
Quid est futilius, quid abjettius, qua major est deliratio ac vecordia, quam eam dammare scientiam, in qua nihil prorsus olfeceris; qui nec naturam, nec naturæ majestatem, nec proprietatem, nec metallorum operationes unquam dedisceris?


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TO THE

ROYAL SOCIETY.

THIS Discourse upon the Universal Medicine for Men and Metals, commonly call’d the Philosophers Stone, is humbly dedicated to the Royal Society, who with so much Success and Glory does cultivate and promote Natural Philosophy, that her Fame is spread all over the learned World.

The Author hath endeavour’d to treat this Subject with all the Plainness and Simplicity it is capable of; to reduce into a small Compend, all that is most essential to the Science of Alchymie; to bring into Order, what is confusedly scatter’d in the Books of the most famous Alchymists, and to frame a clear Notion of their Stone.
To the Royal Society.

If this proves worth the Attention of the Learned Society, there is Hope that it may also prove useful to some of our ingenious Artists, some Time or other, and of great Benefit to the Nation.
Wisdom reputed Folly:

OR,

The Reality and Composition of the Philosophers Stone.

We are indebted to our Modern Philosophers for many agreeable and useful Discoveries, and for the Destruction of many popular Errors, relating to Animals, to Vegetables, and other Productions of Nature. But while they have not spar’d the Mistakes of ancient Naturalists, they have left the Alchymists to themselves with their transmuting Stone.

That Stone, however, is the greatest Discovery that ever human Understanding made in natural Things, supposing it to be no imaginary, but a real Thing: Many Books have been writ, almost in all Ages,
Ages, of its Composition, which our Philo-

sophers have not thought worthy of
their Attention, by Reason (I suppose) of
the Obscurity and Confusion that reigns
in those Books.

I will not pretend to decide, whether it
hath prov’d too hard a Task to convince
the Alchymists (I mean the true Alchy-
mist Philosophers) of imposing upon the
World; or whether it hath been judg’d
too indiscreet to assert the Truth of their
Doctrine now a-day, the World is so
quiet and indifferent about it; and too
dangerous to excite and inflame the De-
fires of Men, who are naturally too apt
to follow blindly any Design that pro-
poses to them the Acquisition of Riches,
and the Preservation of Health.

I should be Blame-worthy, I confess, to
endeavour to provoke the Eagerness which
Multitudes of Men shew’d formerly in the
Search for the Philosophers Stone, if at the
same Time I did not furnish a Preserva-
tive against deceitful Sophists, and the delu-
ding Promises of crafty or fanciful Men,
as I hope to do.

The Count Trevifan and Zacharius re-
counting their long and fruitless Labours,
while like-blind they were led by others
not better sighted, they complain of the
great Number of Men in their Time, who,
without any Theory, but intoxicated with
their own Imaginations, pretended to lead
the Way, and teach the Perfection of the Magistracy. There was hardly a City in Europe in those Days without some such Laborators, looking for the Stone where it is not to be found: Zacharius got acquainted with above a Hundred of them, in the sole City of Paris, to his great Cost.

"We have seen (says the * Count) a vast many † Dealbations and Rubifications, many Receipts of Sophists, in so many Regions, as, at Rome, in Navarre, in Scotland, in Turkey, in Greece, at Alexandria, in Barbary, in Persia, at Messina, at Rhodes, in France, in Spain, in the Holy Land and adjacent Countries, in Italy, in Germany, in England, and almost round the World; and we could see no where but Men working on Sophistical Matters: Some we found in those Regions who had the Stone, and knew the Reason and Composition of it; but we could never be admitted into their Familiarity.

In those Days our England was infested with numerous Cheats and Sophistications; insomuch that, to put a Stop to that Mischief, the Parliament thought fit to make a Statute 5 Hen. 4, against the Multiplication

* Bernardus Cornes Trevifaniæ Marchius de Secretifimo Philofophorum Opere Chemico.
† False Appearances of Silver and Gold.
tiplication of Gold and Silver. That Statute was repealed i Wm. & Mary, at the Representations of the late illustrious Robert Boyle, Esq; who declar’d publickly, that he had seen enough to be perswaded that it was possible to graduate base Metals unto perfect Gold.

Was it not an Injustice to disgust and restrain a Nation, so fertile in Men of a sagacious and penetrating Genius, and to debar them of the Benefit of such Discovery?

The Indians believ’d that their Gods were come down from Heaven to destroy them, when the Spaniards first fell upon them with the Thunder of their Artillery; and I do believe that the ancient Romans would have thought the same, if they had been surpris’d in the same Manner: Or if they had been told, that it was possible to make a Machine vomiting Fire, and sending forth Bullets, that would kill them at a great Distance, no doubt they would have laugh’d at it.

Again, If the Ancients had been told, that by the Propriety of a certain Stone, the Art of Navigation could be so far improv’d, as to enable Men to conduct a Ship round the World, assuredly they would have judg’d it impossible.

This is the Case of the Philosophers Stone: It is deem’d false, because it is unknown.
The Vulgar (says Roger Bacon) laughs "at the Secrets of Wisdom, nor does he "know how to make Use of highly wor¬
thy * Things.

Some Men of Reputation in the Repub¬
lick of Learning, having in vain attempt¬
ed the great Work, over-ruled by Self¬
love, chose to accuse of Falsity the Alchymists, rather than to suspect their own Ignorance: The greatest Number too easy follow'd their Decision, without taking any Pains to examine the Question, and without knowing any thing of the Doctrine of Alchymists, which is ground¬
ed on Nature.

The perpetual Motion and Circulation of Matter in various and almost infinite Modifications, in a certain reciprocal Or¬
der, which ties such and such Effects to such and such Causes, and is establislh'd and preserv'd by the Creator of all Things, is (as I believe) what is commonly call'd Nature, or the Laws of Nature.

The diligent Observation of that reciprocal Order, and of the Causes and Ef¬
facts link'd together in Nature, hath pro¬
duc'd several Arts, among others the Art of Alchymie; and as human Understand¬
ing is capable of infinite successive Know¬
ledge, new Arts will be invented to the End of Time.

In all Changes and Transmutations of Bodies, Nature is always the efficient Cause; Art makes Use of Nature, and is only the occasional Cause of the Effect produced: The Alchymist pretends to no more.

"We do not do it, (says *Geber) but "Nature does it, which we serve by our "ingenious Artifice; we prepare the Mat-"ter, and dispose the Ways; for Nature "always operates by itself, we are only "her Servants: We do not transmute "Metals, it is the Work of Nature.

And as the Gardiner obtains from Na¬ture more excellent Fruits, and more ele¬gant Flowers by his Art, than Nature would produce if left to her self, so the Alchymist improves the Gifts of Nature by his Art, which consists in the Know¬ledge of the Effect that will follow from such and such Disposition of Matter.

I hope this Comparison will not ap¬pear trivial, if one but observe that a small Sprig of Mint growing in a Bottle full of Water, shews a Metamorphosis of that whole Water, which is cold and fluid, into an Aromatic hot Plant; and may afford as much Speculation to a true Phi¬losopher, as the Transmutation of Copper into Gold, which is but a Passage from one

* Gebri Arabis de Alchymia summæ Perfectionis tra¬ditio.
one Kind to another, and from an impure Metal to a pure one.

I remember with Pleasure what I saw in Holland, in the Garden of a Gentleman, a great Florist: He shew'd me first a large Bed of ugly Tulips, all uniform, of a Brick Colour; This is (says he) my Nursery: Then he carry'd me to a private Place, where under a Kind of Tent, like a Green House, I saw a Bed of Tulips beautiful beyond Imagination. You have seen the Nursery, this is what it produces to me by good Management, said my Gentleman; to whom I reply'd, You know, Sir, how to make an admirable Metamorphosis; this is indeed like changing Copper into Gold and Silver. I cannot pass by what the Jesuit Lana relates in his Prodromo e vero saggio di alcuni invenzioni nove, &c.

"I took a Quantity of Orange Flowers, and put them into half a Pound of Oyl of Sweet Almonds, together with a little Rock Allom, in a Glass Bottle well stopp'd: I expos'd it to the Sun for a Month, adding more Flowers, when I found the first were putrify'd, without taking any out. A Month after, I pour'd off the Oyl impregnated with the vertue of the Flowers, and very odoriferous, and divided the Oyl into several Glass Vials, which I carefully did set aside, and left them untouch'd till
till the next Spring; at which Time I saw certain Flowers swimming in the Oyl, which to me appear'd perfectly like true and fresh Leaves of the Orange Tree: But the Wonder increas'd some Months after, when the hot Season being advanc'd, the Flowers were turn'd into Fruit, about the Time that such Fruit was ripen'd upon the Trees; there being seen in the Bottom of the Vials small Oranges with their proper Colours, in nothing distinguishable from true Oranges, Smallness excepted. The Author adds, "That this curious Metamorphosis was seen by many in their College at Rome, and that he presented Monsieur Innocentio Conti, Lieutenant-General of the Army of the Church, with one of the Vials; in which Vial the same Flowers and Fruit were seen in their Season. Had the Author conceal'd his little Art, he would have pass'd for as great a Conjurer as an Alchymist, and, I believe, would have met with as little Credit; for this rare Production is as much out of the common Course of Nature, as the Transmutation of Metals may be.

