

SEVEN GOLDEN CHAPTERS OF HERMES TRISMEGISTUS



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Seven Golden Chapters.

I. HERMES saith, I have not in a very long age ceased to try experiments, nor have I spared any labour of mind: but I obtained the knowledge of this art, by the inspiration of the living God only, who esteeming me his servant worthy, did reveal and open the secrets to me. He has bestowed upon rational creatures, the power and faculty of judging and determining truly, not forsaking any, so as to give them an occasion to cease searching after the truth. For my part, I had never discovered any thing of this matter, nor revealed it to any one, had not the fear of the judgments of God, or the hazard of the damnation of my soul for such a concealment prevailed with me. It is a debt I am willing to pay to the just; as the father of the just has liberally bestowed it upon me.

Now understand, O ye children of wisdom, that the knowledge of the four elements of the ancient philosophers, was not corporeally, nor inconsiderately sought into: they are through patience to be attained, according to their kind, but in their own operation are hidden or obscured. You can do nothing, except the matter be compounded, because it cannot be perfected, unless first the various colours are thoroughly accomplished. Know then, that the division which was made of the water by the ancient philosophers, is that which separates it

into four other substances, one into two, and three to one; the third part of which is colour, or has tincture, viz. the coagulating humour or moisture, but the second and third waters are the weights of the wise. Take of the humidity or moisture, six ounces and half; of the southern redness, viz. the soul of sol, half an ounce, that is, a fourth part of both; of the orange gum in like manner, half an ounce: of anr pigment half an ounce, which are eight; that is three ounces.

Now understand that the vine of the wise men, or tree of the philosophers is extracted or drawn forth in three, but the wine thereof is not perfected till at length thirty be completed. Understand the operation. Decoction diminishes the matter, but the tincture augments its strength. Because luna in fifteen days is diminished, and in the third is augmented. This is then the beginning and the end.

Behold, I have exposed to you that which was hidden, and the work is both with you and for you: that which is within, is quickly taken out, and is permanent or fixed; and you may have it either in the earth, or in the sea. Keep therefore your argent vive, which is prepared in the innermost chamber of the bridegroom, in which it is coagulated; for that is the argent vive itself, which is said to be of the remaining earth. He therefore that now hears my words, let him search into, and inquire, from them; it is not for the justification of the work of any evil doer, but to give to every good man a reward, that I have laid open or discovered all things which were hid, relating to this science; and disclosed and made plain and open to you the greatest of secrets, even the intellectual knowledge. Know therefore ye children of wisdom, and ye seekers after the same thereof, that the vulture standing upon the mountain, cries out with a great voice; saying, I am the white of the black, and the yellow of the white, and the citrine of the yellow, and behold I speak the very truth. Now the chief principle of the art is the crow, which in the blackness of the night, and clearness of the day flies without wings. From the bitterness existing in the throat, the tincture or tinging matter is taken: but the red goes forth of its body, and a pure water is taken from its back. Understand and accept of this gift of God, which is hidden from ignorant and foolish men. This hidden secret which is the venerable stone, splendid in color, and sublime in spirit, an open sea, is hid in the caverns of the metals: behold I have exposed it to you: and give thanks to the almighty God, who teaches you this knowledge: if you be grateful, he will return you the tribute of your love. You must put this matter into a moist fire, and make it to boil, which augments the heat of the humour or matter, and destroys the dryness of the incombustible sulphur; continue boiling till the radix may appear then extract the redness and the light parts, till only about a third remains. For this cause sake, the philosophers are said to be envious or

obscure, not for that they grudged the thing to the honest or just man, to the religious or wise; or to the legitimate sons of art? but to the ignorant, the vicious, the dishonest: lest evil persons should be made powerful to perpetrate sinful things: for such a fault the philosophers must render an account to God. Evil men are not worthy of this wisdom.

Now this matter I call by the name of the stone; the feminine of the magnesia, the hen, the white spittle, or froth, the volatile milk, the incombustible ashes; so that it might be hidden from the simple and unwise, who want understanding, honesty, and goodness: which notwithstanding is signified to the wise and prudent by one only name, which is the stone of the wise, or the philosophers stone. Conserve therefore in this, the sea, the fire, and the heavenly bird, even to the last moment of its exit. But I deprecate, or wish a curse from our benefactor, the great and living God, even to all the sons of the philosophers, to whom it shall please God to give of the bountifulness of his goodness, if they shall undervalue, or divulge the name and power thereof, to any foolish or ignorant person, or any man unfit for the knowledge of this secret. Whatever any man has given to me, I have returned it again; nor have I been behind hand with any, or desisted to return an equal kindness; even in this friendship and unity consists the chief matter of this operation. This is the concealed stone of many colours, which is born and brought forth in one colour only: understand this and conceal it. By means of it, (through the permission of the omnipotent) the greatest disease is cured; and every sorrow, distress, evil, and hurtful thing may be evaded: and through the help thereof, you may come from darkness to light; from a desert or wilderness to a habitation or home; and from straightness and necessities, to a large and ample fortune.

