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Anonyme.

The Sophic Hydrolith.

or Water Stone of the wise.

J. Elliot and Co., London.

1893 .

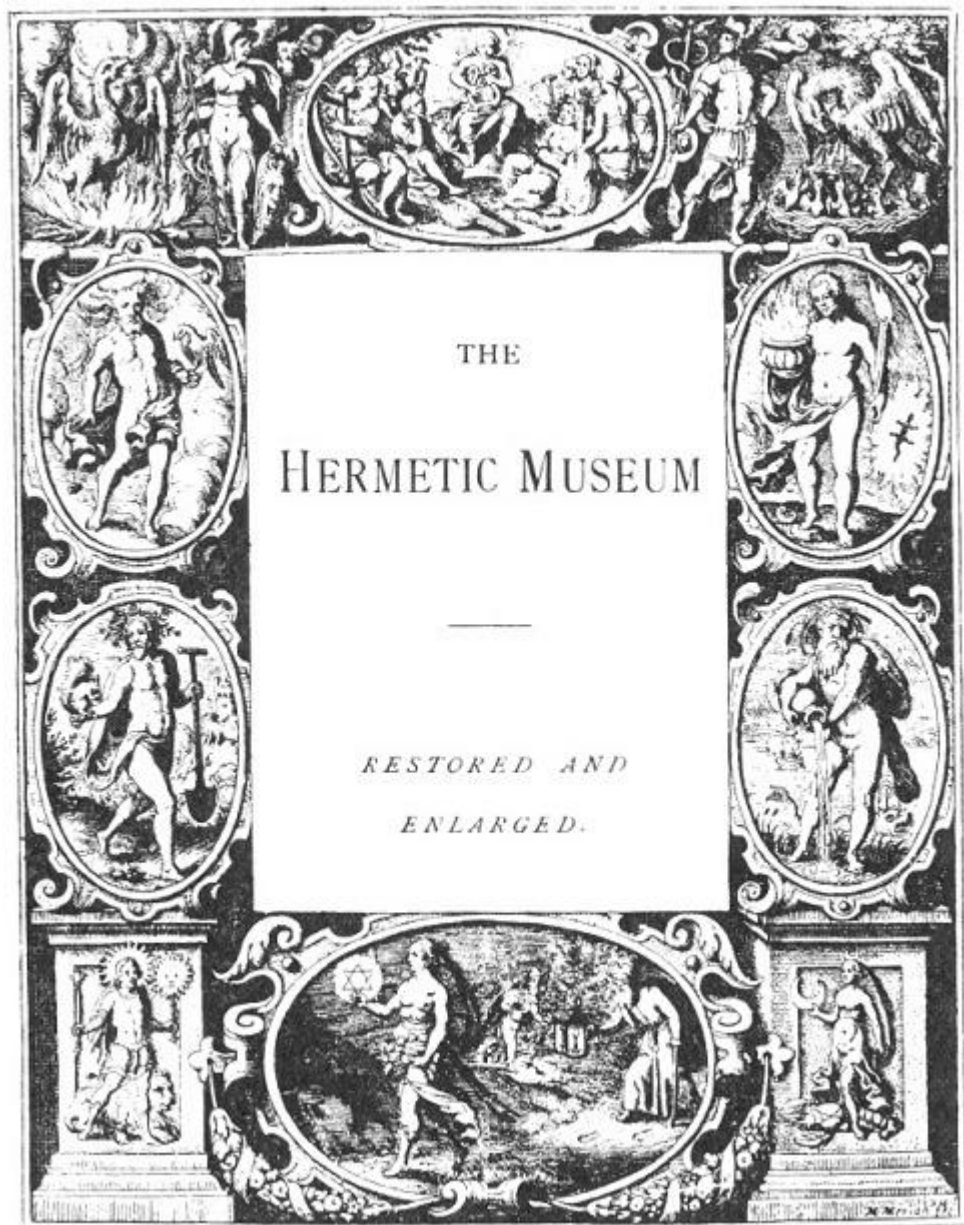
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THE
HERMETIC MUSEUM

—
*RESTORED AND
ENLARGED.*

THE SOPHIC HYDROLITH;

OR,

WATER STONE OF THE WISE,

THAT IS, A CHYMICAL WORK, IN WHICH THE WAY IS SHEWN,
THE MATTER NAMED, AND THE PROCESS DESCRIBED;
NAMELY, THE METHOD OF OBTAINING THE
UNIVERSAL TINCTURE.

NOW PUBLISHED FOR THE FIRST TIME.

PRINTED AT THE PUBLIC COST FOR THE ADVANTAGE OF THE PUBLIC.

A BRIEF EXPOSITION
OF THE
WONDERFUL WATER STONE OF THE WISE,
COMMONLY CALLED
THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE.

FROM the beginning of the world, there have always been God-unlighted men and experienced philosophers and wise Gentiles who diligently studied the nature and properties of the lower Creation. They laboriously endeavoured and fervently longed to discover whether Nature contained anything that would preserve our earthly body from decay and death, and maintain it in perpetual health and vigour. For by the light of Nature, and Divine revelation, they intuitively perceived that the Almighty, in His love to men, must have concealed in the world some wonderful arcanum by which every imperfect, diseased, and defective thing in the whole world might be renewed, and restored to its former vigour.

By the most diligent and careful search they gradually found out that there was nothing in this world that could procure for our earthly and corruptible body immunity from *death*, since death was laid upon the Protoplasts, Adam and Eve, and their posterity, as a perpetual penalty. But they did discover *one* thing which, being itself incorruptible, has been ordained of God for the good of man, to remove disease, to cure all imperfection, to purge old age, and to prolong our brief life -- a boon actually enjoyed by the Patriarchs.

This wonderful remedy was industriously sought by the wise and understanding, until they discovered it, and its precious virtue. Thus, the Patriarchs used it to restore their bodily

vigour, and prolong their lives; and it was no doubt revealed by God to Adam, our thrice great parent, who bequeathed the secret to all the Patriarchs who were his descendants, who thereby procured for themselves length of days and boundless wealth. When the aforesaid Gentiles had received this knowledge, they justly regarded it as a most precious gift of God, and a most holy Art, and forasmuch as they perceived that, by God's providence, it had been revealed only to a few, and concealed from the majority of mankind, they always made it a point of conscience and honour to keep it secret.

But that the secret might not be lost, but rather continued and preserved to posterity, they expounded it most faithfully, both in their writings and in oral teaching to their faithful disciples, for the benefit of posterity; nevertheless, they so clothed and concealed the truth in allegorical language that even now only very few are able to understand their instruction and turn it to practical account. For this practice they had a very good reason; they wished to force those who seek this wisdom to feel their dependence on God (in Whose hand are all things), to obtain it through instant prayer, and, when it has been revealed to them, to give all the glory to Him. Moreover, they did not wish the pearls to be cast before swine. For they knew that if it were made known to the wicked world, men would greedily desire nothing but this one thing, neglect all labour, and give themselves up to a dissolute and degraded life.

But although the said philosophers have treated this subject with so great a variety of method, and used many peculiar and singular expressions, curious parables, and strange and fanciful words, yet they all agree in pointing out the same goal, and one and the same Matter as essential to the right conduct of the Art. Nevertheless, many students of the Art have entirely missed their meaning, and the secret Matter of which they speak. For at the present day there are (as there have always been) a large number not only of low charlatans, but of grave and learned men, who have sought this knowledge with unwearied industry, and yet have not been able to attain to it. Nay, some, angling with a golden hook, have utterly ruined themselves, and have been compelled to abandon their search in despair. Therefore, lest anyone should doubt the existence of this secret Art, or, after the

manner of this wicked world, look upon it as a mere figment, I will enumerate some of the true Sages (besides those named in Holy Scripture) who really knew this Art, in the natural order of their succession. They are Hermes Trismegistus, Pythagoras, Alexander the Great, Plato, Theophrastus, Avicenna, Galen, Hippocrates, Lucian, Longanus, Rasis, Archelaus, Rupescissa, the Author of the Great Rosary, Mary the Prophetess, Dionysius, Zachaire, Haly, Morienus, Calid, Constantius, Serapion, Albertus Magnus, Estrod, Arnold de Villa Nova, Geber, Raymond Lully, Roger Bacon, Alan, Thomas Aquinas, Marcellus Palingenius; and, among moderns, Bernard of Trevisa, Frater Basil. Valentinus, Phillip Theophrastus (*i.e.*, Paracelsus), and many others. Nor is there any doubt that, among our own contemporaries, there might be found some, who, through the grace of God, daily enjoy this arcanum, though they keep it a close secret from the world. But, side by side with these great Sages who have written truly and uprightly concerning this Magistry, there are found many charlatans and imposters who falsely pretend to have a knowledge of this Art, and, by tricking out their lies in the phraseology of the Sages, throw dust into men's eyes, make their mouths water, and at length fail to make good their promises. Their dupes should well ponder the following warning: " Trust not him who distills gold out of your money-box. If you are wise you will be on your guard against such. If you would not suffer both loss and mockery, beware of these dishonest charlatans. Follow those who are simple, straightforward, and modest. He who has the good, enjoys it in silence." But where are you to find such? "Seek the good; you may know them by their excelling the rest in weight, matter, and performance." Now, since there are many students of this Art who would fain learn its secret by a true and straight path, and are yet so bewildered by these impostors and charlatans, by their empty talk and their high pretensions, that they do not know which way to turn: therefore I have determined briefly to expound the true principles of this Art. For though I account myself unworthy to speak of so great a Mystery, yet I may say, without any self-glorification, that, through the grace of God, I have made greater progress in this Magistry than most; and I consider it as my

duty not to hide the talent which my Lord and Master, the great and good God, has committed to my unworthy keeping. For this reason I am willing to show the right way, by which they may attain a true knowledge of this subject, to all lovers of chemistry, and have put forth this Brief Epitome and Declaration of the Whole Art (so far as it may be committed to writing), in the hope that through my means, God may perchance open the eyes of some, and lead them back from their preconceived notions to the right path, and so manifest to them His mighty works. For the greater convenience of the reader I will divide the work into four parts.

In the First part I will set forth the rudiments of the Art, and the best mode of preparing oneself for its study.

In the Second I will shew and describe the quality and properties of the substance required, as also the method of its preparation and manipulation.

In the Third something will be said concerning the great utility of the Art, and its unspeakable efficacy and virtue.

In the Fourth will follow a Spiritual Allegory, in which this whole Magistry is set forth, being the true form of the Heavenly, Everlasting, and Blessed Corner Stone of the Most High. It will also contain a true, brief, and simple, practical manual of the method of proceeding, for I am no friend of many specious words.

PART 1.

P S A L M 25.

"Who is he that fears the Lord ? He will instruct him in the right path."

In the first place, let every devout and God-fearing chemist and student of this Art consider that this arcanum should be regarded, not only as a truly great, but as a most holy Art (seeing that it typifies and shadows out the highest heavenly good). Therefore, if any man desire to reach this great and unspeakable Mystery, he must remember that it is obtained not by the might of man, but by the grace of God, and

that not our will or desire, but only the mercy of the Most High, can bestow it upon us. For this reason you must first of all cleanse your heart, lift it to Him alone, and ask of Him this gift in true, earnest, and undoubting prayer. He alone can give and bestow it.

If the omnipotent God, who is the unerring searcher of all hearts, should find in you uprightness, faithfulness, sincerity, and a desire to know this Art, not for any selfish end, but for His true honour and glory, He will doubtless hear your prayer (according to his promise), and so lead you by His Holy Spirit that you will begin to understand this art, and feel that this knowledge would never have entered your heart if the most gracious Lord had not answered your petition, and revealed to you the understanding even of the most elementary principles.