The Smaragdine Tables, the most ancient Book treating of the Philosophers Stone, is commonly reputed to be a Work of Hermes Trismegist, that is to say, thrice great, who was the same as the God Mercury.
Mercury of the Egyptians: But as they, according to Jamblicus, were used to father upon him the Product of their Brains, to pay a Tribute, and to shew their Reverence to him, whom they worshipp'd as the Father of many Arts and Sciences, or rather to give a greater Weight to their Inventions, it is not known who was the Author of that Book, the less, that Hermes inscrib'd it to Hermes. It is enough for us to say, that this reputed Hermes is held by the Alchymists for the first Inventor of their great Magistry: Therefore to begin with the Source, I shall endeavour to find out the Composition of it in this Analysis, deliver'd to us by Hermes himself in these *Words.

"It is true and very certain, that what is superior hath the Nature of what is inferior; joyn them in one only Way and Disposition: Sol is the Father in this Marriage, and the white Luna is the Mother; a third succeeds as Governor, the Fire. What is gross make subtile, and what is subtile make gross: In

In this Manner you shall possess the Glory of the World.

The first Thing we are to find out is the Matter, and the true Matter; for if we do mistake it, we shall run from one Error to another.

Every Body knows that the Chymists have given to Metals the Names of the Planets; that Gold is Sol, or the Sun, and Silver is Luna, or the Moon, and are call'd by the Alchymists, among other Names, the two great Luminaries, for their Excellence above other Metals.

But, according to the Count Trevisan's Precept, we must not stick to the Sound of Words, but consider what is according to Nature and the Power thereof.

The Metaphor used by Hermes of Father and Mother, is borrow'd from the Generation of Animals, which is effected by the Union of the Male and the Female.

From the Union of Gold and Silver no Generation is to be expected; they are both solid Bodies, and cannot act upon each other; neither the one proceeds from the other.

Geber the Arab is filled by some Magister Magistrorum, the Master of Masters, as being quoted by all those who wrote after him: He says, speaking of the Errors of many Laborators,
Others joining solid Bodies with solid Bodies, and soft with soft, have
endeavour'd to make 'em transmute each other, and could not effect it; as mixing Gold or Silver with Copper,
or with any other Metal, they never saw them transmuted into Gold or Silver by a true and lasting Transmutation.

This very Consideration hath deceiv'd many, and made 'em conclude, that neither Gold nor Silver do enter into the Composition of the Stone: It is hardly to be imagin'd, what fantastical and extravagant Imaginations they fell into.

But if we must judge according to Nature and Reason, we must seek in Gold the Golden Sulphur, the Tincture with which other Metals are said to be tinged and dyed.

In Gold (as all the Philosophers do a-ver) you will find a red Sulphur; in Silver a white Sulphur; such Sulphur is not to be found any where else upon the Earth.

That † Gold (says Geber) is the tinging Sulphur, it appears by this, That being mix'd with Argent Vive, by Sublimation it transforms it into a red

* Gebri Arabis de Alchymia summæ perfectionis traditio. Cap. XXI.
† Cap. de Effentia Solis.
"red Colour." What this Argent Vive, and what the Sublimation is, shall be explain'd and better understood hereafter.

Raym. Lullius speaks very plain of the Tincture of Gold and Silver, with which the Stone to transmute into Gold, and the Stone to transmute into Silver, are made; and you may observe by the by, that Silver is also the Father of the Stone for Silver.

*By the same * Reason that a Man "proceeds from a Man, and a Beast from "a Beast, there is also no other Ferment "in the World besides Gold and Silver, "which are the Tincture with which "Quick-Mercury is tinged; who with- "out such Mercury believes to tinge, "proceeds blindly to his Transmutati- "ons, because Gold gives the Colour of "Gold, and Silver gives the Colour of "Silver.

Here is no Difficulty but in the Word "Mercury; of which hereafter.*

Avicenna's

* Quia Homo exit ab homine, Bos a Bove, item non aliud est fermentum in mundo nisi Sol & Luna, quae sunt tinctura cum quibus coloratur Mercurius vivus. Qui fine tali Mercurio credit tingere, cecus vadit ad Practicam suarum transmutationum; quia Sol in colore Solis tingit, Luna in colore Lunae. Raymundi Lullii Vade Mecum, p. 328;
Avicenna's Words are also very clear:

* Gold being the most noble among Metals, the most compact, perfect and fix'd: if it be dissolv'd and separated in most little Parts, it becomes Spiritual and Volatile like the Mercury, and that by Reason of its Heat; and then it hath a Tincture without End, and that Tincture is call'd the hot Mas-
culine Sperm.

I will not tire my Reader with many Quotations, which I could gather in great Number: I think this may suffice us to be sure, that common Gold (according to Hermes) is the Father of our Stone: But the Mother Lune remains still to be en-
quir'd into.

Let us return to our Philosopher: When he is pleas'd to tell us where we shall find the Matter of our Stone, he directs us thus:

"Go to the Mountains of India, and to their Caves, and take from thence the honour'd Stones, which are dissolv'd in Water when they are mix'd with it, and that Water is that which

* Cum Aurum fit nobilius inter Metalla, magis compactum, perfectum, & fixum, tamen si dissolvatur, & in Partes minimas separetur, fit spirituale & evolans sicut Mercurius, & hoc ratione fine caliditatis; & tunc habet Tincturam fine numero, & ista Tinctura vocatur Sperna Masculinum Calidum.
"is taken from other Mountains and "their Caves.

Gold is easily discover'd in those Stones taken out of the Mines of India. Some Learned do say, that Solomon did send his Fleets to India through the Red Sea, to fetch that Quantity of Gold which abounded so much in Israel.

The Water dissolving those Stones, or rather that Gold is the Luna we are looking for, the Lunar Water, Aqua Lunaria, so often mention'd in the Books of Alchymie; it is the Argent Vive of Geber, the Mercury of Lully and Avicenna: It is that Copper Water so much extoll'd by Basil Valentin, which hath so many Names that they can hardly be told. I shall set down here the most common among the Alchymists, for the Satisfaction of the Curious; and at the same Time the corresponding Names given to Gold.

Luna, Mulier candida, Fœmina, Regina, Mercurius, Fumus albus, Nebula Nigra, Spiritus, Anima, Leo viridis, Vultur aquila, Humidum Aurum.

To which Names do correspond with Gold,

Sol, Rubens maritus, Mas, Rex, Sulphur, Fumus citrinus, Nigrum nigrius nigro, Terra, Corpus, Leo Rubeus, Bufo, Siccum, &c.
The Philosophers do give us sufficient Warning of that Multiplicity of Names: The last Words of the Turba Philosophorum are these:

"Be sure that it is something to which you must add nothing but his Company, and let Men multiply Names; for if they were not multiply'd, Children would laugh at our Science.

Those Names either point at some Property, or at the Colours through which the Matter passes in the Process; by Example, our Water is call'd the Female, because, says Arnoldus, In se recipit virtutem Masculi, Oleum, Sulphur, Tinctura; that is to say, she receives the Sulphur of Gold, the Oyl, the Tincture; and by the Similitude of Nature, unites with it, and cleaves to it in the Fire, which common Mercury does not.

"We never could find (says Geber) any other Thing permanent in the Fire, except that unctuous Humidity, which is the sole Root of all Metals." And the Count Trevisan,

"Our * Work is made of one Root, and of two Substances Mercurial, taken crude * Opus nostrum fit ex una radice, & ex duabus substantiis mercurialibus, crudis assumptis & ex minera traditis, puris & mundis; igne conjunctis amicitia ut exigite tpla materia adhibue coctis, utque dum ex duobus unum fiat, in quo quidem uno corpus spiritus & ille corpus facta sunt a commixtione.
crude out of the Mine, purify'd and
“ cleansed, joyn'd by an amicable Fire,
“ as the Matter requires; concocted in-
“ ceffantly until out of two be made one;
“ in which one the Body is made Spirit,
“ and the Spirit becomes a Body by Com-
“ mication.

