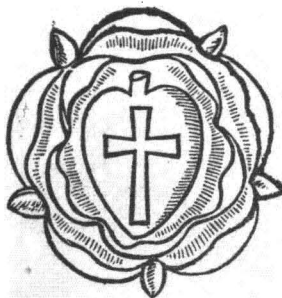


# ALCHEMY AND THE ALCHEMISTS

Giving the Secret of the Philosopher's Stone, the Elixir of Youth, and the Universal Solvent. Also showing that the TRUE Alchemists did not seek to Transmute base metals into gold, but sought the Highest Initiation or the Development of the Spiritual Nature in Man

*"Know Thyself"*



Vol. 1

BY

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Masonry," etc,

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## DEDICATION

To all those who are truly interested in the Higher Science and the Search for the Philosopher's Stone and the Elixir of Life; to those who have helped me form a Complete Philosophy and especially to one without whose help these Works would not be possible.





# PREFACE.

May the children of darkness  
Become children of Light!

The Occult Sciences reveal to man the mysteries of his nature, the secrets of his organization, the means by which he may attain happiness and perfection; in short, the end of his destiny. This was the secret of the Egyptian Initiations. It is also the hidden teaching in all sacred writings, and is the basis of all religions. The Old Testament, as well as the New, reveals the same mysteries,—but how many are able to understand the inner, secret (sacred) meaning?—

Only he who thoroughly understands *Alchemy*, can understand *The Bible*, and he only who can read the "Jargon" of the Old Masters or Alchemists, can understand the Secret of Ancient and Modern Initiations, Egyptian or Masonic.

I am fully aware that this claim will be ridiculed, but

"Those who see only with their physical eyes are almost blind."

The old Mysteries were dual in their object, that is to say, the Wise Teachers had two purposes in view, or as we might say, a double doctrine.

The first Idea was to draw man from his state of Barbarity and to civilize him,—and to take civilized Man and teach him how to become perfect; in other words to lead man, who was believed to be lost or fallen, back to his first nature. According to these teachers, Man must be regenerated, and this can only be accomplished through Initiation.

The second object was to discover the means by which matter could be raised to its first nature, which was also believed to be lost.

Gold was the symbol of the first Matter, as it was

thought that Gold was to matter <sup>as</sup> that which the Ether of the *eight* Heavens was to the Souls. And the seven metals, which were known then, were each named after one of the seven planets, and formed the ladder of material purification. Thus the Initiation had two divisions. In the first division only the propensities were purified, the "Man" only was put through the crucible; this was a spiritual Alchemy, a human Initiation.

The second Initiation lead up to the mysterious operations of nature, and was an Initiation of the "Body."

In the one we find the search for the Corner Stone of the Philosophic Temple and with *ingenious* Symbol taught the Initiate that all humanity should and could be reunited into One Great Fold, in One Faith, One Hope, and *The Same Great Love*.

In the second division the candidate was taught to search for that which lead humanity back to the Golden Age, the Philosopher's Stone and The Elixir which prolongs Life.

The one served as a Veil of Nature, as it does this day. It would be easy to convince the True student

of the truth of this, but the present work on Alchemy and the Alchemists is in itself so clear an exposition of the Subject that it would be out of place in this introduction.

Alchemy is analogous with the Ancient Initiations. It is necessary that the Philosopher should have an acquaintance with the true Germ of nature before commencing his work.

When the Alchemists speak of their Gold and Silver (symbolized in the Lodges of Masonry as the Sun and the Moon), from which they extract their first matter, they do not mean the common Gold and Silver, because these are dead,—but the gold and silver of the philosophers are full of life.

The object of all this philosophy and all Initiations is to obtain the Knowledge or the Art how to make perfect that which nature has left imperfect in the human kind and to find the Treasury of True Morality.

Far back, when man first commenced to reflect on himself, he saw, that, although knowing and approving the good, yet he mostly committed evil, and he found that the power of his desires was greater by far than that of reason. He only enjoyed partly or in ap-

pearance only his free will. It became clear to him that if he would acquire the liberty of choosing and determining his actions throughout his life, he must subdue the passions which controlled his very being. From thence sprang the first idea of the sage, to be a Free Man and *master of himself*, and every Institution and every Philosophy which tends or claims to make Masters and Adepts, must teach how to acquire this liberty and this Kingdom.

*[The greatest of all victories is the victory one gains over one's self.]*

Alchemy, like the Sacred Art, had its origin and home in Egypt and was closely associated with the religious rites. The Egyptian priests were initiated into the mysteries of the Divine Art. Like its predecessors, Alchemy postulated an orderly Universe, but Alchemy was richer in fantastic details, more picturesquely embroidered, more prodigal of strange fancies, than the sacred art of Egypt.

The Alchemist constructed his ordered scheme of nature on the basis of the supposed universality of life. The Alchemist sees life in everything and that life is threefold. He recognizes the manifestation of life in

the form, or body, of a thing, in its soul, and in its spirit. Things might differ materially in appearance, in size, taste, smell and other outward properties, and yet, according to the alchemists, be intimately related, because they were produced from the same principles, and were animated by the same soul. On the other hand, things might resemble one another closely in their appearances, outwardly, and still differ in their essential qualities, because according to alchemy they were formed from different elements and in their spiritual properties were different. The transformations of one thing into another could, according to alchemy, only be affected by spiritual means acting on the spirit of the thing, because the true transmutation consisted essentially in raising the substance to the highest perfection whereof it is capable.

Dr. Clymer has admirably succeeded in the present work on "Alchemy and the Alchemists," to make perfectly clear the vague and mystic language of the old Masters, and he makes the assertion that Man himself is the subject of the Alchemist. But when we say Man, we mean *Man in his threefold nature*, Spirit, Soul and Body, three in one. Man is the Epitome of

the Universe and is called the Microcosm. Man is the Climax and Culmination of Forces which for ages have been seeking harmonious expression.

How to use his forces and express them harmoniously is the secret of this philosophy and is the Pearl of Great Price, as called by the alchemists. A deep and earnest study and a steadfast purpose on the part of the neophyte to live the life taught by our teachers, will in due time open his vision to the true and most wonderful meaning of these writings. All this foregoing philosophy would be idle unless relating to man's moral good. The true understanding of it gives us a natural religion and expounds our former faith; it seems to be a connecting link between earth and heaven, between moral law and material law. Morals are but the revised statutes of religion; spirituality is religion itself. God about us, in our presence, not somewhere else, is a stronger influence than a theory can be. We must have more than a conjectured God. Our own intelligence resides some *where*, in some *thing*. Which is the substance? Is it the most subtle, homogenous and ultimate element of our bodies—the *what*? “Dissection,” says William Hemstreet,

in "Mind is Matter," "has laid open to our very eyes the secret channels, battery and paraphernalia of an electric fluid life. Thus may not the Creative Intelligence inhere in the Universal ether? That is the 'image' in which we have been created." He goes on to say, "The plant needs the *actual* contact of the sunshine, not to possess in itself a 'theory' about sunshine, nor a 'belief' in sunshine. Man needs a God that can assimilate with him, with his spiritual and physical particles in reality of contact, like the proximity of one we love, not a theory of God, nor a belief in a distant God."

All of the foregoing philosophy is in the Holy Writ. Science matches with it. The men who wrote the Scriptures had great, unspoiled hearts and brains, while nature itself was roomy and rich. For moral reasoning, long sight and fine intuitions, they were giants compared with us, encrusted as we are with modern materialism, and upon mere human standards we should revere their views. They taught, as Science does now, that virtue, love, holiness, hope, are the hygiene of the soul; and that vice, guilt, despair, are disease and death of the soul.



"For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." St. Paul.

"In the way of righteousness is life; and in the pathway thereof is no death." Prov. xii, 28.

When we give our minds earnestly to a study of the mere transitoriness of mortal life and affairs, and yet feel how continuous our hopes and loves are, we then realize the utter incompatibility of soul with earth.

We see that the most substantial human successes and possessions fade, literally and exactly, like the scenes of a camera. All personal grandeur, strength, popularity, business, or political success, official station and power, property, family, long sunny plateaus and even empires—pass away like the clouds. None of them are abiding here, simply because the physiology is not abiding. If the body were everlasting, then the earth and time were eternity; then human aspiration would fit physical life. It requires an eternity to match human loves. Our ambitions are more than commensurate with earth and time. Is there an answer to that demand of every heart for permanence? We walk, act, and build for permanence, with scarcely any idea of death; but we are upon quicksand here.

Is there one place that is safe and sure? As seeds in the ground have innate qualities drawing them upwards into the air and sunshine, so we have innate qualities drawing us to ethereal realms. This is science. One who can contemplate a flower, a newborn babe, or the devotions in a sick-room, and say there is no God, has simply no brains; this is morals.

When we assume with scientific certainty that mind is linked to a durable vehicle, to a spiritual body, which is ultimate matter, and that it has the boundless ether as its realm of life and enjoyment, then we are ready for delivery from our earth-worm condition up into the sunshine, the joy, the content of eternity. Suns and planets perish, but in the final crash they cannot harm a soul, because that is Astral fluid, which penetrates and passes through physical matter as magnetism does.

Now right here let us ask the question, "Unless Man know himself, would he be able to understand all this and would he be able to attain to 'the content of eternity?'" The above quotations from Mr. William Hemstreet, show how men of material science look at this grave subject.

Let us now look at the spiritual side of the question and we will quote from "Sympneumata," an inspired work, now out of print. Under the heading, "Freedom of the Enslaved," the Author says:

"As one by one, men, co-operating in earnest simplicity with the divine forces of which, by nature, they are the seat, perceive clear imaging upon a purified mentality of the essential union within them of each sex form and force, and of recovered faculty, throughout the subtler intricacies of surface sense, of enacting that biunity, they understand at once the past and future of their fate; what has been done and what remains for them to do; what was the true growth that struggled up through the snows of their outer nature; and how much waits within still to grow forth; and they face life with a sense absolutely new.

The vices not less than the virtues which characterize with such marked invigoration the present generation, are prophetic and initiatory of the rapid and inevitable change that must supervene throughout society life, both in its lesser and greater forms of family, nationality, and universality.

Since the date, comparatively recent, in view of the whole length of the thought history of men, when the incorporation of spiritual potencies began to create reflection on the qualities of the desires which were produced within them, they have, in the rough-and-ready fashion of a relative inexperience, solved the mental problem suggested by the phenomena of the moral emotional nature, by announcing themselves to be constituted of elements of opposite kinds, generating forces of conflicting tendencies; and for centuries a temporary but necessary purpose has been served by epitomizing the work of all natures struggling towards true development, as the fight of the good within themselves or about them, against the evil within themselves or about them. This view was the only one with which, under past circumstances, the battle of life could be faced or sustained. Either the misdirection and inflammation of force which is called evil, because it endangers freedom, harmony, and life, must be suppressed; or the instincts for equable distributing of affectional vigors which are called good, because they engender justice, peace, and progress, must be largely reinforced from

the hidden sources of life, before a deeper insight can safely be acquired into the facts of moral force. But vice cannot now decrease by weakening of the faculties through which it works, for the whole power of the humanitarian organism may not thus be impaired. The tares must stand and grow for the safety of the field, under the eye of the all-wise husbandmen; for virtue rises to potencies that will *master* vice, not by repulsion of its currents, but by *absorption of them into the bosom of its vaster stream.*”

Let us pause here a moment to say that the author must undoubtedly have understood Alchemy in its full and true scope. “The conception of life and force which outgrow from man’s present mentality, suggest to him, that which his daily life and all the universal phenomena verify, that life-force is one; the direction of its currents, however intricate or interpenetrating, all referable to the same series of impulsions; and that the whole range of facts constituting the suffering and the errors of mankind are but abnormal phenomena of this life-force. But the ordinary sensitiveness of man to the coursing among his atoms of vitality, though it already varies greatly among different indi-

viduals, is generally exceedingly superficial. His nerves, though markedly more acute than the nerves of men who lived some hundreds of years ago, are still exceedingly dense, and carry to his consciousness no more than a few of the strongest waves of the movement that sustains him. He can recognize the fact that his blood rushes to and fro between surfaces and centers, and collects and disperses. He is aware often of shakings, and contractings, and lassitude in his nerve-fluids, and is used by modern teaching to attribute these effects to what he calls physical and moral causes—that is, in fact, the drain or accession of vitality from within himself, and the deeper universe with which he has contact within. But the most profoundly and minutely sensitive depths, even in exceptional natures, which the mirror of external consciousness succeeds in reflecting, affords as yet to man only suggestions of immensities of life throughout his being, as the lenses he has learned to manufacture affirm vastness throughout the astral world, which transcend analysis and grasp by present faculties.

At the present stage of human progress it is unintelligent as it is cowardly to sit down before human

nature and affirm its weakness and its viciousness, and attribute thereunto the necessary prolongation of sufferings on earth. The fatalism of this popular inference is insult to God and man, and to the whole accomplished work of the multitudinous form animated by the one and eternal force. Men may no longer gape aghast at the fixed depravity of men and things; they know better, if they will let the intuitions of wisdom that are born in them speak. The *knowledge of himself* that one man may have, if he will take it, is sufficient knowledge to be the gathering point of knowledges that he should have of all the other millions. The knowledge that he thinks he has even of one other is not true knowledge, affords no valid leverage for action, will reproduce no good unless experience of his own sensations warrant it. Let him be wise to register and to protect and to enact each delicate movement that may thrill the fibre of his deep soul, and he beholds the beginning of wisdom, and only its beginning. He holds then open before himself the first page of the book of nature, according to his reading. Gazing into the realm of his own spontaneity, he requires no outer teaching to make him know that

what stirs there among the atoms of elementary consciousness, is something that he cannot create, nor hinder, nor command; something that touches him from directions toward which his faculties by instinct strain, seeking in love, to worship, but through which they lack capacity to penetrate; something which carries to him vital streams out of some vast inapprehensible, and makes itself a home within his little sense, impregnating him there with possession of its essence of individuality, and surcharging all the vessels of his inmost being till they outpour.

Freedom to be himself at the basis of his nature, protection for the central life-motions of that nature, education of the faculties for consciousness in that pure religion of his being, are not only necessities for man, but are conditions without which his perfect sanity of mind and spirit cannot be maintained; yet if one man claims this freedom, demands this protection, seeks this education, he isolates himself amidst an impeding and irascible mass of views, opinions, and dogmas, that dictate and coerce throughout every department of life,—in religion, in philosophy, in science, art, and sociology—by virtue of, and in de-



fence of the vested interests and prescriptive rights on which their influence rests. Men wound themselves with their own tools; the knowledges that they have made to serve them, render them slaves; they kneel in helpless superstition before the things of their own fashioning,—and still the high manhood, deep-enveloped in them, waits to grow forth. It is this now to which they should turn with patient watchfulness and faithful study.”

The holy depth in man, where God makes sensible the qualities of pure human desires, is now what should be learnt; the key-note of the reality of all that makes human life, sounds to the consciousness of each man only at the core of his personal emotions. Veritable perception is alone registry of these emotions, and just investigation and estimation of all the phenomena produced by other men remains impossible, unless it is raised upon this basis of clear personal experience of spirit, from which, in the study of mankind at large, the necessary hypotheses of existence in it of humane instincts are alone deducible. Silence at that sanctuary of his nature, where the all-holiness which man fails to comprehend, deigns to make meeting, in conde-

scension of simplest intimacy, with his frail capacities of sensational consciousness, makes silence of all harmonies and their joys throughout the whole productiveness of every other faculty that he puts forth; and howsoever brilliant or attractive may be the mental work of teachers who fail or who refuse to hear these deep vibrations, their influence rests on the lives of men as weight and not as light; creeps throughout convictions, cooling, never impassioning; creates in hearts negation rather of veritable sentiment, than aspiration for greater wealth of feeling.

The legitimate claim of each person now, whether man or woman, but the claim most difficult to exact of modern societary development, *is to be himself*; yet such being by each one is the only basis of that perfect altruism which would retrieve society,—for man can be, and can only be, in the sanctuaries of profound emotion, that which makes him man, that phenomenon of power and will for perfectness, that machinery for passionate intention for universal rightness, that form impregnate of the whole charge of divine quality that is the life on earth. And when, and only when, he is thus man, is he of man the providence. Alas! sad

man, or foolish man, bearing within his breast this gem of faculty for every perfectness, he lies down to be crushed by the social machineries of his own making, the Juggernauts that he has raised; for the semblances of power that he gains by little increases in science, education, wealth, political influence, which command a relative obedience and admiration; for the semblance of pleasure that he can extract a little while from portions of his nature by pampering them to abnormal growth; he misses, for the most part, all the power and the delight which are the essential attributes of his deep human sensation.

The evolution of humanity has suggested rightly to it the methods and contrivances which might now secure the general improvement and convenience, but it cannot use them, not daring yet to seek the consciousness of those qualities at its vital heart-centres, which are the mainspring of material, as of intellectual productiveness, and which would dictate the beneficent application of the organizing material provided by recent sciences and inventions.

Among the peoples who lead the progress of the world, and among whom the sense of manifold ex-

perience, need, and aspiration hourly increases, generating the growth called civilization, two lines of tendency are to be marked; the tendency to develop higher and subtler qualities painfully; the tendency to grasp pleasure in recklessness of pure and noble sentiment. Yet highest growth would transcend all pain, and keenest pleasure should be free of all debasedness. Men, too, *must* grow towards all high perfection, and they *must* live with joy, infilling them and outflowing. Whatever in man is pure, true, human, divine, is essentially both progressive and delightful. The sufferings of the growthseekers cling to their brave endeavors, because they cannot yet divest themselves entirely of impressions stamped on mentality from without, from social prejudice, from religious formulae, etc., and all the rest that offers to men's minds material that they should wield and dominate, but which unhappily controls and limits them. The slow degradation that corrupts the pleasure-seekers, results, as malady, from the hyper-development, to which they urge a limited set of faculties, and the absolute atrophy to which they leave the larger wealth of those which, as human being, they are necessarily endowed.

Both forms of suffering are signs alike of man's strange ignorance of the great powers to which he only grows; and we will escape from each if he will turn faithfully towards that gathering-ground of all essential forces within his quivering soul. *Let those who dare, let those who can,* feel their slow way along the circumstances of life to-day, and take what comes, and dream that they do not change; but those who wonder, those who want, those who suffer, will, one and all, because of that clear presence of the fine all-life that sparkles in the breast of man at this triumphant hour of his labors, find that they belong to a new race with which the world is gifted, and that their pain, their weakness and their folly, only came from their not knowing it. Let loose the powers of nature in you, man-woman, woman-man, that God may be incarnate. Study the inspired writings of the old Masters as herein made clear, and then let the clear voice of simple instruction ring to your adoration on the Sinais to which you rise at every hour of the sweet repose when life impours. Hurl right and left and far, all claims of systems of thought and life, that served of old time, if they now cling upon your skirts,

and burden your free ascent. One claim uprears itself in Holiest lawfulness, inflaming the altar of your hearts—the world's cry for redemption; and lo! the God that meets you in the eternal sanctuary of yourself, comes but for that. Lo! on the little field of your frail nature is room for mightiest peace, for the full immensity of reconciliation of God's demands and Man's,—room for the meeting in you of the heaven and earth, O little man of men!

Oh, ye grand thinkers of ye olden time, as well as of our own age and time, thanks be to the earth and to the *soul* which produced you as high things for emulation,—as leaven, that saves the mass from putrescence!

F. OSCAR BIBERSTEIN.

Philadelphia, Pa., August 15, 1907.

## INTRODUCTION.

In the year 1857, a work, entitled "Remarks upon Alchemy and the Alchemists," was issued by one "E. A. H.," in which it was proven, as is well known to all students of true Alchemy, that the subject of the Alchemists was Man, and that in seeking the Philosopher's Stone and the Elixir, they, the Alchemists, did not seek a red powder, nor yet a material remedy, much less the transmutation of the *baser* metals into gold. The Alchemists did not seek anything, they *had* already found, but they tried to teach mankind that it were possible for all, to develop to such an extent, in the present life, that the future could be practically known. At this day we know this as the Supreme Initiation. It is a development of the Soul, and brings out the highest good in man by changing or *transmuting* the baser passions in man.

This is not to say that there is no such thing as the "Elixir of Youth," for I say and *know* that there is, and if man finds it, and he can if he has a Soul, he will be able to live far beyond the usual length of years. Not only that, but he will be able to keep a youthful appearance which he could not otherwise do.

Again, the "Philosopher's Stone" is a reality, and the man or woman who can succeed in finding it, will be able to cure some of the most difficult diseases; diseases which modern medicine could not cope with. In the finding or "development" of the "Philosopher's Stone" man finds that which Paracelsus used. There is but little difference between the "Elixir" and the "Stone." With the "Elixir" man keeps himself youthful, while with the "Stone" he can effect cures in others.

The book issued in 1857 is needed more to-day than at that time, for never before has the world, or mankind, been seeking for the true knowledge as at the present time, and as it is almost impossible to obtain copies of the work at the present time, it is here republished, with many notes of the most famous Philosophers of the past and present. Much space is given to those whom we know to have been the *true* Rosicrucians, the Masters of Destiny. The work, as first issued, was in itself a Masterpiece, but with the notes and explanations it is a Master-key to the Alchemy of the past.

Attention is called to that which composed the or-



iginal book. Such paragraphs are numbered so that the reader will at once know which was the original and which is now added. When quotations are added, the authors are given full credit, and there is, therefore, no stealing.

There is much "New Thought" and Mental Science,—but Mental Science is absolutely abnormal in that it builds entirely on the Mind, and in many cases forgets both Body and Soul,—in others the body is developed with the Mind, but the Soul is forgotten. This, in the end can mean but two things. Either Insanity, moral Consumption or downright materialism, which it usually does. New Thought is in advance of the old thought, which preached Christianity and knew nothing of it except in the brain and the tongue, but in forgetting the Soul, it left out the greatest strength. Had it included the development of the Soul, as such, it would not be the New Thought, it would be Alchemy or Mysticism as of old.

On the other hand, there is Christian Science. This also is abnormal, in that it does not recognize matter. This also can lead to but one thing in the end—Insanity, and daily do the papers prove this to us by the

news item. I have not a word to say against Christian Science and the work it is doing, but it is not perfect, for as stated, it denies the body or the material part as a reality.

It is only when we, as the Alchemists of every age have taught, develop the Body, Mind, and Soul, that we are perfectly balanced and in this we produce the pure gold of the Alchemists.

Let us see what Dr. P. B. Randolph, one of the mightiest Philosophers of any age, had to say concerning the matter in hand. In his Master work "Eulis" we find:

"We are Triplicate beings—soul, spirit, body. Our loves and passions may be either one, two or all three of these. If our love be only of soul it is too fine and *ethereal* for this lower world, and for all practical purposes is useless. If it be of the spirit *only*, it is too vague, unsubstantial, unthoughtful, and physically unsatisfactory. If it be of body only, then lust is regnant, with hell all around, and crime swelters in the air. If our loves be of *soul* and *spirit* only, then we are bereft of the power to become Energies in the world, because we lack the material force to either make our

mark on each other, the world, or to give good physico-vital constitutions to our offspring. If our loves be of *soul* and *body*, we are isolated from the rest of mankind, and are lone pilgrims all the way along. If they be spirit and body *only*, we are extreme—either all transcendental affection, or downright animal passionists. *It is only when our loves are triplicate that we fulfil our true mission, and realize the supreme joys of existence.*” It is this triple development that the Alchemists of all ages have been trying to teach to mankind. They have succeeded to a certain extent and are daily adding new Neophytes to their ranks.

Again he tells us: “There cannot be a doubt but that the ‘*Philosopher’s Stone*’ of ancient and mediæval lore, and the ‘*Elixir Vitæ*’ Water of Life and Perpetual Youth, so vaguely hinted at by old writers, and which constitutes the burden of the celebrated book ‘*Hermipus Redivivus*,’ or the *Sage’s Triumph over Decrepitude and Death*, means the triple mystery, which scarce any one practically knows, but which all should learn, and which every physician and divine in the land ought to be *compelled* to teach their subjects under heavy penalties of neglect, because it is

the secret of sustained youth, grace and beauty; it is the Gate to Power, and the crown and signet of ineffable human glory; it unveils the throne of Will, and taps the fountain of excessive joy; it is the Jemschidgenie of Persian story; and he or she who knows, appreciates diviner and celestial bearings of life and its meanings, becoming indeed a child of the Infinite, and no longer a stranger to the Father's face; and they alone who have it, are able to reach that magnificent sweep of clairvoyant vision, which, leaping from earth at a bound, scans the unutterable glories of space, and beholds the rain of starry systems as we view a gentle summer shower."

Much is mentioned in the following work concerning Love, the Will and the Magnetic force. Listen once more to the one who brought these Sciences to the American shores, to the one man above all who founded Rosicrucianism and the Esoteric teachings, but who has been given less credit than many of those who have copied his works and knew no more of the Sciences than does a new born child in its first incarnation:

"Love, I have stated, is magnetic, and subject to magnetic law. It is a *force* also, capable, as all know,

of exerting very strange effects both upon human souls and bodies. But how? That's the question! Tell us that! I will; listen:

“Matter and mind, in some mysterious way, are not only both alike and unlike, and conjoin to form the thing called man, but they act together directly and indirectly, fully or partially, and yet are not of the same nature, albeit they act and react upon each other in myriad ways, a fact which every one's experience demonstrates beyond cavil. One thing is absolutely certain; that the mind resides in the brain; that in it inheres what constitutes us human; and that the conscious point resides in the centre of the encephalon, at that spot where all three brains meet, viz., cerebrum, cerebellum and medulla, or spinal marrow, which is an elongated brain, is a clear fact, the proof of which can be found by consulting any good anatomical and physiological atlas. In this central point, as through and around the corpus callosum, there is, in death, ‘a nervous and spherul waste;’ in life a brilliant *sun* varying in size from that of a large pea to a perfectly gorgeous sun-shining diamond three inches in diameter.—A ball of dazzling *WHITE FIRE!*—and

this is the *SOUL*—the thing or being par excellence, the tremendous human mystery. It has a double *consciousness*; one facing time and its accidents and incidents; the other gazing square and straight right into eternity. For its higher use it fashions material eyes; for its *thither* use every one of a myriad rays darting from it is an eye whose power laugh Rosse's Telescope to scorn! But there arises a fog from the body which mainly so envelops this central point that the *EYES* are veiled; sometimes in magnetic or other sleep the clouds shift, and then one or more eyes glance over infinite fields, and momentarily glimpse the actualities of space, time, possibility and eternity.

This central ball draws its supplies from space, air, ether, and being Mystic and Divine, directly from the Lord of the universe,—the Imperial Mystery,—Infinite and Eternal God. (About which mystery the savants are as greatly at fault as they are concerning the facts of *growth*.) It breathes; has its tides, its diastole, systole, flux and ebbs; and, being compelled to gaze on the outer world through opaque glasses, diseased bodies, it takes but distorted views of things, and scarce ever can rely upon the absolute truth of

what the *senses* tell it; from which results mistakes, confusion, misapprehension, crime, and whatever else of evil betides its fortunes here.

“The breath of the body is atmospheric air, which air is more or less penetrated with the Ether of space, the Breath of God, and the Magnetism of the heavens surrounding the entire material universe. On these it subsists; *and* when it *means* a thing it discharges a portion of its *own* sphere, its Divine nerval Life toward the object of its desire and attention; and the vehicle is Magnetism, and Magnetism is that specific *vif* of fluid life manufactured by the Sexual apparatus of either gender, as said before. The thing conveyed by it is the purpose of a soul; the result, a certain yielding of any other force on earth—for nothing can withstand the absolute decree of the waked-up (developed) human soul.”\*

In the above we have much of the Mystery explained. However, it only explains to us what it is, the method must be as much a mystery as it was in the time of the first Mystics and Alchemists for the secret is not to be given indiscriminately to all, for but few

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\*See “Divine Alchemy.”

are fit to receive it. Those that are can learn by seeking.

The question may be asked: "If Initiation or Alchemy means but the finding of the Christ or the development of the Soul and purification of the passions, why not simply be a Christian? There is a vast difference. The Christian, that is, the *true* Christian is all that God may want him to be—Spiritually, but the Initiate does not only develop the Spirit, but the Soul and Body as well, and he does so, not because of a future Heaven, but he does so *consciously*, and thereby obtains a power that he may not only *be* but that he may *do*. The Initiate finds the 'Philosopher's Stone' so that he may do what the Alchemists have done for Humanity, and he knows the Elixir so that he may retain his Youth far beyond the usual time."

Again, Dr. Randolph tells us:

"The Grand Mystery of the Will, properly cultured, is the highest aid to *man*, for it is a Divine Energos, white, pure Magic, the miracle-working potentiality which cometh only to the free and wholly unshackled human soul; while to woman it is the only salvation from marital vampyrism, the shield and



buckle of her power, and the groundwork upon which must be builded the real rule of her influence in the world and at home. The reason *why* will be readily seen by recurring to the basic propositions of the Divine Science, which declares that God the *soul* of the Universe, is *POSITIVE HEAT, CELESTIAL FIRE*; that the aura of Deity (God-od) is *LOVE*, the prime element of *all* power, the external fire-sphere, the informing and formative pulse of matter. The deduction is crystalline; for it follows that whoso hath most Love—whether its *expression* be coarse or fine, cultured or crude—hath, therefore, most of God in him or her; the elements of time being competent to the perfecting of all refining influences, over the ocean of Death, if not upon the hither side. Conversely put, the statement stands thus: whoso most resembleth God, therefore, hath most of Love, Goodness, and the elements of power. God is not a *libertine*! Now these latent energies I claim to here give the true knowledge of, that all may understand the laws of love, will, and ethereal forces, and the principles and modes of the evolution, and crystallization in the homos; the result aimed at being the elimination of the gross, and their

orderly consolidation *into personal power*. I hold that Love is, ever was, and eternally will be, *absolutely pure*. Paste is not diamond, though they resemble somewhat, nor is Love ever anything but its own transcendant self; yet normal passion is divine, because through it alone God gives *true men* to the great man-wanting world. There can be no such thing as unholy Love; nor good badness, nor bad goodness.