II. Now my son, before all things, I admonish thee to fear God, in whom is the blessing of your undertakings; and the uniting and disposing of every thing which you segregate, put together, or design for this purpose. Whatever I speak or write, consider it, and reason about it in your mind: I advise not them who are depraved in their reason and understanding, nor the ignorant, or insipid of judgment. Lay hold of my instructions, and meditate upon them; and so fit your mind and understanding to conceive what I say, as if you yourself were the author of these things I write. For to what nature is hot, if it shall be made cold, it shall do hurt or injury to it; so in like manner, he to whom reason is become a guide, does shut against himself, the door of ignorance, lest he should be securely deceived. Take (my son) the flying bird, and drown it flying; then divide, separate, or cleanse it from its filth, which keeps it in death; expel it, and put it away from it, that it may be made living, and answer thee, not by flying in the regions above, but truly by forbearing to fly. If therefore you shall deliver is

out of its imprisonment, and then afterwards you shalt order and govern it, according to the number of days I shall note to thee, according to reason; and then it shall be a companion to thee, and by it, thou shalt be made great and powerful. Extract from the sun beams the shadow, and the sordid matter, by that which makes the clouds hang over it, and corrupts it, and keeps it from the light, because by its torture and red fiery heat, or redness it is burned.

Take this redness corrupted with the water (which resembles the matter, holding the fire as in a live coal) from it: as often as you take this redness corrupted in water, away from it, so often you have the redness purified, then will it associate itself, viz. become fixed, and tinged, in which station it will rest for ever. Return the coal, being extinct in its life, to the water, in the thirty days I note to thee, so will you have a crowned king, resting upon the fountain or well, but drawing it from the auripigment, and wanting the humour or moisture: now have I made the hearts of the attentive, who hope in thee, glad, and their eyes beholding thee, in the hope of that which thou possessest? Now the water was first in the air, then in the earth; restore thou it then, to the superior places, through its own meanders or passages, and (not foolishly or indiscreetly) change or alter it: and then to the former spirit gathered in its redness, you must carefully and leisurely join it. Know thou my son, that the fat of our earth is sulphur; that sulphur is auripigment, sirez, or colcothar, of which auripigment, sulphurs, and such like, some are more vile or mean than others, in which there is a difference or diversity. Of this kind also is the fat of glewy substances; to wit, of hair, nails, hoofs, and sulphur itself; oil of Peter, and the brain or marrow, which is auripigment. Of the same kind also is the cats or lions claw, which is sirez: the fat of the white bodies, and the fat of the two oriental argent vives, which sulphurs are caught hold of, and retained by the bodies. I say more, that this sulphur does tinge and fix; and is contained and held by the conjunctions of the tinctures. Fats also tinge, but withal they fly away, in the body which is contained, which is a conjunction of fugitives only with sulphurs and aluminous bodies, which also contain and hold the fugitive matter.

The order, method, management and disposition of the matter sought after by the philosophers, is but one, in our egg. Now this, in the hens egg, is in no wise to be found. But lest so much of the divine wisdom, as is seen in a hens egg, should not be distinguished; we make in imitation thereof, a composition from the four elements, jointly fitted and compacted together. Now in a hens egg, there is the greatest help that may be, for herein is a nearness of the matters in their natures: a spirituality, and gathering, and joining together of the elements, and the earth which is gold in its nature. The son saith to him, the

sulphurs which are convenient or fit for our work, are they celestial or terrestrial, heavenly or earthly? To whom Hermes answers: some of them are heavenly, and some are from the earth. The son saith. father, I think the heart in the superiors to prenote heaven; in the inferiors, the earth. To whom Hermes saith: it is not so, the masculine truly is the heaven of the feminine: and the feminine the earth of the masculine. The son saith, father, which of these is more worthy, one than another, whether is the heaven or the earth? The father answers: both want the help of one another; but a medium is proposed by precepts. But if thou shalt say, that wisdom or the wise man does rule or command among all mankind; to this Hermes: the indifferent or ordinary things are better with them, because every nature delights, or desires to be joined in society with its own kind. We find even in wisdom itself, that equal things are joined together. The son saith; but what is the main among them? To whom Hermes, and answers: to every thing in nature, there are three things from two. 1. The beginning. 2. The middle. 3. The end, viz. First, the profitable and necessary water. Secondly, the fat or oil. Thirdly, the fæces, or earth, which remains below. But the dragon dwells in, or inhabits in all these things. And his houses are the darkness and blackness in them; and by them he ascends into the air, which is their heaven: but while the fume or vapour remains in them, they are not perpetual, permanant, remaining or fixed. Take but away the fume or vapor from the water; and the blackness from the fat or sulphur, and death from the fæces: and by dissolution, you shall possess a triumphant gift, even that in and by which the possessors live.