These two Substances are of one Root, which is Mercury, out of which is extract-
ed the Argent Vive, with which Nature generates Gold in the Bofom of the Earth; so that the Matter of the Philosophers Stone is Gold, and the Seed of Gold, and nothing else.

Therefore Hermes expresses himself thus:
“ * Nothing agrees with the Thing but
“ what is of its own Nature, and nearest
“ to its own; then it will beget Children
“ like itself.

Now I hope we have found out the true Matter of the Philosophers Stone: We must see what must be done with it. But, before I begin, I must answer an Ob-
jection, which otherwise might perplex the Reader.

The Philosophers do say, That their Gold is not common Gold, as their Mercury is not common Mercury. Aurum nostrum non est Aurum quod est Vulgi.

You

* Non convenit rei, nisi quod est propinquius & in natura fæt; Tunc generabitur Proles similes Hermes.
You must know, that when the Mercurial Water in the Solution of Gold hath seiz'd the Sulphur, the Oyl, the Tincture of Gold, the Philosophers do call it *Aurum*, Gold: And *Arnoldus Villanovanus*, in his great Rosary, Page 138, explains it thus:

"Our Gold is not common Gold, because it hath receiv'd a great Addition in Tincture, and Preservation in the Fire.

That Water united with the incombus-tible Sulphur of Gold is richly tinged with it, and is incombus-tible; as I have made the Experiment of it, and I have seen with my own Eyes, and have shewn to some of my Friends, and can shew it still to the Curious. And it proves itself to be no Sophisti-ca-tion, being very hot, oily, and ponderous; bright like melted Gold, and will not burn nor flame: Nothing like it in Nature.

Now I proceed. The Propriety of our *Lunar* Mercurial Water is to dissolve Gold.

"*Cufios in Turba* says, *I admire, O Company of Philosophers, the Power and Virtue of this Water, which is such, that when it is enter'd into the Body, it*

* Miror, O Turba Sapientum, de tali vi hujus aquæ ac naturæ, cum introivit in hoc corpus, vertit ipsum in terram, deinde in pulverem, *Cufios in Turba*,.
"it turns it into Earth, and then into Powder.

The first Thing then to be done, is to apply that Water upon prepar'd Gold, and, actuated by the Fire, it will exert its Nature: They will embrace mutually each other.

"Thus we must joyn them together; which Commixtion the Philosophers have compar'd to a Marriage of two, of whose Embraces does result a Golden Water; according to the Turba.

And the Semita Semita;

"Our Water dissolves Bodies, calcines them, reduces them into Earth, and transforms them into Ashes, albifies and cleanses them according to the Word of Morienus; Azoth & Ignis Latonem. Mundi diciscant id est obscuritatem penitus ab ea arripiunt.” That is to say, Our Water clarifies Gold, reducing it at last to a precious Stone.

Let us hear again the Turba.

"Unless you do demolish the solid Bodies by a Spiritual Matter, until the Corporeal be made Incorporeal, and like a thin Spirit, you cannot extract that highly subtile and tender Soul which is hid in the innermost of the Bosom.

And

† Sic opportet nos duo conjungere, quam commixtionem Philosopi compararunt conjugibus, ex quorum amplexu resultat qua Aurea. Turba Philos.
And know ye, that unless the Body be broken until it be dead, and ye do extract the Soul, which is a tinging or dying Spirit, you shall never be able to dye a Body with it.

This Dye is not a simple Gilding; it is giving the Colour as it is in Gold itself, and essentially or intrinsically.

The true Solution is reducing Gold and Mercury into their first Matter, which is not, as some ignorantly have fancy'd, to reduce into the four Elements, by reason that they are the Principles of all Things, which Nobody doubts of; but is not what the Philosophers mean by reducing our Stones into the first Matter. The first Matter of Mercury is a Water; the first Matter of Gold is quick Mercury, or Argent Vive and Sulphur, as Geber and all Philosophers do hold.

When you have reduced Mercury into Water, and with that Water you have reduced Gold into a thin Earth and spirituous Sulphur, you need not to think of the four Elements, which are the first Matter
Matter of all Things, and so are the first Matter of Argent Vive and pure Sulphur; which Argent Vive and Sulphur at last are the first Matter of Gold, and of all Metallic Substances.

This is strongly express'd by the Count Trevisan, in his Answer to Thomas de Bononia, (a Physician of Carolus VIII.) who had sent him a Stone compos'd by him the Physician.

Therefore those learned Chymists, who, taking this Matter wrong, did laugh at the Alchymists for pretending to reduce Gold into its first Principles, had no great Reason to triumph over them. Whoever shall see the Philosophical Solution of Gold, will have Reason to laugh at the Ignorance of the Criticks.

"* Gold is nothing but Argent Vive, " or Quicksilver coagulated by the Force " of Sulphur. Therefore if Gold be digested or dissolved duly and naturally " in Argent Vive, that Argent Vive acquires the Natural Proprieties of that " Gold.


N. B. I need not repeat, that Quicksilver here is no common Quia Ksiver, which does not cleave to Gold or Silver in the Fire, but flies away.
Gold. But the Art of that Decodion and Dissolution is known to very few.
"Trevisan.

Geber, disputing against those who deny'd the Possibility of Transmutation, argues thus:

"And that is that makes them believe the Construction of Gold impossible, because they do not know its artificial Destruction from the Course of Nature:
They prove, perhaps, that Gold is of a very strong Composition, but they do not prove to what Degree it is so.

Let us hear other Philosophers about our Solution: And first,

Arnoldus Villa *"The first Homogeneity of Metals is Argent Vive: Therefore when they are dissolv'd in that Homogeneity, they are united and join'd together, and never part; (to wit, in the Process) because they act upon each other, as being alike.

D George

* Prima vero Homogœinitæ metallorum est Argentum Vivum, cum ergo in ipsa Homogœinitate solvuntur, in simul conjunguntur; nec unquam separantur quoniam tamque agit in suum simile.
George Ripley † "Know my Son, that our first Matter is neither common Gold nor common Silver; nor can it be got out of corrosive or other external Things. Have a Care not to use in your Work any Thing contrary to its Nature: For you know that Man shall reap what he sows: Mark * also, that our Stone, which is perfect in its Kind, is hard, nor can it easily be dissolv’d: But if you join his Wife with him, it is dissolv’d into a Philosophical and incombusible Oyl, which hath many other Names.

Clangor Buccina || "The fair Redness of our Copper transforms the Metallic Substance of Argent Vivi; that is to say, the Philosophic Lune, in an admirable Golden Tincture.

Euclides.

† Scito igitur, mi Fili, nostram primam materiam nec Aurum nec Argentum commune esse, nec posse ex corrosivo aut aliis rebus externis elici. Cave igitur, mi Fili, ne aliquid ad opus affumas aliiquid assumas naturae illius contrarium: Scis enim certissime hominem meffurum quod semenat. Nota etiam lapidem nostrum in suo genere absolutum esse durum nec facile solvi; sed si eadem Uxor tuam adjungas solvitur in Oleum Philosophicum incombusibile, quod multa alia habet Nomin. Georgius Ripleus Can. Anglus. de Arte Chimica.

* Remember the honour’d Stones of Hermes.

|| Candida Rubedo Æris nostrà transformat Substantiam Metallicam ArgentiVivi, id est Luna Philosophica, in Tincturam Auream mirabilem. Clangor Buccinae

IV. B. Æs nostrum, Æs Philosophorum, the Copper of Philosophers, that is, Gold.
Euclides. Consulo tibi ut non opereris nisi in Sole & Mercurio simul junctis.

"I advise thee not to work but in Gold and Mercury joined together.

Then it is call'd Rebis, from whence this Verse:

Res Rebis est una conjuncta, sed tamen una Solvitur ut prima sint aut Sol aut Spermata (Luna.

Raim. Lullius || "The Dissolvant, without Gold or Silver, cannot produce or generate the Philosophers Stone, nor on the contrary; but when they are joyn'd, the Menstruum or Dissolvant moves and disposes Metals to a Dissolution; and in their Turn Metals move the Menstruum to produce Heat in the Stones.

Avicenna * "Whence it follows, if in our Stone there were only Sol or Luna,

D 2

|| Menstruum absque Auro vel Argento Lapidem generare non potest, nec e contra: Ubi autem illa conjunctur, Menstruum movet Metalla ad dissolutionem, & vicissim Metalla movet Menstruum ad producendum ignem in Lapidibus. Lullius in Compendio Animi.