“In announcing the law and fact that the subtle element called Magnetism is the connecting link between mind and body, the flesh, sinew, bone and muscle, and the incorporeal viewless soul of man, I declare a new truth, or rather one newly discovered. True, it has been suspected that electricity, in some of its subtler forms, was that link, but I am not aware that the subtler element, magnetism, was ever even suspected to be such link. Body is the seat of the senses; Soul is the seat of the deeper faculties; for Emotion, Love, Sympathy, Memory, Fancy, Judgment, and a hundred other human attributes belong to the region and domain of Soul, Spirit, Mind,—*the invisible man within*,—and the vehicle of their display and action upon, and in the outer world, is magne-

tism."

The question may be asked: Why is the present work a necessity when we have all the old work of the Alchemists and many works of the Mystics of the present day? To this I reply: Because there is not one student in a thousand who understands anything when reading the old Masters and the present work is a Key, and all those who read with the Spirit and not the Senses alone will understand and find the solution of the problem.

The present work is not new as there is *nothing* new under the sun. Everything has been given us concerning the Art, and all we need is a compilation in such form that the old Masters can be read and understood. I give nothing new to the world; I give but the old in a new dress.

Many may question the truth of the "Philosopher's Stone," the "Elixir" and the "Word." To such I say that they are an absolute fact and may be "discovered" by all those who are truly sincere in their search.

Sincerely,

R. SWINBURNE CLYMER.

## CHAPTER I.

1. Some two years since, the author printed a small pamphlet on the subject of Alchemy, his object being to throw out an idea with which he was strongly impressed, that the *Philosopher's Stone* was a mere symbol; and that the Alchemists were not in pursuit of gold, but of *wisdom*, carefully and conscientiously leaving the latter word undefined. The pamphlet was intended for the eye of my friends, and was not published or put on sale, though I was not unwilling to have it circulated among the curious who might be likely to look into the proposition announced. It has been noticed in the *Westminster Review* for October, 1856; and the decision therein expressed, adverse to my view, has induced me to fortify my opinions by additional reasons and by further citations from alchemical works.

2. When I printed the pamphlet, I had read but a few, some half a dozen, works on Alchemy, and my opinions were necessarily of a negative kind. I did not then, nor do I now, undertake to say precisely what the Alchemists sought. I was positive, however, that they were not in pursuit of gold or of worldly

honors; and am still of that opinion. I thought their object was religious, in which I am also fully confirmed by a further examination of alchemical works, of which I have obtained many since my pamphlet was printed.

“If we look upon the subject from the point which affords the widest view, it may be said that Alchemy has two aspects: the simply material, and the religious. The dogma that Alchemy was only a form of chemistry, is untenable by any one who has read the works of its chief professors. The doctrine that alchemy was religion only, and that its chemical references were all blinds, is equally untenable in the face of history, which shows that many of its most noted professors were men who had made important discoveries in the domain of common chemistry, and were in no way notable as teachers either of ethics or religion.”\*

3. I feel now somewhat better prepared to express an opinion upon their real object, though I wish to say, once for all, that the subject is still one of inquiry

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\*“The Science of Alchemy.” “*Sapere Aude*.”

with me. I shall endeavor, nevertheless, to state what I suppose they really sought, or at least will point out the commencement of the work; yet I desire not to be considered as enlisting in defense of what I regard as the philosophy of those extraordinary writers.

4. First I must say a word of the article in the Review. There is placed at the head of it the titles of three works, if my pamphlet may be called one. The first is that of a French writer, Louis Figuier (1854), entitled *Alchemy and the Alchemists, or a Historical and Critical Essay upon Hermetical Philosophy*.

5. The second is that of a German, Dr. Herman Knopp (1843-44), entitled "*The History of Chemistry*."

6. The third is that of my pamphlet, in which I express the opinion that the Philosopher's Stone is a mere symbol, signifying something which could not be expressed openly without incurring the danger of an *auto da fe*.\*

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\*"There are three broad divisions of mediaeval esoteric knowledge. The first is described as Natural Magic, the second as Spiritual or Transcendental Magic, and the third, under the comprehensive title of Alchemy, embraces a philosophy and a physical prac-

7. The title of the German work shows that the author must have taken up the subject of Alchemy only in its relation to chemistry; as perhaps its precursor, which it really was. He regarded Alchemy from the modern point of view of chemistry, and probably examined alchemical works for the purpose of pointing out his opinion of the relation of Alchemy to the modern science of chemistry. In the prosecution of such a work, therefore, it is not to be supposed

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tice which are of the first and consummate importance to the modern student. The Philosophy of the whole subject is embodied in two priceless collections, the works of Hermes Trismegistus and the Jewish Kabbalah, which to all intents and purposes is contained in the Baron de Rosenroth's *Kaballa Denudata*, a part of which has been recently translated into English. The exposition of these philosophical text books are numerous, and they vary considerably in value. There is much interesting and important matter to be found in Cornelius Agrippa's "*Three Books of Occult Philosophy*," so exalted by Thomas Vaughan. The Hermetic and Kabbalistic writings are both in great part devoted to the mystical history of creation, to which the evolution of humanity is considered rigorously parallel, in virtue of the magical doctrine of correspondence, and thus an esoteric significance is attributed to those portions which deal with the development of the material cosmos out of the chaotic storm of elementary forces."

Introduction: "Magical Writings."

that the secret of the Alchemists, if they had one, would become recognizable; and all that can be expected from Dr. Kopp, in the premises, must be secondary and subordinate, as far as Alchemy is concerned. Yet I shall show that even Dr. Kopp, though writing professedly of chemistry and not of Alchemy, had some opinion bordering on the truth in regard to the real object of the latter, though he did not choose to explain it at length, because his proper subject, chemistry, did not require it.

8. Now as to M. Figuier—it must be observed that the Reviewer expresses the opinion very decidedly that the French writer, though he enlarges upon the title of the German author, has nevertheless drawn all of his materials from the laborious German; comparing him to a *parasite*, living upon the vitality of the massive German.

9. Upon this state of the case, as we have no right to expect a treatise upon Alchemy from the German, much less can we look for such a treatise in the French work.

10. But this is not all; the writer of the Review very candidly and honestly admits, that, in the preparation



of his article, he has depended upon the Frenchman and the German; so that what was not even wine in the original is twice diluted in the Westminster Review article.

11. In short, the writer of the article knows nothing of the Alchemists from an examination of their own works, and takes his opinion from others: from a Frenchman, who drew his materials from a German, who did not treat of Alchemy except incidently to his subject, *the History of Chemistry*.

12. Nothing further need be said to show that neither the article in the Review nor the French work can furnish any satisfactory information upon the subject of Alchemy.

13. To refer now more especially to the work of M. Figuier, which is before me, we observe that all of his citations from alchemical works, to illustrate the alleged extravagance and absurdity of their authors, are expressly credited to Dr. Kopp, in these remarkable words: "*Maintenant, ajoute M. Kopp, a qui nous empruntons les citations precedents, si l'on entend par monde le microcosm que l'homme represente, l'interpretation sera facile.*"

14. How could the French author overlook the plain signification of this remarkable passage, in which Dr. Kopp says expressly, that, by considering *the world as the microcosm which man represents, it would be easy to interpret the writings of the Alchemists*, or at least the citations made by himself to exhibit their opinions or mode of procedure? But the French writer takes no notice of this admission of the German, so honorable to his penetration, but proceeds immediately to characterize the Alchemists as guilty of "Deplorable aberrations, the product of a delirious imagination, the disorders of which exceed all power of analysis."

"The Microcosmos or Microcosm—the little world as usually applied to Man. A smaller world is a microcosmos if compared with a larger one. Our Solar System is a Microcosm in comparison with the Universe, and a Macrocosm if compared with the Earth. Man is a Microcosm in comparison with the Earth, and a Macrocosm if compared with an atom of matter. An atom of matter is a Microcosm, because in it are all the potentialities out of which a Macrocosm may grow if the conditions are favorable. Everything contained in a Microcosm in a state of development is contained

in the Microcosm in germ.”\*

15. The English Reviewer also overlooks the pregnant hint of the German; and throwing himself into the arms of the Frenchman quotes at third-hand a number of passages, detached from their proper connections, for the purpose of showing up the absurdity of the Philosophical stone-seekers, absolutely blind as to their *real* object.

16. Leaving, therefore, the French writer and the Reviewer to feed upon the fragments they have elected to deal with, I take up the citation from Dr. Kopp, and will endeavor to substantiate the accuracy of his hint, and show that the Alchemists, in all their writings, had Man in view, regarding him as a microcosm, or miniature of the great world; or, as they are fond of quoting, as the Image of God, in the language of Moses.

17. The *subject* of Alchemy was *Man*; while the *object* was the perfection of Man, which was supposed to center in a certain unity with the Divine nature.”

“The wonders of Spiritual Magic (Alchemy) are

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\*Hartmann, “Paracelsus.”

said to be accomplished by means of a certain method of life and a certain sequence of ceremonies, all of symbolical significance, but unanimously considered by the highest Adepts to be devoid of inherent virtue, and simply adopted to direct and *develop* the Psychic faculties of Will and Imagination which are Grand agents (absolutely necessary) in every Magical process. Eliphas Levi recommends the postulant in the proanos of the Spiritual Temple to 'rise daily at the same hour, and at an early hour, bathe summer and winter before daybreak in spring water (clear, cool water), never wear soiled clothes, to wash them himself if necessary, to exercise himself by voluntary privations that he may be better able to bear involuntary ones; finally, to impose silence on all desires save that of achieving the *magnum opus*.' This is simply the preliminary (but necessary,) discipline; the preparation of the Mystic 'sulphur of the Wise' is of another and higher kind; the student of Vaughn will find it described in various parts of his writings, and especially in the *Anima Magica Abscondita*; it is a process of Psychic chemistry of a triadic and absolutely supernatural character, for the diatribes of

modern Mystics against the use of the term supernatural are founded on a fundamental misapprehension of Occultism, and are due to the influence of materialistic philosophy. It is a doctrine of Magical science that there is an inherent imperfection in Nature, and that there is an absolute perfection which transcends Nature; now, the testimony of the visible universe and the unceasing aspiration of Man's higher Consciousness are in harmony with this doctrine.

"The triadic process, of which I have spoken, is the transmutation of the physical body by the Soul *within* it, the exultation and Transfiguration of the soul by the overshadowing spirit, and the illumination and deification of the spirit by contact with the Universal Consciousness. This process accomplishes the Regeneration of the whole man, which is the true object of Transcendental Philosophy and the only safe basis for practical Magic. All operations attempted by the vulgar and the uninitiated, in other words, by *unregenerate* persons, are either dangerous or unsuccessful, or, as in the case of Black Magic, of a dark and abominable nature.

"Contemplation and quietism are the keys to this

mysterious process, which seems to have been carried to its highest point among Oriental nations. It is described by Roger Bacon as the modification of the body by Alchemy, which puts much of Hermetic allegory in a new and more intelligible light.

“When this modification, or New Birth, has been accomplished, the Magus is placed in communication with the creative forces of the Universe, and the avenues of Spiritual perception, which are narrow, difficult, and full of barriers, to the Psychologist of to-day, are freely thrown open for unlimited exploration—such, at least, is the claim of the Magical textbooks—and the Initiated epopt may proceed to the Invocation of the celestial intelligences, the souls of the great departed, and to the assertion of intellectual dominion over the hierarchies of elementary being. The depths and heights of his own immortal nature are also revealed to him, and from the pinnacles of his spiritual life he may soar into ecstatic, yet Conscious, communion with God Himself. On the physical plane he may perform, by the adaptation of natural laws, many prodigies which seem to the uninitiated observer in defiance of all law; he may endue inert substances

with the potency of his individual will,\* and this is the philosophical principle of talismanic magic; he can search all hearts and read all destinies; perceive events happening at a remote distance; and can impart to suitable subjects a portion of his own prerogatives, inducing trance, clairvoyance, prophetic foresight, etc.

“The third division of mediaeval esoteric science is, in some respects, the most important of all, for Alchemy is not only the foundation of that experimental method which has transformed the face of the earth; it is not only the historical radix of modern physics, including chemistry, it is not only an arcane process

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\*“You need not be surprised to hear that such things are possible, because everything is possible, if it is consistent with natural laws. One man may call another man by his name, and order him to do certain things, and if the latter respects the former, or is awed by his superiority, he will obey his order without being forced to do so with a weapon or stick. On invisible beings the Will of man has still *more* effect, and an inferior being may be made to obey the will of a superior one by the force of the mere thought of a word, because the lower is subject to the higher, and the inferior to the superior, and what else is the will but a power hidden in the thought (mind) of man, and becoming active through his imagination? But the thought of man is as potent to impress a spirit as the spoken word is to impress the mind of a man, for

for the manufacture of material gold, but it has originated a theory which is of the utmost importance to all present students of Psychology.

“I have traced the connection between ancient taurmaturgic Mysticism and modern Mystic action; I have found that the hierophants of old were familiar with the Spiritual phenomena of to-day, and they claim to have made such advances in the Paths wherein we are slowly and painfully travelling, that they had entered into the permanent possession of a power and knowledge which it was dangerous or impossible for them to reveal, which they consequently spoke of in veiled

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spirits have no physical ears to hear physical sounds, and the voice is only needed for those who cannot hear the spirit.

“It does not require the sound of our voice to bring the image of some object before our imagination and if we see the image of a thing in our mind, and realize its presence, it actually exists for us, and thus a spirit may be brought into a form by the power of imagination.

“If the astral element in man can be sent into another man by the power of his olympic spirit, such an astral element may also be embedded in metals and leave its influence in them and thereby the metal may be raised to a higher state, than the one into which it was put by Nature.”

Hartmann, “Paracelsus.”



language, but which they nevertheless endeavored to extend to others, in order that it might be perpetuated, and to this end they invented their symbols and allegories in the hope that a Divine Light would illuminate deserving seekers and enable them to penetrate to their inner significance. Now, the Grand Initiates of Ancient Magic were the Princes of Alchemy in a large number of cases and these two branches of esoteric Wisdom are intimately and curiously connected both in principle and practice. The doctrine of mystical and magical regeneration were expounded by Alchemical Philosophers, and the Psychic manufacture of gold was taught in return by the Magicians. Astrology lent to both the assistance of her traditional observations and the resources of her archaic symbolism. Alchemists and Magicians lay claim to the possession of the same tremendous secret, the same indelible power; they worked with the same weapons after rigorously identical methods, but in various fields of achievements—the material world was the province of the followers of Geber; to the disciples of the Magi were delivered the realms of mind. The highest aspirations of both schools appear to have been

derived from the Hermetic books, and though the practical Alchemy of the Christian age originated with the Arabian Geber, its sources must thus be sought in the theosophy of the later Platonists.

The Alchemical Doctrine of Evolution is the Philosophical basis of the sublime claim of Transcendental or Spiritual Magic which has already been considered at length, and the full consequent Psychic importance of the literature of Alchemy may be shown in a few words. Though it conceals the *first matter* of the *magnum opus*, it describes the process which, given the first matter, will ultimately eliminate the imperfections of metals. These Processes are parallel by the theory in every department of Nature, and thus the Magical Evolution, Transfiguration, or Reconstruction of Man is to be accomplished in a manner which is rigorously similar to the reconstruction in the mineral world. As man is the subject of Spiritual Alchemy, the first matter does not need seeking in this division of the Art, and as Man, in the same manner, is that Mystic *vas philosophorum*, which has been always a *crux* for seekers from the days of Geber downwards, it is plain case that the development of his Latent

Spiritual Energies may be accomplished along the lines of the avowed Hermetic processes, as they are described in Alchemical works, provided the assumption contained in the general Hermetic theory have a basis, as claimed, in fact. Now the processes in question are delineated with a tolerable amount of perspicuity, and I submit to those numerous students of Psychology who are turning for light to the writings and to the alleged achievements of the old Mystics, that here is an adequate warrant for their earnest and exhaustive study, and some ground for believing that we may strike upon an unwrought mine of Spiritual possibilities in the hidden but not unattainable Mysteries of Alchemy.'''\*

18. All of the Alchemists, so far as I have examined their writings, might place in the "fore-front" of their works a number of the most enlightening passages from Scripture, as indicating their doctrines and objects; among them the following, which we will recite at large, to save the trouble of a reference, and

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\*"Introduction, Magical Writings," Thomas Vaughan.

will copy them with some general view to the order of the "great work," as the Alchemists call their Art.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."

19. "I say unto thee except a man be born again" ("from above," in the margin), "he cannot see the kingdom of God."

"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

20. "Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, Lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is *within* you."

21. "I and my Father are one."

22. ".....as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they (the disciples) also may be one in us; .....I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one."

23. "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs,

neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you."

24. "And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it (or understand). But without a parable spake he not unto them (the people); and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples."

25. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom."

"Happy is the man that findeth Wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding; for the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her. Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honor."\*

"Her ways are of pleasantness and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of Life to them that lay hold upon her; and happy is every one that retaineth her."

26. "The Lord by Wisdom hath founded the earth;

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\*See Frontispiece, "Divine Alchemy."

by understanding hath he established the heavens. . . .  
My son, let them not depart from thine eyes; keep  
sound wisdom and discretion. So shall they be life  
unto thy soul and grace to thy neck."

"Get wisdom, get understanding; forget it not:  
neither decline from the words of my mouth. Forsake  
her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she  
shall keep thee."

"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it  
are the issues of life."

"A wise man will hear and will increase learning;  
and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise  
counsels; to understand a proverb, and the interpreta-  
tion, the words of the wise, and their dark sayings."

27. "My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and  
hide my commandments with thee;

"See that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and  
apply thine heart to understanding;

"Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up  
thine voice for understanding;

"If thou seeketh her as for silver, and searchest for  
her as for hid treasures;

"Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord,

and find the Knowledge of God.”

28. “He that giveth his mind to the law of the Most High, and is occupied in the meditation thereof, will seek out the Wisdom of all the ancient, and be occupied in prophecies.

“He will keep the sayings of the renowned men; and where subtle parables are he will be there also.

“He will seek out the secrets of grave sentences, and be conversent in dark parables.”

29. All these sayings are perfectly congenial to the Alchemist, and exactly in harmony with his object.

30. But an important point must here be explained without reserve, it being necessary to a right understanding of the true positions of the Alchemists; especially in what have been called the Dark Ages, when there was neither political nor religious toleration.

31. The Address to the Reader, in the English copy of Sandivogius, opens in this strain: “There is abundance of Knowledge, yet but little Truth known. The generality of our knowledge is but as castles in the air, or groundless fancies. I know but of two ways that are ordained for getting Wisdom, viz., the Book of God and the Book of Nature; and these also, but as

they are read with reason. Many look upon the former as a thing below them; upon the latter, as a ground of Atheism, and therefore neglect both. It is my judgment, that as to search the Scriptures is most necessary, so without reason it is impossible to understand them. Faith without reason is but implicity. If I cannot understand by reason *how* a thing is, yet I will see *that* a thing is so, before I will believe it to be so. I will ground my believing of the Scripture upon Reason; I will improve my Reason by Philosophy. How shall we convince gainsayers of the truth of the Scriptures, but by principles of Reason?

32. "When God made Man after his own Image, how was that? Was it not by making him a rational creature? Men, therefore, that lay aside reason, in the reading of sacred mysteries, do but *un-man* themselves, and become further involved in a labyrinth of errors. Hence it is that their Religion is degenerated into irrational notions.

33. "Now, to say that *pure* Philosophy is *true* Divinity, will haply seem a paradox (in 1650); yet if any one should affirm it, he would not be Heterodox.

34. "When Job had been a long time justifying



himself against God,—which I conceive was by reason of his ignorance of God and himself,—God undertakes to convince him of his error by the principles of Nature; and this, to bring him to the knowledge of *both*; as may be seen at large, Job xxxviii.

35. "Can any one affirm that Hermes, Plato, Aristotle, (though pure Naturalists,) were not most deep Divines? Do not all grant that the first two chapters of *Genesis* are true Divinity? I dare affirm that they are the most deep and the truest Philosophy. Yea, they are the ground and sum of all Divinity, and Philosophy; and if rightly understood, will teach thee more knowledge of *God*, and of *thyself*, than all the books in the world besides."

36. From such passages as the above, or those of a similar import, abundantly found in the works of the Alchemists, I cannot but say that they sought Truth upon evidences drawn from the nature of things and received it only for itself; and were influenced in its reception by neither tradition nor authority.

37. The Alchemists in Christian countries received the doctrines of Christ as true in themselves, or in the nature of things; and they appear to have believed

they were announced by Christ for that reason: but they were not accepted as true simply upon the ground that Christ announced them. With them "wisdom of the doctrine established the truth of Christianity, and not miracles." The wisdom of a doctrine is the truth of it, and this is the authority of God.

38. The Alchemists would have the lovers of their Art test all doctrines by what they call "the possibility of Nature." Hence the test of doctrine was not with them a written record; and, consistently with this principle no Alchemist urges his opinion upon authority, but always in the style of—"My son, listen to my words"—but he adds, *prove them*; or, he might say, with St. Paul, one of the most zealous, bold, and independent reformers the world ever saw, "Prove all things, but hold fast to that which is good."

39. Notwithstanding this high authority, he who accepts truth only because it may be proved, or proved to be "good," and disregards mere authority, is commonly stigmatized as an infidel.

> 40. The Alchemists, therefore, standing upon this ground, would have been persecuted had they pub-

lished their opinions openly;\* for they lived, for the most part, at a period when it was supposed, by those in authority, that coercion and violence might be

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\*“The proscription of the old pagan cultus and the bitter and continual persecution of all professors of secret and magical arts, which took place in the reign of the infamous emperor Constantine, and was continued by Valentinian, Theodosius, and other shining lights of Imperial Christianity, did not eradicate polytheism or destroy the adepts. The old religion and the old theurgic art took refuge in remote places; they were practiced in stealth and in silence, and thus presumably originated many of those mysterious secret societies which perpetuated the traditions of the Magi through the whole period of the Middle Ages, and in numerous Magical Rituals betray their connections with neo-platonism.

“The proscription of Magic and paganism was eventually followed by the proscription and persecution of the Jews, who, in like manner, were reduced to practice their religious rites in secret, and whose oriental vindicativeness was frequently roused to frenzy by their intolerable sufferings and humiliations. Professors of Kabbalistic Arts, firm believers in the virtues of invocations and verbal formulae, and addicted from time immemorial to every species of superstitious practice, they directed their mystic machinery to do injury to their enemies, and the infernal magic of the Middle Ages, with its profanation of Christian mysteries, its black masses and impious invocations, is, in part at least, their creation.”

Introduction, “Magical Writings,” Thomas Vaughan.

legitimately employed to *force* men into the established public faith,\* the imagined enemies of which, besides being held up to public abhorrence, were often burned at the stake. Allusions to this state of things frequently occur in the writings of the Alchemists, as in *The Open Way to the Shut Palace of the King*, where the author says: "I dare affirm that I do possess more riches than the whole known world is worth; but cannot make use thereof, because of the snares of knaves." The true explanation of this

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\*Exactly what is being started to do in this the Twentieth Century of our era. The Masonic Orders, in some of the American States, are having Laws passed by a *mouldable* Legislature, making it a crime for a man to belong to any Masonic Lodge not paying allegiance to their *special* body. This is even worse than the old persecutions, for at that time men were ignorant, but for an Order, at this time, to say to the free born man to what he shall or shall not belong, and making it a crime under an extremely heavy penalty, can result in but one thing, an Anti-Masonic revolution. These Orders, without knowing it, are again obeying the instinct of the Jesuits, and to all such Brother Masons, I would suggest that they get and read, not only read, but study, the pamphlet entitled: "The Pith and Marrow of the Closing and Coming Century and related position of Freemasonry and Jesuitry," which may open their eyes to their own perils.

allusion to riches is in Matt. xvi, 26, for Eyrenaeus proceeds: "I disdain, I loathe, I detest this idolizing gold and silver, by the price whereof the pomp and vanities of the world are celebrated. Ah, filthy evil! ah, vain nothingness!

41. "Believe ye that I conceal these things out of envy? No, surely; for I protest to thee that I grieve from the very bottom of my soul, that we are driven as it were like outcasts from the face of the Lord throughout the earth. We travel through many nations, just like vagabonds, and dare not take upon ourselves the care of a family, neither do we possess any fixed habitation. And although we possess all things, yet can we use but a few. What, therefore, are we happy in, excepting speculation and meditation only, wherein we meet with great satisfaction of mind?

42. "Many do believe (that are strangers to the Art) that, if they should enjoy it, they would do such and such things; so also even we did formerly believe, but being more wary, by the hazard we have run, *we have chosen a more secret method*. For whosoever hath once escaped imminent peril of his life, he will

(believe me) become more wise for the time to come.”

43. Yet he exclaims: “My heart murmureth things unheard of; my spirit beats in my breast for the good of all Israel. . . . . Would to God that every ingenious man, in the whole earth, understood this science! . . . . Then would virtue, naked as it is, be held in great honor, merely for its own amiable nature.” But he adds: “*Our* gold is not to be bought for money, though you should offer a crown or a kingdom for it; for it is the gift of God.”\*

44. As the intolerance of the Middle Ages is a familiar fact, known to every one, we have no disposition to dwell upon it; and refer to it only to assign it as one cause of the Esoteric writings of the Alchemists. They communicated with each other by symbols, writing of salt, sulphur, mercury, etc., and of the transmutation of metals; by which they saved their own heads, though they plunged hundreds and thousands of the “profane,” as they called those not in their secret, into vain and useless efforts to find a *tangible* agent for turning the baser metals into gold.

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\*The reader may be led to surmise the true subject of Alchemy by referring to Acts, chapter viii.

“Who is to blame,” says one of them, “*the Art*, or those who seek it upon false principles?”

45. Another reason for their obscure mode of writing was of a higher order, and it was this: that, as most men are educated in religious tenets according to tradition, without understanding the true grounds of the doctrine imposed upon them, it was not considered safe to shake the hold of the tradition by proposing a new rule of conduct, not easily apprehended. In plain words, it was believed to be better for society that men should be held to their duty by hope and fear, than be exposed to injury by a misunderstood doctrine of freedom: for man is not free by simply denying the false; he is only free by living in the truth. “The truth shall make you free,” was the doctrine of Alchemy, as well as of the Gospel.\*

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\*“The law,” said Apollonius of Thyane, “obliges us to die for liberty, and Nature ordains that we should die for our parents, our friends, and our children. All men are bound by these duties. But a Higher duty is laid upon the sage; he must die for his principles and the truth he holds dearer than life. It is not the law that lays his choice upon him, it is not nature; *it is the strength and courage of his own soul*. Though fire or sword threatens him, it will not overcome his resolu-

46. With the Alchemists, the ancient saying, know thyself, inscribed upon the Temple of Apollo (attributed by some to Pythagoras, by others to the Egyptians), as an injunction, was the ground and sum

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tion or force from him the slightest falsehood; but he will guard the secrets of others' lives and all that has been entrusted to his honor, as religiously as the secrets of initiation. And I know more than other men, for I know that of all that I know, I know some things for the good, some for the wise, some for myself, some for the Gods, but naught for tyrants.

"Again, I think that a wise man does nothing alone or by himself; no thought of his so secret but that he has himself as witness to it. And whether the famous saying 'know thyself' be from Apollo or from some sage who learnt to know himself and proclaimed it as a good for all, I think the wise man who knows himself and has his own spirit in constant comradeship, to fight at his right hand, will neither cringe at what the vulgar fear, nor dare to do what most men do without the slightest shame."

"In the above we have the true philosopher's contempt for death, and also the calm knowledge of the Initiate, of the comforter and adviser of others to whom the secrets of their lives have been confessed, that no torture can ever unseal his lips. Here, too, we have the full knowledge of why Consciousness is, of the impossibility of hiding the smallest trace of evil in the *inner* world; and also the dazzling brilliancy of a Higher ethic which makes the habitual conduct of the crowd appear surprising—the "that which they do—not with shame."

"Apollonius of Tyanne," Mead.



of all Wisdom. In this knowledge was found, as they believed, the knowledge of God; not that God is in man except as he is in all things, but the *knowledge of God* lies in the nature of man, and not in the nature of any other thing in the universe. He who looks for it elsewhere, is on a journey away from the object he seeks, and shall be disappointed. This is regarded as the opinion of the Alchemists.

“The Mystics (Alchemists) may not have been acquainted with our alleged descent from apes; they may only have realized dimly the significance in Nature of that law which regulates the survival of the fittest, though they did not need science to teach them that the weakest go to the wall; but they were acquainted with the capacity for improvement in all substances and in all departments of Nature; they believed in the existence of undeveloped potencies in every kingdom of being. They studied the Mysteries of correspondence and the great law of conditions; they investigated the operations of energy in the direction of improvements. But they did what we do not; their great end was to assist Nature, to bring consciousness, reason, intelligence, to help in fulfilling

*the law*; to begin work where Nature left off, or was arrested, to improve what was defective, to complete what was unfinished, to ameliorate the ill-conditioned, to refine the course, to remove the superfluous. "That work of Nature," says Trevisan, "is assisted by Alchemy." They believed that a change might be effected in all substances, and they sought to work up to the archetypal idea which dominated in each department of Nature. In other words, they endeavored to realize the ideal, to produce perfection in the given substance. Thus, the Physical Mystics, or Alchemists, elaborated the potencies of metals in order to obtain gold. And then in regard to man, the Spiritual Mystics, or Alchemists, sought to produce his archetype, to realize the Ideal Humanity; and we find in their writings and their processes a clear proof of their acquaintance with a law of Spiritual Evolution which we can discern to be in rigorous analogy with that of the physical world. Modern science has concerned itself but little with the possible future of humanity as it is indicated by the law which it has discovered, but underlying the literature of the Western Mysticism there is the consciousness of a

grand future of both Spiritual and physical Transfiguration, perfection, beauty, and visible illumination—things outward being an index of things inward—which is possible, perhaps inevitable for man, and this future can at any rate be achieved by the elect.

