

# AN EXCELLENT INTRODUCTION TO THE ART OF ALCHEMY

by Peter Bonus

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Those chapters, with the arguments previously determined, are faithfully and diligently compiled from the treatise of master Peter Bonus, of Ferrara, a concordance of all ancient and modern Sages, forming an excellent introduction to the Art of Alchemy, By him it is named the *Precious New Pearl*.

Bonus tells us that as beginners we are apt to consider this an easy Art; but as we get to know more about it, we find that we were grievously mistaken in our first impression. On every side we are confronted with so many doubts, difficulties, and apparent contradictions, that we are apt to wonder, after a time, at the youthful rashness and foolhardiness with which we began the study. But in the following chapters we hope to set all difficulties at rest.

## *Chapter I.*

### **The Matter of the Philosopher's Stone. The Matter of the Metals, and its Causes, Properties, and Qualities.**

The great Geber tells us that metals are substantially composed of quicksilver and sulphur; though sulphur is their active principle rather than part of their substance. Their differences are generally traceable to a difference in the sulphur, which is found white, yellowish, red, saffron-coloured, green, and black, while the quicksilver, considered by itself, is always the same. Sometimes, indeed, the quicksilver has an earthy appearance, but this is owing to an admixture of lead, and can be remedied by a process of purification. Now, as sulphur, which is the proper coagulum of quicksilver, varies in its colour, while quicksilver is always white, it follows that the quicksilver receives its colour from the sulphur, and the sulphur causes the peculiar colour of the different metals. Everything else that is found in metals is more or less immature, and does not really belong to them. It should be noticed that, when metals are mixed, the quicksilver readily combines with quicksilver, because it is the same substance in all metals. But this cannot

be said of the sulphur, because it is not the same in all metals.

*Note.*

Hence, fixed sulphur retard the fusion and liquefaction in metals, and entirely prevents it where its quantity exceeds that of the quicksilver. The latter is the case in iron, and the said metal is, therefore, not fusible. This fact we are taught by experience, for when we desire to make fixed sulphur, we must calcine it, and that which is calcined is not susceptible of fusion. But sulphur which is not fixed accelerates fusion, as we see in the case of *arsenic*, which is of the nature of sulphur, and brings about the fusion of red-hot iron. That it is sulphur which prevents fusion, we see from the fact that when miners smelt ore, there ascends a sulphureous vapour before fusion takes place, and if we collect this substance in a vessel, it is found to resemble *orpiment*. But both its smell and its properties shew that it consists largely of sulphur. In the same way, fixed sulphur is said to be the cause of the hardness of metals, as we see in iron and brass. Therefore, also, sulphur, which is not fixed, on the other hand, is the cause of metallic softness, and of volatilization under the test of fire, as we see in lead and tin. But quicksilver, whether fixed or not, is the cause of metallic fusion. Whatever substances are fused with great difficulty are quickly coagulated (on account of the sulphur which they contain) and vice versa.

Sulphur easily adheres to iron and brass, and readily mingles with silver, which has a proportion of combustible sulphur, and also with lead, the latter because lead contains many parts of sulphur which is not fixed. It does not mingle well with tin because of the large quantity of quicksilver which the latter contains. With gold it does not mix at all, because gold is purged of all its sulphur. Quicksilver, on the other hand, enters gold very readily, as it also does silver, and --- in a lesser degree --- tin and lead, because of the large quantity of undigested quicksilver contained in them. Brass will receive it with difficulty, and iron not at all, except by an artifice. To tin it adheres on account of its undigested state, and on account of its large quantity of quicksilver. To gold it adheres most easily of all, because gold abounds in quicksilver. The fixed fusible quicksilver, then, is the cause of perfection in metals, and the less fixed it is, the further it is from perfection. Sulphur, on the other hand, whether fixed or volatile, is the cause of corruption and imperfection, so long as it remains in metals. Hence, we conclude that our noble Stone consists of quicksilver exclusively without any trace of external sulphur. This we see from the fact that quicksilver takes to nothing in the whole world more kindly than to gold; nothing, on the other hand, is more unlike gold than sulphur. Whoever denies that quicksilver is the true substance of metals, is like one who says that snow is not white. And because the Stone must enter the metals in all their parts, it is clear that it must consist entirely of quicksilver. Our assertion is borne out by the authority of Rhasis, Alphidius, and Geber. Rhasis, in his *Seventy Precepts*, affirms that Mercury is the root of all things, it only should be prepared, and from it is derived a good tincture, and a strong and conquering impression. Alphidius declares, on the evidence of all the Sages, that the work of wisdom consists solely in quicksilver. So also Geber says, in his chapter on the procreation of iron: Let us raise the Blessed, Glorious, and most High God, Who created quicksilver, and gave it a substance, and imparted to its substance properties which no other substance on earth can possess. It is the perfection of our Art, it is our victory which overcomes fire, and is not overcome by it, but delights in its heat, and gently and amicably reposes in it, etc. Though in his book on *The Coagulation of Mercury by Precipitation* he says that this medicine is elicited from metallic bodies with their sulphur and *arsenic*, he really means the same thing, but he expresses himself somewhat obscurely. We do not, however, need the testimony of the ancients to convince us that quicksilver without external sulphur must be the substance of the Stone, which, as has been said, is the form of gold. The fact is brought home to us with sufficient force by the evidence of our eyes, if, indeed, we have ever observed the facility and amicable readiness with

which quicksilver joins itself to gold.

*Query: Is Sulphur a material part of Gold and of our Stone?*

But it may be objected that our argument proves too much, and that sulphur must actually form a material part of gold and of the Stone of the Philosophers. If quicksilver must be the matter of the Stone, because it readily unites with gold, we may say with quite as much justice that sulphur must form part of this matter, because it very easily mingles with quicksilver, and especially because sulphur is the proper coagulum of quicksilver. If any one, says the philosopher Aristotle, would coagulate quicksilver so as to change it into gold or the Stone, he must do so by means of sulphur, for whenever sulphur is withdrawn from the quicksilver it becomes liquid as before; unless, therefore, the sulphur remain permanently with the quicksilver, it cannot become gold or the Stone. Moreover, quicksilver is white, and the Stone is universally admitted to be red --- hence sulphur must form part of its substance. Yet we answer as before, that quicksilver alone is the whole material cause, and the whole substance of the Stone.