* Unde si in nostro lapide esset solummodo Sol aut Luna, nunquam de facile fueret Medecina, neque tunc tueram dare per aliquod Magisterium, quoniam non esset receptaculum timenta. Hoc totum non intelligas de Luna Vulgari, sed Luna Philosophica, qua Lunaria dicitur. Ergo consul o ut non opereris nisi cum Mercurio, Sole & Luna, quoniam totum beneficium illius Artis in illis consistit. Avicenna Tractatus de Chemia.
the Medicine would never easily flow, 
or would it give a Tincture, by rea-
son that it would not be the Recepta-
acle of Tincture. Do not understand 
the whole of Vulgar Lune but of Phi-
losophical Lune, which is called also 
Lunaria. Therefore I advise not to 
work but in Sol, and Lune, and Mer-
cur, because the whole Benefit of the 
Art consists in them.

By the foregoing Quotations you may 
see, first, how they agree in their Do-
ctrine, tho' they differ in Stile and Ex-
pression.

Secondly, That the Philosophers Stone 
is made of pure Gold, and of the pure 
Spirit of the Solific Mercury, which is 
the Seed of Gold.

Thirdly, That Gold must be dissolv'd 
in the Mercurial Spirit, and yield to it 
its Sulphur and Tincture; so that it re-
 mains in discolour'd Powder.

Fourthly, That neither of these two 
Individuals alone can generate the Stone, 
but do want the Help of each other to 
effect it.

The same must be understood of Lune, 
or Silver, when you intend the Stone for 
Silver; and have a care not to mix the 
golden Sulphur, which gives the golden 
Tincture, with the white Sulphur of Sil-
ver,
ver, which tinges in white, as you will find in all the Books of Alchymie.

Now if any Man should pretend to the Knowledge of this great Magiftery, let him make a sensible and ocular Demonstration of the real and radical Solution of Gold, and shew the duplicate Mercury, bright as melted Gold, unctuous, heavy, spirituous, hot, and incombustible, otherwise he deserves no Credit, and is either a Sophift or a deluded Visionary.

Hitherto I have added my own Experience to Theory; but I am oblig'd to declare, that I have no manner of Experience of the farther Theory; nor do I believe I ever shall: My Life is too far advanc'd to proceed to Practice and Experiments: I may well say,

\textit{Ars longa, Vita brevis.}

The following Lesson of Geber is too well imprinted in my Mind:

"Whatever Knowledge the Artist may acquire by Theory, if he hath not the Assistance of a natural Industry, he shall not be invited to our precious Feast. In case of need he may by his Industry correct and amend his Errors, to which he could apply no Remedy if he was only grounded upon Theory, because Theory and Industry must help one another."

Some
Some Theory is absolutely necessary in order to Practice, but Practice must perfect Knowledge. I confess myself very unexpert in Manuals.

I shall willingly impart to you what Theory I have been able to acquire in the Perusal of many Treatises of Alchimie; rather provoked by Difficulties than discourag'd, rather accusing myself of Stupidity than my Masters of Nonsense, notwithstanding their affected Loquacity, their eternal Repetitions in different Terms and Metaphors, and the Multiplicity of Operations, where but one is requir'd, as Geber himself says, tho' he be, as Thes. Trevisan says, Totus Scabrosus.

"Our Matter is one, our Decoction is one, in which the whole Magistry consists.

I begin with the Analysis of the whole Process, deliver'd in Turba by Bassen.

"After you have united the Citrin with his Confort, put them in the Bath, but let the Heat be gentle, for fear they should be suffocated; and let them rest there till their Body and Colour be made one.

This is the first Disposition which we have already seen. But for a farther E-lucidation B. Lully shall explain the Sense of Bassen thus:

"With
"† With God's Help, take one Ounce of the said Menstruum, (or Dissolvant) put it in half an Ounce of Gold, very pure, in Leaves or Filings substantially, and stop well the Glass, that nothing can evaporate, and put it in a Balneo for two Days, and the Menstruum will be entirely colour'd of the Cifrin Colour, very bright and clear; then put your Vessel in Ashes for a Day, and the Menstruum will be of a higher Colour; then decant it, and keep it safe in another well stop'd Glass, and so go on in the same Manner until the Menstruum does receive no more Colour; then the Earth of Gold will remain without Colour in the Bottom of the Vessel.

Bassen goes on *, "After that restore to it its Sweat, and kill it again; then procure

† Cum Dei adjutorio recipe uniam dieti menstruum, in ea pone uniam dimidiam de Sole purissimo, solutato live limato substantialiter, & clade vas optime ne respiret, & pone in balneo per duo dies, & menstruum totum colorabitur colore citrino, resplendenti & lucido; deinde pone eum in cineribus per unum diem naturallem, & magis etiam colorabitur. Postea extrahe per evacuationem dixitum menstruum in alio vace, & optime vas clade: Et sic per omnia reiterando, fac ut supra donec non coloretur amplius menstruum, & tibi remanebit in fundo vasis terra de Sole fine colore. Raym. Lullii Lux Mercuriorum.

* Deinde reddite ei sudorem suum, ac iterum neci date, requiemque constituuite caventes ne fugiant. Et tunc veneramini Regem & suam Uxorem, & nolite eos combusture nimio igne, & eos regite donec nigri sint, deinde albi, post rubes. Bassen in Turba.
"procure to them Rest, taking Care that they do not fly away. Then respect the King and his Confort, do not burn them with too much Fire, govern them till they become Black, then White, then Red.

This is the second Disposition. Baffen dispatches the third in these few Words:

_Ultimo fiant venenum tingens._ At last they must be made a tingent Venom.

The Sense of these Words is, That you must imbibe the Earth of Gold with the Golden Tincture extracted in its Dissolution: Which Tincture Basil Valentin calls, _Mercurius Duplicatus_. In which Imbibition two Things are to be observ’d:

_First_., You must distil the whole Quantity you have of the Golden Tincture or tinged Mercury, until there remains behind one third Part of it, which is the _Sudor_, the Sweat here required, and contains the Spirit, the Soul of Gold. _Secondly_, Observe a due Proportion; as an external Heat is necessary in all Generations to move and actuate the Heat of the Seed, as the Heat of the Sun for all Vegetables, the Heat of the Hen for the Generation of Birds, the Heat of the _Matrix_ for the Generation of Animals; so our Matter wants also an external
external artificial Fire to move, provoke, and actuate the natural and essential Heat of our Matter: Therefore the Philosophers have that it up in a Glass Vessel contriv’d for the Purpose, seal’d it Hermetically, and plac’d it in the secret Furnace; wherein, as in a Matrix, it receives the gentle Warmth of the Ambient Air, not exceeding the Heat of the Sun in the Summer: And that is the Meaning of the Respect we must bear to the King and his Spouse; for they must die again of a soft and easy Death, that is to say, they must dissolve again.

The first Sign of Solution is the universal Blackness of our Matter, which appears after forty six Days.

"Whence (says the) Scala Philosophorum) the Heat knitting the Water together with the Earth, first causes Blackness; therefore, the Sun is darken’d in its rising: And this Blackness is the Beginning of the Work, the Mark of Putrefaction, a sure Beginning of Com-mixture, a Sign of the Solution of the Body, and the entering into each other.

E Here

* Unde Calor connectens humidum, primo generat nigredinem ideoque obscurationis est Sol in suo ortu; & hac denigratio est operis initium, putrefactionis indicium, certumque commixtionis principium, corporis solutionis signum, & susceptio utriusque in alterum, Scala Philosophorum.
Here might be objected, that Gold is pretended to be already dissolv'd; what do you now mean by Dissolution of the Body. To resolve this Objection, observe what Cuflos says in *Turba*, which we have already quoted.

"I admire the Vertue and Nature of this Water; when it is got into the Body it turns it into Earth, then into Powder. By Powder, the Philosopher means the Subtilization and Sublimation of the Earth, which carries farther the Solution to a Spiritualization.

The first Destruction of the Metalick Structure and Solidity of Gold, is therefore call'd by *Senior*, Contrition.

So Zeunon in *Turba* *, Therefore the Wisemen have said, if you do not change the Bodies into Spirits, and Spirits into Bodies, you have not yet found the Principle of this Work. The Bodies become Spirits when the Composition, call'd *Ethelia*, is grinded until it be made a Powder: And this Powder can't be made, but by a continual

* Atque ob id dixere sapientes, nisi corpora vertatis in non corpora, & incorporea faciatis corporea nondum hujus operis invenisti Principium. Fiant autem corpora incorporea, cum *Ethelia* teriter quouque fit pulvis, & hic pulvis non fit nisi contritione continua; & fit igne non manibus, cum imbibitione, putrefactione & *Ethelia*

Zeunon in *Turba*, Sent. xxxvii.
nual Contrition, and is made by Fire not by Hands; and is made by Imbibition, Putrefaction, and Eтелia.