“Whether contemplated from the merely scientific standpoint, or from that of the Higher Science of Mysticism, it may be affirmed that the object of physical evolution, working in the natural world, is to accomplish the transfiguration of the natural body of man, to develop what Freemasonry terms the Perfect Ashlar. The object of Spiritual Evolution is to accomplish the transfiguration of the *interior Man*.”\*

“As at present conducted, our modern experiments are devoid of practical results; the lines of investigation reach a certain point and there leave us, but the old pioneers of Mysticism (Alchemy) would appear to have discovered some hitherto inscrutable means of passing the barrier which confronts us, and in so doing they tell us that they have come into the possession of a tremendous secret, which they declare to be of a

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\*“Azoth, or, The Star in the East,” A. E. Waite.

Divine character, and which they dare not publicly reveal, for incalculable penalties attach to the profanation of the Grand Mysteries. In their books they protected their knowledge from the vulgar by means of allegorical language and the use of symbols, leaving their veritable meaning to be divined by the sincere student with the help of an insight imparted from the Spiritual world. They also perpetuated their secrets by the Initiation of tested disciples of undoubted discretion, to whom they seem to have liberally laid open the precious treasures of their knowledge, and in this manner some of the secret Colleges of Magic, once apparently numerous, came to be formed in the East.”\*

47. We know of no one among that class of writers who has stated the ground of their proceedings more distinctly than Van Helmont, where he says:

48. “Seeing that the Creator of all beings, before the foundation of the world, and before ever they were brought forth, had and contained the same in his Mind and Wisdom,—even the little world (man, the microcosm) as well as the greater, according to the testi-

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\*“Introduction, Magical Writings,” Thomas Vaughan.

mony of Scripture (here he quotes passages from Scripture),—must not then the world, the greater (the macrocosm) as well as the lesser (man), have their creator, as their original and beginning, *within* themselves, so that neither the Creator nor his creature are separate from each other? . . . . . Seeing, then, that it cannot be said that perfection is attained, before the end hath reached its beginning, and the beginning united itself with the end, in order to a new birth and production, the question is, whether both the greater and the lesser world, in order to reach perfection, must not, in all their workings, aim at this, viz., that they may return to their beginning, to be united with it.”

49. Again: “Seeing, then, that all the creatures of God, in order to their melioration and glorification, stand in an endless revolution, in order to perfection, and yet must be known and comprehended; and seeing that a thing cannot be known otherwise than by its end and operation, or out-working, as a tree by its fruits; and that the lesser world is the end and comprisal of all creatures and works of God, and consequently an outbirth of the great world, wherein all other creatures are comprised; the question then is,

Whether there can be any other way by which man may attain to a right knowledge of the great world, with and in all its parts, than *in and out of himself*; especially since in him, as in the end and abridgment of all things, the Beginning hath manifested itself;—for the End is nothing but a Beginning wrought out, that is, displaying into act and manifested; so that the End is hid in the Beginning, as the Beginning is manifested in the End? And whether, as a consequence of this, both the worlds have not a great affinity, and perfect likeness, yea, and *unity one with the other*; and whether they must not be wrought out with one another, and thereby reach their highest perfection?"

50. Alchemical volumes are filled with intimations of the *mystery* involved in the nature of man; thus Wiedenfeld exclaims:

51. "Very great incomprehensible gifts hath the Most High God vouchsafed us; in the acknowledgment of which it is our duty day and night to love, worship, and revere Him with our whole heart, and everywhere extol his name with all our might; for besides his creating us out of nothing, and redeeming us with his most precious blood, he hath also made us partakers of

all the blessings contained in the greater world; for which reason *man* is called *Microcosm*; for it has by Divine inspiration been revealed to us that the virtues of all things, animal, vegetable, and mineral, are in *man*."

In the "Turba Philosophorum," the Eighth Dictum, we find the following dialogue concerning the Beginning:

"Pythagoras saith: 'I affirm that God existed before all things, and with Him was nothing, as He was at first. But know, ye Philosophers, that I declare this in order that I may fortify your opinion concerning these four elements and arcana, as well as in the sciences thereof, at which no one can arrive save by the will of God. Understand, that when God was alone, He created four things—fire, air, water, and earth, out of which things He afterwards created all others, both the sublime and the inferior, because He predestinated from the beginning that all creatures extracted from water should multiply and increase, that they might dwell in the world and perform His judgments therein. Consequently, before all, He created the four elements, out of which He afterwards created what He willed;

that is to say, diverse creatures, some of which were produced from a single element.\*

“The Turba saith:—‘Which are these, O Master?’

“And He:—‘They are the angels, whom He created out of fire.’

“But the Turba:—‘Which, then, are created out of two?’

“And He:—‘Out of the elements of fire and air are the sun, moon, and stars composed. Hence the angels are more lucid than the sun, moon, and stars, because they are created from one substance, which is less dense than two, while the sun and the stars are created from a composition of fire and air.’

“The Turba saith:—‘And what concerning the crea-

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\*“In the *Book of Balances*, one of the genuine Arabian works of Geber, there is a passage which has some analogy with this *dictum*:—‘After God had created all things of the four elements. . . He caused the four qualities to issue from the ancient worlds, namely: heat, cold, moisture, and dryness. The combination of these elements produced fire, which contains heat and dryness; water, which possesses cold and moisture; air, which has warmth and humidity; earth, which is cold and dry. By the help of these elements God created the superior and inferior works.’”



tion of Heaven?’

“*Then He*:—‘God created the Heaven out of water and air, whence this is also composed of two, namely, the second of the rarer things, which is air, and the second of the denser things, which is water.’

“*And they*:—‘Master, continue thy discourse concerning these three, and rejoice our hearts with thy sayings, which are life to the dead.’

“*But the others answereth*:—‘I notify to you that God hath further made creatures out of three and out of four; out of three are created flying things, beasts, and vegetables; some of these are created out of water, air, and earth, some out of fire, air, and earth.’

“*But the Turba saith*:—‘Distinguish these divers creatures one from another.’

“*And he*:—‘Beasts are created out of fire, air, and earth; flying things out of fire, air, and water, because flying things, and all among vegetables which have a spirit, are created out of water, while all brute animals are from earth, air, and fire. Yet in vegetables there is no fire, for they are created out of earth, water, and air.’

“*Whereat the Turba saith*:—‘Let us assume that a

fire, with your reverence's pardon, does reside in vegetables.'

"*And he*:—'Ye have spoken the truth, and I affirm that they contain fire.'

"*And they*:—'Whence is that fire?'

"*He answereth*:—'Out of the heat of the air which is concealed therein; for I have signified that a thin fire is present in the air, but the elementary fire concerning which you were in doubt is not produced, except in things which have spirit and soul. But out of four elements our father Adam and his sons were created,\* that is, of fire, air, water, and likewise earth. Understand, all ye that are wise, how everything

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\*"The treatise of Olympiodorus *on the sacred art* observes that Adam was the issue of the four elements, and terms him virgin earth, igneous earth, carnal earth, and sanguineous earth, making reference to the libraries of Ptolemy. There are similar references in Zosimus, by whom he is identified with death. But the carnal Adam of Zosimus signifies material humanity in general, and therein is contained the Spiritual man, whose name no one knoweth except Nicotheos, and that mysterious personage, the Alchemist himself acknowledges to be undiscoverable. The substitute for his true name signifies Light and Fire.

which God hath created out of one essence dies not until the Day of Judgment. The definition of death is the disjunction of the composite, but there is no disjunction of that which is simple, for it is one. Death consists in the separation of the Soul from the body, because anything formed out of two, three, or four components must disintegrate, and this is death. Understand, further, that no complex substance which lacks fire, eats, drinks, or sleeps, because in all things which have a spirit fire is that which eats.”\*

“*The Turba answereth*:—‘How is it, Master, that the angels, being created of fire, do not eat, seeing thou assertest that fire is that which eats?’

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\*“The nature of the angels, and the question whether they eat and sleep, does not seem to have been discussed either by Greek, Syriac, or Arabian Alchemists. Zosimus narrates that the art of alchemy was revealed to mortals by fallen angels; it is to them that the tradition of the art must be referred as to a primary source; and it was they also who wrote the primeval books of alchemy. It will be remembered that magic was also one of the mysteries unfolded by the same intelligences. In the discourse of Isis to Horus, the Mother of the Gods appears as a prophetess, who obtained Initiation into the Mysteries of alchemy from the great angel Amnael, who desired to possess her.”

*“And he:—‘Hence ye doubt, each having his opinion, and ye are become opponents, but if ye truly knew the elements, ye would not deny these things. I agree with all whose judgment it is that simple fire eats not, but thick fire. The angels, therefore, are not created out of thick fire, but out of the thinnest of very thin fire; being created, then, of that which is most simple and exceedingly thin, they neither eat, drink, nor sleep.’*

*“And the Turba:—‘Master, our faculties are able to perceive, for by God’s assistance we have exhausted thy sayings, but our faculties of hearing and of sight are unable to carry such great things. May God reward thee for the sake of thy disciples, since it is with the object of instructing future generations that thou has summoned us together from our countries, the recompense of which thou wilt not fail to receive from the Judge to come!’*

*“Arisleus saith:—‘Seeing that thou hast gathered us together for the advantage of posterity, I think that no explanations will be more useful than definitions of those four elements which thou hast taught us to attain.’*

“*And he*:—‘None of you are, I suppose, ignorant that all the Wise have propounded definitions in God.’

“*The Turba answereth*:—‘Should your disciples pass over anything, it becomes you, O Master, to avoid omissions for the sake of future generations.’

“*And he*:—‘If it pleases you, I will begin the disposition here, since envious men in their books have separated that, or otherwise I will put it at the end of the book.’

“*Whereat the Turba saith*:—‘Place it where you think it will be clearest for future generations.’

“*And he*:—‘I will place it where it will not be recognized by the foolish, nor ignored by the Sons of the Doctrine, for it is the key, the perfection and the end.’

“No student of Mysticism, historical or philosophical, can afford to ignore alchemy. There is a solidarity, if we take only the lowest standpoint, and as we have often stated, between the physical process of Occult chemistry and the Spiritual processes of the Mystics. Now, in so far as this solidarity was known to the *Turba Philosophorum*, so far were all alchemists, themselves Mystics, and Alchemy—that is, the physi-

cal part of the process—was a Mystic work. We regard alchemy, as we regard the larger philosophy of which it was a part, and a mode of expression or of presentations, under a dual aspect. As in the one case Mysticism is capable, as we have seen, of division into Transcendental Science and Transcendental Religion, so in the other alchemy is to be regarded as a Spiritual and physical work. We do neither doubt nor question that many alchemists sought only the transmutation of metals, and applied the principles of arcane law only among mineral genera; of this fact their lives are the evidence. But our researches have also convinced us that their labors were overshadowed by the portents of a Higher achievement—that even as their works read obviously in two ways, literally and trans-literally, so also their operations had two objects, and that both of these objects were pursued from the first beginnings of the science, and are contained in its earliest literature. The spiritual interpretation was not an afterthought; the Spiritual search was not an aftergrowth; the testimony to these matters is not less strong in Geber than it is in Khunrath. The arcane knowledge in both cases preceded the arcane literature.

The secrets of the Ancient sanctuaries and of the Holy Assemblies embraced both the physical and transcendental. It was known that one law variously applied obtained in all departments of Nature as regards the development of species and of the potential energies in all things. Their acquaintance with that law enabled the adepts to develop the latent possibilities of the mineral world, which possibilities resided not in the different species but in the common elements. Their acquaintance with the same law also enabled them to elaborate the transcendental potencies of man. Thus, in vulgar parlance, they could transmute metals, and they could transfigure humanity. Alchemical literature enshrined both processes, which accounts for its composite character, like a skein of silk in which two colors, distinct, though almost inextricable, are confusedly tangled and braided. The evolutionary doctrine of alchemy is scarcely a subject for formal quotation from the sequence of alchemical literature, for it is the foundation and sum of that literature. There is, of course, the hackneyed maxim everywhere cited by the champions of the 'spoliated past,' that maxim which puts tersely, after the manner of the

wisdom of old, the whole theory of the development of the species into a nutshell. 'The stone becomes a plant, the plant an animal, the animal a man, man a God.' But that is not the evolution with which we are now dealing; we are not here concerned with the mode in the manifestation of the law which differentiated species, but rather with a fundamental principle, and a philosophical reason for the principle, which all Mysticism applied in practice.

"The principle briefly was this: All natures, however diversified, have a common origin; there is but one substance in the universe; the latent powers which subsist in any species are the capacities of the *first matter*; it is impossible to ameliorate or to improve species except by having recourse to the fontal substance and source, *whence all multiplication, all generation, all energy of development proceed*. By recourse to this storehouse of universal potency every species can be ameliorated and developed. Development proceeds under the providence of Nature up to a certain point, *beyond which it can be carried by art, and to the highest point and pitch of this evolutionary art*



*the Hermetic adepts apply the name of Alchemy.*"\* J

52. The English translator of a work said to have been written in Arabic, by Alipili, entitled *Centrum Naturae Concentratum, or the Salt of Nature Regenerated*, in his address to "the Reader," says:

53. "The highest wisdom consists in this, for Man to know Himself, because in him God has placed his Eternal Word, by which all things were made and upheld, to be his Light and Life, by which he is capable of knowing all things both in time and eternity.....Therefore let the high inquirers and searchers into the deep mysteries of nature learn first to know what they have in themselves, before they seek in foreign matters without them; and by the Divine power within them, let them first heal themselves and transmute their own souls; then they may go on prosperously, and seek with good success the mysteries and wonders of God in all natural things."

54. This is but the reflection from what is found in the text of the volume in these words:

55. "He that hath the knowledge of the *microcosm*,

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\*"Azoth, or, the Star in the East," A. E. Waite.

cannot long be ignorant of the knowledge of the Macrocosm. This is that which the Egyptian industrious searchers of Nature so often said, and loudly proclaimed,—that every one should *know* Himself. This speech their full disciples (meaning the Greeks) took in a moral sense, and in ignorance affixed it to their Temples. But I admonish thee, whosoever thou art, that desirest to dive into the inmost parts of Nature, if that which thou seekest thou findest not *within* thee, *thou wilt never find it without thee*. If thou knowest not the excellency of thine own house, why dost thou seek and search after the excellency of other things? The universal Orb of the world contains not so great mysteries and excellencies as a *little Man, formed by God in his own Image*. And he who desires the primacy amongst the Students of Nature, will nowhere find a greater or better field of study than Himself. Therefore will I here follow the example of the *Egyptians*, and from my whole heart, and certain true experiences proved by me, speak to my neighbor in the words of the Egyptians, and with a loud voice do proclaim: O Man, KNOW THYSELF; *in thee is hid the Treasure of Treasures.*”

56. The author then falls into the conventional mystic language about the central salt, the firmament, the astrum, the spiritual water, the watery spirit, the water of life, etc., which would not be pertinent here, the point now in question requiring us to show that *Man* is the *Subject* of Alchemy."

"Mysticism (Alchemy), we affirm, is the one avenue of knowledge concerning the *absolute of being*; and in this claim there is nothing narrow, intolerant, or exclusive, from the simple fact that there are no other claimants. It is open to anyone to reject it on the ground that we cannot know; it is open to anyone to be indifferent about positive truth; but if that truth exists, and there be a known way to its attainment, then Mysticism is *that way*. It is the 'metaphysical foundation' of the 'hidden chemistry'; it is that art both ancient and infinite, to which those who would conceal it have 'pinned the narrow name of *chemia*;' it is Nature's explication concerning the 'sephirotic heaven' of Steebe, and Sidrach's 'chief fountain of science.' If indeed there be a *Hortulus Hermeticus*, may that marvelous virgin of Stolcius, that lady the wonder of her kind, who 'from morn to even' minis-

ters in the parabolic garden, lead us with her white hands to the concealed flower, and instruct us in the 'Romance of the Rose.'

"The search after positive truth can be pursued only in one direction. There is only one system, a sole philosophy, one single science which has ever claimed to possess or dispense. That system, that philosophy, that science is Mysticism, which professes to endow its disciples with a method of direct intercourse with the spirit of God. It is no longer a question of astral bodies and of astral shells, of earth-bound spirits, or of unprogressed disembodied humanities. It is not even a question of the souls of just men made perfect, nor yet of creating correspondence with those exalted Hierarchies of existence whose altitude of interior development transcends whatsoever can be imagined of the apex of human evolution. *It is a question of the union of man's individual Consciousness, of his Immortal part, of his inalienable interior self-possession, in the universal Consciousness of God.*

"To be qualified for a Mystic (Alchemist) a man is not called on to make any sacrifice of his reason; he must exercise it to the fullest extent, must apply it to

his personal improvement, and his progressive development. He is not required to profess any definite creed; the Mystic is concerned with the Attainment of Knowledge, not with the enunciation of dogma. But it is undeniably required of the candidate that he should be possessed of Spiritual aspirations, and, above all, of that aspiration after Immortality, which is a testimony of the interior man contributed to the truth of Immortality, and is confirmed by a testimony without in the external facts of Spiritual communion. Whosoever is acquainted with these facts has a certain and substantive knowledge on which to base his faith, and thus the Mysteries which surround him are transfigured. Even in this life he may reasonably anticipate in the future a solution of many problems to which as yet we have found no key.

“It offers a key to the future progress of Humanity, and a practical *modus operandi* for the evolution of the perfect man. These statements may be reduced within even narrower limits, and we may say: ‘Alchemy comprises a physical demonstration concerning the unseen which is around us, whence it is the true alchemical *intritus in veram atque inauditam physi-*

*cam*, and an interior illumination concerning the unseen which is *within*, together with a way to God, who is the end of all human Development. It embodies also a system of education towards the Perfect Life, both physical and Spiritual.

“These, it is submitted, are sufficient reasons for the dissemination of its doctrines and principles. But we may advance beyond this initial standpoint, and we may affirm that a way to God, and a way to the perfect life are the essential elements required in that new religion towards which all the Higher forces in humanity seem to be instinctively moving—in that new religion which shall realize the best aspirations, and constitute a transfigured synthesis of all previous creeds. Now, as existing religious systems are incommensurate to existing necessities; as faith is less than knowledge, and is therefore an inferior ground of conviction; as the Mystics offer knowledge; as knowledge is required by the age; as the development of humanity has not been perfectly accomplished by systems based on faith; as Mysticism (Alchemy) is in harmony with the conclusions of modern science, and with the theorems of modern philosophy, in harmony

with the best aspirations embodied in *all* religions, and is itself committed to no arbitrary doctrines—it is incumbent on those who receive it to spread the knowledge which they possess, to endeavor by personal experience to increase that knowledge, and undertake, so far as in them lies, to begin the education of humanity in the perfection promised by the Masters—in the doctrine of ‘elective physics’ and the Science of Spiritual election.”\*

57. Sandivogius, one of the most universally acknowledged *adepts*, speaks in the following manner of the *mysteries* involved in the nature of Man:

58. “The most high Creator was willing to manifest all natural things unto Man, wherefore he showed to us that Celestial things themselves were naturally made, by which his absolute and incomprehensible Power and Wisdom might be so much the more freely acknowledged; all which things the Philosophers (meaning the Alchemists), in the Light of Nature, as in a Looking glass, have a clear sight of. For which cause they esteemed highly of this Art (Alchemy),

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\*“Azoth, or, The Star in the East.”

viz., not so much out of covetousness for gold or silver, but for knowledge sake, not only of all natural things, but also of the power of the Creator; but they were willing to speak of these things only sparingly and figuratively, lest the Divine Mysteries by which Nature is illustrated should be discovered to the unworthy; which *thou* (reader), *if thou knowest how to KNOW THYSELF*, and art not of a stiff neck, mayest easily comprehend, created as thou art in the likeness of the great world, *yea, after the Image of God*. . . . . Thou, therefore, that desirest to attain to this Art, in the first place, put thy whole trust in God thy Creator, and urge him by thy prayers, and then assuredly believe that he will not forsake thee; for if God shall know that thy Heart is *sincere*, and that thy whole trust is put in Him, he will, by one means or another, shew thee a way, and assist thee in it, and thou shalt obtain thy desire. The Fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom. Pray, but yet work: God indeed gives understanding, but thou must know how and when to use it."

59. Cornelius Agrippa, an Alchemist, and, like many other great men, misunderstood in his day,



writes:

60. "There is one thing by God created (Man), the subject of all wonderfulness in earth and in heaven; it is actually animal, vegetable, and mineral; found everywhere, known (properly) by few, by none expressed by his proper name, but hid in numbers, figures, and riddles, without which neither Alchemy, nor natural magic, can attain their perfect end." Natural Magic, by the way, is only another name for natural philosophy.

"Behold, I'm nobler far  
Than all the Seraphim;  
For I can be what they  
They never be like me.

"My great nobility is, that being here,  
On earth, I may become  
King, Emperor, even God,  
Just what I will that may I be.

"The wise man's whole endeavor  
Is ever to be God.  
The fool doth take much trouble  
To be earth and to rot.

“The lead then will be gold,  
The battle will be won,  
When I with God, through God,  
In God be changed to one.

“God cares as much for me  
As I to him aspire.  
I help to establish Him,  
He grants all my desire.

“Through wisdom God is deep  
And broad through charity;  
Omnipotence is height,  
Length is Eternity.”\*

61. Thomas Norton, a very old writer on Alchemy of great authority (of the fifteenth century), wrote his ‘*Ordinall*’ in verse, and tells all but the very blind the real *subject* of the Art in these words:

“Noble authors, men of glorious fame,  
Called our *stone Microcosmus* by name:  
For his composition is without a doubt,  
Like to this *world* in which we walk about:  
Of Heat, of Cold, of Moist, and of Dry,

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\*“Pearls of Wisdom,” Conrad Fuhrer.

Of Hard, of Soft, of Light, and of Heavy,  
Of Rough, of Smooth, and of things stable,  
Mingled with things fleeting and movable;  
Of all kinds contrary brought to one accord,  
Knit by the doctrine of God by our blessed Lord.  
Whereby of *Metals* is made transmutation,  
Not only in color (appearance) but transubstantia-  
tion,

In which ye have need to know this thing,  
How all the virtues of the elements transmuting,  
Upon the transmuted must have full domination,  
Before that the substance be in transmutation;  
And all parts transmuted must figured be,  
In the elements transmuting impressed by degree.  
So that the third thing eliminated of them all  
Of such condition ever more he shall;  
That it truly have, it may be none other,  
But her substance of that one, and her virtue of that  
other."

62. A friend remarks at my elbow that this is  
"poetry under difficulties," which is very true. It is  
not cited, however, for its beauty, but in testimony to  
a fact.

63. In as clear a manner, George Ripley declares the *subject* of the *Stone* in the following lines:

“For as of one mass was made all thing,  
Right so much it in our practice be,  
All our Secrets of one Image must spring;  
In Philosophers’ books therefore who wishes may see,  
Our *stone* is called the less-world, one and three.”

That is, the Stone is Man, of one nature,—of body, soul, and spirit.

In “Pearls of Wisdom” we find:

“The Bread of the Lord in us  
Is like the Philosopher’s Stone;  
It maketh us to gold,  
If we be melted down.

“Thy Stone, oh Alchemist,  
Is nothing in my sight;  
The corner stone’s my elixir,  
The Stone of Wisdom’s might.”

64. In the Dialogue of *Arislaus*, published in the *Alchemist’s Enchiridion*, in 1672, *man* is indicated as the Stone in this language:

65. “Now in this discourse will I manifest to thee

the natural condition of the Stone of the Philosophers, apparelled with a triple garment, even this Stone of Riches and Charity, the Stone of Relief from Languishment;—in which is contained every secret; being a Divine Mystery and Gift of God, than which there is nothing in this world more sublime.

66. "Therefore diligently observe what I say, viz., that 'tis apparelled with a *Triple garment*, that is to say, with a *Body, Soul and Spirit*."

67. Any one having the least acquaintance with these works would recognize the *subject* of the author by this language, and that it is *Man*.

In the "*Turga Philosophorum*," *The Eleventh Dictum*, we find the following dialogue:

"*Parmenides saith*:—'Ye must know that envious men hath dealt voluminously with several waters, brodioms, stones, and metals, seeking to deceive all you who aspire after knowledge. Leave, therefore, all these, and make the white red, out of this our copper, taking copper and lead, letting these stand for grease, or blackness, and tin for the liquefaction. Know ye, further, that unless ye rule the Nature of Truth, and harmonize well together its complexions

and compositions, the consanguineous with the consanguineous, and the first with the last, ye act improperly and effect nothing, because natures will meet their natures, follow them, and rejoice. For in them they putrefy and are generated, because Nature is ruled by Nature, which destroys it, turns it into dust, reduces to nothing, and finally herself renews it, repeats, and frequently produces the same. Therefore look in books, that ye may know the Nature of Truth, what putrefies it and what renews, what savour it possesses, what neighbors it naturally has, and how they love each other, how also after love enmity and corruption intervene, and how these natures should be united one to another and made at peace, until they become gentle in the fire in similar fashion. Having, therefore, noticed the facts in this Art, set your hands to the work. If, indeed, ye know not the Natures of Truth, do not approach the work, since there will follow nothing but harm, disaster, and sadness. Consider, therefore, the teachings of the Wise, how they have declared the whole work in this saying:—Nature rejoices in Nature, and Nature contains Nature. In these words there is shewn forth unto you the whole

work. Leave, therefore, manifold and superfluous things, and take quicksilver,\* coagulate in the body of Magnesia, in Kuhul, or in Sulphur which does not burn; make the same nature white, and place it upon our Copper, when it becomes white. And if ye cook it still more, it becomes red, when if ye proceed to coction, it becomes gold.\*\* I will tell you that it turns the sea itself red and the color of gold. Know ye also that gold is not turned into redness save by Permanent Water, because Nature rejoices in Nature. Reduce, therefore, the same by means of cooking into a humour, until the hidden nature appear. If, therefore, it be manifested externally, seven times imbue the same with water, cooking, imbuing, and washing,

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\*“Mercury, according to the Greek Epistle of Synesius, is like wax, which readily assumes any color that is imparted to it, for Mercury whitens all bodies and attracts their souls; it digests them by coction, and takes complete possession of them.

\*\*This clearly refers to the development and its different stages up to the complete Development or Supreme Initiation when the Baser metals have been transmuted into clear gold, or in other words, the Passions have been developed into a pure Soul and Immortality is a *felt* fact.

until it become red. O these celestial natures, multiplying the natures of truth by the will of God! O the potent Nature, which overcame and conquered natures, and caused its natures to rejoice and be glad. This, therefore, is that special and spiritual nature to which the God thereof can give what fire cannot. Consequently, we glorify and magnify that (species), than which nothing is more precious in the true tincture, or the like in the smallest degree to be found. This is that truth which those investigating Wisdom Love. For when it is liquefied with bodies, the highest operation is affected. If ye knew the truth, what great thanks ye would give me! Learn, therefore, that while you are tingeing the cinders, you must destroy those that are mixed. For it overcomes those which are mixed, and changes them to its own color. And as it visibly overcame the surface, even so it mastered the interior. And if one be volatile but the other endure the fire, either joined to the other endures the fire. Know also, that if the vapors have whitened the surfaces, they will certainly whiten the interiors. Know further, all ye seekers after Wisdom, that one matter



overcomes four, and our Sulphur\* alone consumes all things.'

"*The Turba Answereth*:—"Thou hast spoken excellently well, O Parmenides, but thou has not demonstrated the disposition of the smoke to posterity, nor how the same is whitened!" "

"The *Magnus Opus*, the highest point and pitch of Transcendental Science, was the establishment of a direct correspondence with the Hierarchies of supra-mundane subsistence. It is true that it included Alchemy, the mystery of the *sol-chemicorum*, which was such an investigation of natural secrets as would elicit a practical method for the conversion of certain substances, generally metallic, into gold and silver. Transcendental Science included also the entire scope of transcendental medicine, the search for the Elixir of Life, for the Universal Medicine, and the Renewal

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\*"Sulphur, Mercury and Salt figure in all Hermetic literature as the most indispensable principles of the Magnum Opus. The later writers never weary of affirming that they are *not* the substances *commonly* so called, but this does not appear so plainly in earlier and especially in Greek Authors.

of Youth—conceptions which were understood by the Magicians in a more or less literal sense. There was, finally, the evocation of the Souls of the departed, which must take rank among the most important and fascinating achievements of Ceremonial Magic.”\*

In the Invocations which were used in the Eleusinian Mysteries, known as the Mystical Hymns of Orpheus, we find some of the most beautiful Evocations that the human mind can imagine. For instance, the one to Sleep, with the Fumigation of the Poppy which contains a Mystery in itself, and which was always certain, though extremely dangerous to the *un-Initiated*, was as follows:

“Sleep, king of Gods, and men of mortal birth,  
Sov’reign of all, sustain’d by mother Earth;  
For thy dominion is supreme alone,  
O’er all extended, and by all things known.  
’Tis thine all bodies with benignant mind.  
In other hands than those of brass to bind.  
Tamer of cares to weary toil repose,  
And from whom sacred solace in affliction flows.

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\*“Azoth, or, The Star in the East.”

Thy pleasing gentle chains preserve the soul,  
And e'en the dreadful cares of death control;  
For Death, and Lethe with oblivious stream,  
Mankind thy genuine brothers justly deem.  
With fav'ring aspect to my pray'r incline.  
*And save thy mystics in their works divine."*

68. In the sequel we shall adduce many other evidences in confirmation of this point, to wit, that all the books of Alchemy treat of *man*; and they treat of no other thing in the universe except in its relation to *man*; but never, when treating of the mysteries of the Art, by this proper name.