Then fall upon thy knees, and with a humble and contrite heart render to Him the praise, honour, and glory due for the hearing of thy prayer, and ask Him again and again to continue to thee His grace, and to grant that, after attaining to full and perfect knowledge of this profound Mystery, thou mayest be enabled to use it to the glory and honour of His most Holy Name, and for the good of thy suffering fellow men.

Moreover, as you love your soul, beware of revealing the Mystery to any unworthy or wicked man, even in the smallest particular, or by making him in any sense a partaker thereof. If you in any way abuse the gift of God, or use it for your own glorification, you will most certainly be called to account by the Almighty Giver, and you will think that it would have been better for you if you had never known it.

When you have thus, as it were, devoted yourself to God (who is not mocked), and learned to appreciate justly the aim and scope of this Art, you should, in the first place, strive to realise how Nature, having been set in order by God the Triune, now works invisibly day by day, and moves and dwells in the will of God alone. For no one should set about the study of this Art without a just appreciation of natural processes. Now Nature may truly be described as being *one*, true, simple, and perfect in her own essence, and as being animated by an invisible spirit. If therefore you would know her, you, too, should be true, single-hearted,

patient, constant, pious, forbearing, and, in short, a new and regenerate man.

If you know yourself to be so constituted and your nature adapted to Nature, you will have an intuitive insight into her working, such as it would otherwise be impossible to obtain.

For the study of this Art is such a perfect guide to excellence that a good knowledge of its principles will (as it were, against your will) hurry you on to an understanding of all the wonderful things of God, and teach you to rate all temporal and worldly things at their true value. But let not him who desires this knowledge for the purpose of procuring wealth and pleasure think that he will ever attain to it. Therefore, let your mind and thoughts be turned away from all things earthly, and, as it were, created anew, and consecrated to God alone. For you should observe that these three, body, soul, and spirit, must work together in harmony if you are to bring your study of this Art to a prosperous issue, for unless the mind and heart of a man be governed by the same law which develops the whole work, such an one must indubitably err in the Art.

When you are in inward harmony with God's world, outward conformity will not be wanting. Yet our artist can do nothing but sow, plant, and water: God must give the increase. Therefore, if any one be the enemy of God, all Nature declares war against him; but to one who loves God, heaven and earth and all the elements must lend their assistance. If you bear these things in mind, and know the true First Matter (of which we shall speak later on) you may at once set about the practical part of this study, calling on God for grace, direction, and guidance, so that your work may be carried successfully through all its stages.

ECCLESIAST. XI.

" He that abides in the fear of the Lord, and cleaves to His Word, and waits faithfully on His office, will transform tin and copper into silver and gold, and will do great things with the help of God: yea, with the grace of Jehovah, he will have power to make gold out of common refuse."

PART II.

I S A I A H XXVIII.

" Therefore, thus saith the Lord: Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a Stone, a tried Stone, a precious corner Stone, a sure foundation. He that has it shall not be confounded."

The numerous writers on our most noble Art have never wearied of singing its praises, and inventing for it new and glorious names. Its most precious object they have called the PHILOSOPHER'S STONE, or the most ancient, secret, natural, incomprehensible, heavenly, blessed, beatified, and triune universal Stone of the Sages. Their reason for naming it a stone, or likening it to a stone, was this: First because its original Matter is really a kind of stone, which, being hard and solid like a stone, may be pounded, reduced to powder, and resolved into its three elements (which Nature herself has joined together), and then again may be re-combined into a solid stone of the fusibility of wax by the skilled hand of the artist adjusting the law of Nature.

The importance of starting with an exact knowledge of the first or otherwise the second Matter of the Philosophical Stone has been largely dwelt upon by all writers on this subject. This Matter is found in one thing, out of which alone our Stone is prepared (although it is called by a thousand names), without any foreign admixture; and its quality, appearance, and properties have been set forth in the following manner. It is composed of three things, yet it is only one. Likewise, having been created and made of one, two, three, four, and five, it is everywhere found in one and two. They also call it the universal Magnesia, or the seed of the world, from which all natural objects take their origin. Its properties are of a singular kind; for, in addition to its marvellous nature and form, it is neither hot and dry like fire, nor cold and wet like water, nor cold and dry like earth, but a perfect preparation of all the elements. Its body is incorruptible, and is not destroyed by any of the four elements, but its properties far exceed those of the four elements, and the four qualities, like heaven and the Quintessence. With respect to its outward appearance,

figure, form, and shape, they call it a stone, and not a stone; they liken it to gum and white water. and to the water of the Ocean. It is named the water of life, the purest and most blessed water, yet not the water of the clouds, or of any common spring, but a thick, permanent, salt, and (in a certain sense) dry water, which wets not the hand, a slimy water which springs out of the fatness of the earth. Likewise, it is a double mercury and Azoth which, being supported by the vapour or exudation of the greater and lesser heavenly and the earthly globe, cannot be consumed by fire. For itself is the universal and sparkling flame of the light of Nature, which has the heavenly Spirit in itself, with which it was animated at first by God, Who pervades all things, and is called by Avicenna, the Soul of the world. For as the soul lives and moves in all the members of the body, so that spirit lives and moves in all elementary creatures, and is the indissoluble bond of body and soul, the purest and most noble essence in which lie hid all mysteries in their inexhaustible fulness of marvellous virtue and efficacy. Moreover, they ascribe to it infinite Divine power and virtue when they say that it is the Spirit of the Lord who fills the Universe, and in the beginning moved upon the face of the waters. They also call it the spirit of truth that is hid in the world, and cannot be understood without the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, or the teaching of those who know it. It is found *potentially* everywhere, and in everything, but in all its perfection and fulness only in *one* thing. In short, it is a Spiritual Essence which is neither celestial nor infernal, but an aerial, pure, and precious body, in the middle between the highest and lowest, the choicest and noblest thing under heaven. But by the ignorant and the beginner it is thought to be the vilest and meanest of things. It is sought by many Sages, and found by few; suspected by those that are far away, and received by those that are near; seen by all, but known by few, as you may see from the following lines:

" Into three the great good is divided, yet it is one, and highly esteemed by the world. Men have it before their eyes, handle it with their hands, yet know it not, though they constantly tread it under their feet. It is the greatest wealth, and he who knows the Art may rival the richest."

AN ENIGMA OF THE SAGES,

In which the underlying substance of the Art, called the Phoenix of the Sages, is found to be thrice threefold.

" If I tell you three parts of a thing you have no cause to complain. Seek one of three, and of the three one will be there: for where there is body and soul, there is also Spirit, and there shine salt, sulphur, and mercury. Trust my word, seek the grass that is trefoil. Thou knowest the name, and art wise and cunning if thou findest it."

ANOTHER ENIGMA.

(Much easier.)

" There is one thing in this world which is found occasionally. It is bluish-grey and green, and, wonderful to say, there is in this thing a red and white colour. It flows like water, yet it makes not wet; it is of great weight, and of small. I might give it a thousand names, yet the thousand know it not. It is mean to look upon, yet to the Sage it is precious. He who solves it with the second and condenses it with the third, he has our glorious subject."

YET ANOTHER ENIGMA.

Everthing contributes to the formation of this Stone. It is conceived below the earth, born in the earth, quickened in heaven, dies in time, obtains eternal glory.

Now when you have the substance indicated (which is in part heavenly, in part earthly, and in its natural state a mere confused chaos without certain name or colour), and know it well (for this knowledge the Sages have always accounted the principal part of this work), then you must give your whole mind to manipulating it in the proper manner. But before doing anything to it with his hands, the student should remember not to begin the preparation of this great and inscrutable arcanum before he knows well the spirit that lurks in it according to its essential qualities and properties. "With this spirit," says a certain philosopher, " you should not meddle until you first have a full and exact knowledge of it. For God is marvellous in His works, and He is not mocked. I could give some instances of

men who set about this matter with great levity and were heavily punished by meeting (some of them) with fatal accidents in their laboratories. For this work is no light thing, as many suppose, perhaps, because the Sages have called it child's play. Those to whom God has revealed His secrets may indeed find the experiment simple and easy. But do thou carefully beware of exposing thyself to great danger by unseasonable carelessness. Rather begin thy work with reverent fear and awe and with earnest prayer, and then thou wilt be in little danger."

Now when you have exercised yourself with exceeding diligence in the oratory, the matter being ready to your hand, go into the laboratory, take the substance indicated, and set to work in the following manner.

Above all things you must let it be your first object to solve this substance (or first Entity, which the Sages have also called the highest natural good'. Then it must be purged of its watery and earthy nature (for at first it appears an earthy, heavy, thick, slimy, and misty body), and all that is thick, nebulous, opaque, and dark in it must be removed, that thus, by a final sublimation, the heart and inner soul contained in it may be separated and reduced to a precious essence.

All this can be accomplished with our Pontic and Catholic water, which in its refluent course irrigates and fertilizes the whole earth, and is sweet, beautiful, clear, limpid, and brighter than gold, silver, carbuncles, or diamonds. This blessed water is enclosed and contained in our Matter.

Then the extracted Heart, Soul, and Spirit must once more be distilled and condensed into *one* by their own proper salt (which in the interior of the substance is first of a blood-red colour, but then becomes of a bright, clear, and transparent white, and is called by the Sages the Salt of Wisdom). You have thus first, by what is called the anterior process, separated the pure from the impure, and first rendered the visible invisible, then, again, the invisible visible or palpable (but yet no longer so gross and shapeless as it was at first), and it is now a bright body with a pleasant, penetrating smell, and withal so subtle and ethereal that if it were not fixed it would evaporate and vanish away. For this reason the Sages call it mercurial water, or water of the sun, or mercury of the sun, or mercury of the wise. But

so long as it remains in the aforesaid form it would, if used as a medicine, produce no good effect, but rather act as a poison. If, therefore, you wish to enjoy its glorious virtue, and manifold power, you must subject it to some further chemical processes

For this purpose you must diligently observe the working of Nature (extending over a considerable period of time), and strictly follow her guidance. When you have this knowledge, you should take two parts of the aforesaid prepared aqueous matter, and again three different parts. The first two parts you should keep; but to the three parts add another matter, viz., the most precious and divinely endowed Body of Gold, which is most intimately akin to the First Matter. Of this add one twelfth for the first fermentation; for both, the spiritual and heavenly prepared substance, and this earthly Body of Gold, must be joined together, and coagulated into *one* body.

But it should be noted that common gold is useless for this purpose, being unsuitable and dead. For though it has been declared by God the Omnipotent to be the most precious and beautiful of metals, yet so long as it lay hid in the mine its perfect growth and development was hindered. Daily use, moreover, blunts its indwelling powers, namely, sulphur, or its soul, and it is continually becoming mingled and defiled with other things that are foreign to its nature. Hence it becomes daily more and more unfit to be the subject of art. You must, therefore, seek to obtain gold which has a pure, living spirit, and of which the sulphur is not yet weakened and sophisticated, but is pure and clear (by passing through antimony, or by the heaven and sphere of Saturn, and being purged of all its defilement): otherwise the first substance, being spiritual and ethereal, will not combine with it. For this Magistry deals only with pure bodies, and suffers no unclean thing near, on, or around it.