Now the temperate fat or sulphur which is the fire, is the medium or middle nature, between the fæces and the water, and the through searcher of the water: the fats are called sulphurs, for between fire, oil, and sulphur, there is so little difference, that there is a propinquity, or nearness; because as the fire does burn, so also does the sulphur. All the wisdom of the world is comprehended within this, learning the art is placed in these wonderful hidden elements, which it does obtain, finish or compleat. It behoves him therefore, who would be introduced into this our hidden wisdom, to quit himself from the usurpation of vice, to be just and good, of a profound reason, and ready at hand to help mankind: of a serene and pleasing countenance, courteous in his conversation to others; and to himself a faithful keeper of the arcanums, being once revealed to him. And this know, that except you know how to mortify and induce generation, to vivify the spirit, to cleanse, and introduce light, how things fight and contend one with another, are made colourless and freed from their defelations, or spots and foulnesses, like as from blackness and darkness, you know nothing, nor can you perform any thing. But this you may know, that this great

arcantum is a matter of so great worth, that even kings themselves shall venerate it; the which secrets, it behoves us to keep close, and to hide them from every profane and wortless person. Understand also that our stone is conjoined with, and composed of many things, of various colours, and of four elements, which it behoves us to divide and cut in pieces, and to disjoint them; and partly to mortify the nature in the same, which is in it. And also to keep safe the water and the fire dwelling therein, which does contain its own water, drawn from the four elements and their waters; this is not water in its form, but fire, containing in a strong and pure vessel, the ascending waters; lest the spirits should fly away from the bodies, for by this means are they made tinged and permanent, or fixed. O blessed water in the form of sea, which element thou dissolvest! Now it behoves us, with this watery soul, to possess a sulphurous form, and to mix or join the same with our vinegar. For when by the power of the water, the compositum also is dissolved, you have the key of the restoration; then death and blackness fly away, and wisdom proceeds on to the finishing of the work.

III. Now know my son, that the philosophers chain up (the matter) with a strong chain, or band, when they make it to contend with the fire: because the spirits in the washed bodies, desire to dwell therein and to rejoice there. In these habitations, they vivify themselves, and dwell therein, and the bodies hold, or contain them, nor from them can they ever be separated. Then the dead elements are revived, and the compositum, or compounded bodies are tinged and altered, and by wonderful operations, they are made permanent, or fixed, as the philosopher saith. O beautiful and permanent, or fixed water, the formator of the royal elements, who having obtained (with thy brethren joined with a moderate government) the tincture, hast found a place of rest. Our stone is a most precious thing, yet cast forth upon the dunghill. It is most dear and valuable, yet vile and the most vile; (i. e. found among the most vile things). Because it behoves us to kill two argent vive's together, and yet to value, prize, and esteem them, viz. the argent vive of auripigment, and the oriental argent vive magnesia. O nature, the greatest, the creator of natures, which makest, containest, and separatest natures in a middle principle! Our stone comes with light, and with light it is generated, and then it generates or brings forth the black clouds or darkness which is the mother of all things.

But when we conjoin the crowned king to our red daughter, and in a gentle fire, not yet too great or hurtful, she does conceive, and will bring forth a faithful and excellent son; which she does feed with a little heat, and nourishes the permanent or fixed matter, making it to abide even the greatest fire. But when you send forth the fire upon the leaves or enfoldings of the sulphur, the boundary of hearts does enter in above it, is washed

in the same, and his putrefied and stinking matter is extracted; then he is altered or changed, and his tincture by the help of the fire remains red as flesh. But our son the begotten king, doth take his tincture from the fire; and death, and the sea, and darkness fly away from him. The dragon flies from the beams of the sun, who observes the holes or passages, where they enter in; and our dead son lives. The king comes from the fire, and rejoices with his wife, laying open the hidden things; and obscured virgins milk. Now the son vivified, or made to live, is made a warrior of the fire, and superexcellent in his tinctures; for the son has got the blessing, having also the root of the matter in him. Come ye sons of wisdom, and rejoice; be ye glad and exceeding joyful together; for death has received its consummation, and the son does reign, he is invested with his red garment, and the scarlet colour is put on.

IV. Now understand that this stone cries out, nourish and perfect me, and I will reward you; give to me mine, that which is my own, and I will bountifully recompence you. My sol, and my beams are most inward, and secretly in me: my own luna also, is my light, exceeding every light; and my good things are better than all other good things. I give largely and plentifully: I reward the understanding with joy and gladness, with delight, with riches and honour and glory: and they that seek after me, I give them opportunities, to know and understand, and to possess divine things. Now know that which the philosophers have hidden and obscured is written with seven letters. Alpha and Yda, follow the two: and sol in like manner follows the book (of nature) notwithstanding, if you are willing, or desire that he should have the dominion you must watch the motions of art, to join the son to the daughter of the water, which is Jupiter: this is a hidden secret. Auditor understand, let us then use our reason: consider what I have written with the most accurate investigation, and in the contemplative part have demonstrated to you. The whole matter I know to be but only one thing. But who is it that understands the sincere investigation, and inquires into the reason of this matter? It is not made from man, nor from any thing like, or a kin to him, nor from the ox or bullock. If any living creature conjoins with one of another species, the thing is neutral indeed which is brought forth. Now Venus saith, I beget the light, nor is the darkness of my nature; and unless my metal be dried, all bodies would cleave unto me; because I should make them liquids; also I blot out, or wipe away their rust and filthiness, and I extract their substance: nothing therefore is better than me and my brother, being conjoined.