You should, however, know that quicksilver in its first creation has many parts of an earthy, white, sulphureous matter mingled with it, which are most subtle and belong to its own material substance, and without which it would have no consistency. These particles cause first its white and then its red colour in the operation of the magistry. Thus Aristotle calls quicksilver a water mingled with a certain subtle sulphureous earth. A hint to the same effect is thrown out by Geber in his chapter on the nature of quicksilver. There is an inward sulphur as well as an outward, he tells us, and this internal sulphur forms part of the substance of the quicksilver, and is the true agent in coagulating it. At least, both are not fixed, and both are instrumental in coagulating the Mercury. But when the quicksilver with its own inward sulphur is mixed and coagulated, and has received from it either the white or red colour, then the external sulphur can no longer combine with it, because they have become dissimilar. Hence it may be urged that it cannot form part of the substance of our Stone.

Here we come upon the great secret of our Art, that quicksilver is coagulated, not by mixture with anything else, but is both coagulated and coloured into perfection by its own internal sulphur, while it is coloured and coagulated to corruption by external sulphur. If the quicksilver could be coagulated by any other substance, whether mineral, vegetable, or animal, it would be a foreign coagulum, and the coagulation would not be that which we require. We see, then, that this external sulphur, though it be active in metallic generation, cannot itself form part of the substance of our Stone; and the task before us is to get the quicksilver by itself, and to coagulate it without the contaminating influence of the outward sulphur, since that which generates cannot be part of the substance generated.

## *Chapter II.*

**Explains the Dictum of the Ancient Sages that "Sulphur alone is the matter of the Stone and of Gold".**

Those who superficially skim the writings of the sages might arrive at the conclusion that sulphur alone is the substance of our Stone. So Rosinus says that incombustible sulphur, which has prevailed against fire, is that which the Sages are in search of, and, elsewhere, that no tincture can be obtained except through pure

water of sulphur. Again, the precious colour of the philosophers is derived from sulphur. So, also, Solomon, the son of David, calls sulphur the Stone which God has placed above all other stones, which is prized by those who know it, and thought vile by the multitude. Bulus, in the *Turba Philosophorum*, asserts that the pure water is obtained from sulphur, yet not from one sulphur only, but from several things which make up one sulphur. And Anaxagoras exclaims: "Know that the perfection of this work is the water of sulphur".

To this question we, nevertheless, answer, as above, that the perfection of our Magistry consists in quicksilver alone, which contains in its composition dry sulphureous particles, which tinge and colour it white in actuality, and red in potentiality, and are that which gives to it perfection and form. But, as this internal sulphur cannot be active without some outward impulse, Nature has added to it, in all metallic ore, a certain external sulphur which stirs it into action. Our Magistry, of course, imitates Nature in this respect. Because of this inward sulphur, which coagulates the quicksilver, and forms part of it, and is unknown to the multitude, the ancient Sages have spoken of quicksilver as sulphur, and this hidden sulphur is made manifest in the Magistry of our Art by a grand artifice. Our sulphur, say they, is not the sulphur of the multitude, because common sulphur burns with a black smoke and is consumed; but the sulphur of the Sages burns with a white smoke and is perfected thereby. It is this sulphur which whitens and imparts the red colour, and coagulates and perfects the quicksilver into the substance gold in nature, and of the Philosopher's Stone in our Art.

It should be observed that, as everything is composed of matter and form, and is what it is by virtue of its form, a thing has the more being to more it possesses of the form. Quantity does not enter into the definition of form, since quantity and passivity belong to matter. When the substance is small in proportion of the form, there is much activity, much virtue, with great intensity of being, because there is proportionately much form. Concentrated force is more powerful than that which is divided. If this be so, we may say that, as the red luminous sulphur hidden in the quicksilver is the form of gold, it is that which tinges and transforms every kind of metal into gold. For this reason, the tincture is said to be derived rather from the quality and form, or sulphur, than from the quantity, or quicksilver. The intense redness thereof approaches black, or the colour of liver and of aloes, as declared in the Book of Three Words. Since one part of it tinges and forms a thousand parts of any metal into gold, according to the consensus of the philosophers, it must have much strength, a concentrated entity, and much form, or, rather, itself is the pure form of gold. Hence, on account of its redness, its operation can be extended to a great quantity of any kind of metal, so as to tinge and perfect it into gold. When the Stone is brought into loving contact with common metals, it purges away the external corrupting sulphur; thus they become white, and of the nature of pure quicksilver, and the form of gold being added to its substance, of course they become gold. This tincture, by means of which the perfecting process is brought about, is the sulphur of the Sages, the divine sulphur, and the Stone of the Philosophers, the secret sulphur with which all things are aureated and beautified. It is the precious substance which the sages call by so many mysterious names; the Shadow of the Sun, the coagulum of quicksilver, that which flies with tings flying and rest with things at rest, the gold of the philosophers, that which is sought of many and found of few, the Quintessence, the salt of armonia, the Vinegar of the Sages, the Golden Tree, of whose fruit whosoever eats shall not hunger again; that which is nourished and generated in the fire, and delights in it as in its native element; that which, like man, is a microcosm or little world. It is the second sulphur which is joined to the first sulphur, producing a third sulphur, of which it is said that sulphurs are contained in sulphurs.

*Note Concerning the Water and the Oil of Sulphur.*

The water of sulphur, or oil of sulphur, is quicksilver extracted from this composite sulphur. It is a living water, and that which the Sages call the Virgin's Milk, the pure, heavenly, and glorious water. It is sometimes referred to as the flying bird, which is substantially identical with the said sulphur, but diverse from the vulgar kind.

*Is Sulphur alone the whole material of Gold?*

Some have said that gold is a substance which is digested in the bowels of the earth out of a most pure orange-coloured sulphur alone, with an admixture of quicksilver just sufficient to give it brightness and malleability. But they say that gold receives from sulphur its substance, colour, fusibility, and all the rest of its proper accidents. We answer that the ancient sages had some good reason for connecting each of the seven metals with one of the seven planets, as the heavenly influence from which it derived its peculiar properties. Thus, lead was assigned to Saturn, tin to Jupiter, iron to Mars, gold to the Sun, copper to Venus, silver to the Moon. But to Mercury they assigned no metal, because only these six have attained to coagulation, with fusibility and malleability. In the seventh place, however, they did place mercury, not as a metal, but as the First Matter of all metals. If they had thought that this place belonged to sulphur, they would have associated sulphur, and not Mercury, with the seventh planet. Hence, it must be concluded that quicksilver, and not sulphur, is the origin, matter, and substance of metals.