Now when these unequal parts of the water and gold (differing not only in quality, but also in quantity, for the first is, after its preparation, ethereal, thin, subtle, and soft, while the other is very heavy, firm and hard) have been combined in a solutory alembic, and reduced to a dry liquid or amalgam, they should be left six or seven days exposed to gentle heat of at least a tepid character. Then take one part of the three parts of water, and pour it into a round, oval glass phial, similar to an

egg in shape; put the tempered liquid in the midst thereof, and leave it once more for six or seven days; the Body of the Sun will then be gradually dissolved by the water. Thereupon both will begin to combine, and one will mingle with the other as gently and insensibly as ice with warm water. This union the Sages have shadowed out in various ways, and likened it, for instance, to the wedlock of a bride and bridegroom (as in the Song of Solomon). When this is done, add the third part (which you have kept) to the rest, but not all at once, or in one day, but in seven different instalments: otherwise the Body would become too liquid, and entirely corrupted by too much moisture.

For as seed, when cast into the ground, is destroyed and rendered useless by an excess of moisture and rain, so our work cannot prosper unless the water is judiciously administered. All this being done, let the phial be carefully closed and sealed, to prevent the compound from evaporating or losing its odour; and place it in the furnace, there exposing it to a gentle, continuous, airy, vaporous, and well-tempered heat, resembling the degree of warmth with which the hen hatches her eggs.

[NOTE. -- The Sages have said much about vaporous fire, which they have called the fire of wisdom, which is not elementary or material, but (according to them) essential and preternatural. They also call it the Divine fire, i.e., the water of mercury, roused into action by common fire.] Digest and heat it well, yet take care that none of it is sublimed, or, in the parabolic language of the Sages, that the wife does not rule the husband, and that the husband does not abuse his authority over the wife, &c., -- if you do this, the whole will proceed normally, without any interference on your part (except that, of course, you must keep up the fire). At first the earthly Body of the Sun is totally solved, and decomposed, and robbed of all strength (the Body, which was first of a muddy impurity, changing to a coal-black colour, called by the Sages the Raven's Head, within the space of forty days), and is thus despoiled of its Soul. The Soul is borne upward, and the Body, being severed from the Soul, lies for some time, as if dead, at the bottom of the still like ashes. But if the fire is increased, and well tempered, the Soul gradually descends again in drops, and saturates and moistens its Body, and so prevents it from being completely

burned and consumed. Then, again, it ascends and descends, the process being repeated seven times. The temperature you must keep at the same point from beginning to end. Haste slowly -- for it is of the greatest importance that the influence of the fire should be brought to bear gently and gradually. In the meantime you will observe various chemical changes (*e.g.*, of colour) in the distilling vessel, to which you must pay careful attention. For if they appear in due order, it is a sign that your undertaking will be brought to a prosperous issue.

First there appear granular bodies like fishes' eyes, then a circle around the substance, which is first reddish, then turns white, then green and yellow like a peacock's tail, then a dazzling white, and finally a deep red -- until at last, under the rarefying influence of the fire, the Soul and Spirit are combined with their Body, that lies at the bottom, into a fixed and indissoluble Essence, which union and conjunction cannot be witnessed without unspeakable admiration and awe. Then you will behold the revived, quickened, perfected, and glorified Body, which is of a most beautiful purple colour (like cochineal), and its tincture has virtue to change, tinge, and cure every imperfect body, as we shall hereafter show more in detail. When thus, by the grace and help of God, you have happily attained the goal of your labours, and found the Phoenix of the Sages, you should once more return thanks to Him with your whole heart, and use His unspeakable gift solely for His glory, and for the advantage of your suffering brethren. Thus I have most faithfully explained to you the whole process by which this most noble Art, and highest achievement, to wit, the Egg of the Sages, or Philosopher's Stone, may be begun and successfully completed.

If, however, during the operation, any accidental mishap should occur, it must be seen to in time, or else the chemical process will never be brought to perfection. If you (~) observe that before the compound is solved and turns black, anything is sublimed, or evaporated, or something resembling a red oil floats on the surface of the substance (which is a bad sign); or (~) if before or after it has turned white, it turns red too suddenly; or (3) if, towards the end, it does not properly coagulate; or (4) if the substance is so strongly affected by the heat that, being taken out, it does not instantly *melt* on *red hot iron* like *wax*, but

tinges and colours the iron, and afterwards will not remain fixed in the fire -- you may regard all these indications as symptoms of a false composition and temperature, or of some kind or other of carelessness.

If these defects are not immediately seen to, they will speedily become incorrigible. A cunning adept should be acquainted with the various devices by which they may be remedied; and I will recount them here for the sake of the beginner.

If one or more of the above defects are observed, the whole compound must again be taken out of the phial, and once more solved in the aforesaid water of mercury (also called virgin's milk, or the milk, blood, and sweat of the First Matter, or the never-failing fountain, or the water of life, which nevertheless contains the most malignant poison); with this water it must once more be moistened and saturated, and then subjected to the action of the fire, until there is no longer any sublimation or formation of gaseous vapours; or till the final coagulation has duly taken place, as described above. Of its subsequent fermentation and multiplication, and of its uses, more will be said in the third part.

Of the *time* required for the whole process, it is impossible to say anything very definite; and, indeed, the Sages have put forward the most conflicting opinions on this point -- no doubt because some have been occupied with it longer than others. But if any man will carefully observe the working of Nature, and be guided by her teaching, and in all things hold a middle course, he will gain his object sooner than one that trusts too blindly to his own wisdom.

But I tell thee not to go beyond the middle point of the letter X either in the former or latter stage of the operation but to take one half (V) for the time of the solution and the other half for the composition. Then, again, for the final union, the number XX should be thy guide (unless anything unforeseen should occur). Be satisfied with that space of time. On the other hand, do not try to hurry on the consummation, for one hour's mistake may throw thee back a whole month. If thou strivest unduly to shorten the time thou wilt produce an abortion. Many persons have, through their ignorance, or self-opinionated haste, obtained a Nihilixir instead of the hoped for Elixir.

In view of the importance of this magical science, I have thought it right to lay this before the sons of knowledge, for their careful consideration.

RIDDLE.

There are seven cities, seven metals, seven days, and the number seven; seven letters, seven words in order meet, seven times, and as many places; seven herbs, seven arts, and seven stones. Divide seven by three, and thou shalt be wise. No one will then strive to precipitate the half. In brief, all will proceed favourably in this number."

In the following lines the whole Process is briefly described: --

(I.) -- THE FIRST STAGE.

" Dissolve your substance, and then let it be decomposed; then let it be distilled, and once more condensed ."

(II.) -- THE SECOND STAGE.

"Combine two things, decompose them, let them become black. Digest them and change them to white by your skill; at last let the compound change to a deep red, let it be coagulated, and fix it; and you will be a favoured man. If, afterwards, you cause it to ferment, you will have conducted the whole work prosperously. Then tinge therewith whatsoever you will, and it will multiply to you infinite treasure."

Or, more briefly, thus: --

" Seek three in one, again seek one in three. Dissolve, and condense, and thou shalt be master of the Art."

A Riddle in which also the Process is indicated: --

" A spirit is given for a time to the body, and that spirit is the life of a soul. If the spirit draw the soul to itself, they are both severed from the body. Then are there three abiding in the same place, until the precious body is dissolved, and is decomposed and dies. But after a time the spirit and the soul are brought back by gentle warmth, and hold once more their former seat. Then you have the essence; no perfection is wanting, and the work is glorified by a joyful end."

PROV. XXIII.

" My son, give me thy heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways."

PART III.

Sirach xliii: " Who has seen Him that he should tell of Him? Who can exalt Him according to His greatness? We see but the smallest of His works: those that are much greater are hidden from us. For God has made all, and gives understanding thereof to those that fear Him."

Concerning the end of this great Art, and the excellence, virtue, efficacy, and unspeakable utility of the marvellous Philosopher's Stone, much has been written: yet has no one been able to tell out its thought-surpassing glory or to adequately set forth its fame. All Sages have regarded it as the chief felicity that this earth can afford, without which no one can attain perfection in this world. For Morienus says: " He who has this Stone has all, and needs no other help." For it includes all temporal felicity, bodily health, and solid good fortune.

They have also commended the Stone for that the spirit and efficacy which lie concealed in it are the spirit of the Quintessence of all things beneath the disc of the moon; on this account they say that it upholds the sky, and moves the sea. They also describe it as the most elect, the most subtle, the purest, and noblest of all the heavenly spirits, to which all the rest yield obedience as to their King, that bestows on men all health -and prosperity, heals all diseases, gives to the God-fearing temporal honour and a long life, but to the wicked, who abuse it, eternal punishment. It is also extolled by the Sages because it has never been known to fail of effecting its purpose, but is found to be in all proved, perfect, and unerring. Therefore Hermes and Aristotle call it the true, undeceiving, and unailing arcanum of all arcana, the Divine Virtue which is hidden from the foolish. In brief, they have designated it the chief of all things under heaven, the marvellous conclusion or epilogue of all philosophic works. Hence some devout Sages have affirmed that it was Divinely revealed to Adam, and by him handed down to all the holy Patriarchs.

For by its aid Noah is said to have built the Ark, Moses the Tabernacle with all its golden vessels, and Solomon the

Temple, besides accomplishing many other great deeds, fashioning many precious ornaments, and procuring for himself long life and boundless riches.

Moreover, the Sages own that through its means they invented the seven liberal arts, and sought and obtained sustenance for themselves. God gave them this gift that they might not be hindered in their researches by poverty, or driven to flatter the rich for the sake of gain, and thus become contemptible, and as a jest or by-word in His sight.

The Stone enabled them to discern the great mysteries of the Divine wonders, and the inexhaustible riches of the Divine Glory, By it their hearts were roused and stirred up to a more intimate knowledge of God. For they sought not to obtain great wealth, or the honour and pleasures of this world, but all their delight was to search out and contemplate the marvellous secrets of Nature. They regarded the works of God with very different eyes, and in a very different manner than most men in our own times, who, alas, look on them like cows or calves, and pursue the study of our noble Art for the sake of wealth, and temporal advantage and pleasure. But they will never find what they seek. For God gives not this gift to the wicked, who despise His word, but to the godly who strive to live honestly and quietly in this wicked and impure world, and to lend a helping hand to the needy brethern; or, in the words of the poet:--

" God gives this Art to the sincere and good, nor can the world purchase it with all its gold. The vulgar know nothing of this Mystery, for if any man be impious, he seeks the Stone in vain. He who holds it in silence dwells where he would, and fears neither accidents, nor thieves, nor any evil. For this reason this sacred gift is granted to few: it is in the hands of God, and He gives it to whomsoever He will."

Much has been said concerning the operation, virtue, and utility of this Art in a variety of writings which have heretofore seen the light, as, for example, unto what extent the said Stone, prepared and made more than perfect, becomes a medicine which is above every medicine. It has been denominated the universal panacea, to which not only all diseases yield (as, for instance, leprosy and gout), but by the use of which old men

may become young again, recover their lost faculties, and their former strength, and by which those who are already half dead may be revived and quickened. But, as I am no physician, I will forbear to give an opinion on this point. That the Stone has this virtue, every one that possesses it can discover for himself. I prefer to set down a few observations concerning those qualities and uses of the Stone which are known to me by daily experience.

In the first place, the practice of this Art enables us to understand, not merely the marvels of Nature, but the nature of God Himself, in all its unspeakable glory. It shadows forth, in a wonderful manner, how man is the image of the most Holy Trinity, the essence of the Holy Trinity, and the Oneness of Substances in that Trinity, as well as the difference of Persons; the Incarnation of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, His Nativity, Passion, Death, and Resurrection; His Exaltation and the Eternal Happiness won by Him for us men; also our purification from original sin, in the absence of which purification all good actions of men would be vain and void -- and, in brief, all the articles of the Christian faith, and the reason why man must pass through much tribulation and anguish, and fall a prey to death, before he can rise again to a new life. All this we see in our Art as it were in a mirror, as we shall take occasion to set forth in our Fourth Part.