69. Man is the central object in all alchemical books; yet, not man as he is an individual, but as he is a *nature*, containing or manifesting the great world, or as he is the Image of God.

70. Whoever desires to understand anything of Alchemy must carry this idea along with him in reading works on the subject; and then, however much he may dissent from the principles or pretensions of the *art*, he may form some comprehension of the use made by this class of writers of the symbolic works, salt, sulphur, mercury, sol, luna, etc., and under these or other

similar names may be discovered, if any one thinks it worth while, what the writers thought of God, Nature, and Man, or Man, Nature, and God,—one and three, three and one.’’

“To speak of God without Nature, is more than we can do, for we have not known him so, and to speak of Nature without God, is more than we may do, for we should rob God of his Glory, and attribute those Effects to Nature, which belong properly to God, and to the spirit of God, which works in Nature. We shall therefore use a mean form of speech, between these extremes, and this form the Scriptures have taught us, for the Prophets and Apostles, have used no other. Let not any man therefore be offended, if in this Discourse we shall use Scripture to prove Philosophy, and Philosophy to prove Divinity, for of a truth our knowledge is such, that our Divinity is not without Nature nor our Philosophy without God. Notwithstanding, I dare not think but most men will repine at this course, though I cannot think, wherefore they should, for when I join Scripture and Philosophy, I do but join God and Nature, an union certainly approved of by God, though it be condemned of men.

But this perverse ignorance, how bold soever it be, I shall not quarrel with, for besides Scripture, I have other grounds, that have brought me very fairly, and soberly to this Discourse.'\*

71. Although the writers refer to Man by an endless variety of names, as representing the true Proteus, they most commonly speak of him as a *Metal*, or *Mineral*; hence one says:

72. "Minerals have their roots in the air, their heads and tops in the earth. Our Mercury is aerial; look for it, therefore, in the air and the earth."

73. In this passage, *Minerals* and *our Mercury* refer to the same thing, and it is the *subject* of Alchemy, the Stone; and we may remember that Plato is said to have defined or described *Man* as a growth having his root in the air, his tops in the earth. Man walks indeed upon the surface of the earth, as if nothing impeded his vision of heaven; but he walks nevertheless at the bottom of the atmosphere, and between these two, his *root* in the air, he must work out his salvation.

74. Another writer says: "Minerals made of living

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\*"Euphrates, or the Waters of the East," Philalethes,

mercury and *living* sulphur (Soul and Body), are to be chosen; work with them sweetly, not with haste and precipitancy."

75. Again: "Those that know the mercury and sulphur of the Philosophers, know that they are made of pure gold and the finest luna and argent vive (Soul, Body, and Spirit, considered essentially), which are daily seen, and looked upon, from which our argent vive is elicited."

Regarding this Luna and Argent Vive, Dr. Waite, in his "Azoth, or the Star in the East," says: "It is clear that the adepts of a true, and above all of a Divine, science would not inclose their mysteries in cryptograms, which exercise only the ingenuity of the seeker, and give no guarantee whatever of his moral or spiritual qualifications. Now, the key which we refer to is precisely that which, on our presumption, we ought to have found in alchemical literature, and it is actually the importance of man in the Art. He, says St. Chrysostom, is "The most resplendent and glorious image, and the most exquisite portal and epitome of the unseen world." This is the key-note of Spiritual Mysticism, and it is the key-note of

practical alchemy. "If that which thou seekest thou findest not *within* thee, thou wilt never find it without thee," says Alipili. Among the strange, archaic treatises comprised, in the *Turba Philosophorum*, there is one which, by a characteristic Hermetic evasion, is ascribed to the patriarch Abel. If it be possible to speak with more force on this point than was done by the Arabian Alchemist, then the words of Pseudo-Abel may perhaps be even more direct and convincing. "Man is the mountain of mountains, the stone of stones, the tree of trees, the root of roots, the earth of earths. All these things he includes *within* himself, and God has given to him to be the preserver of all things." It is, therefore, in man himself that we are directed to seek for the solution of that chief crux of alchemy, the nature and locality of the First Matter of Philosophers. Even if all Magical power is in the inward man, so is the *Magnum Opus* defined to be before all things the creation of man by himself, and that perfect emancipation of his will which ensures his universal dominion over Azoth and the domain of Magnesia. "In us is the power of all wonderful things, which the Supreme Creator has, of His infinite

mercy, implanted in our Soul; out of her is to be extracted the First Matter, the true *Argent Vive*, the *O* of the Philosophers, the veritable *Ens* of *Sol*, namely, a Spiritual, living Gold, which will endure fire, test, and coppel. Our soul has the power, when the body is free of any pollution, the heart void of malice and offence, spiritually and magically to act upon on any matter whatever. Therefore have I said that the First Matter is in the soul, and the extracting thereof is to bring the dominant power of the true, pure, living, breathing spirit and eternal soul into act." So also Geber, perhaps the most ancient of the adepts who are historically traceable, declares that "the universal orb of the earth contains not so great mysteries and excellencies as man reformed by God in His image."

76. "The work," says one, "while yet crude, is called our water permanent, our lead, our Saturn, our Jupiter; when better decocted, then it is argent, then magnesia, and white sulphur; when it is red, it is called auripigment, coral, gold, ferment, or stone, a lucid water of celestial color."

77. "Our Stone," says another, "in the beginning is called water; when the body is dissolved, air or



wind; when it tends to consolidation, then it is named earth; and when it is perfect and fixed, it is called *fire*.”\*

As to the Fire, this has many meanings, but in all Philosophy it refers to the Soul of man and to his God. Paul Miltz, in his translation of “Pearls of Wisdom,” says:

“When in me, God is the fire and I in Him the light;  
Then are we *one* indeed, also eternal quite.

“God is a fire, Spirit, Being, Light;  
And yet again, He none of all these light.

“If God be deemed a fire, my heart the hearth must be  
Upon which He doth consume the word of vanity.”

78. Again: “Although the wise men have varied their names and perplexed their sayings, yet they would always have us think but of one only thing, one disposition, one way. The wise men know this one thing; and that it is one they have often proved.”

79. This one thing is, first, Man, as a *Nature*; one, essentially, or substantially;—but when the writers refer to man phenomenally, they speak of him under

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\*See “Philosophy of Fire.”

different names indicating different states, as he is before or after purification; or they refer to his Body, his Soul, or his Spirit under different names. Sometimes they speak of the whole man as mercury, or by some other name, and then by the same word perhaps they speak of something special as "*our mercury*," which has besides a multitude of other names.

By *our mercury*, *our sulphur*, etc., they mean the philosopher's mercury, and not the common mineral.

80. I am not defending this mode of writing, but I affirm that the whole subject of Alchemy is Man. Each writer, for the most part, designates him by a word of his own choosing; hence one writes of *Antimony*, another of *Lead*, another of *Zinc*, another of *Arsenic*, etc.; Men are designated most frequently by the metals; but these are often called by astronomical names, as *Saturn*, *Jupiter*, *Mars*, etc., the best men, by nature, being likened to gold, and the inferior men to the inferior metals.

8. Although men are of diverse dispositions and tempers, some being angelic and others satanic, yet the Alchemists insist with St. Paul that "all the nations of men are of one blood;" that is, of one *nature*; and

that, in man, by which he is one nature it is the special object of Alchemy to bring into life and action, by means of which, if it could universally prevail, mankind would be constituted into a brotherhood.

Says A. E. Waite: "The great work of Human Reconstruction (Alchemy becoming practical) may be begun by any person vitally interested therein, even in his own home, and in his own family. It is indeed there that it should and must begin. The domestic hearth is the true Mystic Lodge of the New Life, and the Masonic and Rosicrucian analogies which abound therein may be elaborated with more profit than any vindication of Solomon's Temple spiritualized. There should we look to find the perfect Ashler in the Master of the Household, and the great process of the hewing of the Rough Ashler in the shaping of the Youth of the Household. There should the Spiritual Temple be created and visibly made manifest. There at each birth should Christ enter anew into the world. Each daily illustration should symbolize anew the one baptism of the Spirit, and each meal a sacrificial offering and a Eucharistic communion."

82. "This is properly the 'mercury of the Phil-

osophers,' and this is what is referred to when M. Figuier, quoting the Alchemists, says: '*La seule difficile, dans la preparation de la pierre philosophale, consiste donc a obtenir le mercure des philosophes.*' He goes on to say, speaking of the theory, yet supposing an agent for transmuting metals is the object, that, this mercury once found, the work is easy,—a work for 'women and children.' He adds, still quoting the Alchemists, that this work is no slight undertaking; that all the Alchemists acknowledge it to be a work above human power, and that it can be obtained only by the grace of God, or by the friendship of an adept to whom it has been revealed. He says it is called *animated mercury, double mercury, mercury twice born, the green lion, the serpent, sharp water, vinegar, virgin's milk, etc.*; but he adds (speaking now for himself) *that none of the Alchemists have ever discovered it.*'

83. With due deference to M. Figuier, I expect to show that this *mercury* is no other than a pure conscience, or a conscience purified under a sense of the presence of God; and the "difficulty" of *discovering* it is the difficulty of *exciting* or rousing it in the

Breast of man in order to his improvement.

84. The ordinary method of attempting to act upon man is through *hope* on the one side, of *fear* on the other; *as if these were the only active principles in man.*

## CHAPTER II.

I would submit the question to any teacher of youth or guide of those more advanced in life, whether the whole difficulty, and therefore the whole *Art*, in improving man, is not in establishing in his heart a permanent, enduring sense of absolute right, and an undeviating purpose of being governed by it. It is one of the most difficult things in the world to take a man in what is called his natural state, St. Paul's natural man, after he has been for years in the indulgence of all of his passions, having a view of what is called the world, to honors, pleasures, or wealth, and make him sensible to the mere abstract claims of *right*, and willing to relinquish one single passion in deference to it. Most assuredly this is the one grand task of teachers; but this once accomplished, the work of improvement is easy, and may very properly be said to be "children's play."

2. Consider a man ever seeking only what may gratify some selfish passion, a stranger to all generous impulses, unconscious perhaps of their existence, or only regarding their manifestation in others as evidence of imbecility and weakness: how is such a man

to be brought out of this state into a better view of things, so as to feel his dependence upon others, and appreciate their claims upon him? Take a man whose soul is corrupted by all sorts of bad passions, until he has become morbidly sensitive to everything that in any manner interferes with his personal comfort; let him be petulant, irritable, and morose;—how is such a man to be improved? We might speak of downright sins, which generate a class of men, a few of whom find their temporal homes in prisons and penitentiaries, or expiate their crimes upon the gallows. How are such men to be stopped in their career, and brought to a sense of duty? Undoubtedly the great “difficulty” in all these cases is to bring into action the philosophical *mercury*; that is, to awaken the conscience, which lies buried in them; but though buried and inactive, “it is not dead, but sleepeth.”

Says Ethelbert Johnson, in his “Altar in the Wilderness”: “When the Will is educated and freed by knowledge from the entanglements of materiality and animality, new and noble virtues are formed; these are self-reliance, self-control, self-direction. Then does the individual become a strong self-conscious

centre of evolutionary forces, and when united with divine Love all that he contacts are uplifted, for it is through the purified Will that regeneration and redemption are consummated. Moreover, the Will, through wisdom and aspiration, brings illumination and the knowledge of heavenly things, by which our consciousness expands to the consciousness of God. Then all the possibilities of creation are opened before us, with a realization of the perfectibility of the divine plan and an ecstasy of soul which can but exclaim: "Not my will but Thine be done."

3. Take another class, more numerous than any other,—those who are distracted between contrary passions, such as a love of pleasure and a love of money, or a love of glory and a love of ease. What peace can such people have, or how is it possible for them to enjoy tranquility? They need a complete revolution of character or disposition. So with those who, under a vague notion of being in the right, have no more solid foundation for it than self-conceit,—who think the whole world wrong but themselves; and are uneasy and unhappy with everything around them which does not happen to be adjusted to their



particular wishes and predilections. Such people often look with an evil eye upon Providence, which, somehow, proceeds to its general ends in total disregard of all incongruous individualities. How are such people to be dealt with? To tell them plainly that they are in error, is only to arouse their enmity and excite opposition; but create in them the philosophical mercury,—set their conscience on fire,—and the remedy is at hand; but to do this is the great “difficulty.” Who doubts this but those who are in need of this same mercury?

When our attachments to material things has ceased, when we are no longer dependent upon them for every sensation and pleasure we can judge them at their true value, and love them for what they really are—beautiful stepping stones towards divinity. It is a false philosophy of religion that teaches men to hate the things of the world and of the flesh, for nothing exists which has not its proper use and purpose, and is, therefore, immaculate in its naturalness. The ignorant misuse of things and powers, in themselves pure and holy, causes the pain and sorrow we mistake for evil.

When we really know the material world, we learn

to truly love it, and, loving, we try to serve and uplift. Then, too, we grasp the purpose of the angelic ghost in its descent into matter; for, as an ancient mystic has said, "The angels aspire to become men, because the perfect man, the man-god, is above even the angels;" and St. Paul wrote to his followers, "Know ye not that ye shall judge angels." The perfect man is greater than the angels in his ability to serve his fellow men, for through right knowledge, and the compassion that is born of his knowledge he is equipped above and beyond them in his capacity to uplift and redeem humanity.

The law of self-sacrifice is the highest evolutionary law, and the only one by which the enlightened soul may hope to advance. In self-sacrifice alone lies true greatness; in renunciation and service the only enduring bliss; from this we can understand why one of the greatest souls, who worked consciously with this law said to his disciples, "He that would be greatest among you, let him be the servant of all."\*

4. There are no people in the world so suspicious

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\*"The Altar in the Wilderness."

and sensitive as those who are in error. They are like porcupines; you cannot approach them without danger, and truly do the Alchemists refer to these various kinds of people under such names as *Arsenic*, *Vitriol*, *Vipers*, etc., and yet all these substances, as well as in *Antimony*, *Lead*, and a thousand other things (all figuratively used), they seek for a certain mercury, which itself has as many names as the substances in which it is found; as oil, vinegar, honey, wormwood, etc.; and yet this same mercury is considered as one only unalterable thing. It is called an incombustible sulphur, because in whomsoever the conscience is properly awakened, a fire is raised which burns and consumes everything opposed to its own nature.

5. If any one doubts this, let him study the nature of the conscience, and see how uncompromising it is; that it is ubiquitous; it is everywhere present with its subject. Of the conscience it may be truly said, Whither can a man go to escape from it, or how can a man flee from its presence? If he ascent up into heaven, it is there; and if he makes his bed in hell, it is there also. If once roused, it can in no manner be quieted and put to rest but by an unreserved and un-

qualified submission; but then, though it had pursued its victim as an avenging fire, the moment it attains its legitimate supremacy it unfolds its healing virtues and becomes an assuaging balm, a *sovereign medicine*,—the medicine of the Alchemists,—the only true Aesculapius of a “wounded spirit.”

Says A. E. Waite, in his “Azoth, or, The Star in the East”: “The spiritual interpretation of the literature of the physical Mystics is not a new interpretation. It began openly with Jacob Bohme, but it was systematically developed in the *Suggestive Inquiry into the Hermetic Mystery and Alchemy*. However, both in the writings of the Teutonic Theosophists, and in the wonderful elaboration by the daughter of Mr. South, or again in the hundred and one successors in the ‘spiritual hermeneutics’ of Transmutation literature—from Hitchcock to Hartmann; from Eliphas Levi to the ‘adept’ Papus—the system has dealt only with the department of Hermetic Psychology. *It has never been discerned that the principles which work mystically in the soul can be applied outwardly in the body of man—that if Alchemy in its higher significance can inform us of the soul’s development, and of*

*the end of the soul therein, it has something also to tell us of the mystery of our physical evolution, and of a coming glory in the manifest even as in the withdrawn order. But the adornment of the vessel of philosophy is of high importance in our Holy Art. The redemption of the body must be accomplished along with the 'salvation of the soul.' We must not underrate the importance of the vehicle of interior perfection, for we are incarnate here to no purpose if we neglect our bodies. The law of evolution must fulfill its course in both the inward and the outward man. The exclusively spiritual interpretation is, we think, an error of enthusiasm which has operated on suggestive texts and ignored the context, and has forgotten that the lives of the alchemists were in many cases those of laborious investigators into natural secrets, distinct from arch-natural experience. There is no doubt, at the same time, that the texts to which we refer are sufficient in number and gravity to excuse, if they do not warrant, the conclusion, while there are many individual cases which possess a peculiar force. 'As soon as any one discerns 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.' Here, as in a multitude of similar cases, there is stronger language than could be reasonably used in connection with a physical secret, and it derives a fresh significance when it is compared with the dark hints that are found in writers like Norton, who refer to an operation that is not of metals or minerals, but belongs to a high order, is comprehended by few, and is of truly philosophical character. This is that work which begins with a Heavenly Mercury and an imperfect body purified, while glory of its triumphing conclusion is the whole end, as it is also the one ecstasy of the illuminated and the wise."

6. A study of the Conscience may furnish something of a key to the ancient Stoic doctrine, that *pain is not an evil*;<sup>\*</sup> for it is not said that pain is not pain by saying that it is not evil. The only *evil* in the

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\*".... In this way pain leads to knowledge, as also pleasure leads to knowledge; and experiencing these two sides of manifested nature the Soul gathers a little knowledge of the underlying reality of things. Gathering thus the experience which may be, and often is, painful in the gathering, it transmutes its ex-

world is a self-condemnation, or a condemnation of one's own conscience. Pain, as such, does not suppose this, and is in its own nature transient. It may be mitigated or removed by the skill of a physician; or, if it terminates in the death of the body, this is a simple, natural event, and has no necessary connection with the conscience, and is, therefore, not an evil under the definition assumed. Then, with regard to the pain of self-condemnation, this is so far from be-

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perience into knowledge, changes this knowledge into wisdom, which then it takes as its guide; as the knowledge accumulates which is held by the real man, this growing self is beginning to realize what it is; as it transmutes it into wisdom, the wisdom is ever a source of pure and unadulterated joy. This growing wisdom ever means an increasing vision, an increasing serenity, and an increasing strength. So that to it, that which to the lower nature is painful is not unwelcome as bringing with it experience; where some eagerly grasped gratification is found to bring disappointment and weariness to the true man, he changes that experience into wisdom; so that from his standpoint even pain has its joyous side, for he sees in the experience not the transitory pain of the lower nature, but the gain of knowledge to the higher, and he realizes that all these experiences mean his own

ing absolutely evil, that it is universally adjudged to be a sign of some true life in the moral system, which needs only due management to revive and fortify the subject of it.

7. From this view, the worst evil, that is, the worst condition in life, is one in which the conduct is irregular, under a sleeping conscience, a *patient* suffering nothing for the time being, though his course of life may be daily "heaping up wrath against the day"

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growth in knowledge and in power; he chooses them with a deliberate joy in the choosing, because he sees the end of the working, and the gold that comes out of the fire.

"But supposing we take the human being, blinded with ignorance, in the lower world; suppose we find him learning these lessons which nature is continually teaching, lessons which are stern and painful; suppose we see him seeking animal gratifications, careless of the loss inflicted upon others, careless of the suffering which results to those around him, plunging over others in order to grasp for himself some object of desire; then certainly when he finds it fall to pieces in his grasp, his first feeling will be one of acute pain, of intense disappointment, a sense of weariness and of disgust. And so, looked at from this standpoint, the experience is a truly painful one, although from



of wrath.”

8. As a protection against this condition, nature seems to have provided a *tendency to fear* Imaginary and even impossible evils, having various names, which, it is said, “ought not to be mentioned to polite ears.”

9. It must be considered that a healthy action of the conscience always precedes a contemplated evil deed. This it is which establishes the specific difference be-

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that higher standpoint it is one that was well worth the gathering because of the wisdom which it brings, the deeper insight into nature, and the surer knowledge of Law. But it is far more than that. The lower and the higher find themselves in conflict; the higher wills a certain achievement; through the lower it has to work; the lower understands not the aim of the higher, realizes not the object which the higher sees; without that co-operation of the lower the object of the higher cannot be accomplished, and so there is a struggle with the lower nature, sometimes to force it forwards, sometimes to hold it back, and the whole of this, to the lower nature still wrapped in ignorance, results as a feeling of restraint, a feeling of enforced giving up of what it desires to have; but slowly there comes into the lower nature, as the higher works upon it more effectually, an understanding that it is well

tween regret and remorse, and constitutes the true evil of a wicked deed. A deed, considered in itself, is independent of both its pains and its pleasures, which, in respect to the conscience, are merely contingent, accidental, and temporal.

Here it may be well to call attention to a matter of importance to every true student. He would look upon evil and Satan as one and the same thing, humanity could hardly labor under a more mistaken idea than

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that that thing should be done, that although there may be pain in the doing, the pain is well worth the suffering, and that this overcoming of difficulty by effort, while the effort in itself is painful, still results in so much gain of strength that the mere passing pain of the effort is lost in the joy of the achieving. Thus as the Soul is developed, there will be, even so far as the lower nature is concerned, this double working in the intellect, in the mind of man, in which he will deliberately choose a thing which is difficult to achieve because he realizes it as supremely desirable; yet he cannot gain it without sacrificing some lower desire, and he sacrifices them and burns them up, as it were, in the fire of knowledge. He then finds that as he does it he burns up limitations that held him down, that he burns up weaknesses that held him back, and that the touch of the fire, which seemed at first pain-

this is. Ethelbert Johnson, in the work "The Altar in the Wilderness," says: "Why should the great arch-angel, who, according to the Hebrew and Christian mystagogy was the first to leave Paradise to assist humanity in its upward struggle, be regarded as an evil spirit? He it was that first whispered to the new born soul a hint of its possibilities, and awakened in infant man an ideal and an aspiration to return to his birthright and become a god.

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ful, is really nothing more than the burning of these chains that held him. Then he joyfully takes the freedom, and as the experience is repeated, he realizes more and more the freedom, and less and less the suffering by which the freedom is gained. So that from that *inner* standpoint once more this suffering is changed into joy, for here again is the Divine Alchemy, and he sees that in this pouring forth of the Higher into the lower (this Transmutation) the Higher is bringing the lower to share its joy and to feel more of its permanent and increasing bliss. And then when the Soul is approaching the gateway of the Temple, when this process is to a great extent understood, the Soul will begin to see that all this is really a process of getting rid of limitations, and that the whole of the suffering is in these limitations, which prevent it from realizing its oneness with its brothers as well as its oneness with the Divine. As this is

"Satan's mission was a Holy one. The soul could not forever remain in its childhood; the passive purity of the Golden Age must end, and the strenuous spiritual life begin, as no higher evolution would be possible to a being, inherently perfect, who could accumulate neither merit nor demerit.

"Many of us recall an hour in our childhood, when we heard from the lips of a grown-up friend a tale of heroic achievement or some stirring story, which awoke within us a faint perception of our own potentialities. We were never the same again: the playthings, which

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understood, and the pouring forth of the Divine Nature, which is the true man, expresses itself, it will constantly be felt that by the bursting of the limitations this diviner joy is found, and that the pain after all is again a question of separation, that the separation has its root in ignorance, and that with the destruction of ignorance there is also the ceasing of pain. And not only that, but as this limitation is felt to be illusory, as this limitation is seen as apparent and not real, and as having no part in the world where the true man is living, then he will begin deliberately to *transmute* these faculties of the lower nature, and by this Alchemical process refine them in the way at which I have hinted in the beginning."

"In the Outer Court," Annie Beasant.

a short time before had made us supremely happy, were cast aside and we longed for manhood and a larger world. Perhaps in after years we realized that this story was the greatest influence that ever entered our lives, and that it spurred us to effort again and again renewed. For in the child as in the man is no stimulation to endeavor so strong as the discontent with one's self caused by a new Ideal.

“Wise indeed is the Soul to listen to Satan and to choose to become as a god knowing good and evil; to prefer torture and even seeming death to blind, imbecile obedience. Thus only can it fulfill its destiny, which is to uplift the material world through Wisdom and Love. We cannot redeem what we do not love, we cannot love what we do not know. Hence it is first necessary for the spiritual soul to know matter, to enter into it, suffer the limitations of form, and assimilate all the experiences which the contact with the other forms can give.

“In time the soul will learn that this contact, with its resulting attachment to material things, brings pain, and that nothing is so illusory as form. Then will it seek the *within* of matter; and here new and

more illusive trials await it, for within matter there is, as stated by Plato, a blind refractory force which resists the will of the Great Artificer. This force it is that is symbolized as Satan. It is the creative fire; the struggling, differentiating life seeking continual expression in form; it is individual effort, liberty, independence. As a force it is as necessary to evolution as the opposite unfolding, ingathering love force of Christ; yet it is a dangerous power for the infant soul to contact, for, through its ignorance, the soul is in danger of being swept away by an energy so formidable instead of laying hold of it and using it as a means of advancement. If controlled by this force the soul comes under the dominion of Satan, who is the Opposer, the Tester, the Great Separator.

“It is through opposition that we become strong, hence we see that it is harder to withstand the degenerating influence of luxury than of poverty. A family or nation is not in greatest danger while poor and struggling, but when it has acquired wealth and leisure, and succumbed to the subtle voluptuous temptations which these bring. Opposition means conflict, and to the soul conflict and pain mean progress.

Therefore, wealth is the severest test of the soul's endurance; for wealth, alas, buys the semblance of greater things—the semblance of Love, the semblance of Pleasure, aye, even the semblance of Virtue can be wealth's for the asking, and it is so much easier to be satisfied with the readily-attained False than to strive after the hard-earned True. The soul's most difficult task is to overcome the inertia resulting from the glamour of riches. For Dives is apt to believe he has conquered the world and that nothing is worth contending for save those things which gold can buy—pomp, power, and the swine's husks of sensual pleasures."

10. Conscience is a study by itself. The Alchemists often speak of it as in a "crude" state, and call it common mercury (not that which they call *our* mercury), when, in many men, it is hardly recognizable, and its possessor is scarcely conscious that he has such a companion, which nevertheless is the witness of all that is done. In this state its possessor is in danger of temporarily mistaking for it some transient passion, a love of money, or of reputation; as, where a question of *right* is settled by the influence of personal wishes

or the love of applause.

11. This is not the true philosophical mercury, which is *the sense of Right acting under the consciousness of the presence of God*, when all deceits and equivocations become of no avail, and the soul is compelled to sit in judgment upon itself. This is the commencement of that internal reformation of character which will endure, and flame up all the brighter, under trials. To bring about this reformation *according to nature, and not by violence*, is one great object of the Alchemists.

12. Yet this is but an entrance upon what is called the "great work," of the *end* of which it is not my purpose to speak at length. This, we say, is the way to the Philosopher's Stone; but the End "is not yet."

"If we are possessed of the Great Stone of the Philosophers, it is not to hide it in a napkin, but to turn the world to gold. Let not, therefore, the cold severity of a calculating practical criticism condemn our wisdom as a dreamer's lore, gorgeous, perhaps, but still a light of dream; *it is the gospel of a new work; it is the development of man the perfect. Ours is the prospective field of evolution; our domain is the Ascent of*



*Humanity. Man's future in the physical order is a prospect which has been opened to us by science; that prospect has kindled the enthusiasm of a noble and ennobling aspiration; and that aspiration it is our work to exalt into religion. The last word of science is the initial message of the New Mysticism.'\**

13. What one principle is it, more than any other, that confines the extravagances and wanderings of the race within definite limits, so that each age in history recognizes itself in every other? It is not *reason*, however strongly this is claimed as the distinguishing endowment of man, but it is the *sense of right*, that is, conscience. This makes itself felt all the more by the wrongs of all sorts which mark the pages of history. It is this principle, the principles or sense of *right*, well or ill understood, which lies at the foundation of international law, and theoretically determines all national controversies. All questions between independent nations are theoretically decided by the same principle that disposes of controversies between any two of the humblest individuals. In national quarrels

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\*“Azoth, or, The Star in the East.”

vast results, of course, depend upon mere power; but the moral sense of the world is not thereby overcome, and in all cases the impartial historian, in his own sense of right, appeals to this same sense in the race, and fixes the moral judgment of mankind upon all national acts.

14. All laws, also, in civilized states, are theoretically based upon the sense of the *just*, and aim at the security of *right*. Juries are impanalled to do *justice*; that is, to discover and enforce *right*. In short, throughout society, in every phase and department of it, whether on a large or a small scale, whatever is *wrong* instantly arouses (in the true man) the sense of *right*, with a disposition to establish it. Efforts are then made in some shape or other to rectify the wrong, and reason is but an humble aid employed to find out and apply the remedy. How far the right end is attained in the *disposition* to attain it, may be a question worthy a Socrates to discuss.

15. This sense of right is what the Alchemists call an immaterial, incorruptible, and inextinguishable *fire*, which, Pontanus says, "is a matter, mineral, equal, continuous, vapors or fumes not, unless too

much provoked; partakes of sulphur (as the jargon runs, meaning a celestial spirit), and is taken otherwise than from matter; it destroys all things, dissolves, congeals, coagulates, and calcines,—is adapted to penetrate,—and is a compendium without any great cost." It *transmutes*, but "is not itself transmuted with the matter, because it is nothing of the matter."

16. Precisely here a student may take exception to this doctrine, and declare that the powers thus attributed to what the Alchemists call their *fire*, is entirely out of proportion to the powers of the Conscience. But the student will ultimately see that these seemingly extraordinary powers will be in perfect harmony with the Law of the Conscience, which prepares the *subject* of it for that higher state to which the conscience, in its simpler form, is but the *way*, as we have chosen to call it.