The question now arises as to what Aristotle meant by refusing to identify the material of a thing with its form, as was done by the Platonist and the Pythagoreans. It is clear from his words that he did not take the meaning of the ancient Sages. The material of Alchemy --- the first matter, or chaos, according to the ancients, is that in which everything exists in a confused state, i.e., the quicksilver of the Sages in its primary condition, generated by a kind of preliminary digestion. This is the Stone which they seek, concealed from the senses, but manifested to the mind, the form and flower of gold. The knowledge of this material is more important than anything else in Alchemy. For it opens up the knowledge of all other causes, properties, and conditions, and, finally, of the form itself. But if we do not know the right material, it is simply impossible for us to know anything about it. Hence, this question: What is the material? --- must be the first problem solved by the student of Alchemy.

This material is, of course, by its very nature, disposed to receive its own proper form, just as the grain of wheat has in it the disposition to become wheat. Thus, if we define matter as that in which the form inheres, there is, after all, not so much difference between material and form, but that, in our Art, at least, we may confidently identify them. There could be no such thing as a substantial form, if there were no material possessing a capacity of being developed in a certain direction. If anyone, then, would know the form of gold, he must first know the material of the Stone. Hence, we see that real insight into the nature of a thing depends on an accurate knowledge of its material.

### *Chapter III.*

**We must now proceed to enquire what are the Elements of the Stone, and how they are the same in Gold as in all Composite Substances, not only on Earth, but also in the Heavens.**

We affirm that all elements of the Stone must be first purified, and then evenly mixed in the right proportions, so that the resultant compound may be permanent. Hence it is necessary to say something about the elements. There are many persons at the present day, even as there were some in the past, and will be others in the future, so long as investigators abide by the literal words of the Sages, who know not the meaning of our Art, and are endeavoring to extract the Philosopher's Stone from all sorts of fantastic animal and vegetable substances. These substances they have subjected to all the processes described in our orthodox treatises. And have obtained in the end something white, and something red, which, however, have none of the blessed properties of our Stone. These persons do not know that every form must be extracted from that proximate matter in which it is potentially contained; that is to say, the material and the form must both belong to the same natural genus. If we wish to understand the nature of a man, we shall not waste our time in studying the essential properties of a tree or of a stone; for them we should never get beyond these substances, which, however interesting in themselves, are quite foreign to our subject. Alchemy sets itself to transmute metals into gold; hence we must study the essential properties of gold and of the other metals, and we must look for our first substance among metals, and not in the animal or vegetable world. Know, then, that a knowledge of the essence and nature of a thing is obtained from a knowledge of its first principles, or proximate causes. We cannot understand the changes of bodies, or even of quicksilver itself, if we have no radical knowledge of its essential properties. The principles of being and of knowing, says Aristotle, are the same --- as things are, so they must also be understood and known. If we understand the substance of our Stone as it is, there is nothing left to study but the method of treatment, and this method will be suggested by the knowledge we already possess.

Every compound consists of a mixture of four elements, two of which are enclosed, viz., fire and air, while two enclose them, viz., earth and water, whence we see that in every composite there is a superabundance of earth and water. Fire and air are the formal and moving principles, the two others are the material and passive principles. The virtue of fire and air can appear only in the earth and water, as the virtue of the form can appear only in the substance. For even as the form is included or hidden in the matter, so are fire and air included in earth and water. Rhasis calls fire and air the occult, water and earth the manifest principles of a compound. Since, then, the strong are enclosed by the weak, the compound is easily corrupted, and the formal principles by their exhalation give to the others form, colour, taste, smell, etc.; but so long as the material principles remain, they are not wholly deserted by the formal. If, on the other hand, the compound is not easily destroyed, it is on account of the strength of the enclosing principles. If both are weak, the whole compound is very perishable, e.g., camphor. If both are equally strong, even smallest part of the compound coheres in a permanent union with every other. When the humid and the dry, and the hot and the cold, are so evenly balanced that there is an equilibrium of the elements, they are perfectly united, and the compound is indestructible.

The elements of our Art, then, are the humid and the dry, i.e., water and earth. In water there is enclosed air, and in earth fire. But the radical element from which all others are derived, is humidity, or water, that is, liquefaction, or, according to others, earth. We may reconcile the two views by stating, on the authority of Empedocles, that when water is thickened, it becomes earth: earth floats upon the waters, and is founded upon the waters, as we learn from Morienus and Hermes. When wax is in a liquid state, it is like water; when it becomes coagulated, it is dry, like earth; and yet its weight is the same in both cases. Alexander sets forth, in his *Epistle*, that all the Philosophers apply the name of fire to everything that is hot, of water to all that is flexible, and of earth or stone to whatsoever is coagulated. But neither water nor any other element by itself is of much use to us in this Art. They must all be first separated and severally purified, and then recombined in even proportions --- that is to say, when the water has been purified, we must add to it the

purified earth, and then we shall have all the four indissolubly united, and the work will be perfect. If they are not so united, the fire resolves the water into steam, together with the earth, and the whole compound perishes. If, then, you would succeed in mixing elements, you must know their nature and properties. Convert the elements, says Alexander; make the humid dry, and the volatile fixed, and you have what you seek. Know that, then, all elements are actually converted into earth, and the other elements are, and remain, with it potentially and virtually. Hence, Hermes says that earth is the element out of which everything is made, and into which everything is converted. In the composition of the Stone and of gold we have a perfect equation of the elements. This well-tempered substance can neither be destroyed by the violence of the fire, nor vitiated by the impurity of the earth, nor spoiled by an excess of water or air. The Stone and gold are thus generated in the fire, and, like everything else, flourish in their native element. They are, therefore, indestructible by fire, and are rather perfected and improved by it than otherwise.

These remarks, in the opinion of the ancient Sages, had a direct bearing upon the constitution of the heavenly bodies. They, like the Philosopher's Stone, are composed of such an evenly balanced mixture of the elements as to be indestructible. The active and passive elements are so accurately matched in their composition that the formal cannot be separated from the material principles. Hence, Nature has placed nearest to them the sphere of fire, which conserves rather than destroys them. For elementary fire is related to the heavenly bodies as material fire is related to gold and our Stone. It is through this wise natural arrangement that the heavenly bodies may be said to be practically indestructible and eternal.