But the king, and lord, or dominator, to the witnesses his brethren saith, I am crowned, and adorned with a royal diadem, I am cloathed with the royal garment, and I bring joy and gladness of heart. And being overcome by force, I made my sub-

stance to lay hold of, and to rest within the arms and breast, (i. e. the body or womb) of my mother, and to lay hold and fasten upon her substance: making that which is visible to be invisible, and the hidden matter to appear: for every thing which the philosophers have veiled or obscured, is generated by us. Understand these words, keep them, meditate upon them, and enquire after nothing else: man in the beginning is generated of nature, whose bowels or inwards are fleshy; and not from any thing else. Upon these words meditate; and reject what is superfluous (to the work). From thence saith the philosopher Botri is made; from the yellow or citrine, which is extracted out of the red root, and from nothing else; which if it shall be citrine, thou hast sought it at the mouth of wisdom, it was not obtained by thy care or industry: you need not study to exalt or change it from the redness: see I have not limited you, or circumscribed you under darkness; I have made almost all things plain to you. Burn the body of laton or brass with a very great fire, and it will give you gratis what you desire; it will stain, dye, and tinge, as much as you can wish it, and that with glory and excellency. And see that you make that which is fugitive and volatile, or flying away, that it may not fly, by the means of that which flies not. And that which rests or remains upon a strong fire (is fixed,) and is also a strong fire itself; and that which in the heat of a strong or boiling fire is corrupted, or destroyed, or made to fly, is cambar. And know ye that our æs, brass or laton, is gold, which is the art of the permanent or fixed water; and the coloration of its tincture and blackness, is then turned or changed into redness. I confess that through the help of God, I have spoken nothing but the truth: that which is destroyed must be restored and renewed, and from thence corruption is seen in the matter to be renovated, and from thence the renovation appears: and on both or either side, it is the sign of art.

V. My son, that which is born of the crow is the beginning of this art. See here, how I have obscured the matter spoken of to you, by a kind of circumlocution; and I have deprived you of seeing the light (by giving you too much light:) and 1. This dissolved, 2. This joined, 3. This nearest and longest, I have named to you. Roast them therefore, then loil them in that which proceeds from the horse belly, for 7, 14, or 21 days; that it may eat its own wings, and kill or destroy itself. This done, let it be put in petta panni, and in the fire of a furnace, which diligently lute and take care of, that none of the spirit may go forth: and observe, that the times of the earth are in the water; which let be as long as you put the same up upon it. The matter then being melted or dissolved and burnt, take the brain thereof, and grind it in most sharp vinegar, or childrens urine, till it be obscured or hid: this done; it does live in purification. The dark clouds will be in it, before it is killed; let

them be converted into its own body; and this to be reiterated as I have described: again let it be killed as aforesaid, and then it does live. In the life and death thereof the spirits work: for as it is killed by taking away of the spirit; so that being restored, it is again made alive, and rejoices therein. But coming to this, that which ye seek by affirmation, ye shall see: I declare also to you the signs of joy and rejoicing, even that thing which does fix its body. Now these things our ancestors gave us only in figures and types, how they attained to the knowledge of this secret; but behold, they are dead: I have now opened the riddle, I have demonstrated the proposition so much desired, so much aimed at: I have opened the book (of secrets) to the skilful and learned; yet I have also a little concealed the hidden mystery. I have kept the things (which ought to be put a part) within their own bounds: I conjoined the various and divers figures and forms (of its appearance in the operation) and I have confederated or joined together (with them) the spirit. Receive you this as the gift of God.

VI. It behoves you therefore to give thanks to God, who has largely given (of his bounty) to all the wise; who delivers us out of the snares and clutches of misery and poverty. I am proved and tried with the fulness of his riches and goodness; with his probable miracles; and I humbly pray to God, that whilst I live, I may pass the whole course of my life, so as I may attain him. Take then from thence the fats or sulphurous matter, which we take from suets, grease, hair, verdigrease, tragacanth, and bones, which things are written in the books of the ancients. But the fats which contain the tinctures, which coagulate the fugitive, and set forth, or adorn the sulphurs, it behoves us to explicate their disposition (more fully hereafter). And to unveil the figure or form, from all other fats or sulphur, (which is the hidden and buried fat or sulphur) which is seen in no disposition, but dwells in its own body, as fire or heat in trees and stones, which by the most subtle art and ingenuity it behoves us to extract without burning. And know that the heaven is to be joined in a mean with the earth: but the figure is to be in a middle nature, between the heaven and the earth, which thing is our water. Now in the first place of all, is the water, which goes forth from this our stone: the second is gold: but the third is gold in a mean, which is more noble than the water and the feces. And in these three are the vapors, the blackness, and the death. It behoves us therefore to chase or drive away, and expel the super-existent fume or vapor, from the water; the blackness from the fat; and the death from the feces and this by dissolution; by which means we attain to the knowledge of the greatest philosophy, and the sublime secrets of all secrets.