Secondly, its earthly and natural use consists in changing all imperfect metals, by means of its tincture, into pure and solid gold, as I will try to show as briefly as I can.

The Stone or Elixir cannot be used for this purpose in the form in which we left it at the completion of the previous stage of our process; but it should be still further fermented and augmented in the following manner, as otherwise it could not be conveniently applied to imperfect metals and bodies.

Take one part of the Essence, and add to it three parts of purest gold, which has been purged and melted by means of antimony, and reduced to very thin plates. Let them be placed together in the crucible.

Thereupon the whole compound will be transformed into a pure and efficacious Tincture, which, when applied to base metals, in the ratio of 1::1000, will change them into pure gold.

NOTE. -- The purer the metals are, and the greater their affinity to our substance, the more easily are they received by the Tincture, and the more perfect and rapid is the process of regeneration. For the transformation consists in all that is impure and unsuitable being purged off, and rejected like dross. In the same manner flawed stones can be transmuted into precious diamonds, and common crystal can be so tinged as to become equal to the most precious stones. Moreover, many other things may be done with the Tincture which must not be revealed to the wicked world. These virtues of the Stone, and others of a like kind, are looked upon as the least important by the Sages, and by all Christians on whom God has bestowed this most precious gift. Such men think them vile indeed when compared with the knowledge of God and of His works which is afforded by the Stone.

For let me tell you that he on whom the Most High has conferred the knowledge of this Mystery esteems mere money and earthly riches as lightly as the dirt of the streets. His heart and all his desires are bent upon seeing and enjoying the heavenly reality of which all these things are but a figure; as Solomon, the wisest of wise Kings, testifies in chapter vii. of the Book of Wisdom, where he says: " I preferred wisdom before sceptres and thrones, and esteemed riches nothing in comparison of her. Neither compared I unto her any precious stone, because all gold in respect of her is as a little sand, and silver shall be counted as clay before her." Those, therefore, that desire this Art as a means of procuring temporal honour, pleasure, and wealth, are the most foolish of men; and they can never obtain that which they seek at so great an expense of money, time, and trouble, and which fills their hearts, their minds, and all their thoughts. For this reason the Sages have expressed a profound contempt for worldly wealth (not as though it were in itself a bad thing, seeing that it is highly commended in Holy Scripture as an excellent gift of God, but because of its vile abuse). They despised it because it seemed to hinder men from following the good and the true, and to introduce a mischievous confusion into their conceptions of right and wrong. These abuses of money the illustrious Marcellus Palingenius Stellatus has graphically described in the poem entitled

the "Zodiac of Life," under the sign of Sagittarius, where he draws a vivid picture of the evils of avarice. To this poem I would therefore refer the gentle reader.

From this poem we may gather how lightly this distinguished man, though evidently a possessor of the Stone, as appears out of his "Zodiac of Nature," held gold and silver, and all things temporal, in respect of virtue.

Nor is his case by any means exceptional. All Sages have regarded wisdom, and the knowledge of heavenly things, as far better than the transient things of earth, and have so ordered their lives and actions that at the last they might obtain immortality and eternal glory. This feeling is well expressed by Solomon, in his Book of Proverbs (cp. xvi.), where he says:

" How much better is it to get wisdom than gold ! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver!" -- and again in the xxii: chapter: " A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and knowledge rather than silver and gold." The same aspiration prompted the following words of the son of Sirach: " See that thou keep a good name, for it is better than a thousand treasures of gold."

By reason of these and other virtues which result from the philosophy of the Stone, the Sages have never wearied of extolling its marvellous excellence; and they have taken great pains to make it known to the worthy, in order that its wisdom might be accepted and practically exhibited by them. But to the foolish everything is obscure and difficult to be understood. This is the gist of the first six chapters of Solomon's Book of Proverbs, where he says that men should strain every nerve to attain to our wisdom. In the Book of Ecclesiastes, too, he uses the following words: " MY son, be satisfied with a lowly station: for it is better than all that this world desires. The greater thou art, the more humble thyself, and God will give thee grace. For the Lord is a most High God, and does great things through the lowly."

PART IV.

PSALM LXXVIII. AND MATTH. XIII.

" I will open my mouth in parables, and declare things hidden from the foundation of the world."

When it pleases Almighty God by His Divine Word to make known unto the human race His marvellous, deep, and celestial mysteries, He is wont to do so in parables, and to shadow forth His meaning in things familiar to our eyes which are depicted visibly before us. For instance, when pronouncing upon Adam in Paradise, after the Fall, the sentence of death, He told him that as he was made and formed of dust, he should also return to dust -- dust being a thing which in itself has no life. Again, when promising to Abraham an innumerable posterity, He illustrated His meaning by pointing to the stars of the heavens, the sand of the sea shore, and the dust of the earth. In the same manner, God made use of divers precious types in declaring His will to the children of Israel through the Prophets. This practice was also adopted in the New Testament by Christ Himself -- the Foundation and Express Image of the Truth -- who set forth His teaching in parables in order that it might be better understood. So He compares His Divine and Blessed Gospel -- the highest happiness of man -- to seed that is sown in a field, amongst which the enemy scatters evil seed; to a hidden treasure, to a pearl of great price; to a grain of wheat; to a mustard seed; to leaven, etc

[Cp. Luke viii. Matthew xiii. and xxii. Luke xix.
Matthew xx.]

The Kingdom of Heaven He describes under the image of a great Wedding Feast. The Christian Church, again, He compares to a Vineyard, and to a King calling upon his servants to render up an account. He also uses the similitude of a noble lord who entrusted his goods to his servants, of a lost sheep, a prodigal son, and others of a similar nature.

[Cp. Matthew xviii. Luke xvi. Matthew xxv. Luke xviii.
Mark xii. Luke xviii. Luke x.]

These types and similitudes were given to us on account of our human infirmity, which prevents us from understanding and

picturing to ourselves the things of heaven. And since it is God's wont to reveal His mind in parables and *figures*, we can but regard it as of a piece with all the other dealings of God, that the Chief Good, His Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who by His obedience saved all mankind from eternal death and restored to us the Kingdom of Heaven, should have expressed His nature in a concrete bodily form. This is the greatest mystery of Almighty God, and the highest and worthiest object of knowledge.

[Ephes. iii. Col. i. Isaiah xlv.: "*Let the heavens drop down from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness. Let the earth open and bring forth the Saviour.*"]

And although this great Good had been prefigured to us in the Old Testament by types such as the sacrifice of Isaac, the ladder of Jacob, the betrayal and wonderful exaltation of Joseph the brazen serpent, Samson, David, and Jonah: yet, besides all these, Almighty God deigned to give us a fuller revelation and a corporal, visible, and apprehensible Idea of His heavenly treasures and gifts in the Person of His Son. This earthly and bodily manifestation He plainly foretold in the Prophet Isaiah (cp. xxviii.): "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a corner stone, a tried stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste." To the same effect the Royal Seer David speaks, through the Holy Spirit, in Psalm cxviii.: "The Stone which the builders rejected is become the head stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes." This type, the aforesaid Corner Stone, Christ applies to Himself (Matth. cp. xxi.) when He says: "Have ye never read in the Scriptures? The Stone that the builders rejected is become the chief stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes. And whosoever shall fall on this Stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall it shall grind him to powder." And Peter (Acts, cp. iv.) and Paul in his Epistle to the Romans (cp. ix.) repeat almost the same words.

This tried, blessed, and heavenly Stone Jesus Christ was longingly expected from the beginning of the world by the Fathers and Holy Patriarchs; God-enlightened men prayed that they might be accounted worthy to see the promised Christ in His bodily and visible form. And if they rightly knew Him by

the Holy Spirit, they were comforted b-y His presence in their lives, and had an invisible Friend on whom they could stay themselves, as upon a spiritual fulcrum, in trouble and danger even unto the end of their life.

But although that heavenly Stone was bestowed by God as a free gift on the whole human race, the rich as well as the poor (Matth. xi., 6.); yet to this very day comparatively few have been able to know and apprehend Him. To the majority of mankind He has always been a hidden secret, and a grievous stumbling block, as Isaiah foretold in his eighth chapter: " He shall be for a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence, a gin and a snare, so that many shall stumble and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken." The same was revealed to the aged Simeon, when he spake thus to Mary, the Mother of the Corner Stone: " Behold, He shall be for a fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign that shall be spoken against." To this S. Paul also bears witness (ad. Rom. ix.): "They fell from the Stone of offence and the rock of stumbling. He that believes in Him shall not be confounded." This Stone is precious to them that believe, but to the unbelieving "a stone of offence and stumbling, seeing that they are broken against the word, and believe not in Him on whom they are founded (Eccl. xliii.)." In all these respects the Precious, Blessed, and Heavenly Stone agrees most wonderfully with our earthly, corporal, and philosophical Stone; and it is, therefore, well worth our while to compare our Stone with its Heavenly prototype. We shall thus understand that the earthly philosophical Stone is the true image of the real, spiritual, and heavenly Stone Jesus Christ.

Thus, then, those who would truly know and prepare the first Matter of the Philosopher's Stone (the chief and principal mystery of this earth) must have a deep insight into the nature of things, just as those who would know the Heavenly Stone (*i.e.*, the indissoluble, triune essence of the true and living God) must have a profound spiritual insight into the things of heaven: hence we said in our first part, that the student of our Art must first have a thorough knowledge of Nature and her properties. If a man would come to know the highest good, he must rightly know, first God, and then himself (Acts xvii.: " For in Him we live," etc.). If anyone learn to know himself and God (*i.e.*

our duty as men, our origin, the end of our being, and our affinity to God), he has the highest scholarship, without which it is impossible to obtain happiness, either in this world, or in the world to come.

If we would find that high and heavenly Stone, we must remember that, as our earthly Philosophical Stone is to be sought in one thing and two things, which are met with everywhere, so we must look for Him nowhere but in the eternal Word of God, and the Holy Scripture (consisting of the Old and New Testaments) -- as God the Father testified at His Transfiguration on Mount Tabor (Mark ix., Luke ix.), when He said: "This is My Beloved Son: hear ye Him." In the same way Christ, the essential and eternal Word of God, speaks of Himself: "No one comes to the Father, but by Me" -- according to the Scripture, the infallible testimony of the Divine Word (Isaiah xxxiv.). In Isaiah viii. we find the words: "to the Law and the Testimony." And Christ, the aforesaid Corner Stone, bears witness to the necessity of Scripture, when He says: "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye believe that ye have eternal life, and it is they that testify of Me." Therefore, David says in Psalm cxix., long before the coming of Christ: "My delight, O Lord, is in Thy commandments, for they are my counsellors; Thy word is a lamp unto my feet; I rejoice in the way of Thy testimonies more than in great riches. Also, I consider Thy ways, and walk in Thy testimonies."

[Cp. Gen. xiii. Psal. xlv. Isaiah ix., 49. Jerem. xxxii.

John x., 14 Rom. ix. I. Cor. v.]

Moreover, when and where the First Matter of this heavenly Stone was founded ('from the beginning of the world"), is expressly set forth in several passages of Holy Scripture, especially in the fifth chapter of Micah: "Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." When the Jews asked the Corner Stone Himself who He was, He answered: "I that speak to you was from the beginning," and again: "Before Abraham was, I am." From these passages it follows that He had His being, without a beginning, from all eternity, and that He will abide throughout all eternity.