17. Now, when the *conscience*, wherein the sense of right and justice has existence, becomes active under the *idea of God*, it is endowed with supernatural force, and is then, as I understand it, the Alchemist's Philosophical mercury: it is also his salt of mercury: it is no less his "*sovereign treacle*," of which much may be

read in their books, though of a kind quite unlike that of a justly celebrated novelist of the day. This is also the *salt of tartar*, of which we read in alchemical works: it is also the *spirit of wine*, "driven to the center by cold," but not thereby destroyed; on the contrary, it is only made more piercing and active, though the removal of the *envelope* may need an *external fire*; for we read in these books of one, two, three, and four fires—names for various powers in nature, which will be pointed out in due course. This is also the *viperine salt* described with wonderful properties, and said to have an *oil* of marvelous qualities, as we may read in a work with the following curious *hermetic* title: "*New Experiments upon Vipers; containing also an exact description of all the parts of a Viper, the seat of his poison, and the several effects thereof; together with the exquisite remedies that by the skillful may be drawn from Vipers for the cure of their bitings as well as for other maladies.*"

18. This volume (a hermetic work on man) was originally written in French, but was published in English in 1670.

19. "The Volatile Salt of Vipers," says this writer,

“is to be considered as a *Sun*, as well among the parts that rise by *distillation* (one of the words used for the effects of experience in life), as among those that rest in the retort; there being none among those that are come over, but have borrowed from it all the virtue it can have; nor any of those that remain, but have need of it, or are useless without it.” These writers often speak of man as a *retort*, an *alembic*, a *cucurbit*, in which *fermentation* takes place and thoughts are *distilled*. He is sometimes called a *furnace*, a name also applied to great nature itself, the great furnace. “The phlegm,” the author continues, “that rises first, carries always some part with it, without which it would produce no effect. That which is called Spirit is nothing else, to speak aright, but a volatile salt, which in the distillation hath been followed by a little *phlegm* dissolving it and giving it the form of a spirit; which may be shown by the *rectification*, wherein that saline volatile part is separated, raised, and coagulated into a *white* and crystalline form, and leaveth at the bottom of the cucurbit the moisture that had changed its nature, and is nothing else but phlegm.

20. “We say on this occasion the same thing of

what many authors improperly call the *volatile spirit* of the *human skull* (can we not see the author's meaning?), of hartshorn, and of other parts of animals, they being nothing else but volatile salts mixed with phlegm, which they afterwards quit, *when they are rectified*. . . . . The terrestrial part hath nothing in it that deserves to be considered, and it may justly be called *terra mortua* (dead earth), after it is freed from its fixed salt. (Some of the writers called it *terra damnata*; St. Paul calls it the 'body of sin.') So that all the parts that rise by distillation, as well as those that cannot rise, are of small force or altogether useless, without the volatile salt. It is therefore upon good reason that we attribute to it the principal virtues which a Viper (*alias* the natural man) can furnish."

21. To point out the medicinal action of this salt, this writer says: "The similitude of substance which the *volatile salt of viper* hath with the spiritous part of our body, conjoined to its subtle and piercing quality, is the reason, that, accommodating itself to their condition, and finding all liberty for its action (by the removal of 'superfluities' to be hereafter explained),

it produceth all the effects it is capable of, (that is, under given conditions it does all it *can*,) and penetrates without any opposition into the most secret and the most remote parts of the body. It hath this peculiar property, that though it acts as a *sovereign*, and finds nothing of resistance to its dominion, yet it exerts its power not as a conqueror, nor as a destroyer, but rather as a *Restorer* of the places and parts where it passeth; and although all its courses are extraordinary quick and precipitate, yet they are so well measured and so well directed that no part of the body misseth them, and that none of its steps is unuseful, but rather very beautiful to all the places where it passeth."

22. "To judge well of the effects which the Volatile Salt (of Vipers?) can produce in our bodies, we must know its manner of operation, which is to open, to comminute, to assenuate, to pierce, and to drive to the extreme parts of the body, and through the pores of the skin,—(this is all said in a moral and not a physical sense,)—all the impurities and all the strange (heterogene) bodies, that can get out by those ways. Further, it is an enemy to all corruption, very friendly

and very agreeable to our nature, which it assists and fortifies, enabling it to expel, not only by the process of the skin, but by siege, and by all the emunctories of the body, the superfluous humors which molest it; whence it comes to pass, that it produces admirable effects upon a thousand occasions, curing a great number of sicknesses, or at least giving great relief therein, even in those that are most refractory and most difficult to cure; such as apoplexies, lethargies, convulsions, agues, and many other maladies, believed *to have their source in the brain.*”

23. If this writer had said that a purified conscience regulates many wanderings of the intellect, he would *openly* have said what he really meant, and what no one denies.

“A physician who knows nothing of Alchemy can only be a servant of Nature, however well he may be versed in the science of external things; but the Alchemist is her lord. If the physician cannot *infuse* Vitality into decaying parts, he cannot effect a cure, but must wait until Nature accomplishes the task; but he who can guide the Power of Life can guide and



command Nature.”\*

Nothing truer was ever penned and in these few lines of Paracelsus is the whole secret of the Philosopher's Stone. There is an exact science of accomplishing this and this science is known. Before the Physician can accomplish cures in this manner he must first have found the Philosopher's Stone or have *developed* it within himself. This can be done. There are men in this country who know the secret, and I say without hesitation that the development is an exact science, and can be taught. It combines everything—eating, drinking, right manner of thinking and the drill for the development of the Philosopher's Stone.

I myself have treated many thousands of cases, have treated as many as thirty cases a day, and in all the years of my practice I have never lost a single case by death. Can more be said? Can more be accomplished? This is not a dreamer's dream, but a fact. I repeat, the Philosopher's Stone and the Elixir of Life are facts and can be found by him who is willing

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\*Hartmann, “Paracelsus.”

to lead the *life*.

I again call attention to Dr. Hartmann, the German Rosierucian, when he says: "A person who wants to be an Alchemist must have *in* himself the 'magnesia,' which means the Magnetic power to attract and 'co-agulate' invisible astral elements. This power is only possessed by those who are 'reborn in the spirit.' Those who do not know what this expression means are not 'reborn' (or initiated), and it cannot be explained to them."

The word "magnetic" here does not mean anything that belongs to that class of men who would teach you a system of so-called "magnetic healing." It has a far greater meaning and cannot be had by any others but the true Initiates of the Temple.

24. There are yet many things to be said, even at the hazard of being tedious, before entering upon the conclusive proofs (aside from those already given) that Man is the central figure in Alchemy and Hermetic Philosophy, and that the Conscience is the starting point in pursuit of the Philosopher's Stone.

25. A consideration of perhaps more importance than all others is, that the conscience cannot be said in

itself to err: in other words, the conscience cannot sin. It sits in judgment upon every man, approving the good and condemning the bad, but in itself it is incorruptible. The expression, a bad conscience, as when we say a man is troubled with a bad conscience, is not properly said of the conscience, but of the man whom a good conscience condemns.

“Through physical sense flows the animal, and while on this plane we are subject to the laws of the material kingdom—the mortal when awakened to Consciousness of the Higher self through which the Spiritual circulates, a plane has been attained where it is possible to dominate and overcome the lower by the Higher. At this point the God *in* man assumes the sovereignty, manifesting God-like powers, and the reign of Spirituality over materiality begins.

“Through the *understanding* of Spiritual Law and its power over the material, man should continue in both physical and mental vigor so long as he uses the body as an habitation.

“The point is now reached in evolution where we should rise in the higher current and by placing ourselves in harmony with it, cast off the old animal laws

to which we have been subject, governing instead of being governed by our organism.”\*

26. In order to explain the view we take of Alchemy, it is necessary to make apparent, if possible, that, in cases where many suppose that the conscience is in error, the error is not in the conscience, but in the judgment employed in applying means for the accomplishment of *ends*. In this way the most atrocious and abominable things have been done, as the phrase is, with the purest conscience, that is, with the best intentions in the world. This admission may at first be thought equivalent to a complete surrender of the principles just assumed; but it is not so.

27. The conscience has reference to *ends*, and not to *means*, except where these are considered in themselves, and regarded as *ends*. Whether the sacrifices of Charles the First was well or ill done, is not directly a question for the conscience, but for the judgment; which is employed in determining whether that sacrifice was necessary to produce a certain *end*, the end only being the object of the conscience. A patriot

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\*“Vita.”

loves his country, and endeavors to serve it, and this is universally esteemed a virtue; but in seeking the good of his country, he may mistake the *means*, and plunge his country into irreparable evils. In this, and in every supposable case, the conscience decides upon the end, or, more clearly what is meant, the man is approved or condemned according to the end he aims at; and this is what all men have in view in passing moral judgment upon each other. We always seek to know the end a man aims at, in order to determine whether he is to be accepted or rejected in the court of conscience, and if the *end* is approved, a mistake in the means, however lamented, commands pity and not condemnation.

28. Now the end proposed in every case is personal matter, about which no man, in his own case, can be mistaken;—if it is approved, the man is in a right condition for seeking means for effecting his end; but if the end be disapproved in the conscience, and the man still endeavors to attain it, it is manifest the conscience is not in fault. This, by supposition, has executed its office and condemned the end, which, nevertheless, from other influences, the man is im-

pelled to seek. A disruption now takes place. The unity is broken. The man has eaten of the forbidden fruit, and becomes an exile from Paradise. He is now a wanderer, and the question is, How is he to be recovered and brought back into the garden? The Alchemists, as we understand them, point with one voice to the conscience, as an uncorrupted and incorruptible virgin, which, though obscured by errors of its brethren, or other principles in the composite man, is the only *instrument* by which the wanderer can be recovered, with a preservation of what these teachers call the "pondus," that is, the substantial reality of the individual.

29. The great "difficulty" is to bring the Conscience into healthy action without "*embasing*" the subject; which the Alchemists say is always done when violence is used, all external influences and appliances, fears, etc., being called "corrosives." This is the doctrine of Alchemy; but it is wonderfully covered over and buried in figures and fables, for reasons which perhaps have less weight in this age than formerly.

30. In order still further to show the extent of the

dominion of the conscience, we refer to what men call *honor*, and observe that there is no *principle of honor* in man except this one of conscience. Of course, we mean true honor, and not a blind deference to a conventional code determined upon some arbitrarily conceived notions of narrow-minded, arrogant, and domineering men, having only a local existence and influence. In a strict sense, nothing is honorable but what is right; and it *ought* to be very plain that nothing *wrong* can be honored. The principle that determines what is right, determines also what is truly honorable; and, therefore, whether we say it is right to live honorably, or honorable to live rightly, we say the same thing.

31. Most codes of honor, as they are called, are sustained by a love of reputation, by which men submit their conduct to the rule of some external law; but even here, the subjects of this law either approve the law, which may indeed happen, or they persuade themselves that it is *right* to conform to the law prescribed by a given society in which they live; if not, they cannot feel satisfied with themselves while living in compliance with it.

32. The conscience is also the only principle of virtue: for virtue does not lie in a *judgment* of what may contribute to one's wellbeing in a prudential sense, except where virtue itself is recognized also as the highest prudence. Prudence may be a virtue, but virtue is not defined by prudence; somewhat as we may say that blue is a color, but color cannot be defined by saying it is blue.

33. Most, if not all, questions of religion are also determined ultimately by an appeal to the same principle, the conscience. It is thus that men reason about the *duty* of attendance upon divine service, and of living in conformity with the customs of religious people.

34. The highest of all religious *duties* is that of obedience to God; and yet this by the phraseology used to express it, has its sanction in the conscience. It is said to be *right* for the creature to obey the Creator. An obedience rendered upon any other ground would not be free, and when produced by either hope of reward or fear of punishment, is destitute of virtue. A sense of duty made cheerful by love, is the true ground of that perfect obedience to



God, which it is the object of all pure religion to secure.

35. There is nothing so offensive in the Koran as the continual denunciation of "hell-fire" against unbelievers; simply because, in the nature of the case, fear never yet made nor can make an honest man.

36. To determine what particular conduct is acceptable to God may be the office of other principles, in which men may differ very widely. But this is a difference of judgment applied to matters of fact, in settling questions of history, etc.; but whenever it can be decided that any particular conduct in man is pleasing to God, the *duty* of compliance is already prescribed in the conscience.

37. In addition to all this, there is one mode of stating the question which would seem to exclude all controversy. Let it be supposed that some other law besides that of the conscience is of greater authority—how can it be authenticated but by the conscience itself, which must ultimately be appealed to for a sanction of the Law? for, to say that a man *ought* to be governed by any law whatever, is to use the language of the conscience. If any rule can therefore

be proposed before the conscience, which, of *right*, demands obedience, it would then be *wrong* to obey the law of conscience. But to do *right* is the very essence of the Law of Conscience; so that, in preferring another law, a man is reduced to the absurdity of affirming that it is wrong to do right.

38. There is no place where the power of the conscience is so fully manifested as at a Catholic confessional, and there are no people in the world in a better situation for understanding the force of the conscience than the Catholic priesthood. No doubt many principles operate colaterally in the practice of confession, especially the passions of hope and fear; but in a vast majority of cases, conscience is the chief working power that supports the confessional, and in some sense may be thought the support of the whole fabric of the Catholic Church.

39. In most cases, the word *spirit* in the Psalms and Proverbs, as well as elsewhere in Scripture, means *conscience*; as in Prov. xviii, 14,—“The *spirit* of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?”—which means, that a good conscience will sustain a man under infirmities; but no man can

bear a wounded conscience. And because this is the case, and because the means of *reconciliation* are not so much the object of conscience as of judgment, which is liable to err, multitudes of men seek it in the *forms* of an established creed adjudged by others to be solely efficacious. The confessional affords the *means* of a reconcillation with God, that is, with one's own conscience; for it comes to this at last. No Catholic can feel that he is accepted with God until he has satisfied his own conscience by a compliance with what is *judged* to be necessary for that purpose. All sacrifices, modes of worship, compliance with church forms and ceremonies, etc., have at last but the one great object, to wit, a feeling of oneness or acceptance with God; and this in its essence means just this and nothing else, that a man may become reconciled in his own conscience. Leave but the slightest flaw upon the conscience, and man to this extent is an outlaw and an exile from God's presence; and this is not a contingent, but a necessary result.

40. The difficulty in this question does not lie in the conscience, but, as I have already said, in the judgment as to means employed in executing the dictates

of conscience. For example, it is *right* for a man to seek the glory of God; but to do this intelligently requires the most profound of all knowledge, the knowledge of God, and of what is for his glory: or, if it be right for a man to seek beatitude either here or hereafter, a similar species of knowledge is required. Whether this knowledge is possible except to a purified conscience may be a question, and on this point the Alchemists might have to defend themselves; the point is merely suggested, to bring it to the attention of others.

41. If any one should now ask what this conscience is, and what its origin, I would put him upon his conscience to answer, quite sure that, if he has one, he need but interrogate it: while, if he has no conscience, it is certain he will never be brought to the bar of it; but it is equally certain that such a man will never know what it is to be free, but must live and die a slave to his passion, and shall never know true peace of mind.

Perhaps we may better understand what conscience is by the result of the awakened conscience for the results better show the true sense of it than mere

speculation. Says the author of "The Altar in the Wilderness": "When man awakens to a realization of the Spiritual Life, he becomes again as a little child. Entering the temple of Humanity, he asks new questions and receives strange answers, which reveal to him the *inner* truths of Christianity and the other great world religions, explaining, as well, why mankind occasionally runs after strange gods, worshipping and craving excessive wealth, worldly power and sensual pleasures—things which can only be gained by the downfall of his brothers, and which cloy in the having. They tell him, also, that when men and women become dissatisfied with the existing religious systems and social order, humanity has attained to a degree of Spirituality where it has outgrown them, and that the time is then ripe for a turning to new ideals; for a desire to be true, rather than to *seem* or to have; a desire to give instead of to take; to love instead of to hate; to be brotherly, sympathetic, self-sacrificing, just."

42. We do not wish to be understood as saying that *mercury*, *our mercury*, *philosophical mercury*, etc., are expressions used always in one sense. Very far from

it. Mercury is often used for man simply, but sometimes it is used for nature in a universal sense; then for what some understand by the spirit of nature, and again for the spirit of man, every writer taking some latitude in the use of this, and indeed of every other word used symbolically; purposely, it would seem, to compel the student to verify what is said by testing it with "the possibility of nature." Some of the writers invent new words altogether, having no meaning at all, leaving the reader to divine the meaning by the qualities attributed to it; as if one should describe *erif*, by saying that it is something by which an apple might be roasted, it would not be difficult to discover that by *erif* is to be understood *fire*.

43. As a general rule, the conscience is called *philosophical mercury*, or our mercury; but, by whatever name it may be called, it is the *instrument* of improvement, and the *way to the end*.

44. There may be some doubt of the doctrine here set forth, until the powers of the Conscience (for there are many) have become manifest in life; but every one may be satisfied of the truth of the doctrine, by an attentive observation of the conduct of man in

society.

45. "The work is 'circular,' as the writers say themselves; and the end is in some sense the beginning also, which perhaps, as one single point, is *the greatest secret of the whole matter*. Hence the writers tell us that, to make gold, we must have gold; which is not very obscure, after all, if we understand that whoever would find truth must *be* true. And this is scriptural also, for whoever would find grace must have the grace to seek it.

46. We are in the midst of the universe, and know nothing either of its beginning or ending, except as both are contained in the present; and how to understand this cannot but be difficult, and must reduce all reasoning upon the subject to a circle or a nullity. But the fact precedes all argument; and so does the conscience, and both equally prostrate all attempts to ignore them.

47. Having thus spoken of various uses of the word *mercury*, we may as well say that, in a multitude of places, two words will be found coupled together, yet not always in the same sense: as, Sol and Luna, gold and silver, masculine and feminine, brother and

sister, the Doves of Diana, *circulatum majus* and *circulatum minus*, the greater magnet and the lesser magnet; and, indeed, an endless variety of other names, the sense of which must be determined by the context, tested by "the possibility of nature."

48. It may surprise a nōvice in such studies to observe the innumerable quantity of *correlates* to be found in nature, beginning with the macrocosm and microcosm; for we have cause and effect, active and passive, heaven and earth, divine and human, upper and lower, good and evil, hope and fear, soul and body, and an endless variety of other doubles. We read, indeed, that "All things are double one against another; and God hath made nothing imperfect. One thing establishes the good of another." (Ecclesiasticus xlii:24.)

49. Where I have ventured to use the words *soul* and *body*, in the interpretation of some of these doubles, I must be excused for begging the reader not to imagine that by the bare use of these words the things are known; and before he thinks he knows these things, I would recommend him to look for them in the "chest" (i. e. into nature) where Wilhelm Meister



found David and Goliath peaceably side by side.

50. In this same chest will be found many other *couples*; as, Magic and natural philosophy, that is to say, ignorance and knowledge; what is called magic being only a name for so much of nature as we cannot understand. If we consider conscience as the principle of what is known, we shall see nature in its two correlates under one law, by which we understand that as one increases the other must decrease.

51. The reader will observe that I merely am endeavoring to suggest the mode of writing adopted by the Alchemists, without defending it. It will be presently shown that the conscience, a complete knowledge of which must not be assumed\* is the touchstone of all their writings, and that *the way* to the Philosopher's Stone is through or by means of it. Nothing can exceed the simplicity of it from this point of view, while from another point of view there is no mystery exceeding it, for it is commensurate with life itself.

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\*The true student should see the "Beautiful Philosophy of Initiation" concerning the inner meaning of Conscience. For no Initiation is possible without Awakening the Conscience.

52. If the conscience is the way to the Philosopher's Stone, we hear the exclamation, why not speak out plainly about it? what is the need of this mystical talk about salt, sulphur, and mercury? This question, no doubt, often recurs. Two reasons have already been stated for the secret mode of writing; and we may add here, that the very simplicity of the doctrine, or the entrance to it, provokes a doubt or denial of the efficacy of this sort of mercury in working and very extraordinary good end. Hence men look abroad, away from themselves, and would have some marvelous, if not miraculous and incomprehensible, means of bringing about the hope of better things in some distant future. Besides, almost all men wish to be saved in or with their sins ("superfluities"), and not by a separation from them. The doctrine of Christ, which the Alchemists strictly follow, is openly a rebuke to this; still, with multitudes of men the hope of the future is but a little better than an artificial compromise, by which the sinner *consents* to "accept the promise of a future" upon conditions, secretly stipulated, of being only slightly disturbed in the present. To be sure, the future has its claims upon us; but

perhaps the only way to secure it is to be right now, and keep so.

53. As the word *mercury* is used in several senses, so is the word *fire*; which, in its most general sense, signifies *power*. Power is then conceived in several ways, as, the power of man, and the power of external nature; and these are then conceived as one, or as acting to one end. In some cases it means the intellect, but in general it means the conscience in the individual. Sometimes it means what is not inappropriately called the public conscience; or it is the *principle* in the *race*, which is perpetual, surviving all fluctuations in society and government; it lives on in defiance of all sophistry, and remains forever undisturbed by philosophical and religious disputes.

In Alchemy the word *fire* has many meanings as before stated, but this word is used differently in Philosophy. For instance, in Religion, both old and new, the word *fire* means both God and Love, since both are one and the same. Love in the human being is a *fire*, it is *God* and must be so understood. Conscience again may also be considered as a *fire* since Conscience is the God in man. In the work "The

Philosophy of Fire," Fire means God and Love in all cases.

54. Bishop Taylor has said, that "God hath given us conscience to be in his stead to us, to give us laws, and to exact obedience to these laws, to punish them that prevaricate, and to reward the obedient. And therefore," continues this great man, "conscience is called the household guardian and domestic god, the spirit or angel of the place; and when we call God to witness, we only mean that our conscience is right, and that God, and God's vicar, our conscience, knows it."

55. "Conscience," says Dr. South, "is a Latin word, though with an English termination, and, according to the very notation of it, imports a double or joint knowledge; to wit, one of a divine law or rule, and the other of a man's own action; and so is properly the application of a general law to a particular instance of practice."

56. Many efforts have been made to explain the meaning of Socrates, in his references to what he called his *daemon*. Among others Olympiodorus is quoted as giving an opinion in these words: "It must be asserted that the allotted demon is *conscience*,

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which is *the supreme flower of the Soul*; it is guiltless in us, is an inflexible judge, and a witness to Minos and Rhodamanthus of the transactions of the present life. This also becomes the cause of our salvation, as always remaining in us without guilt, and not assenting to the errors of the soul, but disdaining them, and converting the soul to what is proper. You will not err, therefore (says he), in calling the allotted demon *conscience*."

57. This opinion is given in connection with another, that the Divinity has allotted to mortals this principle as a guide in life, etc. Most of the difficulty on this subject grows out of the fact, that we usually learn something of it from *names* before we consciously know the principle itself; we are apt then, to find a seeming contradiction between our *imagination* of it, and the *reality*, and we commonly place more reliance upon the account another gives of it than upon the thing itself.

58. It is proper to say, in reference to this part of our subject, that some writers have expressed the opinion that conscience is *double*, which they call inward and outward; but, we believe this may be better

apprehended by considering, that conscience is sometimes erroneously judged *real* when seen as in union with certain imperfections—as when referred to its judgment upon ordinary acts of life, such as a supposed public opinion,—to honor, reputation, and the like—whereas the true principle can only be recognized when viewed as referred to God.”

“God is the greatest power in the universe,” says Frantz Hartmann, M.D., “because He is the source and sum of all powers in their highest mode of manifestation. God is, therefore, *absolute consciousness*, absolute love and absolute wisdom. If we wish to accomplish anything great, the first requirement is the presence of God, because He is man’s understanding and power, and resides in man. But God cannot be approached by an intellect that is without Love. God is Love,\* and is only attracted by Love. We cannot know the Principle of Love, unless we love it with our hearts, and the more we desire it, the more will we be able to comprehend with the heart what this principle is. The Love of God is therefore a power transcending

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\*See “The Philosophy of Fire.”

the lower nature of man; it cannot develop itself out of the animal elements of man, but it is a gift from the Universal Fountain of Love, in the same sense as sunshine cannot grow out of the earth, but comes from above. God lives in the hearts of men, and if we desire to Love Him, we must love *all* that is good in Humanity. The love of Humanity is the beginning of the Knowledge of God. The intellect is the *greatest* possession of mortal man, and an intellect that rises to the *source* of *all* Knowledge by the power of Love may *know* God and all the Mysteries of Nature (*let the student remember these few words as he seeks for the Philosopher's Stone*) and become godlike himself; but an intellect without Love leads into error, grovels in darkness, and goes to perdition. An intellect combined with Love for the supreme *good* leads to Wisdom; an intellect without Love leads to the powers of evil.

“The Spiritual regeneration of man requires the *opening* of his *inner* senses, and this again involves the development of the internal organs of the Spiritual body, while the latter is intimately connected with the physical form. Thus this *regenera-*

tion is not an entirely Spiritual process, but productive of great changes in the physical body (and here lies the mystery of the Elixir). He who rejects, neglects, or despises his physical body as long as he has not outgrown the necessity of having such a corporeal form, may be compared to the yolk in an egg wanting to be free from the white of the egg and the shell, without having grown into a bird.

“All numbers are multiples of one, all sciences converge to a common point, all wisdom comes out of *one* center, and the number of Wisdom is *one*. The *Light* of Wisdom radiates into the world, and manifests itself in various ways according to the substance in which it manifests itself. Therefore man may manifest reason in a threefold manner: as instinct, as animal reason, and Spiritual intelligence. The knowledge which our Soul derives from the physical and animal elements is temporal; that which it derives from the spirit is eternal. God is the Father of Wisdom, and all wisdom is derived from Him. We may grow *into* Knowledge, but we cannot grow Knowledge ourselves, because in ourselves is nothing but what has been deposited there by God. Those who



believe that they can learn anything without the assistance of God fall into idolatry, superstition, and error. But those who Love the *luminous center* will be attracted to it, and their knowledge comes from God. God is the Father of Wisdom, and man is the son. If we wish for knowledge we must apply for it to the Father and not to the son. And if the son desires to teach Wisdom, he must teach that wisdom which he has derived from the Father. The knowledge which our clergymen possess is not obtained by them from the Father, but they learn it from each other. They are not certain of the truth of what they teach, and therefore they use argumentation, circumvention, and prevarication; they fall into error and vanity, and mistake their own opinions for the Wisdom of God. Hypocrisy is not Holiness, conceit is not Power, slyness is not Wisdom. The art of deceiving and disputing, sophisticating, perverting, and misrepresenting truths may be learned in schools; but the power to recognize and to follow the truth cannot be conferred by academical degrees; it comes only from God. He who desires to know the truth must be able to see it, and not be satisfied with descriptions of it

received from others, but be true to himself. The highest power of the intellect, if it is not illuminated by Love, is only a high grade of animal intellect, and will perish in time; but the intellect animated by the Love of the Supreme is the intellect of the angels, and will live in eternity.

59. The conscience we regard as only *the way* or *means* in what is called the *great work*—indispensable, indeed; for without it, the Alchemists say that nothing can be done in the “Art;” but this initial point being secured, they then speak of *sowing*, in the *philosophical mercury*, what they call the philosophical gold, which is sometimes called Venus.

60. This is Love; the love of God and man; about which I confess I am unwilling to say much, lest I venture beyond my depth. Those who wish to see some account of it in Plato may consult the-Banquet, and learn to substitute for the vulgar notion of Platonic Love, an inspiration of the Love of Truth; for this is the Platonic Love, engrafted only on a purified conscience, and inaccessible to a profane man while living in his sins.

61. Opinions on this subject are not here quoted as

having authority over the conscience, that principle being subject only to God; but having adverted to a few, we will add that of Cicero, who, in his tract of Duties (of offices), refers to the supreme obligation of a Judge, when administering justice, where he says, that a Judge, "when he must pronounce sentence on his oath, will remember that he has called the Divinity at witness—that is, as I conceive (adds Cicero), his own conscience, than which the Deity Himself has given nothing more divine to man." This opinion was not given by Cicero oratorically, where the bias of an advocate or pleader may be supposed to have had its influence, but it is found in one of the most beautiful discourses ever written on questions of morality, by one of the finest minds of antiquity.

## CHAPTER III.

1. For the proofs now of what has been thus far advanced, (besides those already given,) I shall cite passages from several authors referred to by both the French writer and the Reviewer, and from some not mentioned by either. They both refer to *Isaac Hollandus* (of the fifteenth century, according to Du Fresnoy,), but give no account of either him or his work.

2. We will make a few extracts from his writings, which will be easily understood with the explanations already given. The title of the volume is: "Work of Saturn. By John Isaac Hollandus. Published in English, 1670."

3. We have said that the Alchemists often speak of man by the names of metals, and that they frequently call these by astronomical names. In this treatise, *Saturn* stands for *Lead*; but as by *Lead* is meant man, as will be seen presently, the real title of the work is *A Treatise of Man*. To guard against misapprehension, even on a minor point, it should be noticed that by *Saturn* is sometimes meant, not merely man, but man in a state of *humility*.

4. The Preface, by the English translator, is short and suggestive, and reads as follows:

“*Courteous Reader*:—The Philosophers have written much of their *Lead*, which is prepared out of *Antimony*, as Basilius hath taught; and I am of the opinion that this *saturnine* work of the most excellent philosopher, M. John Isaac Hollandus, is not to be understood of common lead, if the matter of the stone be not much more thereby intended, but of the *Philosopher’s Lead*. But whether the vulgar Saturn (a vulgar, or ignorant man) be the matter of the philosopher’s stone or not, you will receive sufficient satisfaction from the following work, which is published for the benefit of all the *lovers of this Art*, because it expounds and declares the Stone of Fire. *Vale.*”

“In the name of the Lord. Amen.

“My child must know that the stone, called the Philosopher’s Stone, comes out of Saturn.