The Count Trevisan, writing to Thomas de Bononia, speaks without Figure, as speaking to a Friend in particular, for, in what he wrote for the Publick, he is more obscure and cover'd.

† With a crude Spirit they have extracted a digested Spirit out of the dissolv'd Body, and there was left to them Ashes fix'd, to be farther dissolv'd, in which they have found an Oleaginity and Gummosity of a stony Nature incombustible, which they have call'd Soul, which vivifies, joynts, and makes Natures uniform. They have separated Natures by Spirit, and re-united by Oil.

The same Author concludes thus, "If any one knows the Art and Secret of the Dissolution, he hath got the Secret of the Art; which is to mix the Species, and to extract the Vertues out of them, which are effectually hid in them.

† Per spiritum crudum spiritum digestum Philosphi extraxerunt de corpore soluto, & cis remanuit Cinis fixus ulterior dissolvendus in quo reperierunt oleaginositatem lapideam, & incombustibilem, & animam dixerunt quæ vivificat conjungit & facit naturas unitas. In spiritu naturas disjungerunt, sic in &co reconjunxerunt. Com. Treu. ad Thom. de Bononia.
An ancient Author, translated from the Hebrew into Arabick, and from the Arabick into Latin, is perfectly agreeable to it; here are his own Words:

"* Begin the Composition which is a Circle of the whole Business. For the Composition shall not be but in Matrimony and Putrefaction. Matrimony is the Mixture of the subtile with the thick, and Putrefaction is Roasting, Grinding, and Watering, until they be mix'd together, so that they be one without Difference.

There is a great deal of Art in this Passage, but it will be sufficient to observe, That tho' those Words, Roasting, Grinding, and Watering, might be explain'd in the same Order you have 'em here, they ought rather to be consider'd thus, and in the following Order.

Watering, which is the Application of the Water upon the Earth, and produces the first Phenomenon, to wit, Blackness, which is a Sign, as we have already observ'd, that the Spirit or Water is entering the Particles of the Earth, and penetrating into the innermost Parts of the Body.
Body: Grinding is the Action of the Spirit upon the Body, to subtilize and sublime it; Roasting is the Coagulation of the Spirit by the Heat of the Body, or the Earth, until both together be fix’d in a perfect Homogeneity and Uniformity.

Let us now go back to the last Words of the Analysis of Bassen in Turba.

Ultimo fiant venenum tingens: That finally they be made a dying or tinging Venum; that is to say, That the Stone might not alone purify base Metals, but also give ’em the Colour; of which hereafter.

We have heard already, that the Philosophers have contriv’d a proper Vessel to serve for a Matrix; that they have plac’d the Glasses, containing the Composition, in a well contriv’d Furnace, and administered to it a very gentle and continual Fire, that after 46 Days they obtain’d the Putrefaction. Let us now see how they proceeded farther to Regeneration.

Considering that the Matter was still tender, and the Commixtion imperfect, they continued the Digestion and Coction with the same first Degree of Heat, with a great deal of Patience.

In terra remanet magna pars ignea. Raym. Lullius.
Too great Hast, says Geber, proceeds from the Devil: After a hundred and fifty six Days, the Matter having pass'd through several Colours, ended and stood in a perfect White.

It is not difficult to conceive, that the variety of *Colours succeeding one another, proceeds from the several Degrees of the Subtiliation of the Earth, and the Coagulation and Exciccation of the Water; and of the several Degrees of their universal Commixtion, which do advance with equal Passes.

"Congelation, says George Ripley, is the hardning of soft Things, and the fixing of volatile Spirits. (He adds) Do not trouble you how you shall congeal, for the Elements will be knitted together, provided the Putrefaction be procured naturally.

That is to say, your Body by Subtiliation, and your Spirit by Congealation will become equal to each other; and

* Cauſa omnium illorum colorum est calor temperatissimus operans, & movens continentem materiam, quæ sic alteratur tam intrinsecus quam extrinsecus substantialiter. & Paulo infra,

Cum materia favía est candida tum spiritus cum corporibus congelabuntur, temporis tibi est adhuc statuendus longus terminus, antequam talis congelatio tibi apparet in similitudine perlarum. Lætare aſpeflo talis congelationis, quæ oducent grana sanguinis modo rubentis, omnibus preferenda mundi divitiae. Georgii Riplei Cano. Ang. Quadriga Aurifera.
fo the Body will be made spiritual and the Spirit corporeal. The Earth is hot and exciccating, the Spirit is active, volatile, and dissolving, so that by their acting and re-acting upon each other, they at last are made one Homogeneity of Quantity and Quality of Particles, which may be farther sublim’d and fix’d as a mere metallick corporify’d Fire, (if I may say so) a Lapis Ignis, as Basil names it.

The Philosophical Sublimation, according to Arnoldus, is the Elevation, not to a higher Place, but to a higher Nature and Dignity: Which may be explain’d by a familiar Example.

A Fruit full grown, is in some Measure perfected; but will attain a greater Degree of Perfection, not by Addition, but by a Kind of Sublimation, when the Sun brings it to perfect Maturity. As the Flowers are produced in the Spring, the Fruit grows by a gentle continual Heat; but it wants the nearer approach of the Sun to ripen it.

So in this Magistry, the Matter would be destroy’d if you should administer to it more Heat than is requir’d, for its Solution, Commixtion, and Coagulation; which once obtain’d, more Heat will be requir’d for its Sublimation.

But we are taught not to be too hasty in this particular neither. We must not trust
trust to the first appearing Whiteness, but stay until it is exceeding white, and bright like Pearls, and until you perceive a Circle of a beginning Redness round about it; then fear not, add to your Fire.

As in Human Body, the first Digestion produces a white Juice, which passing to the Parts which contain more Heat, becomes red, and is at last turn’d into Confinance of perfect Blood; so our Matter, by the increase of external Heat continued many Days, is at last fix’d in a Stone of an obscure Red, then calcines itself into a Powder, heavy, glittering, and of a Tyrius Colour; which is the Purple of the Ancients, a Kind of Violet, as I take it, in so great Esteem among them; and by the Philosophers called Tyrius, from the City Tyrus, (as I suppose) a City in Phoenicia, which was the Staple of all the habitable known World, and famous for its Dye in Purple.

To try it, drop a Particle of it upon a red hot Iron-Plate, if it melts like Wax, without giving any Smoak, and immediately sinks and penetrates into the Iron, then you have but one Point more to gain to compleat your Wishes; you have the Gumma of the Philosophers.

Tho’ the Medicine the great Elixir is now compleated, as far as it is an universal Medicine for Men, it will not yet tinge,
tinge, or give the Tincture to Metals. It must be fermented with Gold, to become a venenum Tingens, the Philo-
spic Tincture, and transmute base Metals into Gold, more perfect than Gold from the Mine: The * Turba says, "Our Gum 
is stronger than Gold. Those who " know it, esteem it more precious than " Gold; but we honour Gold, because, " without it, our Gum is not improv'd".

It is stronger than Gold, because it 
turns it into its own Nature, and by it 
acquires the dying or tinging Force.

There remains behind a great Secret, 
the Secret of the Multiplication. Some 
have attained the Stone, who could not 
attain the Multiplication, which is done 
by an Increase of its Half, in a Month's 
Time; whereas, a whole Year is im-
ploy'd in the perfecting the Stone.

You may be sure, that it cannot re-
ceive any Increase from any Thing that 
is not of its own Nature, nor any No-
urishment but from its own Blood: There-
fore order your Work accordingly. More 
I cannot say; for I do not intend to in-
struct the Cobbler, but only help the En-
deavours of ingenious and laborious Ar-
tists,

* Guma nostra est fortior Auro, propter eam 

noceunt ipsum Auro preciosior teneant. Aurum ta-

men honoramus quia sine ipso Guma non emendatur. 

Turb. Philos.
tists, and to facilitate to them the Intelligence of excellent, tho' obscure Books, which are extant in great Number; particularly of those I have quoted, in such an Order, that they give Light to one another. I may say with more Reason, Omnia tibi dixi prater secretum, as Geber speaks. I have told you all, except the Secret, which no Man of Sense would desire to be Publick; for then it would be good only for subverting and turning the World upside down.

For a Conclusion to this first Part of my Discourse, I set down here a fair Passage of the Count Trevifan, in his Book De Chemico Miraculo.

Et enim Artis industria nihil adfert novi, nec adfert ad Naturam in sua radice; verum adjuvatur Natura per Arpent ut decet; vincula solvendo. Item Ars per naturam adjuita; discendo ab operationibus ejus, & insuppeditatione materiae, simul Amba desideriwm impotent ex voto operantis.

