, that great snare, may be avoided, but for its wonderful prevailing excellency against all Diseases both of body and mind, as witnesseth *Lully*, *Trevisan*, *Artephius*, with that excellent Book intituled *Aurea Hora*, or *Consurgens Aurora*.

For when he was for Age near dead,
He made thereof Aurum Potabile,
Which him revived as men might ſee.

BY vertue of this Quinteſſence *Artephius* teſtifieth, that he lived above a thouſand years: *Hammel* alſo recordeth of it, that it triumpheth over all the Miſeries of the World. *Johannes de Lazarioro* is more bold, and ſaith, that if in the Agony of death a man ſhould taſt but a Grain of it, all the mortal Peſtilence would depart from him.

Since then this Knowledge is ſo wonderfully profitable, being the very Looking-glaſs of Nature, the Antidote againſt Poverty and Sickneſs, and conſequently the Cut-throat of Covetouſneſs, Pride, Ambition, and ſuch like ſordid Affections, who would not beſtow a little time in the Inquiry of it? In which let me aſſure thee in the very words of *Treviſan*, the Art is ſo plain, that if it were nakedly deſcribed it would be contemptible. And yet in vulgar Mechanicks, how frequent is it for men to ſerve ſeven, eight,

eight, yea ten years Apprentiſhip to attain them? And in ſome that are a little more ingenious, how frequently are conſiderable ſums of Money beſtowed to boot? Yet in this noble Art, ſo far excelling all Humane Sciences as the Sun doth a Candle, who will imploy himſelf with diligence? unleſs it be ſome Money-minded Sots, who ſeek only for Riches; and yet how ſoon are even they weary? So that few or none perſiſt in their Inquiry, ſave a few Roguiſh Sophiſters who live by Cozening; by reaſon of ſuch the Art is ſcandalized, and ill ſpoken of: Yet truſt me, for I ſpeak knowingly, the Art is both true and eaſie; yea ſo eaſie, that if you did ſee the Experiment, you could not believe it. I made not five wrong Experiments in it, before I found the truth, although in ſome particular turnings of the *Fire*, I erred oft; yet ſo, as I in my error knew my ſelf a Maſter, and in leſs then full two years and a half, of a vulgar *Ignoramus*, I became a true *Adept*, and have the Secret through the goodneſs of God. And that this is true, there are thoſe alive that can bear

bear witneſs to this my writing, which I penn'd for the ſake of the Ingenious, that they may have *Ariadne*'s thread ſtretched out to guide them; ſo with the bleſſing of God they ſhall by their own Experience ſee and know, that I wrote nothing but what the Light of Experience (far beyond all imaginary conjectures) hath taught me to be true.

AND now my Muſe, let it not irkſome ſeem
To thee of Natures Myſteries to ſing,
Thoſe hidden Myſteries which many deem
Nought but deluſions with them for to bring.
This is th' opinion of the Vulgar rude,
To whom there's hardly any ſelcouth thing,
But ſeems a Jaggling trick, that would delude
Their fancies with an empty wondering;
Therefore againſt it they with thundering words do ring.

There is a fiery Stone of Paradiſe,
So call'd becauſe of its Celeſtial hew,
Named of Ancient years by Sages wiſe
Elixir, *made of Earth and Heaven new,*
Anatically mixt; ſtrange to relate,
Sought for by many, but found out by few;
Above viciſſitudes of Nature, and by fate
Immortal, like a Body fixt to ſhew,
Whoſe penetrative vertue proves a Spirit true.

His property is as the Sages told,
Metals imperfect (which before would burn)
Fix to tranſmute into moſt perfect Gold,
And fixe into the fineſt Silver turn,
Not equalled by Metals of the Mine;
Which while ſome ſeek, they madly ſeem to ſpurn
The pricks, which proves in th' end a bad deſign,
And gives them cauſe ſadly at length to mourn,
And to bewail their deſtiny like men forlorn.

For why, they do not well premeditate
The nature of the thing they would attain;
The only thirſt of Gain doth animate
Theſe Gold-adoring wretches, who maintain
Their mad expence with many a curſed lye,

Nor from falſe perjury will they refrain:
Thus they allure fools by flattery,
To truſt their dotage for the hope of gain,
This laſt ſo long, till in the ſuds they both
remain.