“And know, my child, for a truth, that in the whole vegetable work there is no higher or greater secret than there is in Saturn:” (that is, man is the miracle

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\*The Alchemists no doubt called man by the name of Saturn for the reason that both man and Saturn are

of the Universe, and contains *within* himself the greatest of secrets—which those ought to believe who regard him as the image of God,) for we do not find that perfection in gold which is found in Saturn; because, internally, it is good gold (it contains an immortal spirit); herein all of the philosophers are agreed; and it wants nothing else but that first you remove what is *superfluous* in it; and then, that you turn its inside outwards, which is its redness; then it will be good gold. (This is only another way of teaching with that of Isaiah. We do not say it is as good a method, but we affirm that Hollandus has the meaning of Isaiah, where the latter says [chap. i]: ‘Wash you,

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creators, only lesser than God. In the Eleusinian Mysteries, in their Initiation, at one time the greatest Mysteries known, the following Evocation was used:

TO SATURN.

“Etherial father, mighty Titan, hear,  
Great sire of Gods and men, whom all revere;  
Endued with various counsel, pure and strong,  
To whom increase and decrement belong.  
Hence matter’s flowing forms thro’ thee that die  
By the restored, their former place supply.  
The world immense in everlasting chains,  
Strong and ineffable thy power contains;

and make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes,' etc." Verse 22 of this same chapter is in the language appropriated by the Alchemists: "Thy *silver* is become dross, thy *wine* mixed with water.") "For," says Hollandus, in continuation, "gold cannot be made so easily from anything as from Saturn; for Saturn is easily dissolved and congealed, and its *mercury* may be more easily extracted from it. (The theory is, that Saturn stands for man in his humility, and the conscience will manifest itself and become active, where the *superfluities* in which it lies buried are removed; in the sense of James 1:21.) And this mercury extracted from Saturn, being purified and sublimed, as mercury is

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Father of vast eternity, divine,  
O mighty Saturn, various speech is thine;  
Blossom of earth and of the starry skies,  
Husband of Rhea, and Prometheus wise.  
Obstetric power and venerable root,  
From which the various forms of being shoot;  
No parts peculiar can thy power enclose,  
Diffused thro' all, from which the world arose.  
O best of beings, of a subtle mind,  
Propitious hear, to suppliant prayers inclined;  
The Sacred Rites benevolent attend,  
And grant a blameless life, a blessed end."

usually sublimed, I tell thee, my child, that the same mercury is as good as the mercury extracted out of gold in all operations."

5. An allusion is here intended, that all men are of one nature essentially, and that all partake of the image of God.

6. "If Saturn be gold internally, as in truth it is, then its mercury be as good as the mercury of gold.

"My child, lock this up in thy heart and understanding; this Saturn is the stone, which the philosophers will not name; its name has been concealed unto this day.....The name remains concealed, because of the evils which might proceed from its being known. (Observe the reasons already given for secrecy, especially a consideration of the danger of proposing a change in the *ground* of duty, from that of a hope of reward, to a sense of duty, *as it is a duty*, independently of both hope and fear.)

7. "All of the strange parables which the philosophers have spoken mystically of a stone, a moon, a furnace, a vessel,—all this is Saturn (that is, all is said of man); for you must not put any strange things to its nature, but only that which comes out of it.



There is none so poor in this world, that cannot operate and promote this work; for *Luna* may be easily made of Saturn, in a short time, (here *Luna* stands for the affections purified,) and in a little time longer *Sol* may be made from it. By *Sol*, here, must be understood the intellect, which becomes clarified in proportion as the affections become purified; a great deal of what is called intellect—a brisk smartness and cunning cleverness, the product of animal spirits aided by a good memory—is not the true *Sol*.)

8. “And though a man be poor, yet may he very well attain unto it, and may be employed in making the philosopher’s stone.”

9. That is, every man, no matter how humble his vocation, *may do the best he can*, in his place,—may “love mercy, do justly, and walk humbly with God;” and what more doth God require of any man? (Micah vi:8.) M. Figuiet observes, that a great number of authors certify that the poor possess the philosopher’s stone, as well as the rich; and certainly they do, if we understand by it truth, goodness, moral perfection, the Divine blessing. Sandivogus says: “I doubt not but many men of *good consciences and*

*affections* do secretly enjoy this gift of God." Yet this could not open the eyes of M. Figuiet.

10. "Wherefore, my child," continues Hollandus, "all that we have need of is concealed in Saturn; for in it is a perfect mercury; in it are all the colors of the world."

11. That is, the whole universe in some sense lies in the nature of man, whence have proceeded all religions, all philosophies, all histories, all fables, all poesy, all arts, and all science.

12. "The eye of man cannot endure anything that is imperfect, how little soever it be; though it should be the least atom of dust, it would cause pain, so that he could not rest. But if you take the quantity of a beam of Saturn, shave it smooth and round, and put it into the eye, it will cause no pain at all."

13. This is only a mode of saying that the conscience, the eye of the soul, cannot bear the least falsehood; but it receives truth as congenerous with its nature.

13. "The reason is (says Hollandus), that Saturn is internally perfect, even as gold and precious stones. By these and other speeches, (dark sayings, Prov. i:6,)

you may observe that Saturn is our philosopher's stone, and our Latten, out of which our mercury and our stone is extracted with small labor, little art and expense, and in a short time."

"Wherefore I admonish you, my child, and all those who know its name, that you conceal it from the people (that is, from people in general, who have neither leisure nor inclination to think of these things), by reason of the evil that might otherwise arise; *and you shall call the stone our Latten; and call the vinegar, water*, wherein our stone is to be washed."

14. The vinegar is the Conscience, wherein the man is to be washed. It is called by infinite other names, as oil, honey, wormwood, etc., according to the state of the man.

15. "This is the stone and the water whereof the philosophers have written so many volumes.

"This stone is the true *aurum potabile*, the true quintessence which we seek; and we seek no other thing in the world but this stone. Therefore the philosophers say, that whoever knows our stone, and can prepare it, (that is, perfect it,) needs no more;

wherefore they sought this thing, and no other."

16. In short, it is the one thing needful, or the way to it, to wit, the perfect approval of a conscience *purified* under a sense of the presence of God; for, examine the matter as closely as we may, we shall find no ground for supposing God's approval of us but our own self-approval, ascertained in the closet and not put to vote in the market-place.

Of the quintessence, A. E. Waite, in "Azoth, or, The Star of the East," says: "When the physical body has become atomatically unified with the Higher principles, its *quintessence* (or *subtilest and purest part*), is made use of for the constitution of the *inner* or Spiritual body, which is the envelope of disembodied humanity. Thus, one of its uses is to provide an environment for the *next* stage of subsistence, and the evolution of the arch-natural man, by another compensating action, creates a more perfect correspondence between the Psychal and the physical man, and will actually, with the progress of the race, manifest the Soul as a Transfiguration of the atomic body, and then, in a sense, the Soul will be actually the living body. To this conception the alchemist gave

the names—Rebis, Animal, Stone, Blood, Sulphur, Olitet, etc.

“This Olitet preserves the color of the Spirit, even to thickening,” and so the physical body of the regenerate man has a tinge, a coloring of his Spirit; contemplated in his wholeness as a triad, he exhibits at the apex of his being the eternal presidency of pure essential mind, and at the base, as it were, thickened spirit, that which is above made manifest below in a concrete form, but still preserving a coloring or permeation of the splendor of the summit. “Then it is fit for the production of royal weapons and metallic figures.” That is to say, the adept has control over the energies of the universe, and he shapes these forces to his purposes; he can possess the power of the king, symbolized by weapons of warfare, or the power of the pontiff, represented by the figures or images, which are also said to be of metal, because both forces are in their ultimate of the same nature. “It manifests itself as golden in gold and as argentine in silver,” because there is but one substance infinitely differentiated in the universe. “The Soul’s ascent is when the Body becomes white, clear, and fluid,” that

is, the *inner* man is exalted in the purification of the outer man. The state of whiteness signifies the clarity or molecular refulgence of physical purity; the transparency is the atomic exaltation which follows the process of *regeneration*; the fluidic state is the dissolution of the hardness of the material condition, and signifies that the possession of a physical environment is no longer an invincible obstacle to an *interior* progress, but that the body itself passes on with the other principles, even as a stream flows, from ascension to ascension. "Immediately they are one and living." When the Body has been thus operated upon, there is a consanguinity of life subsisting throughout the triad. "Then is there danger. If the Soul should escape or burn, it is lost." The universal voice of occultism bears witness to the dangerous period which must *inevitably* follow the first plunge into the mysteries of the Inner way.

All initiation symbolizes it; all allegories depict it. "So is the Soul quickly given to the Body, and takes shape;" here the necessity of the phenomenal manifestation of the Body is shadowed forth. "The Soul proceeds out of the unified Body; she is herself the


living Body. Here the reference includes the two Mysteries." Truly the above is plain enough for all students.

17. Another of the genuine Alchemists, referred to by the Reviewer, is Artephius, (of the twelfth century, according to DuFresnoy,) whom he laughs at for saying that he had lived a thousand years. He is not the first to ridicule this, Swift and Butler having fully occupied the ground.

18. As old a writer as Sallust, a Platonic philosopher of the second century, in his treatise on the Gods, has given a rule for the interpretation of extravagances, and even abominations, found in old poems and philosophies. That, says he, which in a literal sense is manifestly absurd and impossible, must be understood in some other sense.

19. Upon this principle Philo interpreted the sacred writings of his nation; and Origen pursued the same method with both the Old and the New Testament.

20. In the case of Artephius, a slight acquaintance with the books of the Alchemists will inform any one that these writers, at times, call months *years*, weeks *months*, and vice versa. Roger Bacon in one place



speaks of a philosophic month, which he says is forty days: doubtless an allusion to the journey through the wilderness, which was, indeed, forty years. This may seem ridiculous, but if any one is disposed to comment upon it, the purpose of the writer should be considered.

21. By this it appears that Artephius was over eighty years of age when he wrote a work, as we say, upon *man*; though the book purports to be on *antimony*, which he defines as "a mineral participating of *saturnine* parts (in the sense of Hollandus, who wrote of *saturn*), and has in all respects the nature thereof."

22. That which Artephius calls *antimonial vinegar* it what Hollandus charged his pupil to call *water* (to "deceive the profane"). In plain words, as simple as is may seem, they both mean the conscience; and when Artephius says, that "without antimonial vinegar no metal can be *whitened*," he means that, without the conscience, no man can be purified. Artephius calls it by many names, besides antimonial vinegar; as *acrid vinegar*, *oil*, *dissolving water*, *the fountain*, *balneum mariae*, *the preternatural fire*, *the secret*, *hidden*, *and invisible fire*, *pure*, *clear water*, and many other



names; and says that "it is the only apt and natural medium, by which we ought to resolve (dissolve, *humilitate*) the perfect bodies of *Sol* and *Luna* (Soul and Body), by a wonderful and solemn dissolution, with a *preservation* of the species, and without any destruction, unless it be to a new, more noble, and better form of generation, *to wit*: into the perfect Philosopher's Stone."

23. It may be thought that the conscience, simply considered, does not answer all of the conditions required by Artephius, to identify it as the water here described. For this reason it has been pointed out as the *way* to the Philosopher's Stone; but a *conscientious* adherence to it will finally bring to light its harmony with what Artephius calls water, the two being mysteriously one.

24. "Now this *water*," says Artephius, "is a certain *middle* substance, clear as fine silver, which ought to receive the Tinctures (the essences) of *Sol* and *Luna* (Soul and Body), so that they may be congealed and changed into a white (pure) and *living* earth.

25. By the use of the expression *middle substance*, Artephius would have us think of the *conscience* as

something between the Soul and Body,\* without being precisely either, and yet the tie of both; the Soul being the fabricating cause of the Body, the Body being the *embodiment* of the soul,—as Swedenborg expresses it. But whoever would study the conscience must not rest in mere words.

26. "This water," says Artephius, "needs the perfect bodies, (Soul and Body,) that with them, after the dissolution, it may be congealed, fixed, and coagulated into a white (pure or living earth)."

27. If the reader will weigh distinctly each passage, thinking of the *nature of the thing*, and not be over-critical upon the expressions referring to it, he may with no great difficulty understand the *theory* of these writers. The truth or falsehood of the theory, is an independent inquiry, about which, of course, there may be differences of opinion. The first step is dissolution (sometimes called calcination, and by many other names), effected by the conscience as a Spiritual power; by which *the man* is summoned, as it were,

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\*This is described by Dante, in the New Life, as a Lady all in white, between two other ladies older than herself.

into the presence of God, and feels the nothingness of all mere human attractions, and the impossibility of evasion, prevarication, and deceit. He then becomes as a little child, according to the requirement of Mark x:15, the instant of submission being also the beginning of a New Life.

28. "But their solution," continues Artephius, "is also their coagulation; they have one and the same operation, for one is not dissolved, but the other is congealed. Nor is there any other *water* which can dissolve the bodies, but that which *abideth with them in matter and form.*"

29. The principle just indicated contains a fund of wisdom for all who are charged with the moral and spiritual education of man, who is not "effectually" improved but by the action of something proper to his nature, and which remains with it. This is what Hollandus means, when he says of *saturn*, that nothing must be put into it but that which arises from it. Artephius proceeds:

"It cannot be *permanent* unless it be of the nature of the other bodies, that they may be made *one*. (The so-called "other bodies" are the two called Sol and

Luna, words which signify Soul and Body.) Thus you see that *nature* is to be amended by its own like nature; that is, gold and silver (meaning *Sol* and *Luna*) are to be exalted in our *water* (the water of Hollandus), as our water also with those bodies; which water is called the medium of the soul, *without which nothing can be done in our art*. It is a vegetable, mineral, and animal fire, which conserves the fixed spirits (the essence or substance) of *Sol* and *Luna*, but destroys and conquers their bodies; for it destroys, overturns, and changes bodies and metallic forms (that is, *Sol* and *Luna*, morally considered), making them to be no bodies but a fixed spirit."

Arthephius then urges (altogether in figures, however), that the *water* cannot penetrate imperfect metals in their *dry, hard state*, and therefore they must be *softened* and brought into a "fluid matter" (of course, this is all metaphorical); but this is effected by the *water* itself, which "attenuates, alters, and softens the bodies, to wit, *Sol* and *Luna*, that so they may be mixed with other bodies." The reader may remember the properties attributed to the volatile salt of vipers, and may understand that a common

idea prevails. Artephius now speaks of it under another name, and says :

“It is an *oil* by nature hot, subtle, penetrating, sinking through and entering into other bodies ; it is called the perfect or *great Elixir*, and the hidden secret of the wise searchers of Nature. He, therefore, who knows this *salt* of *Sol* and *Luna*, and its generation and preparation, and afterwards how to commix it, and make it *homogene* with other perfect bodies, knows, in truth, one of the greatest secrets of nature, and the only way that leads to perfection.”

“These Bodies,” he continues, “thus dissolved by our water (that is, the Soul and Body dissolved by the conscience, or the middle substance, and not brought into a state of humiliation by mortified pride (for this ‘color’ effects nothing in the art), are called *Argent vive*, which is not without its sulphur, nor the sulphur without the fixedness of *Sol* and *Luna*; because gold and silver (*Sol* and *Luna*), are the particular means or medium in the form (the man) through which nature passes in the perfecting and completing thereof. And this *Argent vive* is called our esteemed and valuable salt, being animated and pregnant; and our

*Fire*, because it is nothing but Fire: yet not fire, but *sulphur*; and not sulphur only, but also *quicksilver*, drawn from *Sol* and *Luna* by our *water*, and reduced into a Stone of great price; that is to say, it is the matter or substance of *Sol* and *Luna*, or *silver* and *gold* altered from vileness to nobility."

Let us see what another Mystic, A. W. Waite, has to say in regard to this *Sol* and *Luna* and the method. In his "Azoth," under the heading of "The Hermetic Doctrine of Development," he states: "If we would be truly acquainted with the end of our Evolution (evolution, transmutation, Alchemy, etc., all have the same meaning), and the nature of our perfection, the law of our welfare, the goal of our happiness, and the source of real being, we must learn these things of the Mystics (Alchemists). For it is the prime postulate of this treatise on physical and Spiritual sanctity that arcane science is the foundation of Initiation into the Mystery of fundamental truth. We address those who have accepted this postulate, about which we do not argue or endeavor to verify because those who know are already convinced, while those who have yet to learn can be instructed only by experience. If unto

these Mystics have been committed the keys of Spiritual Knowledge, it follows that it is not unreasonable to suppose that the possessors of the one transcendental science should, if we question their oracles, prove qualified to instruct us in the secrets of physical transcendency. From the double stem of the Golden Rose of Hermes there issue two perfect, mature, and adorable blossoms. If these, in their first significance, are Sol and Luna of Alchemy, and in their second, philosophical meaning are the physical and spiritual sides of the *Magnum Opus*, they are also more profoundly, and at the same time in a more direct manner, the two branches of the Great Subject *Man*—differentiated in sex, but one in essence, one in root, one in origin, one in the Divine completeness of a perfection that is more than possible, because it is substantially guaranteed by Law; and they are, moreover, the outward and the inward side of this same great, universal, and supernal subject.

“Those who know God must know also the secret of all power and of all Beauty in Heaven and on Earth, and it is the thesis of our work that the counsels of Mystic perfection which constitutes the Rose-lined

pathway of the Absolute, the way of Light and fragrance, though directly they act in the Soul, have action also in a reflex manner upon the outward body of man. It is the law of that reflexion, and the education of that indirect action into an outward and manifested potency which is the whole subject of our enquiry as regards the outward man. Thus in the light of the Hermetic Philosophy, the Path to Perfection becomes the Path to Beauty, as it is that of peace and joy. There is an exterior complexion of the ripe and perfect peach which is an index of its sweetness and delight; so do the Seven Gifts of the Spirit beautify by radiation from *within* the casket in which they are enshrined, and the Twelve Paradisiacal Fruits have an outward bloom and glow. The attainment of the end of Evolution in the external man, the Christ-Theosophical culture of the fair flower of Christ, the 'double Rose of Love,' can be secured only by the observation of ethical and spiritual law. But the Laws of the Spirit, the Laws of God's Love, and of the joy in God, are in their ultimate the Grand Secret of the Mystics (Alchemists)."

30. Artephius calls it a "living water which comes



to moisten the earth, that it may spring forth, and in due season bring forth much fruit;" comparing it to rain, saying, "it penetrates the bodies and makes one new body of two bodies."

31. "This *aqua vitae*, or Water of Life (here are other names for the same thing), being rightly ordered (i. e. rightly or *naturally* brought into action), and disposed with the body, it whitens it, and converts or changes it into a white color" (that is, purifies it).

32. Artephius then calls it *azoth*, and the *water washing* Latten. The reader will remember that Hollandus called his Saturn *Latten*; and his vinegar, *water*.

33. The philosopher now exclaims: "How precious, then, and how great a thing, is this water!\* for without it *the work* could never be done or perfected. It is also called *vas naturae*, the belly, the womb, the receptacle of the tincture, the earth, the nurse. It is the royal fountain in which the King and Queen (*Sol* and *Luna* again, for the names are infinitely varied) bathe

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\*This "water" is the precious conscience, without which no man can make any moral improvement in Life.

themselves; and the mother which must be put into and sealed up within the belly of her infant; and that is Sol himself, who proceeded from her, and whom she brought forth; and therefore they have loved one another as mother and son, and are conjoined together, because they came from one root and are of the same substance and nature (that is, the moral nature of man proceeds from the conscience, as a Spiritual power). And because this water is the water of the vegetable life, it causes the dead body to vegetate, increase, and spring forth, and to rise from death to life, by being <sup>born by his conscience?</sup> dissolved first and then sublimed. And in doing this the body is converted into a spirit, and the spirit afterwards into a body; and then is made the amity, the peace, the concord, and the union of the contraries, to wit, between the body and the spirit, which reciprocally or naturally change their natures, which they receive and communicate one to another through their most minute parts."

34. He goes on to say that "in this operation the Body is made a Spirit, of a most subtle nature; and again, the Spirit is corporified and changed into the nature of the Body, with the (two) Bodies, whereby

*This doesn't  
have much to  
do w/  
conscience*

our Stone" (can any one doubt the meaning of the author? that, *man*) "consists of a *Body, a Soul, and a Spirit.*"

35. "It appears, then," says Artephius, "that this composition is *not a work of the hands*, but a change of the natures; because *nature* dissolves, and joins itself, sublimes and lifts itself up, and grows white, being separated from the *faeces* (i. e. superfluities, as Hollandus calls them) . . . . Our Brass or Latten then is to be made to ascent by the degrees of Fire, *but of its own accord, freely, and without violence.* But when it ascends on high, it is born in the Air or Spirit, and is changed into a spirit; and becomes *Life with Life.* And by such an operation, and the Spirit is incorporated with the Body, *and made one with it*; and by such a sublimation, conjunction, and raising up, the whole, Body and Spirit, are made white" (i. e. pure).

36. Nearly all of the writers quote a saying attributed to "old Osthanes,"—that *nature se joint par nature; nature s'jouet en nature; nature amende nature; nature aime nature; nature surmonte nature; nature perfectionne nature; nature contient nature et nature est contenue par nature*; and several of them

caution their readers to keep these principles strongly in mind.

37. All the writers agree that "violence" is not to be used. They designate all appliances to force man into goodness as "*corrosives*," "*aqua fortis*," etc., and say that when used, they can only produce a *surface tincture*. They always "embase the metal," and make it unfit for the artist.

38. It seems impossible not to perceive that Ar-tephius is writing of *Man*, and is endeavoring to indicate some process by which man may be said to pass, under the discipline of God and Nature, from a chaotic state of ignorance and passion to a certain sense of a Divine Unity.

39. "The Spirit," says he, "penetrates, the Body fixes, and the Soul joins together, tinges, and whitens. From these three united together is our Stone made, to wit: Sol, Luna, and Mercury. Therefore, with this our *golden-water*, a natural substance is extracted, exceeding all natural substances; and so, except the bodies be broken and destroyed, imbibed and made subtle and fine, thriftily and diligently managed, till they are abstracted from or lose their grossness or

solid substance, and be changed into a thin and subtle spirit, all our labor will be in vain. And unless the bodies be made no bodies, or incorporeal, that is, be converted into the philosopher's mercury, *there is no rule of Art yet found out to work by.*"

40. "Now this operation or work," says Artephius, "is a thing of no great labor *to him that knows and understands it*; nor is the matter so dear, considering how small a quantity doth suffice, that it should cause any man to withdraw his hand from it. It is indeed a work so short and easy, that it may well be called a woman's work and the play of children. Go to, then, my son, put up thy supplications to God Almighty; be diligent in searching the books of the learned in this science; for one book openeth another; think and meditate of these things profoundly; and avoid all things that vanish in, or will not endure the fire (that is, *avoid everything that wounds the conscience*), because from those adustible, perishing, or consuming things, you can never attain to the perfect matter, which is only found in the digesting of your water extracted from Sol and Luna."

41. "This water is the true tincture, separated from

✓ all its black faeces (corruptions, of all kinds); and our Brass or Latten is prepared with our Water, purified and brought to a white color."

42. "Which white color is not obtained but by decoction, and coagulation of the water. Decoct, therefore, continually; *wash away the blackness from the Latten, not with your hands, but with the Stone, or our second mercurial water* (the Stone, the Fire, and the Second Mercurial water, are three forms of one thing; or three things of one nature), *which is the true Tincture.*"

43. "This separation of the pure from the impure is not done with hands; but Nature herself does it, and brings it to perfection by a *circular* operation."

44. "Wherefore decoct the Body in our white water, viz., *mercury*, till it be dissolved into blackness (humility), and then by a continual decoction let it be deprived of the same blackness, and the body so dissolved will at length ascend or rise with a white (pure) soul."

45. It may be needless, perhaps, to turn the attention of the reader to the "circular" nature of this operation, for he can hardly fail to see *the water*

indicate  
of corrupted  
man

*extracts the water, which extracts the water;* and, as already intimated, perhaps the most difficult of all the secrets in Hermetic Philosophy lies precisely here. If the reader desires to understand anything of this philosophy, let him throw aside, for the moment, everything like a captious disposition; and, avoiding hypercriticism, reflect upon the course of nature, and see how impossible it is, by what the Germans call the understanding, "judging according to sense," to seize upon a first or a last; or a first, which is not also a last; and after first losing himself in this maze, he may find himself all the stronger.

46. After turning this difficult point, he may be in a good condition for understanding the wonderful text, "Whosoever will save his (natural) life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his (natural) life *for my sake*, shall find it," (in the Spirit).

47. I must not omit to say, that thus far Artephius is chiefly speaking of what some of the writers call the "base" of the work, and although I have just hinted at the *end*, I do not propose to speak of it at length. This can only be known by those who put into requisition *the means*; for nature never does anything but

*by means*, and according to them. Every man must reap as he sows. (Gal. vi:7, 8.)

48. The *Secret Book of Artephius* contains some twenty chapters or more, in the course of which what is called the "great work," and sometimes the "Divine Work," is indicated by many repetitions, in different ways. The author points out more of what may be called the theory of the Unity in Trinity (or Trinity in Unity), than is usually met with in these peculiar books.

This is really the "Great Work" or the "Divine Work," and even more so than many of the greatest students suspect. In the "Science of Alchemy" we find: "The Higher Alchemy is identical with Religion, as distinct from Theology. The function of Religion and the Great Work of the Alchemist is Spiritualization. The separation of the subtle from the gross; the redemption of Spirit, while still *seated* in matter, from the taint inevitable to the lowest planes of manifestation. Or again, the transmutation of the low forms of the human forces which are in man, in excess of the bodily needs of sheer subsistence, into the more refined emotions, the more delicate



shades of feeling, the purer and higher manifestations of spirit which even the human entity is plainly susceptible of.

“From another point of view, and by the use again of other but allied terms, is perceived that aspect of mental purification and that form of transmutation into Higher powers which is expressed by the Ideal of Atonement, or, as Anna Kingsford loved to write it, At-one-ment. The *reunion* of the spark of the Flame, of the offspring to the parent, of the ray to the sun, of the personal thinker to the Divine type of the Christos, the Higher Self, or the overshadowing Divine Spirit; from which each one of us has emerged upon a long course of experience to last for ages, until such time as we shall be again reunited by personal effort, enthusiasm, and self-sacrifice to the source of all emanation. To quote the words of Edward Maitland:

“The steps leading by inward purification to at-one-ment are the secret and method of the Christ, a term denoting the culmination of humanity by union with the immergence in Divinity. This process is Regeneration, and from Genesis to the Apocalypse this is, in all its mystical books, the theme of the Bible, which

thus becomes plainly to our eyes essentially a work on Alchemy."

"The Alchemic expression of 'Solve et Coagula,' meaning 'volatilize and fix,' as two contrasted changes seen alike in chemistry, physics and in human development, are traceable in the Biblical allegories of the descent of Divinity *into* man, by the putting on of coats of skin, when the human monad becomes material and fixed and suffers the consequent loss of the power of direct Spiritual Communion with the source Divine; while on the other hand, we have the allegory of the Resurrection of the Son of the Divine one, who obtains re-union with the godhead by casting off the cloak of matter and returning to his Father and to our Father; and this resurrection is promised to all who seek it. By birth upon earth man's thinker or Manus is fixed, coagulated and fettered by his environment. By death and by throwing off of scoria, slag, refuse and his precipiolum, man is released from his grosser bondage and passes at once to a plane of the Arupic worlds, even if his final absorption into Nirvana, or into Paradise be delayed, so that he may still further function as an entity of superior type and more ex-

alted possibilities.

It is not difficult to furnish other examples of the Spiritualization of Alchemic terms on the lines of the Hermetic Science. Numberless quotations might be selected in which, besides the important analogies already alluded to, the use of such terms as Sol and Luna, which in chemistry refer to Gold and Silver, these terms of art may be well understood as referring on the Spiritual plane to the Soul and Body. Mercury, Sulphur and Salt too do in many instances refer to spirit, illumination and substance. Again these three terms have been used as synonyms of some Divine Triads of Spiritual Force; as Anna Kingsford has noted, the representation by these terms of the Trinity: a divine Father, Mercury or Spirit, a divine Mother—passive principle—salt; and of a Son, or seed and efficient force in manifestation by the Sulphur. As a last example the Black Dragon of putrefaction which by time and force can become fashioned into the White Swan of purity, has been clearly established as a beautiful symbol of the change in man, from a sin-laden reprobate to the *purified* personality—to the man purified by suffering, chastened by humility, and

fit to commune with the holier ones.

“The relation of the Alchemy of the Mediaeval European world, being directly in relation to the Western or Hermetic system of philosophy, and so referring to both ethics and religion, can only be expected to show indirect analogies with the Theosophic school of thought, which has been evolved from the special teachings of the Eastern world and more particularly from those of the East Indies and the Buddhist nations of Thibet. Yet as the Hermetic doctrines are in general parallel to the Theosophic conception, as regards Man—the Microcosm, and the Universe—the Macrocosm, so many Alchemic dicta can be illustrated in the Theosophical Terminology. This is hardly correct speaking since it must be admitted that Paracelsus was possibly the first great teacher of the Alchemical school and the teachings generally known as Theosophic is that of Paracelsus and really belongs to the Rosicrucian school.

“It is commonly stated that the mystical books of India do not bear any reference to Alchemic processes, but this is not exact, as is well known to the student of the *Sarva Darsana Samgraha*. Some portions of

this work of chemical philosophy refer to the interaction of 'mercury' and some substance, apparently 'mica.' The word 'Sulphur' does not appear to be used; but this variation is of no importance, because the European Alchemists by their word 'Sulphur,' did not mean what chemists now refer to by that name."