VII. Now there are seven bodies, of which the first is gold, the most perfect, the king and the head of them: which the water cannot alter, nor the earth corrupt, nor fire devastate;

because its complexion is temperate, or in a mean; and its nature direct, in respect of heat, cold, moisture, or dryness; nor is any thing that is in it superfluous. Therefore the philosophers bear up, and magnify themselves in it, saying, that such gold in bodies is like the sun among the stars, most light and splendid. And as by the power of God, every vegetable, and all the fruits of the earth are perfected; so by the same power, the gold, and (the seed thereof) which contains all these seven bodies, makes them to spring to be ripened, and brought to perfection, and without which this work can in no wise be performed. And like as paste or dough is impossible to be fermented, or leavened without leaven; so is it in this case, without the proper ferment, you can do nothing: when you sublime the bodies, and purify them separating the filthiness and uncleanness from them, or from the feces, you must conjoin and mix them together, and put in the ferment, making up the earth with the water. And you must decoct and digest till ixir, the ferment, makes the alteration or change, like as leaven does in paste. Meditate upon this, and see whether the ferment to this compositum, does make or change it from its former nature to another thing. Consider also that there is no leaven or ferment but from the paste itself. It is also to be noted, that the ferment does whiten the confection or compositum; and forbids or hinders the burning: It contains, holds, or fixes the tincture, so that it cannot fly away, and rejoices the bodies, and makes them mutually to join, and to enter one into another. And this is the key of the philosophers, and the end of all their works: and by this science the bodies are meliorated, and restored: and the work of them (*Deo annuente*) is performed and perfected.

But by negligence and an ill opinion of the matter, the operations may be spoiled and destroyed; as in a mass of leavened paste: or milk turned with runnet for cheese; and musk among aromatics. The certain colour of the golden matter for the red, and the nature thereof is not sweetness, therefore of them we make sericum, which is ixir, (the ferment:) and of them we make enamel, of which we have written. And with the king's seal we have tinged the clay, and in that we have put or placed the colour of heaven, which augments the sight of them, who can already in some measure see. Gold therefore is the most precious stone without spots, also temperate, which neither fire, nor air, nor water, nor earth, is able to corrupt or destroy, the universal ferment, rectifying all things, in a middle or temperate composition, which is of a yellow, or true citrine colour. The gold of the wise men, boiled and well digested, with a fiery water makes ixir. For the gold of the wise men is more weighty or heavy than lead, which in a temperate composition, is the ferment of ixir: and contrariwise, in a distemperate composition; is the distemperature, or hurt of the whole work or matter. For the work is first made from the vegetable: secondly from the

animal, in a hens egg; in which is the greatest assistance, and the constancy of the elements. And gold is our earth; of all which, we make sericum, which is our ferment, or ixir.

The wise say, if you conserve a third part of your camels, (viz. of the swift or volatile matter, or that which must bear the burthen,) and consume the remaining two thirds, you have attained to the thing desired; you have perfected the work. In like manner you must be careful of your argent vive; for the black matter does whiten the flesh, and the work is perfected by the fire of the wise. And the work is to be performed by a spiritual water, in which the blackness is washed away; and by that instrument, in which the foundation of the work is laid, and in that time and moment, in which the clouds appear. Now that water, in or by which the blackness is washed away, is the sweat or moisture of the sun, and childrens' urine, (i. e. the virgins water.) The thing which I tell you insufficient for you to know. In like manner, take the water of the water, (mercury of mercury,) and with it cleanse and purify the wind, fume, or vapour, and abolish the blackness. Understand what this signifies, and rejoice therein. Also in the same manner, take the blackness and conjoin it; then have respect to the white, and conjoin the red; so will you go through the thing desired, and come to the end of the work. It is also to be noted, that it is the fire-stone which governs the matter or work, by the good pleasure of God: boil it therefore with a gentle fire, night and day, lest the water should be separated from it; even till it becomes of a golden colour: understand well what I say. That also which congeals, does dissolve; and that which does whiten, does in like manner make red. I have made plain to you the nearest way, that you may be easy and satisfied: understand therefore these things, and meditate upon them; and you shall certainly attain to the perfection of the work. It is also to be noted, that as sol is among the stars; so is gold among the other metalline bodies: for as the light of the sun, is joined to the lights, and contains the fruit of this operation; so in like manner gold: meditate upon these words, and by the permission of God you may find it out.