There are, then, four elements, by reason of the four primary qualities; and they are mutually convertible, because every one is potentially in every other, and they are constantly generating and destroying each other. In substance, there is from the beginning of the world only one element, or First Matter, out of the conflicting qualities of which the four elements are generated by division. Similarly, there are in the first substance of this Stone four elements potentially, which by our Art are separated, and then again combined. Moreover, we believe our Stone to be incorruptible, not only through the equation of its elements, but also through the addition to it to the fifth element, just as the great world is composed of four corruptible elements, and an incorruptible one, which is the quintessence. It is this quintessence which, in the small world of our Art, holds the four elements together in indissoluble union, which also, according to Alexander, is neither hot nor cold, neither moist nor dry. This soul of our Art is the divine incorruptible sulphur. Other elements are the body, soul, and spirit, the dry and the humid, the fixed and the volatile, the white and the red. As of all the elements earth alone is fixed, and as the elements at the end of our Magistry must become fixed, it is clear that they must all be converted into earth, or the fixed state of the philosophers.

#### *Chapter IV.*

##### **Of the Ferment, and the Modes, Conditions, Properties, and Conversion brought about by it.**

Of the ferment, which is the great secret of our Art, and without which it cannot attain its goal, the Sages speak only in the very obscurest terms. They seem to use the word in two senses, meaning either the elements of the Stone itself, or that which perfects and completes the Stone. In the first sense our Stone is the leaven of all other metals, and changes them into its own nature --- a small piece of leaven leavening a whole lump. As leaven, though of the same nature with dough, cannot raise it, until, from being dough, it

has received a new quality which it did not possess before, so our Stone cannot change metals, until it is changed itself, and has added to it a certain virtue which it did not possess before. It cannot change, or colour, unless it have first itself been changed and coloured, as we learn from the *Turba Philosophorum*. Ordinary leaven receives its fermenting power through the digestive virtue of gentle and hidden heat; and so our Stone is rendered capable of fermenting, converting, and altering metals by means of a certain digestive heat, which bring out its potential and latent properties, seeing that without heat, as Theophrastus tells us, neither digestion, operation, nor motion are possible. The difference between ordinary leaven and our ferment is that common leaven loses nothing of its substance in the digestive process, while digestion removes from our ferment all that is superfluous, impure, and corruptive, as is done by Nature in the preparation of gold. It is because our ferment assimilates all metals to itself, just as common leaven assimilates to itself the whole mass of dough, that it has received this name from the Sages. Hence it appears that quicksilver (being of the same substance with the metals), when fermented and changed into the same substance as the ferment, transmutes into its own nature every fusible substance of its own kind, and, as its nature is that of gold, it converts all metals into gold.

It is true the action of this ferment is not quite analogous to that of leaven. For leaven changes the whole lump of dough into a kind of leaven; but our Stone, instead of converting metals into the Tincture, transmutes them only into gold. Our Stone rather changes all metals into a kind of intermediate substance, such as is the substance of gold, between that which they were before and the alternative ferment. The colour, too, of gold is intermediate between the blackness of iron, the redness of copper, the livid grey of lead, and the whiteness of silver. The degree of digestion which is obtained is also intermediate between that of copper and iron on the one hand, and that of tin and lead on the other. Its fusibility further represents the golden mean, since copper is melted with difficulty, iron with more difficulty, while tin and lead are melted with the greatest ease, and silver and gold not so readily as the latter, but more readily than the former. The same intermediate quality of gold is noticeable also in its ring, that of lead and tin being dull, and that of silver and gold moderately clear. To this middle state all metals are reduced by our Stone. For, though the virtue of our Stone is great, yet, on being mixed with common metals, its action is slightly affected by their impurity, and does not change them quite into its own likeness, but only into gold.

More difficult is the second sense of the ferment, which is the truly philosophical ferment, and wherein is the whole difficulty of our Art, for in this sense it signifies that which perfects our Stone. The word ferment is derived from a root which denotes seething or bubbling, because it makes the dough rise and swell, and has a hidden dominant quality which prevails to change the dough into its own nature, rectifying and reducing it to a better and nobler state. It is composed of divers hidden virtues inherent in one substance. In the same way that ferment which is mixed with our quicksilver makes it rise and swell, and prevails to assimilate it to its own nature, thus exalting it into a nobler condition. In itself quicksilver has no active virtue, but if it be mortified together with this ferment it remains joined to it forever, and is thenceforward changed into the nature of the Sun, the whole being developed into ferment, which in turn develops all things into gold.

The ferment of which we speak is invisible to the eye, but capable of being apprehended by the mind. It is the body which retains the soul, and the soul can shew its power only when it is united to the body. Therefore, when the Artist sees the white soul arise, he should join it to its body in the very same instant; for no soul can be retained without its body. This union takes place through the mediation of the spirit, for the soul cannot abide in the body except through the spirit, which gives permanence to their union, and this conjunction is the end of the work. Now, the body is nothing new or foreign; only that which was before

hidden becomes manifest, and vice versa. The body is stronger than soul and spirit, and if we are to retain them, we must do so by means of the body, as the *Turba* and Plato agree. Without this hidden spiritual body the Stone can neither ferment nor be perfected. Of course, the body, soul, and spirit of pure Stone are only different aspect of the same thing, and according to these aspects the Sages call it now by one name, and now by another. The soul, says Plato, must be reunited to its own body, or else you will fail, because the soul will escape you. And Hermes insists that it must be its own original body, and not one of an extraneous or alien nature, as attempted by some who are ignorant of this Arcanum. Rhasis says that the body is the form, and the spirit the matter; and rightly, because as no substance can exist without form, which is its real being, so the soul, through the mediation of the spirit, cannot be in the Stone except by the body, because its being and perfection depend on the body. Hence, the body is their bond and form, though they are the same thing. As that which imparts its form to the Stone and to gold, is something fixed, and a body, while Mercury is that which receives fixation and a form, it follows that the body is the form.

The body, then, is that which is the form, and the ferment, and the perfection, and the Tincture of which the Sages are in search. It is also the Sol and gold of the philosophers. It is white actually and red potentially; while it is white it is still imperfect, but it is perfected when it becomes red. The Sun, says Rosinus, is white in appearance, and red by development. Anaxagoras teaches that the Sun is an ardent red, but the soul to which the Sun is united by the bond of the spirit is white, being of the nature of the Moon, and is called the quicksilver of the philosophers. Hermes tells us that without the Red Stone there can be no true Tincture. The red slave, says Rhasis, has wedded a white spouse. We now see the truth of the saying that there are two kinds of gold, one white and one red; but the one must be in the other. This white gold is, according to Rhasis, a neutral body, which is neither in sickness nor in health, and it is, of course, quicksilver. Geber says that no metal is submerged in it except gold, which is the medium of conjunction between the tinctures. That it is the true ferment, Hermes tells us in his seventh book, when he says: Note, that the ferment whitens the compound, prevents combustion, holds the tincture together, and makes them enter each other and remain in union, etc. So also Morienus affirms that the ferment of gold is gold, as the ferment of dough is dough.