Art and Industry, do afford nothing new, nor add anything to Nature in its Root; but Nature is assisted by Art, as is requisite in untying the Bands. And Art is assisted and taught by the Operations of Nature, and by the Supply of Matter; both together fulfil the Desires of the Workman.
This, I think, is sufficiently made good in the foregoing Pages; and it is the same as in the Manufacture of Glasses, which, if unknown, would be as great a Miracle to vulgar Eyes, as the Transmutation of Metals.

I shall endeavour, in my Second Part, to remove the common Prejudices against Alchymie.
The Second Part.

Propose now to myself, to answer the three following Questions.

I. Whether it is possible to Art, to make in few Minutes, Gold, which Nature is some Ages a forming in the Earth?

II. Whether it is possible, that a Grain of Matter could produce such a Miracle, as to transmute seven or eight Ounces of Metal into Gold?

III. Whether there ever was any such Matter in the World?

These three Questions, I think, do contain all the Difficulties that can be made against the Reality of the Philosopher's Stone, in General.

As to the first Question, I shall borrow an Answer from the Count Trevilian, * "Therefore (says he) Gold is dissolv'd

* Ea propter Aurum dissolvitur Arte cum Mercu-rio, ut ex Maturo subveniatur Immaturo, & sic Arte decoquente, & Natura perssiciente, maturatur compo-sition.
diffolv'd with Mercury, in Order, that what hath its compleat Maturity, might help what is crude; and thus, Art concocting, and Nature perfecting, the Composition is ripen'd: From which, the Cause may be drawn, why, by the Help of the Philosophic Art, Gold is generated sooner, in a less Time, more perfect, more noble, and of a sublimer Degree, than by the Work of Nature: Because, Nature does only concoct, and digest in the Bosom of the Earth, without any Assistance, Mercury alone, which in a little Time cannot be brought to the due Proportion of Gold, or any other Metal: But our Art helps the Work of Nature, mixing with Mercury mature Gold, in which there is a Sulphur, very well digested; and by Consequence, soon digesting and ripening,

[[ficio, Christi Gratia. Unde causa elici potest quare opere Artis Philosophicae, citius & breviori tempore generatur Aurum, perfectius nobilius & gradibus sublimius quam opere Natura. Quia Natura hoc tantum agit & operatur solum Mercurium in visceribus Terræ abique quovis administrulo, coquendo & digerendo, quod non potest ad debitam proportionem Aurum, aut alterius Metalli parvo tempore contingere. Ars autem nostra vivat opus Natura, admicendo Mercurio Aurum maturam, in quo est Sulphur optime digestum & ideo maturans & cito digerens ipsum Mercurium ad anaticam Aurum propositionem; elementa illius subtili-ando: Unde sequitur Miras hujus operis Naturalis abbreviatio. Comus Treviianus ad Thomam de Bononia Medium Epist.]]
ing Mercury itself, to the adequate Proportion of Gold, by subtilizing its Elements. Whence follows the wonderful Abbreviation of that Work of Nature.

The Elements of Mercury, are the Spirit, and the incombusatable Sulphur, which are the same in all Metals, with this Difference, that in Gold they are pure, unmix'd, and perfectly digested; whereas, in base Metals, they are mix'd with supervening Impurity, with a combustible Sulphur, therefore not equally digested.

"By Reason, (says Geber;) that all metallic Bodies are compos'd of argent Vive and Sulphur, pure or impure, by Accident, and not from their Nativity; therefore the Impurity may be remov'd, by a convenient Preparation; for the Expoliation, or the removing of Accidents is not impossible."

And this may be done in a short Time, as we see the pure Substance of Antimony, by Example, soon separated from the Dross and Scories. If the pure Metallic Substance of Copper be separated from the impure, and maturated with the Accession of the necessary Tincture, the Transmutation is perfected. So a Man may easily conceive, that Art does not pretend to make the Metal, which properly cost Nature so many Years a making.
making. But Art, by Means of what Nature hath already perfected, excites Nature to perfect what was left imperfect. No such great Wonder then it is, if the Produce is such as it is.

Nature bestows as much Time in generating Wismuth, alias Bismuth, or Tin, as she does in perfecting Tin-glass, and no doubt some hundred of Years. Wismuth is a bastard Metal, a monstrous Birth, instead of Tin: And as a monstrous Child, and a right made Child, are in all Respects of an equal Date; so may we be sure, that Tin, and Tin-glass, are of an equal Date also. Notwithstanding, Artists have found Means, to make an artificial Wismuth, in three or four Hours, no Ways distinguishable from the Natural, rather brighter. But which Way pray? (Just as the Alchymists do:) They take the Gifts ready prepar'd by nature, and mixing them together, as they were mix'd in their Principles, produce in a short Time, what from the Principles is produc'd in many Years by Nature: To wit, Tin, Arsenic, white Tartar, and Salt-peter. Who will reflect a little on this Observation, may, I think, reconcile himself with Alchymists, and their Transmutations. *Geber in Summa* relates a Fact, which shews manifestly that base Metals may be purify'd, and brought to the Perfection of Gold. Which will
will not be amiss to set down here faithfully translated.

"Gold gives its Colour to every Metal radically, and makes them equal to himself; makes Gold of all Sorts of Metals. Accordingly, we have apprehended by the Work of Nature, as well as by Art, that Copper could be transmuted into Gold. For we have seen in the Mines of Copper, out of which came forth a Water, carrying along with itself little Scales, or Particles of Copper, and washing them daily, and cleansing continually by its Fall. Afterwards, the Water ceasing to flow, we have seen those Scales remain three Years, or thereabout, on the dry Sand, concocted by the Heat of the Sun. At last we found among them true and very pure Gold. Therefore we judg'd, that they had been purify'd, by Virtue of the Water, and at last, equally digested by the Heat of the Sun, in the dry Sand, and arriv'd to the Equality of Gold. Imitating Nature in what we can, we also purify; albeit in this particular we ought not to follow Nature".

This, I think, is enough to satisfy any reasonable Man, upon the first Question.

Now, I shall shew, that it is possible, that a Grain of Matter be so highly sublim'd,
lim'd, as to acquire such Degree of Force, and Activity, as to pervade, purify, and perfect every Particle of half a Pound of Metal. But the Reader must excuse me, from entering into philosophical Reasons, and Arguments, which would carry me too far, and are always liable to new Objections, and Disputes. The Possibility of a natural Effect, may be well enough prov'd by other parallel Effects of Nature.

The Nitrofulphureous Particles, attracted by the Sun, from the Earth are so much sublim'd above the common Sulphur and Nitre, that being kindled in the Air, and darted against the Earth, do melt in a Moment a Sword in the Scabbard, Money in a Man's Pocket, and passing through his Flesh, break the Bones: Which is a Demonstration, of the great Activity of the most subtile Particles of the Fulmen, commonly call'd Thunderbolt. They pass through the Pores, or Interstices of loose Bodies, with so much Rapidity, that they make no Impression upon them; whereas, meeting with Resistance, they dwell upon solid Bodies, and by the Force of their Motion, do melt Metals, and bruise Bones in an Instant. Everybody knows, that a Thunderbolt, as we call it, hath various and surprizing Effects. I hope I shall not be too tedious, to relate here what
what I have seen with my own Eyes beyond Sea.

I was in a Castle built by the Romans, on the Bank of the old Rhine: One Night we had a violent Storm, attended with terrible Thunder and Lightning: Among others, one Clap of Thunder was such, that I thought verily that it fell upon the House, but it prov'd to have fallen in the Avenue, at a little Distance, upon an Elm, as I found it next Morning; I saw with Amazement, that almost every Branch of the Tree was scratch'd as with an iron Hook; the Stem had three Streaks, as Lines from the Top to the Foot; the Ground under the Tree, was almost cover'd with little Bits, of the Rind of the Branches, fresh, without any Scent of Fire; near the Foot of the Stem, the Earth was stirr'd up like a Molehill: I caus'd to dig there, but nothing could be found, nor any Alteration in the Earth to be perceiv'd; nor could I perceive any Alteration in the Leaves of the Tree.

When I consider the extensive Ductility of Gold, which we are hardly able to determine; and I consider farther, how much subtile its Particles are render'd by the philosophic Sublimation; methinks that I could sooner explain the Action of the Philosopher's Stone, upon Metals,
Metals, than I can conceive any Thing of the Fabric of this Fulmen.