Hermes moreover saith, he that outwardly takes in this medicine, it kills him: but he that inwardly drinks it in, it makes him to live and rejoice. Understand what this means. And as for this cause sake, this water is said to be divine, so it is said to be the greatest poison: and it is preferred before all other things, by so much as that without it nothing of the work can be done. It is also called divine, for that it cannot be mixed or joined with any filth or defiled thing: and this water of our stone purifies and cleanses the natures of the metals, and washes away their defecations or defilements. And as sol acts upon bodies, so also does this water upon the philosophic stone: yea, it pene-

trates and sinks through it, and is constant, fixed, and perfect. This indeed is seen in sol; but it is to be understood that the work may be made through all the seven planers: as first from saturn, then from jupiter, mars, venus, mercury, and lastly from luna. The first is the government of saturn; to wit, to cause sol to putrefy, or bring the body to putrefaction, which is done in the space of forty days and nights. The second is the government of jupiter, which is to grind or break the matter, and in twelve days and nights to imbue or moisten it, which is called the regiment of tin. The third is the government of mars, which is to induce death or blackness, or to separate the spirit from the body, by which it is said to be changed. The fourth is the government of sol, which is to work away the blackness and poison; and is indeed to make it white. The fifth is the government of venus, which is to join the moist to the dry, and the hot to the cold, and to unite them together in one. this is the dominion of brass or copper, (or the making of the matter of a changeable yellow). The sixth is the government of mercury; which is to burn, and is called the dominion of argent vive. The seventh is the government of luna, which is to decoct or boil, and make hot, and so to perfect the matter, (with the fixed citrine tincture) in twenty-five days: and this is the dominion of silver. See here, I have gone with you through the whole work; take heed therefore lest you err.

And know that the white body is made with the whiteness; and its ferment is that which you already know: whiten therefore the body, and understand what I say. Also in like manner you are to note; that the stone sought after, has not its like or equal in the whole earth. It is both outwardly and inwardly of a citrine golden colour; but when it is altered or changed, it is made a body dark and black, like burnt coals. Now the colour of the spirit taken from it is white, and the substance thereof is liquid as water; but the colour of the soul thereof is red. But the soul and the spirit thereof is returned to it again, and it doth live and rejoice, and its light and glory returns again; and you shall see it overcome and triumph: and that which was even now dead, shall have conquered death, and then it shall live, and arise from the dead, and live as it were for ever. Happy and blessed therefore is he in whose power the disposition of this matter is, who kills and makes alive, and is omnipotent over all for ever. I therefore advise you, not to do any thing in this work, till you get an understanding thereof: for if you be ignorant and void of true knowledge, you will err in whatsoever you do, you will wholly labour in vain, and your work will perish. So that thus mistaking in your operation, you blame presently your instructors (the philosophers) and think that they have erred, or taught you wrong, when it is only your ignorance, and not understanding their words. This then know and understand, that the day, is the nativity or bringing

forth of the light; but the night, the nativity or bringing forth of the darkness. Sol, also is the light of the day; and luna the light of the night; which God created to govern the world. But luna does receive her light of the sun by combustion, and is dilated or enlarged therewith: and by so much as she receives of the light of the sun, or does contain in her, of his light; by so much does the nature of sol bear rule over the nature of luna. If therefore you contemplate what I say, and meditate upon my words, you will find that I have spoken the truth; and you will understand the signification, of all that I have said, and the demonstration of the whole matter. Know then, that the spirit, is enfolded or circumscribed, within its marble house or walls: open therefore the passages that the dead spirit may go out, and be cast forth from our bodies: then it will become beautiful, which is only a work or undertaking of wisdom. Sow therefore O God, thy wisdom in our hearts, and root out the corrupt principles which lodge therein, and lead us in the way of thy saints, by which our spirits and souls may be purified. Thou art omnipotent, O Lord God Almighty, and canst do whatever thou pleasest.

There is one thing which is to be wondered at, viz. after what manner carmine, to wit, grana nostra, doth tinge or dye silk, which is of a contrary nature, and tinges not a dead thing: and after what manner uzifur, to wit, our vermilion doth tinge vestem which is of a contrary nature, and tinges not live or growing things. For it is not natural for any thing to tinge other substances, not agreeable to their natures: if therefore you put into your composition, red gold, you shall find in the tincture a pure and perfect red: and if you put into it white gold; the most passive red will vanish or go forth. There is nothing indeed does tinge any thing, but what is similate to, or like itself. And I testify to you by the living God, maker of heaven and earth, that the stone which I have described, you have permanent or fixed, nor are you kept from it by the earth or the sea, or any other matter. Keep then your congealed quick-silver, many parts of which are lost because of its subtilty. Also the mountain in which is the tabernacle which cries out. I am the black of the white, and the white of the black; I speak the truth indeed, and I lye not. Now know, that the root of the matter is, the head of the crow flying without wings, in the dark and black of the night, and in the appearance of the day: from the throat the fixing spirit: from its gall the colouring or tinging matter is taken, from its tail, the desication, or drying of the matter; from its wings the liquid water; and from its body the redness. Understand the meaning of the words, for hereby is understood our venerable stone, and the fume or vapour thereof which is exalted (lifted up or sublimed) and the sea irradiated, and a light shining. You are also to note, what alums and salts are, which flow from bodies: if you put the medicines (or matters of the