From these considerations we see clearly how silver and gold are of the same nature, and that silver precedes gold, and is predisposed to gold, while gold is hidden in silver, and is extracted from its womb. Hence, Senior says that the rising sun is in the waxing moon. Know, ye students of this Art, cries Zeno in the *Turba Philosophorum*, that unless you first make it white, you will not be able to make it red, because the white potentially contains the red. If there be too little gold in the compound, says Dardanus, the Tincture will be brilliantly white. Alphidius says: Know that the dealbation must come first, for it is the beginning of the whole work, and then the rubefaction must follow, which is the perfection of the whole work. Since the entire substance, viz., the soul united to the body by the spirit, is of the pure nature of gold, it is clear that whatever it converts, it must convert into gold. At first, indeed, the whole mass is white, because quicksilver predominates; but because gold is dominant, though hidden, in it, when it is ferment, the mass in the second stage of our Magistry becomes red in the fullness of the potential sense, while in the third stage, or the second and last decoction, the ferment is actively dominated, and the red colour becomes manifest, and possesses the whole substance. Again, we say that this ferment is that strong substance which turns everything into its own nature. Our ferment is of the same substance of gold; gold is of quicksilver, and our design is to produce gold.

The Ancients gave the name of body to whatsoever is fixed and resists the action of heat; moreover, it has the power of retaining in a compound that which is essentially incorporeal and volatile, and attempts to

volatilize the body, viz., the soul. Spirit they called that which constitutes the bond between body and soul, and, by abiding with the body, compels the soul to return to it. And yet, body, soul, and spirit are not three things, but different aspects of the same thing. As bond between body and soul, the spirit is said to prevail during the Magistry from beginning to end; so long as the substance is volatile and flees from the fire, it is called soul; when it becomes able to resist the action of the fire, it is called body. The force of the body should prevail over the force of the soul, and instead of the body being carried upward with the soul, the soul remains with the body, the work is crowned with success, and the spirit will bind with the two in indissoluble union forever. Since, then, the body perfects and retains the soul, and imparts real being to it and the whole work, while the soul manifests its power in this body, and all this is accomplished through the mediation of the spirit, it has been well said that the body and the form are one and the same thing, the other two being called the substance.

But how are we to understand Plato's remark that he who has once performed this work need not repeat it, as his fortune is made forever? The words do not mean that he who has once prepared the Tincture can multiply its quantity indefinitely, just as he who has once struck a fire out of a stone can always keep himself provided with fire simply by adding fuel to it. The authority of Plato is supported by that of Rhasis, who speaks in a similar fashion. They should be interpreted, however, not according to the letter, but according to the spirit. He who has once succeeded in preparing this Medicine need not any more go through the experience of his failures and mistakes: he now knows how to perform all the processes of our Magistry properly, and, therefore, if ever he should need a fresh supply of the Medicine, he will be able to provide himself with it without much trouble.

When the Alchemist, in the course of course of his decoction and putrefaction, has reached the end of the first part of our Magistry, in which is seen the simple white colour, before the appearance of any other colours, then he must straightway set about the second part of the work, and this second part is the ferment and the fermentation of the substance. Then, if all elements are evenly combined without being touched by hand, the artist is a rich man, and has no need, thenceforth, in repeating the work, to repeat all his former mistakes. But, if he does not combine the elements evenly, the whole substance will vanish into thin air, and the Alchemist will have lost his hoped-for riches. If, says Haly, you do not find this Stone, when it germinates, no other will arise in its place. Beware, says Plato, lest in the fermentation you come to a bitter end. If there be any hindrance or obstacle in the solution, there will most likely be corruption in the augmenting. The right moment must be seized here, as in all other things. When you are baking bread or sweetmeats, or any other solid substance, the moment will arise when they are perfectly done; and if after that moment you leave them in the oven ever so short a time, they will be marred, burnt, and destroyed. Haly compares the preparation of our Stone to that of soap, which is spoiled if boiled beyond a certain point. Hence the artist must be extremely watchful, and as soon as the substance has reached its most subtle stage, he must put an end to the digestive process; if he pushes it any further, the combined forces of the fire and the volatile part of the substance overcome its fixed part, and the whole evaporated. He who knows how to pacify and assuage the hostility of the elements will be successful in our Magistry, but no other.

The object of what has been said is to shew that at the close of the perfect decoction and putrefaction, Nature, by the ministration of our Art, generates a bare simple matter, not united to its form; this matter the Ancients called first matter, on account of its resemblance to the first matter of the world, before it received its form. This matter needs to be united to its form, which form is the ferment, and is hidden in its womb. This conjunction must take place immediately the matter is born; the same will then become durable and imperishable. Nature, unassisted, cannot effect this union, because it is irrational, and its operations go on

forever in successive renovation and destruction; but the Artist can watch the proper moment, and preserve that which the fire has generated. Now, when the conjunction has taken place, the substance has nothing more to fear from the fire. If one only knows the right moment, the conjunction is a very easy process; and when it takes place, there are many wonderful phenomena, as Morienus testifies. It is brought about by a well-tempered fire, the action of which is stopped by a watchful artist. And this conjunction accomplished, it is open to the artist to rest. Socrates, in the *Turba Philosophorum*, says that what follows is woman's work and child's play. Rhasis says that nothing but vigilance is requisite, for as the ablution and depuration of the elements are accomplished by the presence of fire, so are the conjunction, perpetuation, and fermentation of the purified matters performed in the absence of fire.

### *Concerning the Time of Fermentation*

It should further be noticed that the time for fermenting the substance is the moment when the Stone germinates, germination being the revival of a seed after apparent death. The quicksilver first melts through the digestive action of the fire, and then is coagulated with its ferment or body: this process is that which we call germination. What a man sows, says Rhasis, that shall he also reap. Seeds can only spring up after their kind, and bear fruit after their kind. So minerals do not become something else, but return to that from which they arose.

Yet, how can Nature generate a simple substance not united to its form? This is, nevertheless, a fact according to the Ancients, but in a metaphorical sense. Aristotle says that as the reason comes to a man from without, so the vegetative and sensitive soul comes from within. There is in seed the soul and the body, but there is added to it from without the rational spirit. In the same way we are to understand the metaphorical dicta in our Art.