Then Covetouſneſs wrangles with Deceit,
And curſes him for all his lewd expence:
The other being conſcious of his cheat,
With ſubtle words doth make a ſly defence.
But what is paſt can never be recall'd,
This grieves the Churl, who vows for that
offence
He'l have the Jugglers future pranks fore-
ſtall'd,
Lays him in Gaol, O monſtrous change! from thence
The great Stone-maker through a Grate doth
beg for pence.

But he who will a ſtudious Searcher be
Of Truth, let him ſuch Sophiſters eſchew,
And if he will but be adviſ'd by me,
Of falſe ways I'le him warn, and ſhew him
true.
Beg humbly of thy God to be thy guide,
For thou muſt paſs through hidden ways, by
few

Traced; and that thy ſuit be not deny'd,
Intreat of him thy heart for to renew,
Thus qualifi'd thou mayſt thy Journey never rue.

Next learn to know the different Kingdoms
three,
In which all ſublunary things are wrought,
Unveil the hidden Bodies, whoſe degree
Is noble, though their place full low be
ſought;
In which reſpect they bear the Planets
names,
And they to ſuch a Virtue may be brought,
Which anſwer may the painful Chymiſt's
aims,
And it perform, which will ſurpaſs the
thought
Of the rude Vulgar, who by only ſenſe are
taught.

The Wiſe mens Books with diligence peruſe,
From which, if diligent, thou mayſt diſ-
cern
What ſubſtance 'tis they for their Matter
chuſe,
Alſo their hidden Agent thou mayſt learn:

They

Animal Vegetable Mineral

They tell thee eke what things thou shouldst refuse,
And of erroneous Works they will thee warn;
Their counsel take, so shalt thou never lose
Thy cost ne labour; also thou mayst earn
Riches and Health, the one to other subaltern.

Yet pains and labour see thou do not grudge,
Nor cost, although a little will suffice;
Yet Truth at first to find thou may not judge,
'Tis well if faults at length will make thee wise:
Nor be thou over-heady to believe Voice
The Shell of words, which them who are not
To sever Truth from Falshood, do deceive,
That they to win a shadow lose a prize:
To sever Corn from Straw I therefore you advise.

And if you please to take me for your Guide,
I'le you unto a goodly Castle lead,
A Castle which to hold all proof is try'd,
So that there's none within its Walls may tread
But he who favour'd is with special Grace,
No other title any one may plead:

And

And she who is Queen-Regent of the place,
Is Nature call'd, she in Jehovah's *stead*
Doth sit and rule, for she next under God is Head.

This Castle round by force Inexpugnable,
Whose Composition's Homogeneal,
Immortal ever stands, that none is able
To conquer it by force, though fraud withall
Concur; its standing is so firmly stable,
No way to storm it, though we could recall
Great Hercules, *'tis so inviolable:*
And yet withall its Beauty is so amiable.

Twelve Gates it hath, and yet they are but one,
And these twelve Gates have but one only Lock,
So that you either open all or none;
Nor can you force it open with a knock,
For violence cannot it break in sunder,
Those who attempt it the event doth mock;
Nay though you could call down the dreadful Thunder,
It would nothing avail; who so his stock
Shall thus imploy, may walk at length in thread-bare Cloak.

There

There is one only Key, this learn to know
And make, then I will you a Maſter name.
This Key the entrance of the Lock will ſhow,
And being enter'd will unlock the ſame:
Which being done, to you ſhall open fly
The twelve Gates of this Caſtle, great in fame,
Little in bulk, which once I did eſpy;
Alſo within it a moſt noble Game
Fought 'twixt an Eagle *volant, and a* Lyon *tame.*

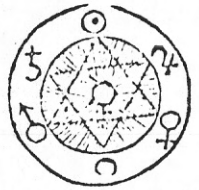
FINIS.

AN EXPOSITION UPON THE First Six Gates OF Sir *GEORGE RIPLEY's* Compound of *Alchymie.*

VIZ.

1. *Calcination.*
2. *Diſſolution.*
3. *Separation.*
4. *Conjunction.*
5. *Putrefaction.*
6. *Congelation.*

Written by
Æyrenæus Philalethes, Natu *Anglus*; Habitatione *Coſmopolita.*



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