That the Transmutation of Metals was never thought of by the *true* Alchemist, as has so often been stated in the foregoing, is again clearly shown by Thomas Vaughan, one of the most famous of the old Alchemists, for in his "*Anima Magia Abscondita*" he tells us:

"Moses tells us that in the beginning God created the Heaven and the Earth, that is the Virgin Mercury and the Virgin Sulphur. Now, let me advise you not to trouble yourselves with this Mercury unless you have a true friend to instruct you, or an expressly illumination from the first Author of it, for it is a thing attained 'by a marvelous Art.' Observe, then, what I shall now tell you. There is in every star, and in this elemental world, a certain principle which is 'the Bride of the Sun.' These two in their coition do emit semen, which seed is carried in the womb of

Nature, but the ejection of it is performed invisibly, and in a Sacred silence, for this is the conjugal Mystery of Heaven and Earth, their act of generation, a thing done in private between males and females, but how much more, think you, between the two universal natures? Know, therefore, that it is impossible for you to extract or receive any seed from the sun without this feminine principle which is the Wife of the Sun. Now then, my small sophisters of the Stone, you that consume your time and substance in making waters and oils with a dirty *caput mortuum*, you that deal in gold and quick-silver, being infatuated with the legends of some late and former mountebanks, consider the last end of such men. (Is this not plain enough to anyone?) Did they obtain anything by it but disease and poverty? Did they not in their old age, "the greybeards of an evil time," fall to clipping and counterfeiting coin? and for a period of their memory, did they not die in despair, which is the child of ignorance? Know then for certain that the Magician's Sun and Moon are two *universal* pairs, male and female, or king and queen regents, always young, and never old. These two are adequate to the whole

world, and co-extend through the universe. The one is not without the other, God having united them in his work of creation in a solemn sacramental union. It will then be hard and difficult enterprise to rob the husband of his wife, to put those asunder whom God Himself hath put together, for they sleep both in the same bed, and he that discovers the one must needs see the other.

“ ‘Fix that which is volatile, and volatilize that which is fixed, and thou shalt attain to our Grand Magisterium.’ That is to say, ‘make the unyielding body pliant, which by the supreme virtue of the Spirit acting in concert with the Soul, will endow the physical organism itself with an invariable constancy, and enable it to resist every test.’ For gold is proven with fire, by which process all that is not gold is cast aside. O pre-eminent Gold of the Philosophers with which the Sons of the Wise are enriched, not with that which is coined. Come hither, all ye who seek with such multitudinous exertions for the Philosophical Treasure, behold that Stone which you rejected, and learn first what it is before you set out in search of it. It is more astonishing than any miracle that a man

should seek he knows not what. It is undeniably foolish that an object should be sought by men, about the truth of which the investigators know nothing, for such a search is hopeless. Let those whosoever, who seek with so great toil first ascertain the existence and nature of the object they are in search of, and thus they will not be frustrated in their attempts. The wise man seeks what he loves and cannot love what he does not know, otherwise he would be a fool. Out of knowledge, therefore, springeth Love, the truth which is in all things, and which alone flourishes in all true philosophies."

49. Basil Valentine (born 1414), another Alchemist, also indicates the Unity, writing as Artephius did of Antimony; that is, of man under this name. Everything these authors say is obscure until the reader *takes the idea*; for example: "Now let the reader consider, and observe it as a thing worthy of note, that the true *Unicorn's-horn*, sophisticated by no fallacy, repels all venom from itself; nor can it assume or draw to itself anything of venom, as is manifest by experience."

50. Can any one read such a passage, and imagine



that the author intended to be understood literally? Who has ever known such an animal as the Unicorn? Precisely because this *one-horned* animal is fabulous, it answered the purpose of Basil, which was to teach that the absolute Unity is necessarily free from all evil, and incapable of being affected by it. But what has this to do with Antimony? It has much to do with it, if, under the name of Antimony, Basil's object was Man.

51. Basil Valentine wrote of man under a great variety of symbols, but his principal work is that entitled *The Triumphant Chariot of Antimony*. A few passages will show that he held opinions in common with all the Alchemists.

52. "Consider," says he, "and observe these things diligently; for this principal key is of great concern: *Antimony, which contains in itself its own vinegar*, ought to be so prepared that all its *venomosity* may be taken away. He who then useth it, conceives no venom thereby, but rather drives away and casts out all poison from himself."

53. Basilus in treating of man, in whom, as an instrument of purification, there is contained its own

vinegar (the Antimonial vinegar of Artephius), that is, the "water" of Hollandus (to wit, the conscience), by the use of which man may expel and cast out of himself all sin. He proceeds:

"Therefore, in the preparation of Antimony (man) consists the Key of Alchemy, by which it is dissolved, divided, and separated; as in calcination, reverberation, sublimation, etc.; also in extracting its essence, and in *vivifying its mercury*, which mercury must afterwards be precipitated in a fixed powder: likewise, by Art and a due method, or it may be made an *oil* for the cure of disease."

54. In another place he says: "You are to know, that in Antimony there is a *Spirit* which effects whatsoever is in it, or can proceed from it, in an *invisible way* and manner: not otherwise than as in the magnet is absconded a certain *invisible power*, as we shall more largely treat in its own place, where we speak of the magnet."

55. Perhaps we ought to say, that many of these writers speak of man as a *Magnet*, having in itself a principle by which it seeks the great Magnet, and will never rest until it "lies level with it."

56. To show that his subject is the same as that of those who wrote of *Saturn* or *Lead*, Basil says: "But that we may also say something of the *Lead* of the philosophers, let the curious searchers of nature know, that between *Antimony* and common *Lead* there is a certain near affinity, and they hold a strict friendship, the one with the other." That is, as many philosophers have written of man under the symbol of "lead," Basil wishes to intimate that his subject, that of antimony, is man also.

In another part he says: "But to return to the science of Antimony (Man). You should know that all things contain operative and vital spirits, which derive their substance and nourishment from their bodies; nor are the elements themselves without these spirits, whether good or evil. Men and animals have within them an operative and vitalizing (Magnetic) spirit, and if it forsakes them, nothing but a dead body is left. Herbs and trees have spirits of health, else no Art could turn them to medicinal use. In the same way, minerals and metals possess vitalizing spirits, which constitute their whole strength and goodness: for what has no spirit has no life, or vital-

izing power. Again: "Antimony (Man) has the four first qualities,—it is frigid and humid, and yet hot and dry; it accommodates itself to the four seasons of the year, and is both volatile and fixed. Its volatility is poisonous, its fixed state free from all poison. Hence Antimony is one of the seven wonders of the world, and many have written about it without knowing the meaning of their own words; no one before me, and even at the present time no one besides myself, has any real acquaintance with its potency, virtues, powers, operations, and efficacy."

57. Valentine concludes a work on the *magnet* in the following manner, as if he would compel the commonest dullard to divine his meaning:

58. "Allegorical expressions betwixt the Holy Trinity and the Philosopher's Stone.

"Dear Christian Lover, and well-wisher to the Blessed Art: how graciously and miraculously hath the Holy Trinity created the Philosopher's Stone. For God the Father is a Spirit, and yet maketh himself known under the notion of a Man, as where he speaketh, (Gen., chap. i,) 'Let us make man after our own image.' Again, the expressions where he

speaketh of his mouth, eyes, hands, and feet. So the Philosopher's Mercury is held to be a *spiritual Body*, as philosophers call him. God the Father begetteth his only Son Jesus Christ, which is God and man, and is without sin, neither needeth he to die; but he laid down his life freely, and rose again, for his brethren and sisters' sake, that they might live with him eternally without sin. So is *Sol*, or *Gold*, without defect, and if fixed, holds out gloriously in all fiery examens; but by reason of its imperfect and sick brethren and sisters (the Soul and Body are often called male and female, brother and sister), it dieth and riseth gloriously, redeemeth and tingeth them unto eternal Life, making them perfect unto good gold.

“The third person of the Trinity is God the Holy Ghost, a comforter sent by our Lord *Christ Jesus* unto his believing Christians, who strengtheneth and comforteth them in faith, unto Eternal Life: even so is the spirit of material *Sol*, or of the *Body of Mercury*, when they come together. There are two spirits, God the Father and God the Holy Ghost. But God the Son, a glorified man, is even as our glorified and fixed

*Sol*, or Philosopher's Stone; since *Lapis* is called *Trinus*, namely, out of two waters (*Sol* and *Luna* considered essentially) or spirits of mineral and of vegetable; and of the animal of sulphur of *Sol*. These are the *two* and *three*, and yet but *one*. If you understand it not, then you are not likely to succeed. Thus by way of *similitude* I have delineated unto thee sufficiently the *universal*. Pray to God for a blessing, for without Him you are not likely to prosper at all."

59. It seems amazing, in view of such passages, that the real subject and object of Alchemy should have escaped the observation of general readers and even critics; in so much that there is scarcely a fragment of current literature in allusion to the Alchemists but what implies that they were in pursuit of gold; when, except some "deluded, sottish ignorants," nothing can be more certain than that their purpose was wholly Religious.

60. With the explanations we have made, the reader can hardly fail to see the *theory* indicated by Basilus, right or wrong. He considered *man* as consisting (not *composed*, in a mechanical sense) of Body, Soul, and Spirit; the latter appearing in the form of the Con-

science, itself sinless and incapable of sin, (in this respect like Christ himself,) though associated with a "sick" brother and sister, for whose sake it mystically dies, but only to work out a purification, when the same spirit is regarded as a Magnet, or as possessing a magnetic virtue (call it Love) by which it seeks the universal Magnet, in which alone it has its Life and finds its eternal resting place."

If we desire still further proof that Valentine sought the true Elixir or Philosopher's Stone, rather than the transmutation of the base metals, then let us look at his own instructions as given in his "The Triumphal Chariot of Antimony."

"I have found that in this Meditation there are five principal heads, which must be diligently considered, as much by all who are in possession of the wisdom of philosophy as by all who aspire after that wisdom which is attained in our art. The first is the invocation of God; the second, the contemplation of Nature; the third, true preparation (long training, development and transmutation of passions); the fourth, the way of using (taught only to the student seeking the Philosopher's Stone); the fifth, the use and profit. He

who does not carefully attend to these points will never be included among *real* Alchemists, or be numbered among the perfect professors of the Spagyric science. Therefore we will treat of them in their proper order as lucidly and succinctly as we can, in order that the careful and studious operator may be enabled to perform our Magistracy in the right way."

I would ask the student where there is anything in this that would indicate such a thing as the transmutation of the baser metals? There is no such thing indicated and the true preparation was what we now call the true Initiation or a process of Development, starting at the very beginning and developing up to Supreme Initiation when man will have found not only the Philosopher's Stone, but the Elixir of Youth also, and not only this for himself alone, but so that he can use it upon others and heal them and teach them the true life without exposing the secret to them. This is no dream, it is a fact which all students may prove for themselves. Provided, they are truly and Spiritually interested, and then they must not forget that it is a life work and that it cannot be accomplished in a day. They must also remember that the



teacher or Master or Alchemist cannot teach them the Philosopher's Stone or True Art, but that He can only point to the Path and that the student or Neophyte must himself travel it until he has reached Supreme Initiation or found the Philosopher's Stone, for when he has reached Supreme Initiation he will also have the Stone.

“First, there should be the invocation of God, flowing from the depth of a pure and sincere heart (the desire must be pure and not only because the secret is selfishly desired), and a *conscience* which should be free from all ambition, hypocrisy, and vice, as also from all cognate faults, such as arrogance, boldness, pride, luxury, worldly vanity, oppression of the poor, and similar iniquities, which should all be rooted out (changed into Love—transmuted) of the heart—that when a man appears before the Throne of God, to regain the health of his body (thy sins are cast out—Christ), he may come with a conscience weeded of all tares, and be changed into a pure temple of God, cleansed of all that defiles. For ‘God is not mocked,’ as worldly men fondly suppose (‘the Still Small Voice’ of the Conscience cannot be covered over or bribed).

He is not mocked, I say, but will be called upon with reverence and fear, and acknowledged as the Creator of all, with proper proofs of obedience. For what has man that he does not owe to God?—whether you look at his body, or at the soul which works in his body. Does he not nourish the latter with the word of His mercy? and has not he promised to it eternal life? Does he not give to our bodies food and clothing, without which we could not even live? All this man must obtain from the Blessed Father, who has created the earth, things visible and invisible, the firmament, elements, vegetables, animals, and all things. Hence a wicked (*un-regenerate*) man can never obtain the *true* Medicine (Philosopher's Stone—or Supreme Initiation), much less become partaker of the heavenly eternal bread.

“Therefore, let all your hope be stayed on God, and let constant prayer (desire), to impart to you this Blessing, be the beginning of your work, in order that you may safely reach the end, for the ‘fear of God is the beginning of Wisdom.’

“He who would seek the greatest of all earthly benedictions, the knowledge of all created good, and of

the effectual virtue which God has liberally implanted in stones, herbs, roots, seeds, animals, plants, minerals, metals, and all things, must fling away every earthly thought, hope only for freedom of heart, and pray to God with the greatest humility. Thus, the aspiration after freedom will soon be realized. This truth no one will call in question who knows it is God who redeems Israel from all foes, and not only Israel but all that call upon Him with a contrite and broken Spirit.

“The first head of our teaching, then, must be in prayer (desire for the transmutation—or, *conscious Life*), which *we* call the invocation of God, and see that it comes not forth out of feigned (half-hearted) lips, but is the fruit of faith and confidence, like that of the Centurion of Capernaum; in humility and contrition, like that of the Canaanitish woman; in charity, like that of the Samaritan who took up the wounded man on the way to Jericho, pouring into his wounds wine and oil, and paying his expenses at the inn, with an injunction that proper care should be taken of him; in brief, let the prayer be offered up in that spirit of Christian (Christ-like) charity which desires to share what it obtains with its neighbor;

then you will doubtless attain the object of your undertaking, viz: riches and health.

“Next in order after prayer follows *Contemplation*, by which we apprehend the essential properties of a thing, the circumstances by which it is conditioned, its matter, its form, its operations and their source, whence it is infused and implanted, how it is generated by the Stars, formed by the elements, produced and perfected by the three principles (Body, Soul, and Spirit. Mercury, Sulphur, and Salt).

“Again, it enables us to understand how the body of anything can be dissolved, i. e., resolved into its first matter or essence:

“This Contemplation, which forms the second part of our work, is heavenly, and spiritually apprehended, for only the spiritual mind can grasp the circumstances and foundation of all things. Now, this Contemplation is two-fold; one is called impossible, the other possible. The former consists in endless meditations, which can have no result because their object is intangible. Such problems are the Eternity of God, the Sin against the Holy Ghost, the infinite nature of the Godhead. They are incomprehensible,

and necessarily baffle the finite enquirer.

“The other part of Contemplation, which is possible, is called *Thoria*. It deals with the tangible and visible which has a temporal form—showing how it can be dissolved and thereby perfected into any given body; how every body can impart the good or evil, medicine or poison, which is latent in it; how the wholesome is separated from the unwholesome; how to set about destruction and demolition for the purpose of really and truly severing the pure from the impure without any sophistic guile.”

It needs no scholar to see by this that Valentinus did not teach a material Alchemy, but that he taught the *regeneration* of Humanity, the Development of all that is good (gold) in man.

61. One of these writers preludes in a somewhat antiquated language on this subject, as follows:

“Well did the primitive Grecian give the name *Altheia* unto *truth*: whose consanguinity, nay, consubstantiality of essence with the Human Soul, which the divine philosophy of Moses hath defined to be the *breath of God*, doth exactly make out that Etymology. For so incessant a *magnetism*, or congenerous Love,

doth the Soul hold unto *Truth*, that she can know no real or permanent satisfaction, in the fruition of any other object; but like the Aguish magnetified needle, reels to and fro, in a phrensy of inquietude, distracted twixt various apparitions, until she lie parallel unto the centre, or *unity* thereof; but having once fixed (the reader should note this expression, for it points to what the Alchemists call the 'fixation' of the matter of the Stone) in that happy position, she is, by an eternal *union*, identified or assimilated unto that twin of herself, and in that mysterious penetration of Homogenial forms meets her Beatitude, which can never know defect of satiety, alterity or desires, or remission of intensity."

62. The Reviewer thinks Basil Valentine, in seeking for the "Mercurius Philosophorum" in Antimony, though he missed what he sought, discovered a "valuable spirit of Salt, what we call the hydrochloric acid."

63. The reader is now prepared to judge whether the *spirit* sought for by Basilus in Antimony had an affinity with *hydrochloric acid*.

64. We know very well, however, that he did not lose sight of the actual mineral work, following in this

respect the example of all symbolic writers, who work up as much double truth as possible, without intending to prejudice the real object under the veil.

65. Webster, in a volume entitled *Metallagraphia* (1671), has written a Treatise of actual metals; but he has concluded every chapter Alchemically (or Hermetically) by writing, under a mask, of man. A hasty reader would only be mystified, but any one acquainted with the mode of writing adopted by the Alchemists would easily detect the disciple of Hermes.

66. Van Suchten, like Basil Valentine and Arthephius, wrote of Antimony, 1670; but his subject is also man, and his principles coincide entirely with those of the writers already cited. He opens his work in these words:

“It is not our purpose to write and dispute, out of what *Antimony* first cometh, as some have done.”

67. That is, the author will not undertake the (vain) inquiry into the origin of man, but he will take him as he finds him. This is what he means in this opening passage of his work.

68. He soon declares that, “in matter (substance) metals and antimony are all one,” and discloses the

Alchemist by saying that "Antimony is an imperfect metal, and in philosophy is called *Saturn* (the Saturn of Hollandus), of which Rhasis writeth, saying, that in Saturn, *Sol* and *Luna* (in the sense of active and passive) are contained in portentia, not visibly. Also Pythagoras saith, *all secrets are in Saturn*; and this Saturn is our Lead, which we physicians (philosophers) must know and understand; for it is created for us; it is *ours* and not another's.....Out of Antimony by Art is *aurum portabile* made.....This Art is named *Alchemy*.....

"Now for the *preparation* of Antimony, know that Antimony (man) is an Earth wherein lieth a metal called *Mercury* (the mercury or water of Hollandus again). This must the physician (philosopher) *draw from Antimony*; but the *miner* shall first melt (humiliate) Antimony from his mineral earth, wherein it grew, and *purify it*.....Thus is Mercury made out of Antimony; out of Saturn, Argent Vive (other names for antimony and mercury); which belongeth to the physician (philosopher); out of which he shall further make *Luna*, and out of *Luna*, *Sol*; so hath the work an end." (Luna here signifies the affections,



and Sol the reason; for the man must be made a reasonable being.)

69. Let anyone compare this with the extract from Hollandus, and it will be seen that what one says of *Lead*, the other says of *Antimony*; but Lead is not Antimony, while nevertheless both of them may symbolize man; as they do in the Hermetic writings under examination.

70. The second chapter of Van Suchten is, "of the venom of the physical mercury (sinfulness of the natural man) his heat and sulphur, and of the glass of antimony," in which a second step is taken. By *glass* we are to undersand purity, often spoken of as crystalline glass. It is the *White Earth* of Artephius.

71. The third chapter is much more abstruse, in which the author speaks of a certain Fire which is called, he says, *Donum Dei*, and proceeds: "The Alchemists—I understand not here," says he, "those sots who promise riches to others, yet are themselves beggars—have called this mystery the *Philosopher's Stone*, the *Blessed Holy Stone*, for this reason, that God hath placed it in an earthly, stony, and contemptible matter (man). The Arabians have called

it *Alchemy*, because Alchemy is an instrument which divideth the good from the bad; and what is not mature it matureth. The astronomers say it is Sol, that bringeth all things to maturity. So is this mystery, according to the *similitude*, called the Sun also. Paracelsus, in many places, calleth it God; as in that place where he saith, *Let gold be the seed, be thou the growing plant.*"

72. Here is a passage in condemnation of false Alchemists: "If thou dost object," says Van Suchten, "that not only common people, but also great nobles, have labored a long time in Alchemy with great expense, including among them many very learned men, yet not only any of them have found anything: I answer, that this noble Art requires a sound man, all these have been sick; they have had the gold sickness, *which hath darkened their senses*, so that they could not understand the terms which the wise men use in the description of the Art; seeking only with hot desire that which they shall never find. But what is to be found, that they seek not; therefore they work in vain. Who is to be blamed, the Art or the Artist, that they understand nothing? Alchemy is a pure and un-

corrupted virgin; she casts off the sensual man, and will have an intellectual one; of whom, at present, I see but few. Let no man's reason deceive him; we cannot be without errors, for very much of the idol hangeth on it. *In the Mind is the true Intellect*, which we must follow, not reason; so shall we enter, and thereby understand the wise men, who write rare things and easily know what it is.....The first operation of the Refiner (of man) is natural; the second, of the physician (philosopher), is natural also; but *the third is Divine*, for God worketh here alone, and the physician (philosopher) standeth here in his stead."

73. Von Helmont also says, that Man is not well defined by *reason*, and insists that there is something in him above reason, (he means reasoning,) which he calls religion. . Van Suchten and Von Helmont probably both refer to that *something*, which the more modern phraseology places above the "understanding, judging according to sense;" a sort of intuition, which some have not hesitated to call an inspiration. This is what Van Suchten probably calls the *mind*, or intellect, and says it is not reason. Is it anything else

than that *spiritual* sight which St. Paul says is necessary for discerning spiritual truths? The actual powers of man have always been the same, but as they are developed in individuals they take different names and give rise to controversies about mere words.

That man has a power of *conceiving* truths which the senses cannot *perceive*, seems a mere matter of fact about which there need be no difference of opinion. The real difficulty here is perhaps that of distinguishing *intuitions* from mere *imaginations*. It was Dr. P. B. Randolph who said that *intuition* was the highest quality of the Soul.

74. But to return to Van Suchten, who says, after describing with extraordinary minuteness, though in figures, the new birth, that,—

“The physician (meaning Teacher here) who hath not this knowledge, let him not meddle with *mercury* (for we have a warning of the consequence of the blind leading the blind), for it is not for him. But he who *earnestly thirsteth* after the knowledge of Nature,\*

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\*He who has a knowledge of Nature has a knowledge of *all* things. This was well understood by all Alchemists and Initiates, even of the most remote times. In the Eleusinian Mysteries and initiation, the follow-

and is well experienced in chemistry (meaning alchemy, or the knowledge of man), may take mercury in hand. What I mention, seek therein; all is in it, (Know Thyself,) and if thou rightly goest about it, thou shalt experimentally find that which I have met with. Then shalt thou see that I have written this Treatise, not out of hate or envy, but from a true heart, and for the lovers of truth; not according to my fancy and speculation, but from perfect experience, which time, according to God's will, hath manifested to me."

75. Who can imagine that this style of writing was  
ing Invocation was used:

"Nature, *all*-parent, Ancient and Divine,  
 O much mechanic mother, Art is thine;  
 Heavenly, abundant, venerable queen,  
 In every part of thy dominions seen.  
 Untamed, all taming, ever splendid light,  
 All ruling, honored, and supremely bright.  
 Immortal, *first*-born, ever still the same,  
 Nocturnal, starry, shining, powerful dame.  
 Thy feet still trace in a circling course,  
 By thee are turned, with unremitting force.  
 Pure ornament of all the Powers Divine,  
 Finite and infinite alike you shine;  
 To all things common, and in *all* things known,  
 Yet incommunicable and alone.  
 Without a father of thy wondrous frame,  
 Thyself the father whence thy essence came;

used by a seeker after earthly riches? The author may be called a deluded fool; but no man in his senses can read this very grave little volume of Van Suchten's, and suppose that the writer was thinking of perishable treasures."

There is no aspiration, there is no ambition, there is no purpose to compare with the search after truth. It is the "wise man's crown," the way of the "temple of Wisdom," and the "glory of the Rosy Cross." To some natures the necessity for truth is as imperative as the necessity for love. In some natures the passion for truth is more strong than any physical passion.

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Mingling, all-flourishing, supremely wise,  
And bond connective of the earth and skies.  
Leader, life-bearing queen, all various named,  
And for commanding grace and beauty famed.  
Justice, supreme in might, whose general sway  
The waters of the restless deep obey.  
Etherial, earthly, for the *pious glad*,  
Sweet to the good, but bitter to the *bad*;  
All-wise, all-bounteous, provident, Divine,  
A rich increase of nutriment is thine;  
And to maturity whatever may spring,  
You to decay and dissolution bring.  
Father of all, great nurse, and mother kind,  
Abundant, blessed, all-spermatie mind;  
Mature, impetuous, from whose fertile seeds  
And plastic hand this changing scene proceeds.  
All-parent power, in Vital impulse seen,

Whatsoever the direction it may take, whatsoever the end in view, we may be sure that the search is noble because the truth is always good. "A familiar acquaintance with the different branches of knowledge has taught me," says the Alchemist, Edward Kelley, "this one thing, that nothing is more Ancient, excellent, or more desirable than truth, and whoever neglects it must pass his whole life in the shade." There are times and there are seasons which are more appropriate than others for the communication of certain truths, and knowledge out of season may be dangerous, but the truth is always good. There is not

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Eternal, moving, all-sagacious queen.  
By thee the world, whose parts in rapid flow,  
Like swift descending streams, no respite know,  
On an eternal hinge, with steady course,  
Is whirled with matchless, unremitting force.  
Throned on a circling car, thy mighty hand  
Holds and directs the reins of wide command:  
Various thy essence, honored, and the best,  
Of judgment, too, the general end and test.  
Intrepid, fatal, all-subduing dame,  
Life everlasting, Parca, breathing flame.  
Immortal Providence, the world is thine,  
And thou art all things, Architect Divine.  
O, blessed Goddess, hear thy suppliants' prayer,  
And make their future life thy constant care;  
Give plenteous seasons and sufficient wealth,  
And crown our days with lasting peace and health.

a branch of enquiry which can be legitimately included in the search after truth, that, when properly regarded, is not a Holy thing. There is a sanctity of learning which is the splendor of the beauty of truth, and even the methods and processes of science by which we discover and learn, have that sacredness of sentiment which attaches to the vestments of a saint.”\*

Philosophy has been defined as “Passion for Wisdom,” and we read: “Philosophy, or the passion for wisdom, stimulates the intellect, as religion stimulates the emotions; these passions or expansions of the Ego carry it beyond the limits of its own being, and tend to merge it in the *all* being. Here the centrifugal or Redeeming force is free to act, and the constrictions of matter cease. When the Passions of the Emotions and the intellect are set free, the Experience of Elementary Nature can be judged with safety. *This then is the Esoteric meaning of the “Unity with God.” “I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.”* (St. John x:14-20.) Compare again, “*His is the mind, theirs are the powers*” of the Chaldean Oracles. For the *perfect* man stands *between the finest ether and*

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\*“Azoth, or, The Star in the East.”



the *coarsest* matter, and his spirit *must* penetrate *all*.

“For the world, religion means, as Cardinal Newman puts it, ‘the knowledge of God, of His will, and of our duties towards Him.’ Separating Him as a formal notion from His works, cutting Him off as a branch from the Tree of Life of which He is the *very* root and being. Therefore to the Initiated it is no blasphemy to say that such religion is a vanity and vexation of spirit.

“The world holds many half evolved personalities who have to live and learn much before they can be *conscious* of the *latent* complexities of their *own* nature. Their hour has not yet come. But for the more fully developed,—life daily sounds undreamed of harmonies. Just as in modern music the most acute emotion is produced by subtle changes of key, so the human being is passing from one aspect to another of a highly complex existence intensifies and enriches his being with experiences, undreamed of by the *un*-developed man, just as little as by the Masters of the simple harmonies of ancient music.

“Without philosophy, or the ‘Passion for Wisdom,’ Salvation cannot be understood. Again we plead for

the union of the Divine, the Celestial and the Natural (the Mercury, Sulphur, and Salt); for we say the very nature of the highest existence is in the union and synthesis of the Divine productions of differentiation.”\*

76. It is remarkable that all of the Alchemists denounce mere money-seekers. They promise the sons of Art riches indeed, but they are the “riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God.” It is admitted, of course, that multitudes of the selfish and ignorant were led by their promises, literally understood, to seek among real metals an agent for turning common metals into gold, and this class of men may unconsciously have prepared the way for modern chemistry—in fact did so; but it is not just to omit all notice of the genuine Alchemists, and affix to their Art the odium which only belongs to a class of people called “ignorant sots” by the Alchemists themselves. We have seen what Van Suchten says of those who were duped, or attempted to deceive others.

77. Here is a passage from “*Eyrenaeus Cosmopolita*”: “Since, then, this knowledge is so wonderful,

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\*“Euphrates, or, the Waters of the East.”

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 them, in the very words of Trevisan, *the Art is so plain that, if it were nakedly described, it would seem to be contemptible*; and yet in mechanical arts how frequent is it for men to serve seven, eight, yea, ten years' apprenticeship 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, excelling all human sciences, as the sun doth a candle, who will employ himself with diligence? unless it be some money-minded sots, who seek only for riches; and yet even they are soon weary. So that few or none persist in the inquiry, save a few roughish sophists who live by cozening; *by reason of whom the Art is scandalized*, and ill spoken of. Yet trust me, for I speak knowingly, the Art is both true and easy; yea, so easy, that, if you were to see the experiment, you would hardly believe it."

78. M. Figuiet speaks of the causes of the overthrow

of Alchemy, and, curiously enough, cites among others the labors of Otto Tachenius, giving him great credit therefor. The work of Tachenius is in two parts; the first, the *Hippocrates chymicus*, was written against *false* Alchemists, and was intended to turn from the study all hasty and immature wits; for the *Clavis* annexed to it, as the second part, is a genuine alchemical work; and even the first part is strewed with Hermetic philosophy, purposely made impenetrable to dunces.

79. The celebrated Robert Boyle wrote a work ostensibly against certain supposed principles of the Alchemists; but he took care to approve and recommend, and even to explain and defend, mystically,—in their own jargon,—what he distinguished as their practical work. The truth is, that some, losing sight of the legitimate “Work,” ambitiously sought to *explain* the Universe, and this, too, in a more or less mechanical sense. To this class of writers Mr. Boyle took just exception; but he stops far short of a condemnation of Alchemy.