Again, the action of heat in itself is not determined in any particular direction, or towards any particular end; but for the attainment of any such purpose it has to be used and regulated by an intelligent mind. When I say heat, I mean the elementary fire which is generated in all things, both animals, and vegetables, and metals. This natural fire, without which there is neither growth nor generation, is the instrument of the mind, and is regulated by the Artist, in respect of quantity, quality, and time, for the attainment of a certain well-defined end. If the heat be continued beyond a certain point, the form which it had generated is again destroyed. The action of fire in itself only tends to combustion, but man may regulate it so as to effect many other objects. Hence, Pythagoras says that man is the measure of all things. Nature is blind and its action indefinite; it follows all the influences which are brought to bear on it, in this or in that direction; but the will of man is free, and can regulate and modify the working of Nature so as to bring about its own ends. If the will of man follow Nature, Nature will go beyond the proper point, and spoil everything.

The object of Nature in all things is to introduce into each substance the form which properly belongs to it; and this is also the design of our Art. When, therefore, the quicksilver of the Sages has been generated by the skill and wisdom of the artist, the form must be added to it, and then the work stopped at once, since its end is reached, and anything more can only spoil it.

If the Mercury were coagulated by some foreign (non-metallic) substance, it would not be of the slightest use, since in Nature only homogeneous things will combine. The coagulation by means of *arsenic* and common sulphur, though they are mineral substances, tends only to corruption.

## *Chapter V.*

### **What is Theriac, and What is Called the Poison in the Philosopher's Stone?**

The Ancients have mentioned, as component parts of this Stone, theriac and poison. Like the ferment, they are either the perfect Stone, or that which perfects it. In the first sense it is improperly, in the second more properly, so-called. Because theriac has remarkable cleansing properties, and poison possess considerable medicinal virtues, they may mean the Stone, which cleanses common metals from all impurities, and converts them into gold. The four corrupt metals suffer from four different kinds of leprosy, and therefore, each needs this poison for its cure. Iron is infected with leprosy from corruption of the bile, tin from corruption of the phlegm, and lead from simple melancholic corruption, which is also called elephantiasis. All these corruptions are due to the presence of impure sulphur, which is removed by our poison, or washed away by means of our theriac. Silver suffers from a phlegmatic leprosy, because it contains a proportion of combustible sulphur. But wise Nature in the generation thereof has combined a certain theriac therein, and when the sulphur has been purged of by the Stone, gold immediately results. Gold alone is free from impurity and is perfectly healthy, like pure blood in a sound body. In its correct sense, theriac or poison is that which is properly called ferment. If the Artist stops at the right moment, all will be well; otherwise, the process of fermentation will go too far, and everything will be spoiled. Hence Hamec says that at this stage the ferment may become poison, and the Artist must very carefully beware of its smell, for, if he inhale it, it will prove fatal to him. He means to say that if it be allowed to evaporate, the Artist will be ruined. This Stone, says Morienus, heals the infirmities of metals, as theriac cures the diseases of the human body; hence it is sometimes called poison, on account of its medicinal use.

*Note: --- Of the Union of Soul and Body with their Spirit.*

At the close of our Magistry, when the soul seeks its body, we should see that it is able to unite itself to it, and receive life and activity. This union and composition take place through the operation of the spirit. When the soul is united to the body, it lives with its body forever. The conjunction occurs at the moment of the soul's resurrection: for, though it existed before, yet it could not manifest itself in the body, on account of the defilement and impurity of the body. Hence it lays like a thing dead and useless, and, as it were, buried with its body. But when it is purified and made white by means of our Magistry, it rises clean and white, and finds the body from which it had been separated also clean and pure, and so it seeks its body, and longs to be united with it, in order that it may live for ever: for it cannot be united to a strange body. If, therefore, the Artist does not take care, it will seek to escape with its body, and carry it upward, when the whole work will be annihilated, and the end of the experiment made void. Hence the body is called the theriac of its soul when the soul is saved by it and is beatified with it; it is called poison when it is the cause of the eternal death of the soul, through a failure in conjunction by reason of the Artist's folly. But if he seizes the right moment to stop the heat, the union is perfected and is rendered indissoluble. In this conjunction the body is spiritual, like the soul itself. Thus they unite, as water unites with water, and body, soul, and spirit are now the same thing, nor can they be separated for ever. Because of the insight which their Art gave to them, the Ancient Sages knew all about the resurrection of the body and the redeeming work of Jesus Christ, as also about the Trinity in Unity, and all the other verities of our faith. I am firmly persuaded that any unbeliever who got truly to know this Art, would straightway confess the truth of our Blessed Religion, and believe in the trinity and in our Lord Jesus Christ. Such was the experience of

Hermes, Plato, and other ancient Sages.

But we will now return to the point. We were speaking of theriac and poison. When this Stone is born in the coction, it is in the likeness of brilliantly white quicksilver, and is called the quicksilver of the sages. This quicksilver, to be of any utility, must be joined to its body and mortified; it is killed by its body, and therefore the body may be called poison, in the second and proper sense. And as this death tends to healing and glorious restoration, it is, in the same way, designated theriac. So it is with men: death is the means of giving to them a more glorious life. Our poison, or theriac, is thus identical with the above-mentioned ferment, and is the key of the whole work, the form of the Sun, and the flower of gold. Hence it is advanced by Seno, in the *Turba Philosophorum*, that no body is more precious and pure than the Sun, and that no tinging poison can be generated without the Sun and its shadow; whoever thinks otherwise errs grievously, but he who tinges the poison of the Wise by the Sun and its shadow, the same attains unto the great Arcanum. Without this theriac and poison our Magistry cannot be accomplished; though, of course, they are not added from without, but form an integral part of our substance.

## *Chapter VI.*

### **The Coagulum and the Milk in the Philosopher's Stone, and its Male and Female Agents.**

The terms used in the superscription are some of the most secret phrases of our Art, and if we do not know their meaning, we know nothing about Alchemy. Some suppose that this Stone, when perfect, is related to Mercury, as a coagulating substance to milk. For, as a moderate quantity of a coagulum clots a large quantity of milk, so a small particle of this Stone, when projected upon many parts of Mercury, converts them into silver or gold. This view, however, is a great mistake. If it were true, of what use would the Stone be for the conversion of metals which are already coagulated by Nature?