And although this knowledge is to be found and obtained nowhere but in the Old and New Testaments, nevertheless he

who would gain it must proceed with the greatest care (II. Timothy, iii.), for one false step may render all our subsequent labour useless. He who would gain a golden understanding of the word of truth, should have the eyes of his soul opened, and his mind illumined by the inward light (I. John, v.) which God has kindled in our hearts from, the beginning; for he who strives to obtain this knowledge without the Divine light, may easily mistake Saul for Paul, and choose a false road instead of the right path. This happens continually in regard to our earthly Stone. Ten persons may read the same description of it, and yet only one may read the words aright. So the majority of mankind daily miss the knowledge of the Heavenly Stone; not because it is not before their eyes, but because they have not eyes to see it. Therefore Christ says: (Luke xi.) " The eye is the light of the body, and if the eye be dark the whole body will be full of darkness." In the seventeenth chapter of the same Gospel He says: " Behold the kingdom of God is within you." From these words it most clearly appears that the knowledge of the light in man must come from within, and not from without.

The external object, as they say, or the letter, is written for the sake of our infirmity, as a further aid to the implanted light of grace (Matth. xxiv.), as also the outward spoken word is used as an auxiliary means for the conveyance and advancement of knowledge. For example, if a white and a black tablet were put before you, and you were asked to say which was white and which black, you would not be able to answer the question if you had no previous knowledge of those colours; your ability to do so, comes, not from looking at the tablets, but from the knowledge that before was in your mind. The object only stirs up your perceptive faculty, and calls out the knowledge that before was in you, but does not of itself afford that knowledge. In the same way, if any one put into your hand a flint, and asked you to bring outward and visible fire out of it for him, you would be unable to do so without the steel that belongs to it, with which you would have to elicit the spark slumbering in the stone. Moreover, you would have to catch and fan it into flame on a piece of tinder -- or else the spark would immediately vanish again. If you do this, you will have a bright fire, and so long as you keep it up, you will be able to do with it whatever you

like. In the same manner, the heavenly light slumbers in the human soul, and must be struck out by outward contact, namely, by the true faith, through reading and hearing, and through the Holy Spirit whom Christ restored to us, and promised to give us (John xiv.: " No man comes to the Father but by me"), and to put into our dark, but still glowing hearts, as into a kind of tinder, where He may be fanned and kindled' into a bright flame, working the will of God in our souls. For He delights to dwell in light unapproachable, and in the hearts of believers. Although no man ever has, or ever can, see God with his outward bodily eyes, yet with the inward eyes of the soul He may well be seen and known. But notwithstanding that inward light casts its bright beams over the whole world, and into the heart of every man without any difference, the world, by reason of its innate corruptness, cannot see it rightly, and refuses to acknowledge it; and on this account so many false and pernicious notions are current concerning it. But we shall do well to consider that God has, not without a good purpose, furnished our heads with two eyes and two ears; for He would thereby teach us that man has a double vision and a double hearing; namely, the outward and the inward. With the inward he is to judge spiritual things, and the outward is also to perform its own proper office. The same distinction we find in the spirit and the letter of Scripture. For this reason I thought fit to explain this matter for the sake of students of the simple sort, who might otherwise be at a loss to apprehend the full significance of the triune Stone.

Again, as the substance of the earthly Stone is nothing accounted of in the world, and rejected by the majority of mankind, so Christ, the eternal Word of the Father, and the Heavenly Triune Stone, is lightly esteemed in this world, and scarcely even looked at; nay, we may say that nothing is so profoundly and utterly despised by mankind, as the Saving Word of God. Hence (Cor. i., 2) it is called foolishness by the wise of this world. Nor is it only contemned and regarded as worthless; it is even proscribed and laid under a ban, like some false heretical doctrine, and it is greivous for a God-fearing man to listen to the blasphemous words that are spoken against it. But

the believer must be tried by it, and the world sifted by its appearance. So S. John says(cp. i.): " He came unto His own, and they received Him not; " and again: " He was in the world, and the world knew Him not."

Again, as the physical and earthly water-Stone of the Sages has, on account of its unsearchable excellence; been called by a great variety of names by the multitude of philosophers, so the Heavenly Light, the one Noumen and Illuminant, whose riches and glory are past finding out, is designated in Holy Scripture by a large number of titles. We will go through the most important names of both. The Philosopher's Stone is called the most ancient, secret or unknown, natural, incomprehensible, heavenly, blessed, sacred Stone of the Sages. It is described as being true, more certain than certainty itself, the arcanum of all arcana -- the Divine virtue and efficacy, which is hidden from the foolish, the aim and end of all things under heaven, the wonderful epilogue or conclusion of all the labours of the Sages -- the perfect essence of all the elements, the indestructible body which no element can injure, the quintessence; the double and living mercury which has in itself the heavenly spirit -- the cure for all unsound and imperfect metals -- the everlasting light -- the panacea for all diseases -- the glorious Phoenix -- the most precious of treasures -- the chief good of Nature -- the universal triune Stone, which is naturally composed of three things, and, nevertheless, is but *one* -- nay, is generated and brought forth of one, two, three, four, and five. In the writings of the Sages we may also find it spoken of as the Catholic Magnesia, or the seed of the world, and under many other names and titles of a like nature, which we may best sum up and comprehend in the perfect number of one thousand. And as the earthly Philosopher's Stone and its substance have a thousand names, so an infinite variety of titles is even more justly predicated of the Chief Good of the Universe. For He is God, the Word of God, the Eternal Son, the real, eternal, tried, and precious corner and foundation Stone which the builders refused and rejected. He is true, and more ancient than all things seeing that He was before the foundation of the world, and from everlasting. He is the true, hidden, and unknown God, supernatural, incomprehensible, heavenly, blessed, and highly

praised. He is the only Saviour, and the God of Gods (Deut. x.). Sure He is, and true, and cannot lie (Nu. xxiii., Rom. iii.). He is the only Potentate who does what He will, according to His good pleasure. He is secret and eternal, and in Him lie hid all the treasures and mysteries of knowledge (Rom. xvi., Col. ii.). He is the only Divine virtue and omnipotence, which is unknown to the foolish, or the wise of this world. He is the only true essence of all elements, seeing that of Him all things are and were created (Rom. ii., Ja. i.). He is the quintessence, the essence of all essences, and yet Himself not an essence of anything. He has in Himself the Heavenly Spirit which quickens ail things with life itself (Wisd. vii., Isaiah xlii., John xiv.). He is the one perfect Saviour of all imperfect bodies and men, the true heavenly physician of the soul, the eternal light that lights all men (Isaiah lx., John i.), the universal Remedy of all diseases, the true spiritual panacea. He is the glorious Phoenix that quickens and restores with His own blood His little ones whom the old Serpent, the Devil, had wounded and killed. He is the greatest treasure, and the best thing in heaven or upon earth, the triune universal essence, called Jehovah -- of one, the Divine essence -- of two, God and Man -- of three, namely three Persons -- of four, namely three Persons, and one Divine Substance -- of five, namely of three Persons, one Divine, and one Human Substance. He is also the true Catholic Magnesia, or universal seed of the world, of Whom, through Whom, and to Whom are all things in heaven and upon earth -- the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, says the Lord that is, and was, and is to come, the Almighty (Apoc. ;.).

But again, as in the case of the philosophical work, it is not enough for anyone to know its substance and its triune essence, with the quality and property thereof, if he does not also know where to obtain it, and how to become a partaker of its benefits -- which can only be done, as we said above, by dissolving the substance into its three parts, decomposing it, and so depriving it of its caliginous shadow and hirsute essence, subliming its inner hidden heart and soul by means of the sweet, universal, fiery, marine water (extracted from itself) into a volatile essence -- so we cannot know that glorious triune Essence, called Jehovah,

unless the image of Him is first dissolved and purified in our own souls, the veil of Moses (*i.e.*, our own desperate sinfulness which prevents us from seeing God as He is) being taken away, and our inner heart and soul being purified, cleansed, and sublimed by the Divine illumination of Him that dwells within, namely, Christ, who washes our hearts like pure water (Isaiah xliv.), and fills them with His sweet and gentle comfort. So you first behold the wrath, but afterwards the love of God.

Once more: As our Matter, in the philosophical work, after being dissolved into its three parts or principles, must again be coagulated and reduced into its own proper salt, and into *one* essence, which is then called the salt of the Sages: so God, and His Son, must be known as *One*, by means of their essential substance, and must not be regarded as two or three Divinities, possessing more than one essence. When you have thus known God through His Son, and united them by the bond of the Holy Spirit, God is no longer invisible, or full of wrath, but you may feel His love, and, as it were, see Him with your eyes, and handle Him with your hands, in the person of Jesus Christ, His Son and express image. But even this knowledge of the Triune God will avail you little, unless you continue to advance and grow in His grace, for God otherwise will be still terrible, and as it is said of Him (Deut. vii., 18), "a consuming fire." For as the substance of the Sages, after all the changes that it has undergone, will do more harm than good as a medicine applied to the body, without the final preparation, so unless you fully and perfectly apprehend Christ, the mere knowledge of Him will tend to your condemnation rather than to the salvation of your soul (I. John, iv.). Therefore if you wish to become a partaker of Christ, and if you desire to possess and enjoy His heavenly gifts and treasures, you must advance in the *personal* knowledge of Christ, and look upon Him, not merely as a pure and immaterial Spirit, but as the Saviour who in the fulness of time took upon Himself a human body, and became the Son of Man, as well as the Son of God.

For as in our philosophical work another most noble and cognate metallic body must be united to our first substance (if it is to be rendered effectual for the perfecting of other metals), and joined together with it into *one* body, so the Divine Nature

of the Son of God had to take upon itself, as it were, another kindred "metallic" body, namely our human nature, our human flesh and blood (which, having been created in the image of God, has the greatest affinity with Him), and to be joined with it into one indissoluble whole, in order that He might have the power of bringing imperfect men to perfection.

But again, we said that common gold, on account of its imperfection and impurity, would not combine with our substance, because its manifold defects had rendered it "dead" and useless for our purpose, and that, for this reason, it must first receive a bright and pure body (not adulterated or weakened by the presence of bad internal sulphur). In the same way, the Divine essence of the Son of God could not be joined to common human nature, which is conceived in sin, defiled with hereditary uncleanness, and many actual sins and besetting infirmities (though all these are no integral part of human nature as such), but required a pure, sinless, and perfect humanity.

For if the earthly Adam, before the Fall (though after all only a created being), was holy, perfect, and sinless, how much more must the heavenly Adam, to whom the only begotten Son of God was joined, have a perfect humanity? Therefore the heavenly, eternal, fundamental Corner Stone, Jesus Christ (like the earthly Philosophical Stone), is now *One*, uniting in Himself, after an inscrutable manner, a dual nature of admirable generation and origin, and the properties both of God and of man. For according to His Divine Nature, He is true God, of the Substance of His heavenly and eternal Father, and the Son of God, whose goings out (as the Scripture says) were from everlasting (Mic. v.). According to His human nature, on the other hand, He was born in the fullness of time as a true and perfect man, without sin, but with a real body and soul (Matth xxvi.). Therefore He now eternally represents the indissoluble and personal union of the Divine and the human substance, the oneness of the natures of God and man.

It is much to be wished that the eyes of our self-opinionated doctors were opened, or the nebulous film, or sophistical mask, which obscures their vision, taken away, that so they might see more clearly. I am particularly alluding to the Aristotelians, and other blind theological quibblers, who spend their lives in

wrangling and disputing about Divine things in a most unchristian manner, and put forth no end of manifold distinctions, divisions, and confusions, thus obscuring the Scriptural doctrine concerning the union of natures and communication of substances in Christ. If they will not believe God and His Holy Word, they might at least be enlightened by a study of our chemical Art, and of the union of two waters (viz., that of mercury and that of the Sun) which our Art so strikingly and palpably exhibits. But the scholastic wisdom of their Ethnic philosophy is entirely based upon pagan philosophy, and has no foundation in Holy Scripture or Christian Theology. Their Aristotelian precepts, their "substances" and "accidents," entirely blind them to the true proportions of things, and they forget Tertullian's saying "that philosophers are the patriarchs of heresy." But we do not think it worth while to pursue this subject any further.