But we need not to seek far off for Examples of the prodigious Subtity Matter is capable of; which, according to Des-Cartes, is neither finite, nor infinite; that is to say, is beyond our Faculty of conceiving. Let us but reflect upon the Animal Spirits, elaborated in the Bodies of Animals, from the Blood; one should think, that in their natural State, they are of the last Degree of Force and Subtity; nevertheless, we have great Reason to suspect, that they can be still more rarify’d, and that they are capable of different Configurations.

By the best Observations, no Venom can be found in the Viper; its Flesh is wholesome, and a Friend to human Blood. No such Thing can be found about their Teeth, as those pretended little Bladders, full of a certain Liquor, which hath been suppos’d to be the Venom they transmit into the Blood, when they bite. Nevertheless, their Biting, as every body knows, is mortal; and the best Reason that can be given of it, is, that Anger does rarify suddenly the animal Spirits in the Head of that Animal; which being transmitted into the Blood, by their canine Teeth, are capable of destroying the whole Frame, of many Pounds of Blood, and cause a sudden Death, as it happen’d
happen'd at Rome when I was there: Two Men being a shooting Quails, which abound thereabout in the Spring, one fell down, his Face upon a Clutter, or Nest of Vipers, and, before his Companions could come to him, was dead; and in few Hours his Body was all over black.

I would fain ask, how much those Animal Spirits did weigh, whether a Grain, or the twentieth part of a Grain? Surely so sudden a Death could not be caus'd by a Liquor insinuated into the Blood, and carry'd to the Heart by Circulation; the Man would have had Time to rise and walk.

I have often reflected with Horror, upon the dismal Effect of the Biting of a mad Dog, which, in my humble Opinion, cannot proceed but from the Animal Spirits, of the mad Beast, which insinuated into the Blood of a Man, or any other Animal, circulates there till it fixes, and seizes the Brains: Then you see a frightful Transmutation of a reasonable Creature, into a mad Dog, barking and biting, and having all the same Inclinations, the same Symptoms of Rage, and of an approaching Death.

I ask again, What can be the Weight of those Spirits?
I ask also, What can be the Weight of the Effluvia of a Cat, dispers'd in a Room, and mix'd with the whole Mafs of Air in it; which Effluvia will affect some Men so strangely, as to make them sweat, tremble, and faint away, though they see nothing.

Let us add to it, the Effect of some subtile Poisons, as the Napel, which kept in the Hand till it be warm, kills a Man on the Spot.

The Moors have a Poison so present, that they want only so much as they can hide under a Nail, to dispatch a Man quickly.

Methinks, a Man may conclude from such Observations, by the Rule of Contraries, that the Philosopher's Stone may as well be a Medicine for Men, and Metals, as quick, as the destructive Things above-mention'd, are, in their Operation, for worse: At least, I have sufficiently shewn, that Matter may be subtiliz'd beyond our Conception, and still preserve a prodigious Degree of Force and Activity.

It remains to prove the Reality of the Philosopher's Stone; but what shall I say to overcome Incredulity, upon a Subject which is a Secret, and must naturally be a Secret, or else loose its Merit, and be attended with the worse Consequences.

I can
I can afford no other Proofs, than the Testimony of many Men, in all Ages, and of all Nations, who are not reconcilable, either by their Character, or by their Writings.

I shall not be so uncivil, to our Gain-sayers, as Geber was, to those of his Time, some hundred Years ago: Here you have his own Words.

"If they say, that Philosophers and Princes have wish'd for this Science, and could not obtain it; we Answer shortly, that they lie; for there hath been some, though few in our Time; but more, anciantly, who by their Industry have trac'd that Science; but did not declare it by Word of Mouth, nor by Writings, to such unworthy Unbelievers."

I shall only desire them to set aside their Prejudice, and consider these Words of Raym. Lullius.

"Who is able to recount the Power of this Medicine, which we having experimented, I, and my Companions, prostrated on the Ground, with an elevated Mind, pray'd to God, and rising full of Joy, begun to sing, We praise Thee, O God!"

Let them examine the Character of this Man, and the Reputation he had while he liv'd: They will find his Extraction noble, his Credit great among the
the greatest Kings of his Time, in whose
Favour and Request he compos'd most
of his Writings, of the Philosopher's
Stone.

After he had been a good while, and
by repeated Instances invited to England,
by our King Edward the Third; at laft,
move'd by the solemn Promises of the
King to wage War against the Turks,
if the Philosopher would furnish him
with Gold, he came to him; but finding
that the King's Intention was to make
War against the King of France, he de¬
clin'd to serve him any farther, for
which he was detain'd in the Tower,
but escap'd by a great Providence, which
perhaps was the Reason of the Short¬
ness of that War: Therefore our Phi¬
losopher reciting these Particulars, warns,
in pressing Words, his Disciples, not to
trust to Princes: From whence we may
conclude, how dangerous it was always
to the Possessors of the Stone to be
known.

It is reported of our Philosopher, that
being Old, and like to die, he reco¬
ver'd his Juvenile Vigour, with his pot¬
able Gold; which I am apt to believe
to be true, for the following Reasons.

His last Will and Testament, which
is a Treaty of the great Magiftery, de¬
dicated to Charles King of Majorca: Be¬
gins thus,

Cum
Cum ad nos venisti dilectissime Fili, at Princeps in tali casu & mortis Articulo, valde quievit anima mea, cum ad te paternam & Antiquam tui Patris illustriissimi amicitiam quam per indignationem, interrupram, recuperatam intelligerem.

"When you came to me, dear Son and Prince, when I was on the Point of Death, my Soul receiv'd a great Comfort, understanding by you, that I had recover'd the ancient Friendship of your illustrious Father, which I had interrupted by my Wroth."

It appears by these Words, what Figure he made in that Court: It appears also, that he was then an old Man: He wrote since, his Testament, and several other Treatises: And he came to England; for he tells us, that having writ a little Treatise, in his Lodgings in St. Catharine's, near the Tower, he gave it to the King, with his Testament, and other Writings.

This is not all; mov'd by a christian Zeal, he resolv'd afterwards, though a Secular Man, to undertake the Conversion of the Mahometans in Africa; seeing that he could engage no Prince against them.

He went thither, and was ston'd to Death in a popular Commotion, in behalf of their Mahometism, and suffer'd Martyrdom.
the greatest Kings of his Time, in whose Favour and Request he compos'd most of his Writings, of the Philosopher's Stone.

After he had been a good while, and by repeated Instances invited to England, by our King Edward the Third; at last, mov'd by the solemn Promises of the King to wage War against the Turks, if the Philosopher would furnish him with Gold, he came to him; but finding that the King's Intention was to make War against the King of France, he declin'd to serve him any farther, for which he was detain'd in the Tower, but escap'd by a great Providence, which perhaps was the Reason of the Shortness of that War: Therefore our Philosopher reciting these Particulars, warns, in pressing Words, his Disciples, not to trust to Princes: From whence we may conclude, how dangerous it was always to the Possessors of the Stone to be known.

It is reported of our Philosopher, that being Old, and like to die, he recover'd his Juvenile Vigour, with his portable Gold; which I am apt to believe to be true, for the following Reasons.

His last Will and Testament, which is a Treaty of the great Magistracy, dedicated to Charles King of Majorca: Begins thus,

Cum
When you came to me, dear Son, and Prince, when I was on the Point of Death, my Soul receiv'd a great Comfort, understanding by you, that I had recover'd the ancient Friendship of your illustrious Father, which I had interrupted by my Wroth.

It appears by these Words, what Figure he made in that Court: It appears also, that he was then an old Man: He wrote since, his Testament, and several other Treatises: And he came to England; for he tells us, that having writ a little Treatise, in his Lodgings in St. Catharine's, near the Tower, he gave it to the King, with his Testament, and other Writings.

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He went thither, and was ston'd to Death in a popular Commotion, in behalf of their Mahometism, and suffer'd Martyrdom.
If the Testimony of such a Man must go for nothing, I cannot help it: For my Part, I have demonstrative Reasons to trust to his Sincerity, in regard to what I have neither seen nor experimented. Let us observe here, that under our present happy Constitution, and the Government of a just Prince, a Man might make his Transmutations in the Market-Place, without Fear of the Tower.

Arnoldus Villanovaus was a Clergyman, and a Physician of good, and of great Reputation. A contemporary Author writes of him, that in his Time, he made at Rome gold Ingots, bearing the Test of the most resin'd Gold. And Arnoldus himself, in his Noveum Lumen, declares, that the Magistry of the Stone, or Elixir, was shewn to him by a good Man, and that he saw it, made it, and had it, by the Grace of God.