We say that the coagulation of the Sages is that which, in the preceding chapters, has been called the ferment, or the body, or the poison, or the flower of gold, which is hidden in the Mercury of the Sages when it arises, and that Mercury is called the Milk. The coagulum is that which coagulates the mercury, and the two are one and the same in substance, i.e, Mercury coagulates itself, and is not coagulated by any foreign substance, as you may also see in the case of wax when it is coagulated. Moreover, as coagulum is made of milk alone, but receives the power of coagulation by means of a certain digestion and decoction, so this coagulum which arises in the Mercury of the Philosophers by means of certain digestion and decoction, receives power to coagulate the mercury in which it is; and as the coagulum changes a large quantity of milk into its own nature, so it is with the coagulum of Mercury and its substance. Mercury, thus coagulated, is no longer volatile, but has become the gold of the Sages, and their poison.

Know that this coagulum is the Key of the Sages, because when it coagulates the spirit, it at the same time dissolves the body, the coagulation of the spirit and the solution of the body being the same thing, whence the philosophers have laid down that the spirits cannot be contained except with the waters of their bodies. Our gum coagulates our milk, says Rhasis, and our milk dissolves our gum, after which appears the morning redness. When I saw water coagulate itself, says Senior, I was sure that all I had been told was true; this coagulated water they call the male, and they espouse it to a female, whose son he is, and is also his root and coagulation. Female they call the milk which is coagulated, and male that which coagulates; for

activity belongs to the male, and passivity to the female. The first part is the fixed part of quicksilver, and the second its liquid and volatile part --- out of their mixture arises the Stone. The male and the female, being joined together, become one body. Venerate, says Alexander, the king and his queen, and do not burn them. The male is under the female, and has no wings; the female has wings, and desires to fly, but the male holds her back. Hence the philosophers say: make the woman rise over the man, and the man rise over the woman. So also Rosinus: The woman is fortified by the man.

I must repeat that the male and the female are the same in the same subject, and yet have different and even contrary qualities. It is like the male and female principles in any vegetable seed, or the active and the passive principle in an egg. Thus, when the Stone first comes into existence, it has in it a mixture of the male and female principles, but at first it is liquid, fluent, volatile, bright, and capable of coagulation, i.e., female. The coagulum in its womb is solid, permanent, fixed, and produces coagulation in the other, i.e., is male. The female that flees is passive, white, and easily caught by the male; the male that pursues is red, and seizes and holds the female with great strength.

Similarly, the Sages have compared the two principles in our substance to an old and a young man, because the colour of old age is white, while that of youth is ruddy and bright. Hence Rhasis: The stone of our science in the beginning is an ancient and in the end a boy, because it is first white and afterwards red.

They have also given geographical names to this substance, calling the humid principle the Egyptian, and the dry principle the Persian; Egypt the house of humidity, and Persia the house of dryness. The Egyptians, says Melvoscindus, need the help of the Persians. All putrefaction takes place in humid substances, but the end of putrefaction is dryness and incineration. The putrefaction begins in Egypt, but its end is in Persia. They have also described our substance by saying that the white female has the red male in her womb, and is in the travail throes. The coagulation will then be the accomplishment of the birth; that which was within now coming out, and that which is flexible becoming fixed. Such are a few metaphors under which our substance has been described.

## *Chapter VII.*

### **This is a Chapter of the Different Similitudes of the Generation and Birth of the Embryo out of the Menstrual Blood, and of a Chicken out of an Egg --- Considered as Analogous to the Birth of Gold out of Sulphur and Quicksilver.**

We will now proceed to illustrate our meaning still further by the help of some analogies. The first analogy we shall select is the generation of the foetus in the mother's womb. The generation of the foetus is brought about by the male sperm, in conjunction with the female menstrual blood. The latter is the substance, the former the active principle. As soon as the form is generated, the sperm is purged off. In generation, the male contributes the form and the active principle, the female contributes the substance and the body. The sperm is to the menstrual blood what the carpenter is to the wood in producing a bench, hence the sperm is not part of the thing generated. So gold is caused by sulphur as the efficient or active means and by quicksilver as the substantial or passive means. And as the sperm informs with a form similar to itself, and not foreign, so is it in like manner with sulphur. The outward sulphur acts by digestion upon the inward sulphur which is latent in the quicksilver, and causes it to inform, coagulate, colour, and fix the

quicksilver into the form of gold or of the Stone of the Philosophers.

It should also be observed that the sperm generates out of the substance first the heart, thus impressing upon the heart the generative virtue which belongs to it as part of the living body. Then the sperm is separated from the heart, because now the heart is able of itself to form the other members by means of the generative power imparted to it by the sperm. When the sperm has generated the heart, its work is done, and all that remains is performed by the heart. The same principle holds good in the germination of plants. When the seed, in which all the generative force is at first inherent, has sent forth the germ or shoot, the seed itself withers and decays, as something which has henceforth become useless, and the power of generating the rest of the plant is now inherent in the germ or shoot. When the germ has once been formed, it no longer needs the seed, but produces leaves, flowers, and seed out of itself. Thus the germ is, like the heart, generated and then separated from its sperm.

In the same, we declare that the outward sulphur generates out of the quicksilver a certain sulphur which is like the heart, and to which henceforth belongs all the generative force of the outward sulphur. Thus, the outward sulphur, being no longer needed, is purged off. The sperm, which in our case is the sulphur, having introduced the form into the quicksilver, by means of the internal sulphur, by means of the internal sulphur, having done its work, is no longer wanted.

You should know that since it is unnecessary for the moving principle continually to keep in contact with that which it moves, provided it has once touched it, as you may see from the case of the archer and the arrow, so the sperm, and the heart generated by the sperm, need not always keep up their connection. In the same way, as soon as the outward sulphur has touched the quicksilver, and generated or created another sulphur out of the quicksilver, which now possessed the power of generating and imparting the form of gold, it is not necessary that the outward sulphur should remain any longer in contact with the quicksilver; it is sufficient that it has touched it in the past. Hence it is fitting that what is extrinsic should be separated, as something corruptible from what is incorruptible.

Again, in human generation, if the sperm be sufficiently powerful, and has sufficient heat to assimilate the whole of the menstrual blood to itself, the sperm, coming as it does from a male, will naturally produce a male in the mother's womb. But if the sperm has not sufficient heat or strength, it will not be able to digest the female substance; the latter will, therefore, prevail, and a female will be the result. The consequence of this arrangement is that females have not so much natural heat as males. It is the same with our sulphur and quicksilver. If the inward sulphur has sufficient heat to digest the whole of the quicksilver, it assimilates the quicksilver to itself, and the whole is changed into gold. In the contrary case, the quicksilver will prevail and change the whole substance into silver. Hence gold is yellow like sulphur, and silver is white like mercury. But the yellowness and whiteness in quicksilver are not of double origin; both are of the quicksilver, just as the white and yellow of an egg are both the product of the female bird. In other metals, the sulphur has not yet been able to digest the quicksilver because of its want of heat, as in lead and tin, or it has burnt the quicksilver by means of its excessive heat, as in iron and copper.