Again, as our chemical compound (in which the two essences have been combined) is subjected to the action of fire, and is decomposed, dissolved, and well digested, and as this process, before its consummation, exhibits various chromatic changes, so this Divine Man, and Human God, Jesus Christ, had, by the will of His heavenly Father, to pass through the furnace of affliction, that is, through many troubles, insults, and sufferings, in the course of which His outward aspect was grievously changed; thus He suffered hunger when, after His Baptism and His entrance upon the ministry of the Word, the Holy Spirit led Him into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil, and there waged with Him a threefold contest, as an example to all baptized Christian men, who, having declared themselves followers of Christ, are, like Him, tempted, and have to sustain the shock of various grievous assaults. Again, He was subject to weariness, He shed tears, He trembled, He wrestled with death, He shed drops of sweat mingled with blood, He was taken captive and bound, was struck in the face by the high priest's servant, was mocked, derided, spitted upon, scourged, crowned with thorns, condemned to die upon the Cross, which He had to bear Himself; was nailed to it between two malefactors, received vinegar and gall to drink, cried out with a loud voice, commended His spirit into the hands of His Father -- and so gave up the ghost and died upon the Cross. These and other tribulations,

which are faithfully related by the Evangelists, He had to bear in the course of His earthly life.

And as the Sages say that the above mentioned process of chemical digestion is generally completed within forty days, so the same number seems to have a most peculiar significance in Scripture, more particularly in connection with the life of our Lord. The Israelites remained forty years in the wilderness; Moses was forty days and forty nights on Mount Sinai; Elijah's flight from Ahab occupied the same length of time. Christ fasted forty days and forty nights in the wilderness; He spent forty months in preaching upon earth; He lay forty hours in the grave -- appeared to His disciples forty days after His Resurrection. Within forty years from Christ's Ascension Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans, and made level with the ground.

Then again, the Sages have called our compound, while undergoing the process of decomposition, the Raven's Head, on account of its blackness. In the same way, Christ (Isaiah liii.) had no form nor comeliness -- was despised and rejected of men -- a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief -- so despised, that men hid, as it were, their faces from Him; and in the z~nd Psalm He complains that He " is a worm, and no man," "a scorn and laughing-stock of the people." We may also see an analogy to Christ in the fact that the decomposed body of the sun lies for some time dead and lifeless, like burnt-out ashes, at the bottom of the phial, and that its " soul!" gradually descends to it under the influence of greater heat, and once more saturates, as it were, the dead and decaying body, and saves it from total destruction. For when, on the Mount of Olives, and on the Cross, Christ had experienced a feeling of utter dereliction, He was afterwards comforted and strengthened, and nourished (as it were) with Divine nectar from above. And when at length He had given up the ghost, and all the strength forsook His body, so that He went down to the parts below the earth, even there He was preserved, refreshed, and filled with the quickening power of the eternal Deity, and thus, by the reunion of His spirit with His dead body, quickened, raised from the dead, lifted up into heaven, and appointed Lord and King of all -- where, sitting at the right hand of His Father, He now rules, governs, preserves, and quickens all things with the power of

His Word. This marvellous Union and Divine Exaltation angels and men in heaven, upon earth, and under the earth can scarce think upon without holy fear, and trembling awe -- Whose power, strength, and purple Tincture (*i.e.*, Blood) changes us imperfect men and sinners in body and soul, and is a marvellous medicine for all our diseases, as we shall see further on.

We have briefly and simply considered the most obvious analogies that serve to establish the typical connection between Jesus Christ, the heavenly Corner Stone, and our earthly Philosopher's Stone, and to illustrate its figurative resemblance to the Incarnation of the Saviour of men. We will now proceed to shew that the earthly Stone also shadows forth His transmuting, strengthening, healing, and quickening power towards us sinful, wretched, and imperfect human beings.

For though God created man at the beginning in His own image, and made him more glorious and perfect than other creatures, and breathed into him a living and immortal soul, yet by the fall the image of God was defaced, and man was changed into the very reverse of what God had intended that I he should be.

But in order that we might be restored to our former glorious state, God in His great mercy devised the following remedy: As the perfect earthly Stone, or Tincture, after its completion extends its quickening efficacy, and the perfecting virtue of its tincture to other imperfect metals, so Christ, that blessed heavenly Stone, extends the quickening influence of His purple Tincture to us, purifying us, and conforming us to the likeness of His perfect and heavenly Body. For, as S. Paul says: (Rom. viii.), He is the first-born among many brethren, as He is also the first-born before all creatures, through whom all things in heaven and earth were created, and reconciled to God, If we who are by Nature impure, imperfect, and mortal, desire to become pure, immortal and perfect, this transmutation can be effected only through the mediation of the Heavenly Corner Stone Jesus Christ, who is the only holy, risen, glorified, heavenly King, both God and man in the unity of *one* Person.

For as the Philosopher's Stone, which is the Chemical King, has virtue by means of its tincture and its developed perfection

to change other imperfect and base metals into pure gold, so our heavenly King and fundamental Corner Stone, .Jesus Christ, can alone purify us sinners and imperfect men with His Blessed ruby-coloured Tincture, that is to say, His Blood, from all our natural filth and uncleanness, and perfectly heal the malignant disease of our nature-; seeing that there is no salvation but in Him, and that no other name is given under heaven whereby men can obtain happiness and perfection.

The blind and insensate world has, indeed, through the craft and deceit of the Devil, tried many other ways and methods of obtaining everlasting salvation, and has toiled hard to reach the goal; but Christ nevertheless is and remains the only true Saviour and Mediator, who alone can make us appear just in the sight of God, and purify us from our spiritual leprosy -- just as, upon earth, there is only one royal, saving, chemical Stone by which all imperfect metals must be brought to perfection and all bodily diseases healed (especially that fearful, and otherwise incurable leprosy). All other spiritual remedies -- such as those invented and used by Jews, Turks, heathens, and heretics -- may be compared to the devices of false and sophistical alchemists; for by them men are not purified, but defiled--not quickened, but enfeebled, and given over to a state of more helpless spiritual deadness. So the pseudo alchemists, or malchemists, as they may be more appropriately termed, discover many tinctures and colours by which men are not only deceived, but, as daily experience teaches, often ruined in fortune, body, and soul.

Again, if we men would be purified and cleansed of our original sin and the filth of Adam (in whom, through the subtilty of the Cacodæmon, our whole race was corrupted in the very Protoplast), we can obtain perfection and eternal happiness only through the regeneration of water and the Spirit, as the royal chemical substance is regenerated by water and its spirit. In this new and spiritual regeneration, which is performed in baptism through water and the Spirit, we are washed and purified with the Blood of Christ, united to His Body, and clothed with Him as with a garment (Col. iii., Eph. v.). For, as the Philosophical Stone becomes joined to other metals by means of its tincture and enters into an indissoluble union with them, so Christ, our Head, is in constant vital communion with all His

members through the ruby tincture of His Blood, and compacts His whole Body into a perfect spiritual building which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Now, that regeneration which is wrought in baptism through the operation of the Holy Spirit is really nothing but an inward spiritual renewal of fallen man, by which we become God's friends instead of His enemies, and thus heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ (~. Cor. ii., Rom. xii., Ephes. ii., Hebr. iii.). For to this end Christ died and rose again, that through this means, namely, through His passion, death, resurrection, and ascension, He might enter the Holy Place made without hands, and prepare for us the way to our everlasting Fatherland. Therefore, we, too, as His brothers and sisters, should follow His passion, and grow like Him in love, humility, and all other virtues, till we are conformed to His glorified body, and until, having lived and died with Him, we also reign with Him, and share His everlasting glory.

But this inward quickening and imitation of Christ, our heavenly King, in our daily lives, is not the outgrowth of our own merit or natural will (for by nature all men are blind, deaf, and dead, as to spiritual things), but is produced solely through the effectual working of the Holy Spirit, who dwells in us through the blessed laver of regeneration. In like manner, the minerals and metals are in themselves gross and dead, and cannot purify or ameliorate themselves, but are purified, renewed, dissolved, and perfected through the agency of the spagyric spirit. Now when we have been incorporated in the Body of our heavenly King, and washed and cleansed of original sin through His purple Tincture, and so rendered capable of bringing forth the first fruits of the Holy Spirit, we are fed up, like little children, and nourished with the pure and health-giving milk of grace, until at length we become living stones, fit for the heavenly building and the highest priesthood, which consists in offering up spiritual sacrifices such as are acceptable to God the Father, through Jesus Christ. For even a Christian, though regenerated through water and the Word, cannot grasp or apprehend all things at once, but must grow gradually, and daily, in the knowledge of God and of Christ.

For as, in our philosophical experiment, the union of the two essences, namely of the earthly gold and the heavenly

prepared Matter, which have first been reduced to a kind of dry liquid, or amalgam, in a solutory alembic, does not take place all at once (seeing that the different parts are added gradually and at stated intervals), so we must expect the growth of the quickened spirit to be slow and gradual. For when the spiritual union of a man with Christ in baptism has once taken place, and he is united once for all with His Body, he must gradually advance in the Christian faith, and assimilate in his soul one article after another, until he has obtained perfect knowledge, and is firmly established in all the fulness of conviction.

Now the Christian faith, like the prepared aqueous substance, consists of twelve articles, according to the number of the Apostles, and these again fall into three principal sections, viz. (1) that which treats of our creation, (2) that which deals with our redemption, and (3) that which describes our sanctification. All these articles the Christian must, one by one, and little by little, make his own. He cannot master them all at once; for if too much spiritual nourishment were administered to him at a time, his soul might begin to loathe its food, and he might be entirely estranged from the faith. Therefore, the third article, for instance, should be divided into seven parts, and taught in seven different lessons (just as the matter was not put into the phial all at once). When a man has made the whole faith thoroughly his own, he must carefully preserve it pure from all corruption and falsification.