medicine) in a just or true proportion, you shall not err; but if you mistake the proportion, you must add or diminish, according as you see it tends to the emendation or performing of the work, lest a deluge should come and overflow all, drowning the regions, and overturning the trees by the roots. And though the matter be unknown, yet consider these things, how, or after what manner these two colours are distinguished, or diversified; by their vapours: look into the sweetness of sugar, which is one kind of sweet juice; and into the sweetness of honey, which is yet more intense or inward. Except you make the bodies spiritual and impalpable, you know not how to putrefy ixiv, or proceed on in the work; nor how the three volatile matters or principles, fight one against another; and how they fail not, each in their turns, to devour one another, till of two being left, one, only remains. Be careful also, how you increase your fire (though it is not to be very small when you dry up the water) and take heed that you burn not the matter, because if the vessel breaks, it will be with a mighty impetus or force. And unless the matters of the stone, prove inimical one to another, or contend and fight with, and strive to destroy one another, you shall never attain to the thing you seek after. If you mix your calx with auripigment, and not in a mean or due proportion, the splendour and glory of the operation will not succeed; but if you interpose a medium, the effect will immediately follow. Now know, that it is our water, which extracts the hidden tincture. Behold the example and understand it; if you have once brought the body into ashes, you have operated rightly. And the blood (which is in the philosophic water) of the animated body, is the earth of the wise, to wit, the permanent or enduring perfection.

Now it is that which is dead, which you ought to vivify or make alive; and that which is sick, which ought to be cured: it is the white which is to be rubified; the black which is to be purified; and the cold which is to be made hot. It is God himself who does create, and inspire or give life, and replenishes nature with his power, that it might follow and imitate his wisdom, and act as an instrument subservient to him. Iron is our gold; and brass or copper is our tincture; argent vive is our glory; tin is our silver; blackness is our whiteness; and the whiteness is our redness. From hence it appears necessary, that we should have a body purifying bodies; and a water subliming water. Our stone which is a vessel of fire, is made of fire: and is converted into the same again. And if you would walk in the true way, you must pursue it in the evident or visible blackness: for (saith our stone) it is that which is hidden within, which does make me white; and the same thing which makes me white, makes me also red. Conceal this thing from men, like as a word which is yet in thy mouth, which no man understands; and as the fire, light, or sight, which is in thine eye:

I will not tell it plainly to thee thyself, lest by thy words thou conveyest my breath to another, to thine own damage: this is the caution I give thee. Now know that this our work, is made of two figures the one of which wants the white rust, and the other the reddish rust. Our matters also are searsed through our sieves or searses, made of pure or clean rinds, and a most blessed wood. You are also to take notice, that the fire-stone of the philosophers sought after, wants extention, but it has quantity. It behoves you therefore, to support and nourish it on every side, and to continue it as in the middle. You must also conjoin the body with the soul, beating and grinding it in the sun, and imbuing it with the stone; then putting it into the fire, so long till all its stains and defilements are taken away; let it be a gentle fire for about seven hours space; thus will you get that which will make you to live. I also tell you, that its habitation or dwelling place, is posited in the bowels of the earth, for without earth it cannot be perfected: also, its habitation is posited in the bowels of the fire, nor without fire can it be perfected, which is the perfection of our art. Again, except you mix with the white the red, and presently bring or reduce the same into a perfect water, it will tinge nothing; for it never tinges any thing red, but that which is white: and while the work is now perfecting, add them to the light of the sun, and it will be compleated regimine marino, as we have already declared: and by this conjunction above, your stone will attain to its beauty and glory. Thus have you a dry fire which does tinge: an air or vapour, which fixes and chains the volatile matter, binding the fugitive in fetters; and also whitens, expelling the blackness from bodies; and a fixed earth, also receiving the tincture.

Wash your mercury with the water of the sea, till you have taken away from it all its blackness, so will you accomplish your work to perfection, in which rejoice. If you understand how a resurrection is accomplished, i. e. how the living (principle or spirit) comes forth from the dead (matter or substance) how that is made apparent which was hidden, and how strength is drawn forth through weakness; you cannot be ignorant how to compleat and perfect this work. How manifest and clear are the words of the wise, yet so as the internal life and principal is still hidden; you understand them not perfectly by their expressions. Two bodies equally taken from the earth, grind, in the oil of the decocted matter, and in the milk of the white volatile: now mighty and wonderful are the powers and force of these bodies, which are freely bestowed upon you, through this whole science, which you shall possess, and therewith a long and enduring life. Take by force the most intense wisdom, from whence you must draw forth the eternal (perpetual or fixed) life of the stone, till your stone is congealed, and its dulness is vanished; so will you accomplish the life thereof sought after. Give therefore of this life sufficiently to your matter, and it will