80. A Most remarkable Essay touching this subject may be seen in Bishop Berkeley’s “Iris,” or Essay on

*Tar Water.* Bishop Berkeley well knew the real object of the Alchemists, and had something more than sympathy for it, as any one may see who will understandingly read his *Essay on Tar Water*. Tar Water is Bishop Berkeley's symbol of the *impure* natural man, which needs to be washed, and washed, and washed again, etc.

81. Readers of metaphysical writings will recollect that Father Malebranche would have us "see all things in God," while Bishop Berkeley would have us recognize the Spirit of God in all things. Is the Spirit of God anything *but* God? what essential difference is there between these doctrines? To say that we see God in all things, or all things in God, is to say the same thing, provided these expressions have any meaning at all, and are not a mere form of words.

82. M. Figuier makes merry with the word *Alcahest*, or the *universal solvent*, "sought by all the experimentalists." "Of course," says the Reviewer, "many proclaimed that they had found it, until Kunkel scattered the whole fabric of pretention by a single phrase: 'What kind of vessel,' he asked, '*contains* this universal solvent?'" M. Figuier notices the deriva-

tion of the word in the German, *all-Geist* (*all-Spirit*), but does not profit by it; and yet this amazingly obtuse-witted man has published what he calls an *historical and critical Essay* upon Hermetical Philosophy!

83. Bishop Berkeley knew very well what *alcahest* meant in the writings of the Alchemists, and was far enough from denying the Spirit of God because no human vessel can be made to contain it, well seeing, nevertheless, that it is contained (if the Spirit of God is) in all things. The alchemists knew that it could not be *contained*, or rather *confined*, in a formula of words, and held up for the curiosity of the idle, much less for the profane; yet to the properly *prepared* and *purified* Soul it is the *most* apparent thing in the Universe.

The body is not the adversary of the Soul, and should never be so regarded. Inert and beautiful, the body is the Temple of the *indwelling* God, and is not to be held accountable should it be profaned by the "money changers" and the "sellers of sheep and oxen," which in the New Testament personify the *baser* passions and desires. It is the duty of the Christ

to drive these from *within* and to take possession of the Sanctuary in the name of the Father. Not until they have been redeemed should they be allowed to re-enter. Thus does the Mystic John have the Christ say, "All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers," meaning that the *lower passions* hold unlawful occupancy and sway over the body until Christ, its rightful lord, takes possession of his own.

To the purified (transmuted) passion, the thief on the cross, he says, "To-morrow thou shalt be with me in Paradise," for Paradise, like the Kingdom of Heaven, is *within* us, and when a passion which once gratified us ceases to do so and causes suffering, it is the travail of a new birth, which man, if Wisdom guides us, redeem that passion and make it worthy to become the servant and companion of Christ.

The body is the hall (crucible) of Initiation wherein a man's Soul (Sulphur or Mercury) is tried and strengthened (purified). Within it, the Master, the Mystic Alchemist, takes all the *baser* elements, and transmutes them into pure gold. Here experience is built into strength and strength uplifted to virtue; and it is by means of these virtues, which are often subli-

mated from the basest experiences, that the Soul of man *evolves* to the Highest.”\*

What a remarkable treatise on the true Alchemy this is and in it is the Key to all the Alchemical writings and in so plain a language that all may understand.

84. Who shows the most reverence for God,—he who parades the name before his readers as he would that of a familiar acquaintance, or he who throws a veil over what he hopes he may not be mistaken in as a result of whole years of meditation upon his Sacred name?

85. Let any one read the qualifications set out by Basil Valentine, —already given—as necessary in him who would understand anything of *antimony*, and consider to what they really point. There is something in the very title of his work, “The Triumphal Chariot of Antimony,” which may remind us of the Chariot of Fire in the Book of Kings.

86. According to Basilus, as stated, it is necessary, as a preparation for the study of *antimony*, to make,—

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\*“The Altar in the Wilderness.”



“First, Invocation to God, with a certain heavenly intention, drawn from the bottom of a pure and sincere heart and conscience, pure from all ambition, hypocrisy, and all other vices which have any affinity with these; as arrogance, boldness, pride, luxury, petulancy, oppression of the poor, and other similar evils, all of which are to be eradicated from the heart; that when a man desires to prostrate himself before the throne of grace, for obtaining health, he may do so with a conscience free from all unprofitable weeds, *that his body may be transmuted* into a holy temple of God, and be purged from all uncleanness. For God will not be mocked, (of which I would earnestly admonish all,) as worldly men, pleasing and flattering themselves with their own wisdom, think. God, I say, will not be mocked, but the Creator of all things will be invoked with reverential fear; and acknowledged with due obedience. . . . . Which is so very true, that I am certainly assured no impious man shall ever be partaker of the true *medicine*, much less of the eternal heavenly bread. Therefore, place your whole intention and trust in God; call upon him and pray that he may impart his blessing to you. Let this be the be-

ginning of your work, that by the same you may obtain your desired end, and at length effect what you intended. *For the fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom.*"

87. After a whole page more—as given in another part—Basil comes to the *second* qualification, which he calls *contemplation*, by which, says he, "I understand an accurate attention to the business itself, under which will fall these considerations, first to be noted. As, what are the circumstances of anything; what the matter; what the form; whence its operations proceed; whence it is infused and implanted; how generated," etc.; "also how the body of everything may be dissolved, that is, resolved into the *first matter*, or *first essence* (of which I have already made mention in other parts of these writings), *viz.*, how the last matter may be changed into the first, and the first into the last. This contemplation," continues Basil, "is celestial, and to be understood with Spiritual reason; for the circumstances and depth of things cannot be perceived in any other way than by the Spiritual cogitation of man; and this contemplation is twofold. One is called possible, and the other impossible, etc."

88. The reader may consider what Hollandus says of cleansing *Saturn*, and of what Von Suchten says of purifying Antimony: indeed, all of these writers hold but one language on this point, no matter what name they select for their matter, which everywhere, in all of the books, signifies *Man*, who is the subject of all this inquiry, all this labor, all this talk about the Philosopher's Stone. As a sample of what Basil says of the *qualifications* deemed important in a student of *Antimony*, we will cite the remainder of what he says under this head:

"This *separation* is instituted and made by divers manual operations, and various ways; some of which are vulgarly known by experience, others remote from vulgar experience. These are calcination, sublimation, reverberation, circulation, putrefaction, digestion, distillation, cohobation, fixation, and the like of these; all the degrees of which are found in operating, learned and perceived, and manifested by the same." (These are only various names for various experiences in life.)

89. To caution the reader that some of these operations, though most real, are nevertheless invisible, and

not the work of the hands, I would remind him to reflect upon what is said in Scripture of a certain something which is sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing assunder of Soul and Spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a *discerner of the thoughts and intent of the heart.*—*The Conscience.*

90. "Whence will clearly appear," continues Basil, "what is movable (transient), what is fixed (permanent), what is white, red, black, blue, or green, viz., when the operation is rightly instituted by the artificer; for possibly the operator may err, and turn aside from the right way; but *that Nature should err, when rightly handled, is not possible.*"

91. I place this passage in italics, for I would have it noticed. "Therefore," says Basil, "if you shall err, so that Nature cannot be altogether free, and released from the body, in which it is held captive, return again unto your way; learn the theory more perfectly, and inquire more accurately into the method of your operating, that you may discover the foundation and certainty in the separation of all things; which is a matter of great concern. And this is the

second foundation of philosophy, which follows prayer (desire). For in that, the sum of the matter lies, and is contained in these words: Seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness by prayer (holy desire), and *all* things shall be added unto you."

92. To show that Basil Valentine was not alone in thus announcing the sort of preparation necessary for success in this study, we will recite a few of the *Canons* of Espagnet, viz:

"The light of this knowledge is the gift of God, which by his freeness he bestoweth upon whom he pleaseth. (The reader will remember the verse from John iii:8.) Let none, therefore, set himself to the study hereof, until, having cleared and purified his heart, he devote himself wholly unto God, and be emptied of all affection to things impure."

"Those that are in public honors and offices, or be always busied with private and necessary occupations, let them not strive to attain to the top of this philosophy; for it requireth the whole man; and being found, possesseth him, and being possessed, challengeth him from all long and serious employments, esteeming all other things as strange unto him, and of no value."

This language, it is true, is not quite as strong as that in Phil. iii:8.

“Let him that is desirous of this knowledge clear his mind from all evil notions, especially pride, which is abomination to heaven, and the gate of hell. Let him be frequent with prayers, and charitable; have little to do with the world; abstain from too much company keeping, and enjoy constant tranquility, that the mind may be able to reason more freely in private, and be more highly lifted up; for unless it be kindled with a beam of divine light, it will hardly be able to penetrate the hidden truth.”

“A studious *tyro* of a quick wit, constant mind, inflamed with the love of philosophy, very skillful in natural philosophy, of a pure heart, perfect in manners, mightily devoted to God (to truth)—even though ignorant of practical chemistry (note this carefully), may with confidence enter the highway of Nature, and peruse the books of the best philosophers. Let him seek out an ingenious (and ingenuous) companion for himself, and not despair of accomplishing his desire.”

93. It will be seen here, that for success in this

study a knowledge of practical chemistry is not deemed indispensable. The reason is that the subject is *Man*, and a chief instrument in the work is *meditation*. It is not a work of the hands. Pontanus, a great name among the Alchemists, says that, after reading Artephius, he discovered the true Fire by a "profound meditation," and affirms that it can be discovered in no other way.

94. "Let a Lover of Truth," continues Espagnet, "make use of only a few authors, but of best note and experienced truth; let him suspect things that are quickly understood, especially in *mystical names and secret operations*; for truth lies hid in obscurity; nor do philosophers ever write more deceitfully than when plainly, nor ever more truly than when obscurely."

95. Espagnet then recommends the works of Hermes, Morienus Romanus, Count Trevisan, and Raymond Luly; to which I would by all means add his own little book, entitled "*Arcanum, or the Grand Secret of Hermetical Philosophy*." He adds, in recommendation of Sandivogius: "As for that clear water sought for by many, found out by few, yet obvious and profitable unto all, which is the *base* of

the philosopher's work, a noble *Polonian*, not more famous for his learning than subtlety of wit, (anonymous, whose name, nevertheless, a double anagram hath betrayed,) in his *Novum Lumen Chemicum*, *Parabala*, and *Enigma*, as also his Tract of Sulphur, hath spoken largely and freely enough. Yea, he hath expressed all things concerning it so plainly, that nothing can be satisfactory to him that desireth more."

Let us look at the Theosophical view of Alchemy and then at the Scriptural. There is but one Alchemy, no matter by what class it may be taught, and the proper name for that Alchemy, for all *true* Alchemy, is Divine Alchemy. All *true* Alchemy deals with the Transmutation of the baser metals into the pure gold. In other words, with the transmutation of the base passions and habits into a Divine Love for all true Alchemy ends in pure Love. Selfish love is a base passion; true Love beautiful gold. Says an author: "But a love that is selfish, how shall it be changed? *Not* by diminishing the love; that is the blunder that some men make. *Not* by chilling it down and making it colder and harder as it were, if love could ever be cold and hard; but by encouraging the love and de-



liberately *trying* to eliminate these elements which degrade it; by watching the lower self, and when it begins to build a little wall of exclusion, knocking that wall down; when it desires to keep that which is so precious and so admirable, then at once trying to share with its neighbor; when it tries to draw the loved one from others, rather to give him out that he may be shared by others. The Soul *must* realize that what is beautiful and joy-giving should be given to all in order that they too may have the happiness which the one is receiving from the object which is beloved, so that all these grosser elements shall gradually disappear. When the feeling of selfishness arises, it shall deliberately be put aside; when the feeling of jealousy expresses itself, it shall at once be put an end to; so that where the feeling was "Let us keep alone and enjoy," it shall be changed into "Let us go forth into the world together to give and share with others the joy that together we have found." So that by this process of Alchemy, the love will become Divine compassion, and will spread itself over all the world of men; so that which found its joy in receiving from the beloved, will find its delight in pouring forth to all

that which it has found. And this love which once was selfish, which once perhaps was the love between one man and one woman, and then widened out into the circle of the home, and then widened still further into the life of the community, and then further out into the life of the nation, and then into the life of the race, shall finally widen out to include everything that lives in a universe where there is naught that lives not. And it shall have lost nothing in its depth, nothing in its warmth, nothing in its intensity, nothing in its fervor, but it shall have spread over the Universe instead of being concentrated on a single heart, and shall have become that ocean of compassion which includes everything which feels and lives. Such would be, with regard to love, this Alchemy of the Soul.

“And thus you might take quality after quality of the lower nature, and trace it out as I have traced this, and you will see that the whole of the process is essentially a getting rid of the separateness, a burning up of that deliberate will and deliberate knowledge and understanding, and that the whole of the process is a joy to the true, the real man, however much the lower man may sometimes in his blindness fail to

understand. And when once that is known, then that which was pain loses its aspect of pain, and becomes a joy, and even in the absolute sensation of what otherwise would have been pain, the joy overbears and changes the suffering, because the Soul sees, and the lower nature begins to understand, and the end and the object of the work.

“And thus tracing this subject we shall realize that there is yet another way in which this Transmutation may occur; that as this fire of wisdom and of love, which is the Divine Nature in man, comes forth unto the lower nature more and more, burning up these limitations that I have spoken of, and transmuting it into its own likeness, there is also a liberation of Spiritual energy, a liberation of Spiritual power; this Self which is thus manifested in the lower man is able to put forth energies and powers which seen in some strange way to be the outcome of the process that we have been tracing, an Alchemy in nature by which—as this Soul, with its Fire of Love and of Wisdom, becomes manifest in the world of men—in the very manifestation it seems to liberate energy, in the very burning up of the lower it sets free Subtle Forces of

the Higher; so that the result of the burning is the liberation of the Spiritual Life, and setting free of that which was bound and could not manifest itself, but which, when this outer film shall be burned up, is freed for work in the world. We come dimly to understand, as the Soul is rising on to Higher planes, and realizing its identity with all and the oneness of all, we begin dimly to see the outline of a great truth; that it is able by virtue of its oneness with other Souls to share with them and to help them in many ways, and that it is able to surrender and feel joy in the surrender of that which it might have had for itself, but which, having identified itself with all, it must needs give to the world. And so what might be called the prize of Spiritual achievements—the possibilities of Spiritual rest, and Spiritual bliss, and Spiritual growth, which could not be shared with others—may be surrendered by this Soul as a joyful act, which is for it a necessity of its own nature, in order that all it surrenders may become common property, and spread through the race of men to help forward their Evolution.”

And again: “I have described.....Spiritual

Alchemy; and had in mind, in the use of that phrase, a process of change, a process of Transmutation, the allusion of course being to that work of the Alchemist whereby they changed the baser metals into the nobler, thereby he changed, say, the copper into the gold. And I have in my thought a process which goes on in the world around us, to some extent I should imagine in the mind and in the life of every thoughtful and religious person, but which with our candidate becomes, as I have often repeated, a self-conscious and deliberate process, so that he recognizes his method and his end and turns himself deliberately to the achievement of that which he desires. Now this process of Spiritual Alchemy spoken of, may be regarded, I think, in the most general sense of the term, as a *transmutation* of Forces. Each man has in himself life and energy and vigor, power of will, and so on; these are the forces with which he is to work, these are the energies by which his object is to be attained. By a process, which may fairly be described as Alchemical, he *transmutes* these forces from lower ends to higher, he transmutes from the gross energies to energies that are refined and Spiritualized. It is not only that he

changes their object, nor is the change of object the point which my own mind is directed in this phase; it is rather that he changes and purifies them without as it were altering their essential nature, just as the Alchemist, taking his grosser matter, really passed it through a process of purification; not the mere purging away of dross, but a purification that went much farther, that took the very metal itself, that reduced it into a finer and rarer state, and then, as it were, recombined it into a nobler and sublimer type. So that you may imagine the Spiritual Alchemist as taking all these forces of his nature, recognizing them as forces, and therefore as useful and necessary, but deliberately changing, purifying, and refining them. We are concerned with the method of refining, with the way in which this work may be carried out.

“The object of this Spiritual Alchemy is not only this Transmutation of the forces, though that is its essential part, but there is a subsidiary side to it which one cannot leave out of account. Souls are bound to earth-life, to the wheel of births and of deaths, by desires, they are held there by ignorance, they are fettered by their longings after material enjoyments.

after separated and isolated joys as it were. Continually engaged in actions, these actions bind the Soul, whether they be in themselves good or bad, whether they be in themselves helpful or mischievous; none the less as actions they have this characteristic—that action in the ordinary man springs from desire, and that this desire is the binding and the fettering force. Action must continue to be accomplished as long as man remains in the world; actions are needful to be done, else manifestation could no longer be. As a man grows nobler and wiser and stronger, his actions become an ever more and more important factor in the world's progress. And supposing the greatest should abstain from action, then the progress of the race must necessarily be delayed, its evolution must inevitably be retarded.”\*

96. It may throw some light upon the spirit and purpose of the Alchemists to give a specimen of their Invocation of Divine aid; and we take one from the introductory chapter to Nicholas Flammel's work on a book of Hieroglyphics—in these words:

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“The Lord God of my Life, who exalts the humble

\*“In the Outer Court,” Annie Beasant.

in spirit out of the most abject dust, and makes the hearts of such as hope in him to rejoice, be eternally praised.

“Who of his own grace reveals to the believing Soul the springs of his bounty, and subjugates under their feet the crowns of all earthly felicities and glories :

“In him (I say) let us always put our confidence; in his fear let us place our happiness; and in his mercy the hope and glory of the restoration of our fallen state.

“And in our supplication to him let us demonstrate, or show forth, a faith unfeigned and stable; an assurance, that shall not forever be shaken.

“And thou, O Lord God Almighty, as Thou, out of thy infinite and most desirable goodness, hast condescended to open the Earth, and unlock thy Treasures unto me, thy poor and unworthy servant, and hast given into my possession the Fountains and Well-Springs of all the Treasures and riches of this world :

“So, O Lord God, out of thine abundant kindness extend thy mercies unto me, that when I shall cease to be any longer in the Land of the Living, thou mayest open unto me the Celestial Riches, thy Divine



Treasures, and give me a part or portion in the Heavenly Inheritance forever :

“Where I may behold the fullness of thy Heavenly Majesty, a pleasure so Ineffable, and a Joy so ravishing, which no mortal Man can express or conceive.

“This I entreat of thee, O Lord, for our Lord Jesus Christ, thy well-beloved Son’s sake, who, in the Unity of the Holy Spirit, liveth with thee, World without end. *Amen.*”

97. We have the following, in the same spirit, as the conclusion of Ripley’s *Medulla Alchemiae* :

“O, most incomprehensible Light, most glorious in Majesty, who with the Charity of thy Heavenly Rays doth darken our Dimmer Light; O, substantial Unity, the Divine Three, the joy and rejoicing of the Heavenly Host, the Glory of our Redemption :

“Thou most merciful, the Purifier of Souls, and the Perpetual subsistence; O, most Gracious, through dangers and perils which thou dost suffer us to undergo, through this vexatious vale of Vanity, bring us to thy heavenly Kingdom.

“O, Power and Wisdom, thou goodness inexplicable, uphold us daily, and be our guide and director, that

we may never displease Thee all the days of our lives, but obey Thee, as Faithful Professors of thy Holy Name.

“Early, even betimes, O Lord, hear thou my prayers; by the virtue of thy Grace, help forward my desires, and enable me, I beseech thee, to perform thy Holy Will.

“O, most excellent Fountain, boundless in Treasures, thou scatterest thy good things without measure amongst the Sons of Men, and thou makest every other creature to partake of thine especial kindness.

“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to behold the Works of thy Hand, and to defend what thy Right Hand hath planted, that we may not live unprofitably, nor spend the course of our Years in Vanities.

“Grant, therefore, we beseech thee, that we may live without falsehood and deceit; that, avoiding the great danger of a sinful course of life, we may escape the snares of wickedness.

“And as I renounce the loves of the things of this life, and the concupiscences or lusts thereof, so accept of thy Servant, as a true votary, who wholly depends

on thy goodness with all confidence, possessing nothing more.

“We submit ourselves to Thee, for so it is fit. Vouchsafe Thy Light to discover to us the immortal Treasures of Life; show us Thy hidden things, and be merciful and good to us.

“Among the rest of Thy Servants who profess Thy Name, I offer myself with all humble submission; and I beseech Thee, O Lord, to forgive me, if I open and reveal Thy Secrets to Thy Faithful Servants. *Amen.*”

98. The reader has now before him, at what he may consider a tedious length, extracts from Isaac Hollandus, Artephius, Van Suchten, Basil Valentine, and Espagnet, and many others more modern, all well-known names of Alchemists, three of these especially referred to by the Reviewer as in pursuit of an agent for transmuting common metal into gold; and can hardly fail to see one pervading doctrine, explicably only by a due knowledge of the nature of man. Extracts from the works of more than a hundred other writers might be added, if it were necessary, showing that every genuine Alchemist wrote only of Man.

99. This is the class of men overlooked by the his-

torian and others, who have fastened upon the weak and ignorant, or upon "imposters and mountebanks," as if these men were the originators of Alchemy; when, so far from belonging to the class of those who entered into or sought to enter into the new birth, they properly belong to the production known among midwives as the *placenta*.

100. That chemistry is indirectly indebted to the Alchemists for its introduction among the sciences is certainly true; but not to the immediate labors of the Alchemists themselves, whose peculiar work was one of contemplation, and not a work of the hands. The almbic, furnace, cucurbit, retort, philosophical egg, etc., in which the work of fermentation, distillation, extraction of essence and spirits, and the preperation of salts is said to have taken place, was *man*,—yourself, friendly reader; and if you will take yourself into your own study, and be candid and honest, acknowledging no other guide or authority but Truth, you may easily discover something of Hermetic Philosophy; and if, at the beginning, there should be some "fear and trembling," the end may be a more than compensating peace.

101. For the most part, the experiments which led the way to chemistry were made by men who were misled by the language of the Alchemists, and sought gold instead of truth. Many of this class of men no doubt died over their furnaces, "*uttering no voice*;" but none of them wrote books upon the Philosopher's Stone, for the simple reason that they never discovered anything to write about, and were incapable of indicating in the remotest manner any method for discovering what they sought, but never found. Some imposters purposely wrote of mysteries, to play upon the credulity of the ignorant; but their works have nothing alchemical about them. It is true, also, that many books were written by men who really imagined they had discovered the secret, and were nevertheless mistaken. But this imaginary success could never have had place where *gold* was the object; because in the bare *fact* no man was ever deceived. No man ever believed that he had discovered a method of making gold out of inferior metals. The thing speaks for itself. It is impossible that any man can ever have been deluded upon this fact. But it is quite otherwise with respect to the real object of Alchemy, in which

men have been deceived in all ages either under the name of Alchemy, or under some other name; for the *subject* is always in the world; hence the antiquity claimed for the Art by the Alchemists. Upon this subject, under the name of Alchemy, many mistaken men have written large volumes; and, to a novice, these works are among the obstacles in the study, for until some skill is obtained, at least so far as to discern the *subject* of the study, the student has no principle for separating the chaff from the wheat.

102. To a man who cannot read at all, all books are alike; and to one who reads in but one language, by much the greater part of the books in the world are incomprehensible; while, of the books in the language one reads, those only come within his comprehension up to near the level of which he has risen by cultivation, study, and research.

D'Alembert congratulated himself that his works on *Mathematics* could not be criticised by fools.

103. The Reviewer gives the opinion, that the religious language found in books of Alchemy was not in use among the Arabs who sought the Philosopher's Stone, but was introduced by Christians after the

subject was transferred to Christendom; when, he says, religious *inspiration* was believed to be necessary for the discovery of the agent for transmuting metals; the Reviewer still being under the impression that gold was the object. He says that this *religious language* is all that gives "a sort of pretext" to the views in my pamphlet.

104. If the writer of the article in the Westminster Review should by any chance ever fall in with this defence of the Alchemists (not of myself), I beg him to believe that I do not tax him with an inability to perceive his error, if he would consult the works of the Alchemists. My only surprise is that he should have ventured upon the subject so illy prepared for it. If he will look into the writings of Geber, the Arabian, his eye may chance to fall upon such passages as follows:

"We have discribed it (the Stone) in such a way of speaking as is agreeable to the will of the Most High, Blessed, Sublime, and Glorified God, and *our own mind*.\* We have written the same, as it happened

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\*The author means to say, that he has described the Stone according to his own mind, acting under *his*

to be recollected, or as it was infused by *the Grace of his Divine goodness, who gives it to, and withholds it from, whom he will.*"

105. And again: "The Artist should be intent on the true *end* only, because our Art is reserved in the *divine will of God*, and is given to, or withheld from, whom he will; who is glorious, sublime, and full of justice and goodness."

106. It will be difficult to discover in this language any other than the religious spirit which the Reviewer thinks was introduced into Arabia after the subject had been transferred into Christendom.

107. The Reviewer also says that the Arabians never thought of the Philosopher's Stone as a cure for disease; and yet the same Geber speaks of it as a "medicine, rejoicing and preserving the Body in Youth."

108. This is alchemical language for expressing immortality; and if any one who wishes to speak of this *under the rose*, how can it be better represented than as perpetual youth?

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conception of the Most High, Blessed, Sublime, and Glorious God.



109. Geber further gives the student this instruction: "Dispose yourself by exercise to the study with great industry and labor, and a *continued deep meditation; for by these you may find it, and not otherwise.*"

110. What can meditation do with actual metals? It cannot blow the coals under an alembic; but it may bring a man into a right state for hearing the *still, small voice*, whose potency, like that of the *Alcahest*,—for it is the *Alcahest*, or stands in relation to it as a son to his father, being the same nature,—is able to dissolve the stoniest hearts.

111. Again, Geber says: "If we have concealed anything, (meaning by enigmatical writing,) ye sons of learning, wonder not, for we have not concealed it from you, but have delivered it in such language as that it may be hid from evil men, and that the unjust and vile might not know it. But, ye sons of Truth, search, and you shall find this most excellent gift of God, which he has reserved for you;"—as if he had expressly the language of Scripture in view,—"*Seek, and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you.*" But he adds:

“Ye sons of folly, impiety, and profanity, avoid you the seeking after this knowledge; it will be destructive to you, and precipitate you into contempt and misery. This gift of God is absolutely, by the judgment of the Divine Providence, hid from you, and denied you forever.

“Perhaps for the punishment of your sophistical work, (or bad life,) God denies you the Art, and lamentably thrusts you into the by-path of error, and from your error into perpetual infelicity and wretchedness; for he is most miserable and unhappy, to whom, after the end of his work and labor, God denies the sight of Truth. For such a man is doomed to perpetual labor, beset with misfortune and infelicity, loseth the consolation, joy, and delight of his life, and consumes his whole time in grief without profit.”

112. Who can read such language, and suppose that the author was thinking of gold? He was not! He was writing of Truth: and this is *Geber*, the *Arabian*.

113. The Reviewer is not less unfortunate in his reference to George Ripley, a monk of the fifteenth century. Ripley's *Compound of Alchemy*, only one of

many works by him on the same subject, became a text-book for the Alchemists, who continually refer to it with eulogy. It would be tedious, or, by a few extracts, it might be easily shown that Ripley wrote only of *man*, and never dreamed of making gold in any other sense than that of making goodness.

114. The Reviewer thinks that Ripley publicly recanted his belief in Alchemy, and endeavored to dissuade others from falling into similar errors. This story arose from the urgent dissuasives against *false* Alchemy, contained in some of his works, where he warns every one against endeavors to discover the secret by working in so common metals and minerals, enumerating in his compound of Alchemy a whole page full of things in which the secret cannot be found;—because, in short, it is not a work of the hands at all. The best writers assure us that it is the result of a certain Divine contemplation, productive rather of a *state of being* than one of mere *knowing*, or of knowing as a consequence of *being* in a particular state.

115. Many of the writers, especially Pontanus, Eyrenaeus, and Espagnet, as also Ripley, just named,

warn their readers not to lose their time, money, and labor in working with common metals;—which may be taken very literally, or the warning may be construed as applying to a certain class of common men who either cannot or will not receive instructions. But these warnings were thrown away upon a multitude of self-seekers, who desired not the Kingdom of God, but were intent upon earthly riches.

116. It may be observed, that the mystical purpose of the writers, above referred to, has in view the nature of the *one* (or three in one). A good *recipe* for a somewhat blind practice (the reason of the work not being the object) is cited by Collier as a “mock-prescription,” published in London in the middle of the seventeenth century, as a protection against “what was called the plague.”

Thus (following the antiquated orthography) : Take one pound of good hard penance, and washe it wel with water of your eyes, and let it ly a good whyle at your hert (heart). Take also of the best fyne fayth, hope and charyte yt (that) you can get, a like quantite of al mixed together, your soule even full, and use this confection every day in your lyfe, whiles the plagës of

God reigneth. Then, take both your hands ful of good workes commanded of God, and kepe them close in a cleane conscience from the duste of vayne glory, and ever as you are able and se necessite so to use them. This medicine was found in an old byble booke, and it hath ben practised and proved true of mani, both men and women.

#### END OF VOL. I.

NOTICE.—I wish to warn the reader, who might be inclined to try any of the alchemical prescriptions contained in this book, not to do so unless he is an alchemist, because, although I know from personal observation that these prescriptions are not only allegorically but literally true, and will prove successful in the hands of an alchemist, they would only cause a waste of time and money in the hands of one who has not the necessary qualifications. A person who wants to be an alchemist must have in himself the “magnesia,” which means the Magnetic Power to attract and “coagulate” invisible astral elements. This power is only possessed by those who are “reborn in the spirit.” Those who do not know what this expression

means are not "reborn" (or initiated), and it cannot be explained to them. But he who is initiated will know it, and needs no instructions from books, because he will know his instructor." Hartmann, "Paracelsus."