Moreover, in the chemical process, the Stone cannot bring its influence to bear on imperfect metals, unless it is first combined with three several parts of highly refined and purified gold, not because the tincture of the Stone itself is imperfect, but on account of the grossness of the metals which otherwise could not receive its subtle influence. The Stone itself is perfect; but the base metals are so feeble and dead that they cannot apprehend the angelical and spiritual perfection of the Tincture, except through the more congenial medium of gold, refined and fused through Antimony. In the same way, our heavenly King, Jesus Christ, has, through His obedience to His Father's will, once for all delivered us from sin and impurity, and made us sons and heirs of God; nevertheless, His saving Blood, the true purple Tincture, cannot be received by us, on account of our inborn

infirmity and gross sinfulness, except through three media appointed by God for this purpose, namely: (1), His Holy Word, which is better and purer than earthly gold seven times refined; (2), saving faith, which is a marvellous gift of God, comes through the Word of God, unites the hearts of men, and is tried in the fire of affliction; (3), unfeigned love towards God and our neighbour, which is also a gift of God, the fulfilment of the law, and a perfect imitation of God's nature. If we have and possess in a proper manner these three things, the Word, faith, and love, Christ can operate rightly upon us with his heavenly Tincture, and celestial Unction, make their blessed influence felt throughout our imperfect natures, and thus, by pervading our entire being, cause us to be partakers of His own heavenly nature. But Satan, that grim pseudo-alchymist, ever lies in wait to draw those whom Christ has regenerated, and made sons of God by faith through baptism, and who are warring the good warfare, and keeping faith and a good conscience, away from the right path -- and in this attempt he and his faithful servants, our sinful flesh, and the wicked, seductive world, are, alas, very frequently successful (for even the just man falls seven times a day. Prov. xxiv.). For as he lay in wait for Christ, our Lord, Master, and Guide, and soon after His Baptism made a violent assault upon Him; so to the present day he spreads his crafty nets and pernicious snares in the Christian Church. Our Lord he first endeavoured to delude into doubting the Word of God, and questioning His Father's love, by pointing to the want, hunger, and bodily affliction, that God suffered Him to endure in the wilderness. But if Christians do not yield to this temptation, Satan attacks them on another point, and tries to induce them to place a foolhardy confidence (such as is not warranted by God's word) in their heavenly Father, just as he strove to persuade Christ to cast Himself down from the pinnacle of the Temple, seeing that God would surely protect Him. If this device does not succeed, the Evil One is not ashamed to try a third expedient: he promises us all the riches of this world. and the glory thereof, if we will forsake God, become idolators, and worship Satan himself -- a proposal which he actually had the hardihood to make to Christ These Satanic machinations God, in His inscrutable wisdom, permits, in order that men may

thereby be exercised in faith, hope, patience, and true prayer, and prepared for the agony of death which the old man will one day have to undergo -- that thus they may gain a final victory over their hereditary foe. This victory they will gain if they are taught by the grace of God how to encounter the Devil's deceitful and crafty wiles.

For since, as S. Paul says, we wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers, with the rulers of the darkness of this world, with the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places; we cannot successfully oppose our own strength to their spiritual assaults, but we must, after the example of our Standard-bearer, Jesus Christ, arm ourselves against our spiritual foes with spiritual weapons, such as the Word of God, and the sword of the Spirit. We must take from the armoury of the Holy Spirit the breast-plate of righteousness, and have our loins girt with truth, our feet shod with the preparedness of the Gospel of peace; and we must cover ourselves with the great shield of faith, with which we shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one: for faith in Jesus Christ is a most strong shield which no weapon of the Evil Demon has power to pierce.

Again, we saw that in our chemical operation the regulation of the fire, and a most patient and careful tempering of its heat, was of the greatest importance for the proper digestion of the substance. We also spoke of the " fire of the Sages " as being one of the chief agents in our chemical process, and said that it was an essential, preternatural, and Divine fire, that it lay hid in our substance, and that it was stirred into action by the influence and aid of the outward material fire. In like manner, the true Word of God, or the Spirit of God, whom Jeremiah compares to a fire, lies hid in our hearts, having been planted in our souls by Nature, and only defaced and obscured by the fall. This spirit must be aided, roused into action, and fanned into a bright flame, by another outward fire, viz., the daily fire of godliness, the exercise of all the Christian virtues in good days and in evil, and the study of the pure Divine Word, if, indeed, the internal light of grace, or the Spirit of God, is to work in us, instead of being extinguished. For as an earthly craftsman polishes iron, which in itself is cold, till it is heated by continual friction, and

as a lamp must go out if it is not constantly fed with oil; so the inward fire of man, unless it is assiduously kept up, gradually begins to burn low, and is at length completely extinguished. Therefore it is indispensable for a Christian diligently to hear, carefully to study, and faithfully to practice the Word of God.

Again, what we said of spiritual sight, viz., that it must take place not with the outward eyes of the body, but with the inward eye of the soul, is equally applicable to spiritual hearing. I speak of listening, not to the outward speech of men, or to the Pharisaic leaven of the new Scribes, which nowadays, alas, is substituted for the sincere and unadulterated Word of God, but to the Voice of God Himself. I speak of the thrice refined Word of God (Psalm cxix.), which proceeds out of the mouth of God, and is declared by His Holy Spirit -- which is not, as these false teachers presumptuously assert, a vain and empty sound, but the Spirit, the life, and the saving power of God to all that believe. Of it the Royal Seer David speaks as follows: " I will hear what the Lord shall say unto me." Of this inward and Divine hearing of the Word of God, as from a kind of fountain-head, good and living faith, which works by love, takes its source. For it is, as S. Paul says (Rom. x.): " Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."

Now if the Word is pure and undefiled, the hearing, too, may be pure and undefiled, and the faith which comes of such hearing will also be true, and show itself by love and humble obedience to the will of God in prayer, praise, and thanksgiving. It will also find expression in all good works towards our neighbour. To the exercise of this love Christ exhorts us in His long valedictory discourse (John xiii.), and leaves it with us as His farewell saying: " This is my commandment that ye love each other, even as I also loved you." " If any one say, I know God, and love not his brother, he is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But he who keeps the Word of God, in him the love of God is perfected " (1. John, ii.). And again (1. John, iv.): " God is love, and he that abides in love abides in God, and God in him." From these passages we learn that love is the bond of perfection by which we are united to Christ, and by which we are in Him, He in His Father, and His Father in Him. " If any one," says Christ, "will keep my word, this is he that loves me, and I will love

him, and we will come to him and take up our abode with him." Again: " If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love." But this our love to God must also find expression towards our neighbour. For " if any one love not his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God, whom he has not seen ? And this commandment we have of Him, that he that loves God love his brother also." The nature of this love is described by S. Paul (I. Cor. xiii.) in the following words: " Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, and never fails." Hence it appears that there is no true love which does not show itself in works of kindness towards our fellow men; and hence also it appears that the good works which are acceptable to God cannot precede faith, but are its outgrowth and precious fruit; works do not make faith good and acceptable, but it is faith that gives their real value to works -- for we are justified and obtain eternal life by faith alone. And if a regenerate man bear himself thus lovingly and humbly in all his life, he will never lack fruit in due season. For such a man is placed by God in the furnace of affliction, and (like the hermetic compound) is purged with the fire of suffering until the old Adam is dead, and there arises a new man created after God in righteousness and true holiness, as S. Paul says (Rom.vi.): " We are buried with Christ by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead, even so we also should walk in newness of life." When this has been accomplished, and a man is no longer under the dominion of sin, then there begins in him something analogous to the solution of the gold added to the substance of our chemical process. The old nature is destroyed, dissolved, decomposed, and, in a longer or shorter period of time, transmuted into something else. Such a man is so well digested and melted in the fire of affliction that he despairs of his own strength and looks for help and comfort to the mercy of God alone. In this furnace of the Cross, a man, like earthly gold, attains to the true black Raven's Head, ie., loses all beauty and reputation in the eyes of the world; and that not only during forty days and nights, or forty years, but often during his whole life, which is thus often more full of sorrow and suffering than of comfort and joy. And, through this spiritual dying, his soul is taken from him, and lifted up on high;

while his body is still upon earth, his spirit and heart are already in his eternal Fatherland; and all his actions have a heavenly source, and seem no longer to belong to this earth. For he lives no longer according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit, not in the unfruitful works of darkness, but in the light and in the day -- in works that stand the test of fire. This separation of body and soul is brought about by a spiritual dying. For as the dissolution of body and soul is performed in the regenerated gold, where body and soul are separated from one another, and yet remain close together in the same phial, the soul daily refreshing the body from above, and preserving it from final destruction, until a set time: so the decaying and half-dead bodily part of man is not entirely deserted by its soul in the furnace of the Cross, but is refreshed by the spirit from above with heavenly dew, and fed and preserved with Divine nectar. (For our temporal death, which is the wages of sin, is not a real death, but only a natural and gentle severing of body and soul). The indissoluble union and conjunction of the Spirit of God, and the soul of the Christian, are a real and abiding fact. And here again we have an analogy to the (sevenfold) ascending and descending of the soul in the chemical process. For the tribulations and temporal sufferings of God's people have now lasted six thousand years; but during this whole time, men have again and again been refreshed, comforted, and strengthened by the Spirit of God -- and so it is now, and ever will be, until the great universal Sabbath and rest-day of the seventh millenium. Then this occasional spiritual refreshing will cease, and everlasting joy will reign, since God will be all in all.

While the digestion of the dead spiritual body in man goes forward, there may be seen (as in the chemical process) many variegated colours and signs, i.e., all manner of sufferings, afflictions, and tribulations, including the ceaseless assaults of the Devil, the world, and the flesh. But all these signs are of good omen, since they show that such a man will at length reach the desired goal. For Scripture tells us that all that are to obtain the eternal beatitude of Christ must be persecuted in this world, and we must enter into the kingdom of heaven through much tribulation and anguish. This truth is well expressed in the following words of S. Augustine: " Marvel not, brother, if after

becoming a Christian you are assailed by many troubles. For Christ is our Head, and, as His members, we must follow and imitate, not only Him, but His life and sufferings. The life of Christ was closely beset with all manner of tribulations, poverty, insult, mockery, scorn, sorrow, and acute bodily suffering; and it is clear that if you would obtain the life of Christ, you must, like Him, become perfect through suffering. For without these afflictions and tribulations we cannot come to God. A man who would enter Paradise must go through fire and water, whether he be Peter, to whom the keys of heaven were entrusted, or Paul, a chosen vessel of God, or John, to whom all the secrets of God were revealed. Every brother must enter the kingdom of heaven through much tribulation."

It should further be observed that the Antimony of the Sages with which the gold must be refined before being added to the Elixir, or royal chemical substance (or before undergoing a sudatory bath with ancient grey-headed Saturn) is expressed by the sign 0. In the same way, a ball with a cross upon it is put into the hands of the Lord of the Holy Roman Empire, whereby it is indicated that he, too, must experience, and be tried by the tribulations of this world, before he can be peacefully seated upon his throne. To all this we may find an analogy in the aforesaid School of the Cross, and the tribulations and persecutions through which all Christians must pass, and the struggle which they must wage with grey-headed Saturn, that is to say, the old Adam and Satan, before they can enter into everlasting joy and rest

Besides the aforesaid sorrows and afflictions, there are also in this world certain signs and marvels, and great mundane revolutions, which we must diligently consider and perpend. We must first hear of wars, and rumours of wars, various sects, plagues, and famines; for all these things are the true fore-runners and heralds of our redemption. Then must come the general resurrection of the dead, by which those who obtain the victory through the Blood of the Lamb (for this second regeneration is begun and rendered possible by their first regeneration in this life) pass into a new and unending life through the final indissoluble union of their bodies, souls, and spirits. For by the power and effectual working of Christ, our almighty

heavenly King (to whom we are joined in a supernatural manner by faith), we shall be endued with pure spiritual health, strength, glory, and excellence. This marvellous union of body, soul, and spirit, this Divine glorification and exaltation of the elect, is a consideration fraught with reverential and unspeakable awe (like the sight of the final chemical transformation); it is a sight at which the very angels will stand rapt in inexpressible wonder; and then they will see us pass into the heavens to reign with Christ, and with them, and the ministering spirits, in everlasting glory, and joy unspeakable, world without end.