For the heat of the sulphur may be in excess as well as too little, and thus digestion may be prevented in two opposite ways. When heat is too great it dries up the humidity of the substance, and when it is too small it is choked by this humidity. Too much fire will spoil the food, and too little will not be sufficient to cook it. Gold alone, of all the metals, is properly digested by temperate heat, and silver in the same way; but all other metals suffer either from excess or defect of heat.

But, after all, we should remember, with Aristotle, that the real motive principle in sperm is not the sperm itself, but the soul of the person who generates with the sperm, as with an instrument to shape the timber or to fashion the sword. The intelligent soul of man, through the medium of the spirit or blood, moves the hand as an instrument, and the hand moves the outward substance. So the soul of the person generating uses the seed or sperm as an instrument, and acts on the substance or menstrual blood indirectly through the sperm. It is the same with sulphur and quicksilver in the generation of metals; sulphur is not the principal agent, but the occult mineral virtue, or chief intrinsic agent, which acts with the heavenly bodies, and makes an instrumental use of the sulphur; which, then, in its turn, moves the quicksilver, as a substance proper for the generation to which it is moved by the first agents. In this Art, the soul or intelligence of the Artist, wherein are the species and the knowledge, is the real, extrinsic, moving cause, and imparts its purpose to the digestive and liquefactive mineral virtue, which again, in its turn, moves directly the outward sulphur, and indirectly the inward sulphur and the quicksilver. Liquefaction, coagulation and other accidents, are brought about the cold and heat, but the form is produced by the movement of instrumental forces which are themselves set in motion by the intelligent mind of the Artist, who modifies, tempers, and aids the action of natural conditions.

#### *The Analogy of Common Quicksilver.*

As the egg of the hen without the seed of the male bird can never become a chicken, so common quicksilver without sulphur can never become gold, or the Stone of the Philosophers, because without sulphur it has no generative virtue; again, sulphur without quicksilver can never become gold, or the Stone, because it is like the seed and sperm of the male, and there is no generation without the menstrual blood of the female, which is the substance and nutriment of generation. The generation of gold is of quicksilver, and its nutriment (like that of the chicken in the egg) is of the yellow substance, namely, sulphur. Hence the Stone is generated of the white, i.e., quicksilver, and the nutriment of the yellow, i.e., its' hidden sulphur digested by the action of the outward sulphur through the regulative power of our Art. Nature has wisely mingled the sulphur and common quicksilver, the male and the female substance, in metals, for the purpose of their generation. And as everything attains to growth and development by the same principles to which it owes its generation, so gold and the Stone must be perfected by the action of homogeneous substances, and not by substances foreign to them. So, also, if imperfect metals are to be changed into gold by means of the Stone, even this agent can make use only of that substance in them which is identical with that of gold, while all foreign corruptive elements must be purged off; this means that only out of quicksilver can gold be generated by the mediation of the Stone, for which reason the sulphureous elements which are in the common metals are heterogeneous, and must be removed, because they will not amalgamate with it. Those, again, who attempt to prepare our Stone out of non-metallic substances are grievously at fault, and spend their labour in vain.

The artist who would prepare the Stone, must take for his substance neither common quicksilver alone, nor common sulphur alone, nor yet a mixture of common quicksilver and common sulphur, but a substance in which Nature herself, who is the handmaid of Art, has combined quicksilver and sulphur. The two substances of which we speak are really one substance, and are never found apart. They are capable of developing into gold, and this development actually takes place under favourable circumstances. For we see that geographical situation has an influence in either elevating or degrading animal and vegetable forms, we may conclude that the same probably holds good in the case of metals. Local influences may sometimes be favourable to the development of sulphur and quicksilver into gold, or they may cause the process of

development to stop short at one of the imperfect metals. Again, the imperfection of the common metals may be owing to a corrupt state of the surrounding earth, or to an excess of bad sulphur.

### *Chapter VIII.*

#### **Refutation of Some Objections. It is said that Copper and Iron cannot become Gold and Silver. How this is possible. The difficulty solved.**

Many admit that those common metals which are still in a crude and half-digested completed so as to become gold. But, they say it is different with iron and copper, which, through the excessive quality of their digestive heat, have already passed the proper point of temperate digestion, and, therefore, can never be brought back to the intermediate state indicated by gold.

It should, whoever, be observed that there are in all varieties of metal, except gold, two kinds of sulphur, one external and scorching, the other inward and non-combustive, being of the substantial composition of quicksilver. The outward is separable from them; the inward sulphur is not. The outward sulphur, then, is not, in any real sense, united to the quicksilver: hence the quicksilver cannot be really scorched by it. If this be so, it follows that when the quicksilver is purified by the removal of the outward sulphur, it is restored to its original condition, and can be transmuted into gold and silver, whether it be found in tin and lead, or in iron and copper; and we may justly conclude from these considerations that when the Philosopher's Stone is projected upon iron or copper in a liquefied state, it mingles in a moment of time with all the particles of quicksilver existing in them, and with these only, as they alone are of a nature homogeneous with its own, and perfects them into the purest gold, while all particles of external sulphur are purged off, because they are not of a nature homogeneous with that of the Philosopher's Stone. For quicksilver always most readily combines with any substance that is of the same nature with itself, and rejects and casts out everything heterogeneous. It does not matter what are the other constituent parts of a metal; if it be a metal, and contain quicksilver, that quicksilver can be changed into gold by means of the Philosophers' Stone. So we see that, in the case of milk, the coagulum clots only those parts of the milk which are of a nature homogeneous with its own. The scorching to which our objectors refer, has taken place only in the sulphur of iron and copper; the quicksilver is not at all affected by this adverse influence, as any experimental chemist will tell you. If we burn or coagulate quicksilver with sulphur, and make from their sublimation what is called uzifur (that is, cinnabar from sulphur and mercury), after the magistry of sublimation, we may separate the substance of the quicksilver from the uzifer, pure and clean, which shews that the quicksilver did not undergo combustion, but the sulphur only. It is the same in the cases of iron and copper, and in this manner the difficulty is settled.

*This is the end of our Golden Investigation, extracted from the world of Bonus of Ferrara by Janus Therapus Lacinius, the Calabrian Minorite friar.*