I cannot say much of Geber, a Mahometan Arab; his Writing must speak for him. I shall only transcribe his Testimony: "Be the great and glorious God prais'd, (says he) who with the Experience of this Medicine, hath reveal'd unto us, the Series of all Medicines, which by his Goodness,
and Instruction, and our assiduous
Labour, we have obtain'd; and we
have seen with our Eyes, and touch'd
with our Hands, the Complement of
this our Magistracy."

But the Testimony of Bernard, Count
of the March Trevifane, ought to be
valid: His Sincerity is great, in ac-
quainting the Publick with his fool-
ish Labours, from the Age of Eight-
een, to past Sixty: Tossed about and
cheated by Sophists, and deceitful Men,
consum'd great Sums of Money, and
almost his Paternal Estate: He tells us,
"That at laft, betaking himself whol-
ly to the Lecture of good Books, he
acquir'd the true and compleat The-
ory, and began again to work with
the desir'd Success, and compleated
the Stone four Times, with which he
cured the most reputed incurable Di-
tempers."

"Ut ipse met expertus sum, (says he,
speaking of this Medicine) in multis Le-
prosis, Caducis, Hydropicis, Ethicis, Apo-
plecticos, Iliacis, Insensatis, Furibundis, &
alis quam plurimis.

So that his Reputation went all over
Europe.

Zaccharius,
Zaccharius, a Gentleman of good Education, and Fortune, Master of Arts, went through the same Misfortunes, and arriv'd at last into the Haven of Safety and Felicity: Let us hear him:

"I saw by the Grace of God, all those Colours, succeeding one another, after which, a Year after the very Easterday, I saw the Perfection, and having made the Experience of it upon Mercury, heated in a Crucible, I saw with my own Eyes, the Mercury converted into pure Gold, in less than an Hour, with very little of that divine Powder: God knows with what Joy I was penetrated: Nor grew I boasting, nor proud, to the least of the World, but in Secret return'd immortal Thanks to Almighty God, for his great Benefit, and pray'd him farther to give me Grace to make good Use of it, &c."

He departed immediately from France, to live incognito in other Parts of Europe.

I shall pass by Albertus Magnus, Divus Thomas Aquinatus, his Disciple Basilius Valentinus,
lentinus, and several others, of whom a great deal might be said: They may perhaps be rejected as Witnesses in their own Cause.

But to offer some direct, and disinterested Testimonies, I shall alledge Van Helmont, who assures us, that with half a Grain of a Powder given him, he transmuted into pure Silver half a Pound of Mercury.

Boriccbius Witnesses also, that an Experience of the Transmutation of Mercury into Gold, was made in Denmark, in Presence of some Persons of Quality.

But we have an unexceptionable Evidence in what is related, and confirm'd by Martin Maximilian Pruggmayer, Doctor of Physick, and Philosophy, in his Philosophical Scrutiny of the true Elixir of Life, at Saltburgh 1687. Which is thus:

The Emperor Ferdinand the Third, with one single Grain of that philosophical Tincture, did, with his own Hand, change into pure Gold, half a Pound of Mercury, of which, for a perpetual Monument of the Fact, he caus'd to be made a Kind of Coin, by Way of Medal, with this Inscription on one Side.
Divina Metamorphosis exhibita Pragae 1648, 15mo Januarii, in presentid Sacra Ca-
sarea Majestatis Ferdin. III.

On the Reverse, Raris ut hae hominibus est Ars, ita raro in lucem prodit. Laude-
tur Deus in aternum, qui partem infinita sua potentiae nobis suis abjectissimis creaturis com-
municat.

That is to say, "The divine Metamor-
phosis made at Prague, in Presence of "his S. M. the Emp. Ferd. III."

"As this Art is rare among Men, so it rarely appears. Blessed be God who "hath given Part of his infinite Power "to us his most despicable Creatures."

This whole System being built upon the Solution of Gold, no doubt many will think to ruin it at once, by denying its Possibility; as Guisonius, formerly a Physician at Avignon, in a Dissertation, does use this admirable Argument, to prove that Impossibility; That he kept Gold in Flux, in a Glasshouse Furnace three Months, and found it in Quantity and Quality the same: Therefore you may be sure, there is no Menstruum in the
the World to dissolve it: Well, then, may that Author cry out as he does.

"Truly I am not mov'd by the hectoring Boasts of some footy mysterious Chymists, who with a loud and tingling Voice, prate of nothing but of sublime, and unheard Things; and from their secret Furnace."

"(If it pleases the Gods) do promise astonishing Wonders." Here you have his own Words.

Neque profetdo me movet Thrafonica quorundam fuliginosorum Mystarum Faetantia, quæ sonanti & tinnulā voce, nihil non sublime & inauditum garrunto, & ex sua Arcanorum Tripode (si Diis placet) stupenda pollicentur.

I do not remember, to have met with any Thing so loud, and tingling, as that Period, in the Books of Alchymists; I may, I think, well reply,

Nec profetdo me movebit Guifoniorum procax focatio.

But to do Justice to the Memory of Guifonius, who was a learned and ingenious
ingenious Gentleman, I must confess that he was arguing in that Dissertation, against a Pamphlet of a miserable Sophist, who deserv'd to be laugh'd at.

Hoc opus, hic labor est,
Hic exercentur inanes Artificum cura
Ut sensim madeant, & mollia persistent.
Magnum opus, & quo credas operosius
(ullum
Esse alius de quo magis ars se maxima
(jacet). Augurellus.
The Alchymist Writers are so diffuse, so intricate, so full of Figures, and do affect Obscurity and Confusion so much; jumping from the Beginning to the End, from the End to the Middle, that it is no Wonder if most Men do loose Patience, and leave off Reading them, with a Kind of Indignation.

The many apparent Contradictions one meets with, the insignificant Things with which they often fill two or three Pages, to slip in two or three instructing Lines, which easily passes unobserv'd by the Reader, is another Obstacle, and Occasion of Disgust: From thence came the Words Chymia Verbose.
In the *Turba*, the Philosophers do deliver their Sentences, upon one and the same Point, so differently, and seemingly wide from one another, that one is apt to think they really mean different Things; and the Reader is misled, and falls into Error: But we are oblig'd to say, in their Behalf, that we cannot in Justice blame them, since of all those Things they give us sufficient Warning, and do tell us, that they do it on Purpose, to conceal the Art from vulgar Eyes.

*Artem pro posse occultârunt, ne illam indignis patefacerent.*

If this Discourse should fall into the Hands of any Adept, surely he would be angry at me, for writing in so plain, and unaffected a Manner, as I do, of so great a Mystery.

The Sophist and false Pretender, would less pardon me, for my giving so much Light to discover him, and prevent his imposing upon the World. But I would fain encourage the ingenious Artift, if there is any among us, inclin'd to the Study of Alchymie, as, I believe there is. Therefore the Solution of Gold being the Foundation of
the Art, I do assure him again, that the Difficulty of that Solution is not insuperable.

The dissolvent is describ'd by the Alchymists a hundred different Ways. Let the Student consider, whether the Qualities and Properties of the Matter, out of which it is extracted, as they are declared by them, (whatever Names be given to that Matter) cannot be ascrib'd to any Thing in Nature besides, to that very Matter, understood or guess'd at by him. If so, he may be sure, he hath the true Matter to work upon.

Take this for a great and important Lesson; I would advise him to read and study the Authors I have quoted.

"Let none, (says Arnoldus de Vil-lanova) neglect to dig out of good Books, the final and principal Mo- ther of all Philosophy, which adorns Men with good Manners, enriches with Benefices, keeps the Body in Health, and restores it to a good State. He who shall be lazy in Reading, shall not be ready in preparing Matters: For a Book is the Key of another Book, a Word explains ano-
ther Word, and a Speech another Speech; because what is wanting in one, is made up in another. He who goes to practice without Theory, will proceed like the Aes at a Supper, not know what is fit to choose.

With a reasonable Attention, you may judge, whether my Notions are grounded on the Doctrine of our Masters, and find out what remains behind of the perfect Theory.

In order to it, consider well, whether that which you do apprehend of their Meaning, be consistent with the Ways and Power of Nature; remember, that no Art can determine Nature to produce a Plant without the Seed of that Plant.

You cannot conclude, that you do understand the several Authors you have consulted, unless you do perceive clearly, their mutual Agreement, and that they may equally bear the Explication you do make of them, and no other.

Thus, with some Experience in Manuals, with a firm Health, with Patience, and Application, and the necessary
Fairy Conveniences, the Perfection of
the Magistracy may be obtain'd; which
I wish with all my Heart, to some of
our worthy Countrymen, for the Be-
nefit of many: And if I have con-
tributed any Thing towards it, I have all
the Reward I aim at.

FINIS.