mortify it (or bring it to putrefaction) but replete your earth, and it shall make it to live (spring, bud, grow, germinate.) Plant this tree upon your stone, that it may not be in danger of the violence of winds, that the volatile influences or bird of heaven, may fall upon it, and by virtue thereof, its branches may bring forth much fruit; from thence wisdom does arise. Take this volatile bird, cut off its head with a fiery sword, then strip it of its feathers or wings, undo its joints, and boil it upon coals, till it is made, or becomes of one only colour. Then put the venom, or poison to it, so much as is enough to bury or cover it; govern it now with a gentle fire, till your matter is mortified or putrefied; which done, grind it with white water, and manage it rightly. For we bought two — (crows) and we put them into a paropsidem, or crucible (or cupel) which we had by us, and eggs or silver gobbets came out, white as salt, these we tinged with our saffron: of them we sold publicly two hundred times, with which we have been made rich, and our treasures are multiplied. And whosoever you shall imbue or fill with the powers thereof, should they be hurt with the poison of vipers, or the malignity of brass or verdigrease, they shall be in no danger; for that it quickens and revives the dead, and kills the living: it destroys and restores again; it casts down that which is elevated and lift up, and elevates that which is abjected and cast down, and gives you a dominion over the heavens of the earth. Now you must note, that there are two stones of the wise, found in the shores of the rivers, in the arms of the mountains, in the bowels of the floods, and in the back parts of the king's house, which by instruction and prudent management may be brought forth, male and female. By these being conjoined and made complex (or perfectly united into one consimilar substance) you will be made wiser (you will see the reason of the operation, and the end of the work.) Blessed God, how great and how wonderful a thing is this.

A certain philosopher dreamed, that the king's messenger came to a certain gouty man, and the man desired that he might go with him; to whom the messenger answered, since thou hast the gout, how canst thou go with me, for thou canst not walk. To whom the gouty man answered, thou knowest that in the root of this mountain, there is a certain tabernacle, bear me then thither, leave there the burthen, so shall I be presently freed or delivered from my gout. Then said he to me, thou art not able to touch the foot thereof: but going back, he took him up and placed him in the tabernacle, the foot of which, the messenger said, he was not able to touch: and waking from his dream, he saw nothing. Behold the similitude. Another also saw in a dream, wherein it was said, if any one truly should sit down by the way, and should ask you, whether you would think fit to do this thing, would you do it? He answered, I know not; the other said, that he should lie or generate with his

mother in the middle of the earth; then awaking, he saw nothing. Consider well this similitude.

But leading you to the knowledge of philosophy, and exposing the demonstrations thereof, in a philosophic manner, we should make it the derision and mockery of women, and the play of children. Take also the fresh bark or rind, in the same moment; in which you shall, after another manner, extract the matter or thing itself, in the place where it is generated; and put it into a cucurbit, and sublime it. And that which is or shall be sublimed, separate it, for it is the vinegar of the philosophers, and their sapience (i. e. their salt.) Then take this vinegar, and melt or pour it forth upon another cortex, bark, or superficies of the sea, and put it into a glass vesica, in which put so much of your vinegar, as may over top it the height of four inches: this bury in warm horse dung, for thirty-one or forty days. This time being past, take the vessel forth, and you will find it now dissolved, and turned into a black and stinking water; more black and stinking than any thing in the whole world. Take then this very thing itself, and very gently elevate it in its tabernacle, till all the moisture is consumed, so as no more will ascend, this sublimed matter keep carefully for your use. Then take the fœces, which remain in the bottom of the cucurbit, and keep them, for they are the crown (and rejoicing) of the heart. Dye then the same and grind them, and add thereto fresh or new cortex of the sea, that is say, mercury, and grind them together, drying them in a warm sun. And the waters from the same first sublimed, sink down to the bottom, which diligently grind and dry, and put them in the crucible or test of Ethel, and sublime: and the matter being sublimed purely white, as fine salt, keep it safely, for it is the auripigment, and sulphur and magnesia of the philosophers.

Understand now, and see that you govern your work with wisdom and prudence, and make not too much haste. Then take the cucurbit, put half way into lute, and put into the same, your dissolved black water, which you have sublimed; that is to say, nine parts, and of this whitened auripigmentum, which you sublimed from the ethel two parts. I say, that this opened or decocted auripigment, is immediately dissolved in the water, and made like to water; that nothing can be seen by mankind, of a more intense, fixt, and perfect whiteness, nor any thing more beautiful to the eye, which the philosophers call their sal virginis, or virgin salt. Put this into a little vessel, called a cucurbit, close well the joynts, which put upon a gentle fire, making it, as it were, but with two coals at first, and then adding two others: and look into it, to see how the water ascends and descends. When you see the vapour is consumed, and nothing more will ascend, of that which is elevated, nor descend, know that the matter itself is now coagulated: make therefore a more intense and vehement fire, for the space of

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three hours of the day. Then lastly, take away the fire, or let it go out, and the next day (all things being cold) open the mouth of your cucurbit, and take forth the matter, which is of a substance, white, sincere, and melted or dissolved. This is your substance sought after: and now you have come through to the end of your work; manage it according to your reason and prudence, for (God assisting) you may make of it what you please.

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