To conclude -- as, in our chemico-philosophical process, it was possible and necessary to correct at once any defect or irregularity, since otherwise the whole compound would be corrupted and rendered useless; so, in the Christian life, every fault must at once be carefully corrected, and put away, lest it afford a loophole for Satan, the world, and the flesh, to creep in again, and to cause in us, so to speak, a pernicious sublimation, or a premature redness (corresponding to the first and second chemical defects), or to make us despair of God's mercy when we consider our many greivous sins, or to stir up in us a spirit of murmuring against the great furnace heat of God's discipline (which two latter failings correspond to the third and fourth chemical defects). If any of these unfortunate accidents happen to our souls, they must be dissolved again (after the analogy of the chemical compound), by repentance, by the solutory key of holy Absolution, and thus, as often as is required, be purged of sin and post-baptismal defilement by Absolution, as well as by the pure heavenly milk of the Lord's Supper, which is the sweat of the heavenly Lamb, and water and blood, the fountain of life -- which (like the mercurial water of the chemical process) is, to the unworthy and wicked, the most deadly poison, but food, drink, and a source of strength to the repentant believer. Thus he may still attain to what corresponds to the final coagulation and perfect chemical condensation, namely, to the heavenly perfection of eternal beatitude. These two most wholesome remedies for post-baptismal sin (viz., Absolution and the Lord's Supper), God in his mercy has ordained, and entrusted to the keeping of His most Beloved Church, for the healing of repentant Christian men. Through

her, we are either, by absolution, pronounced free from guilt, or, if we remain impenitent, and persist in our wicked course, we are, by excommunication, delivered over to Satan, that by the destruction of the flesh, our souls may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

EPILOGUE.

Thus, gentle and well-wishing reader, I have briefly and simply set forth to you the perfect analogy which exists between our earthly and chemical and the true and heavenly Stone, Jesus Christ, whereby we may attain unto certain beatitude and perfection, not only in earthly but also in eternal life. I might have done so more grandly and copiously; but you must know that I am neither a theologian, nor, according to the modern fashion, an Aristotelico-theologian, but a simple and unsophisticated layman. For the knowledge which God has committed to me, I have obtained, not at any learned academy, but in the universal school of Nature, and by perusing the open book of God. For this reason I have expressed my thoughts simply, and not tricked them out in sesquipedalian words, as is the manner of professional theologians; nor do I pretend to have exhausted the subject; all that I have done is to throw out some hints for the guidance of those who wish to investigate it more carefully. In doing my best, I have also endeavoured to do my duty; for every lover of the truth is bound to praise God by revealing the knowledge entrusted to him. Besides all this, I desired to profess publicly my belief in the true Christian faith; since at the present time many devout and godly Christians are falsely represented and decried by lying slanderers as heretics. Let not the blasphemies and reckless judgment of the wicked world trouble the true Christian, against whom they are directed; for the Devil and his servants have at all times done to the followers of Christ what they did to Christ Himself. Therefore I will say no more on this subject, but I will leave it to be decided by the Judge of all the world.

As to the earthly Stone itself I must ask the reader to study diligently what has gone before in our treatise as to this subject.

For as in an excellent poem a verse is sometimes repeated at least once, so on this point we are accustomed to do the same, because the reader ought not to direct his aims and thoughts to the earthly Philosophical Stone until he has attained a right knowledge of the Celestial Stone, and has prepared it, or, at least, has commenced with the utmost zeal the preparations of both together. For the earthly Stone is a gift from God, descending by the clemency of the Celestial Stone. I agree with all the Sages that it would be folly to attempt the study of so profound a mystery without a good previous knowledge of Nature and her properties. But I also say that it is not merely difficult, but quite impossible, to prepare the Philosopher's Stone without a true knowledge of Christ, the heavenly Corner Stone, in whom all Nature lives and moves, and has its being. This warning should be duly considered; and he who would not expose himself to the certainty of ignominious failure, should reflect that the mastery of any art requires persevering exercise, and that, before setting about this search after the Philosopher's Stone, he must prepare himself by careful and patient study. If any neglect this warning, his failure will be the result of his own ignorance and mental immaturity.

But I wonder still more that there are to be found some men, who not only study this Art, but even try to practice it, and yet do not quite know whether it proceeds by natural and legitimate magic, or whether it is not after all a necromantic, or black art, which is exercised by the illegitimate aid of the powers of hell. No, my good friend. The Devil, wicked angels, and wicked men, have no power but that which God suffers them to possess -- and with our present glorious Art they positively have nothing whatever to do. It is entirely in the hand of God, who imparts it to whom He will, and takes it away from whom He will; and He does not suffer any votaries of pleasure, or evil spirits, to partake of it. He gives it only to the pure, true, and humble of heart. This excellence is neither known, nor understood, by the majority of the present generation; and when the sound of it strikes upon their ears, and they do not comprehend it, they straightway call it foolishness. On account of this their blindness, that spirit will always be hidden from their minds, and will at length be entirely taken away from them.

Let me, however, be permitted to impress one thing on the minds of my pious and devout readers. In so far as a man orders his life, soul, heart, and actions aright in the sight of God, in so far will he perceive that he is making good progress in the discovery, preparation, and use of the Stone. This assertion is the result of my own personal experience during many years, and it embodies my deliberate conviction. Therefore, the best preparation for this study is, in my judgment, a diligent amendment of heart and life.

I am aware that I here lay myself open to the objection that it is possible to enumerate several men who actually possessed this Stone, or Tincture, and with it transmuted base metals into gold and silver; and who yet were not good men, but vain, profligate, and without knowledge of God. To this objection, I answer that from whencesoever these men may have obtained the Tincture, I certainly never will believe that they prepared it -- *i.e.*, the true and right Tincture -- themselves. The tragic end of many of these men, and the headlong destruction brought upon them by their Tincture, prove but too clearly the truth of what I say. Moreover, all that call themselves alchemists are not therefore necessarily true possessors of the Stone. For, as in other branches of knowledge, there are found many different schools and sects, so all that are in search of this precious Tincture are called alchemists, without necessarily deserving the name.

In this tract I have spoken of true, natural, and scientific alchemy, which teaches us to distinguish the evil and impure from the good and pure, and thus, to aid the weakness, and correct the corruption, of Nature. We help the metals to arrive at maturity, just as a gardener may assist fruit, which by some accident is prevented from ripening, or as a seed or grain of corn may easily be multiplied by being sown in the ground. Of pseudo-alchemy I neither pretend, nor care, to know anything, because I perceive that the ways of its teachers are crooked, and that they promise mountains of gold, without being able to redeem the least part of their pledge; I also see that those who follow them incur great expense, ceaseless toil, and are often ruined in body and soul. Therefore, if you encounter alchemists of this description, who speak boastfully of their Art, and offer

to teach it you for money, I warn you to be on your guard against them. For with such men there is mostly a serpent lurking in the grass (Mic. ii.).

I think I may confidently assert that the cost of preparing the Tincture (apart from your own daily maintenance, and the fuel required) does not exceed three florins. For the Matter, as has already been said, is for most part, very common, and may be everywhere obtained in abundance; and the *labour* is easy and simple. In brief, the whole design can present no difficulty whatever to those whom God has chosen for this purpose, *i.e.*, to those who love Him; but to the wicked it is beset with insuperable impediments. In conclusion, let me tell you that if God in His gracious mercy should vouchsafe to reveal to you this open secret, it will then become your sacred duty to use it well, and to conceal your knowledge from the unworthy, to put a seal upon your lips, and to preserve unbroken silence about it. If you neglect this well-meant warning, you may bring upon yourself the anger of God, and persecutions of wicked men, and be justly punished with temporal and eternal ruin.

" If any one seek riches by means of this sacred "
 " Art, let him be devout, and simple-hearted, silent,"
 " and wise. He who strives not after these virtues,"
 " will receive the opposite of that which he desires: "
 " he will be poor, needy, naked and wretched."

All this, beloved Reader, I desired to enjoin upon you as a farewell admonition. I devoutly hope that God has opened your eyes, and that you have completely apprehended my meaning. To explain the matter more clearly and openly than I have done, I am forbidden by my vow. I can only ask you once more to peruse this treatise carefully, and to ask God to enlighten your understanding.

A P P E N D I X.

If, after obtaining this knowledge, you give way to pride or avarice (under the pretext of economy and prudence), and thus gradually turn away from God, the secret will most certainly fade out of your mind in a manner which you do not understand. This has actually happened to many who would not be warned.

RECAPITULATORY LINES.

" If you will follow my teaching, and if you are "
 " a devout Christian man, you may take the"
 " substance which I have before indicated, and,"
 " by following the directions I have given, you"
 " may possess all the riches of the whole world."

To this end -- if you are worthy -- may God in His mercy vouchsafe you His blessing. This prayer I offer up for you from the bottom of my heart.

PRAYER.

Almighty, everlasting God, Father of heavenly light, from Whom proceed all good and perfect gifts: we pray Thee, of Thine infinite mercy, to reveal to us Thine eternal wisdom, which is evermore about Thy throne, and by which all things were created and made, and are still governed and preserved: send it down to us from heaven, and from the throne of Thy glory, that it may be with us, and work with us, seeing that it is the teacher of all heavenly and secret arts, and knows and understands all things. Let it accompany us in all our works, that by Thy Spirit we may attain a true understanding and certain knowledge of this Blessed Art, and of the marvellous Stone of the Sages, which Thou art wont to reveal only to Thine elect, and hast concealed from the world. And so further us with Thy wisdom, that we may begin, continue, and complete this work without any error, and enjoy its fruits for ever with great joy -- through the Heavenly and Eternal Foundation and Corner Stone, Jesus Christ, Who with Thee and the Holy Spirit liveth and reigneth, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

Joshua xxi., 43-44

" And the Lord gave unto Israel all the land which He sware to give unto their fathers; and there failed not aught of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass."

Deuteronomy xxxii., 3.

" Ascribe the Glory unto God Alone! "

A M E N .

EPIGRAM.

" It is an easy matter to prepare gold in the furnace out of metals: at times there is found a man to whom the secret is revealed. Why is not every alchemist rich ? The reason is that one thing is wanting which many seek with anxious care. Common gold is not fixed, and, ~when brought to the test of fire, quickly disappears and perishes. But he who knows the fixed gold, which at all times remains the same, and from which nothing is lost, he is the possessor of the true Art, and may be called a good and practical Sage and Chemist."

ANOTHER EPIGRAM.

" Theology without alchemy is like a noble body without its right hand. This is graphically shewn and exhibited in the picture before us. First look at the helmet and the two wings, which signify the love of the Art. They bear us onward to Sophia (Wisdom), who is bright like Phoebus. Her body is naked because she is ardently loved. She is loved because she has at her disposal the riches of the whole world. He that gazes upon her beauteous form cannot refrain himself from loving her, goddess as she is. Although this love is, as it were, hidden, yet it is constant; and that is indicated by the mask. Her heart is sincere, her words are modest, righteousness upholds her steps, she is free from malice and guile. Her valiant appearance shows that she is of an open mind. Yet she seems to be falling, too: that is because the base world hates her, and with fierce truculence tries to cast her down to the ground. But evermore she bravely rises on high, though ambition moves her not She is beloved by God and man. Though mockery is to her for a garment, as is shewn by the noisy cymbals, yet she cares nothing for it, but cleaves all the more faithfully to wisdom; to it she lifts her eyes, to it she directs her steps. For she knows that it is the only true salvation, and therefore she occupies herself with it by day and by night. She is not anxious for worldly praise, nor does she heed the hatred and injustice of men, or care for their opinion too little or too much. Much suffering and tribulation are inflicted upon her by this wicked world, yet she bears it with a valiant heart and holds it in disdain. For she possesses the treasure which gives her all

that she desires, and avarice dwells not in her thoughts. That in which the world delights, she accounts as the dirt beneath her feet, since fortune is a wheel, and its revolutions are swift Therefore she delights to tread the path of thorns, until, leaving the world, she finds rest in the tomb. Then her righteous soul will soar aloft to heaven, and for a just reward there shall be given unto her a diadem of stars. After her death, her praise and glory shall wax bright in the world, like unto the glorious splendour of the sun; nor will it ever pale, but become more intense as the years advance, and her name shall shine like a bright star for evermore."*

UNTO GOD ALONE BE THE GLORY.

AMEN.

* NOTE.--The Latin original contains no engraving illustrative of this Epigram.

