

THE ART OF ALCHEMY

-OR-

THE GENERATION OF GOLD

—

A COURSE OF PRACTICAL LESSONS

-IN-

Metallic Transmutation

by

Delmar Bryant



Part One, Lessons 1 - 3

THE ART OF ALCHEMY

-OR-

THE GENERATION OF GOLD

—

Part One, Lessons 1 - 3

by

Delmar Bryant



The Alchemical Press

ISBN # 1-55818-169-5

*** 1990 ***

PRINTED IN THE U.S.A. BY
THE ALCHEMICAL PRESS
P.O. BOX 623
EDMONDS, WA 98020

FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF PUBLICATIONS,
PLEASE ADDRESS:
HOLMES PUBLISHING GROUP
P.O. BOX 623
EDMONDS, WA 98020

The Art of Alchemy

PRACTICAL LESSONS. NO. 1

2 KAPH K

The eleventh letter of the Hebrew alphabet, the first of the higher symbol series, is KAPH, meaning literally, the Palm of the Hand, and signifying Strength.

The matter which was hidden by the veil of Isis in *Beth* (2) becoming animated in *He* (5), being justly applied in *Heth* (8), now comes into potential manifestation in KAPH.

The hand might be perfectly formed, but, if it were not animated with life, applied to an object and directed by will, it would be powerless to execute that for which it was designed.

The Tarot figure corresponding to this letter is called Strength and shows a Maiden opening the mouth of a Lion.

This Maiden is the Virgo of our previous lesson who has met the true object upon which she is to exercise her strength; and, while it appears a conquest, it results in a union by which the seemingly vanquished powers of the Lion are augmented a thousand fold.

This dual force in itself is something irresistible, and one which, if applied to apparently inanimate objects, will effect magical transformations.

Take a simple illustration: The blood flowing in the veins is the Red Lion. The air we breathe is the Maiden. By this air the blood is energized and transformed into wonderful, living tissues.

The air, in this illustration, is comparable to the Mercury of the alchemists, while the blood is their Sulphur. In the *Turba Philosophorum* (Assembly of the Sages) we read, "In the estimation of all sages, Mercury is the first principle of all metals. . . . As flesh is generated from coagulated blood, so gold is generated out of coagulated Mercury." Trevisan says, "Gold is nothing but quicksilver (Mercury) congealed by its sulphur."

Broadly speaking, Mercury is Water, and Sulphur is Earth. Mercury, the "messenger of the

gods," is always shown with wings on his heels and helmet, which is expressive of the volatility of water through the agency of fire. In his hand he holds a caduceus, formed of a rod about which two serpents are entwined—expressive of One Substance containing two principles, *i. e.*, Fire and Water.

If we look upon these mythological figures as merely representative of certain fabled deities, or even interpret them as astronomical realities, we shall fail to grasp their real significance.

Alchemy, alone, explains their true meaning.

Mercury is the mystery of magic. The story of Christ is the story of Mercury, which, if divested of its allegorical garb, is beheld, not as the history of any personality, but as the description of a principle.

This principle, apprehended as energy actively expressed is creation, is Mercury, Christ, God, or anything else we choose to name it.

Alchemy, science and religion, if properly understood, are synonymous terms, since they all express a mental recognition of the one great central fact, or principle of existence.

There is a very general misconception of the term, Alchemy. It is commonly regarded as a pseudo-science, based upon the chimerical dreams of certain medieval philosophers, relative to the discovery of a means for transmuting the base metals into gold and of prolonging life at will.

This discovery was known as the *Alkahest*, or Universal Solvent. By its use all imperfect things were said to be brought to the highest state of perfection. The word Alchemy, itself (generally believed to be of Arabic origin, from *al*, the, and *komia*, secret thing), goes further back to Chaldea and Egypt where *Al* or *El* meant God, and *Cham*, the Sun. The word means virtually, The power of the Divine Solar Influence expressed in Nature.

Although the term, Alchemy, was not employed before the middle ages, yet the Art which it represents is as old as the world, being known formerly as Magic. Owing to the ignorance of the times, the cupidity of rulers and the practice of charlatans, this art fell into disfavor and partial obloquy, so that in modern times it is little wonder that it is numbered with legends and fairy tales.

The fact is, however, that Alchemy is an art so great and sublime that it is worthy to be called the only art; for what is known as science today is, indeed, but little more than the ripples, or waves, upon the vast sea of Alchemy.

Furthermore, if the principles of Alchemy were universally known, religion as now understood and practiced would appear puerile.

The more man progresses in the line of intellectual achievement the further he gets from the central truth; conversely, the further back we go in the history of civilization, the nearer we shall find man to this center. The heathen, worshiping the symbol of stone, the pantheist reverencing God in Nature, the sun-worshiper, adoring the great central luminary, were, in a certain sense, much nearer the truth than the modern religionist, bowing down to an idea of which he has no definite or fixed conception.

The church has clung to its symbols without being able to understand or interpret them.

Alchemy alone shows where they originated and what they mean. Take, for example, the symbol of the Trinity.

The ecclesiastical trinity is founded wholly upon the alchemical tri-unity of natural principles.

1. The Elohim, *fire-air*. 2. Mary, *water*. 3. Jesus, *earth*.

This is shown in the following diagram :

1	2	3	4 (or 1)
IOD	HE	VAV	HE
Fire	Water	Air	Earth
Mas.	Fem.	Neut.	Mas.

It is apparent that while the Divine Name, HEVE, is completed in Earth, or 4, yet this 4 is but the basis of a *new* triadic series of emanations, as has been shown in previous lessons.

This *Earth*, then, must contain all other elements. In the one, therefore, there are four. But the only visible elements are Water and Earth, the others being invisible and only recognizable as inner principles, or formative energies.

Alchemy explains all the mystical and seemingly impossible sayings of the Bible. For example that of Nicodemus, "Can a man when he is old enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be

born again?" and that of Jesus, "I and my father are one."

Earth may be alchemically resolved into Water (its original womb), and this water into Air (its original father). By "father" is meant the super-nal father-mother: Ether is the father and Hydrogen the mother of all things.

As I have shown in the primary lesson-course, the highest expression of divine activity is bi-une, or sexual. If it be the highest, it must be the lowest. Man is the macrocosm, or synthesis of all lower forms of expressed energy.

When it is said that Man is made in the image of God, it means that Mind is that image.

Intellect may arrogate to itself the exclusive possession of Mind, but Intuition recognizes Mind to be universal. Every atom, every stone, every tree *knows* and understands.

This vast Mind has been intellectually separated into higher and lower, conscious and sub-conscious, mind.

This division is entirely arbitrary and unreal, as are the terms organic and in-organic.

But in no way can we so fully comprehend this fact and come into the consciousness of the omnipotence, omnipresence and omniscience of God as to begin at the foundation, the lower, sub-conscious, inorganic realm, where God is discovered as a Being, apprehensible to the touch, the sight and other ordinary senses.

Jesus, after his resurrection, said to his disciples, "Behold my *hands* and my *feet*, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have."

In this text the occultist reads that by *hands* are meant the volatile principles, Fire and Air (Gemini), while by *feet* are designated the fixed principles, Water and Earth (Pisces), of that marvelous creation, the Philosopher's Stone.

It is an error to suppose that the Alchemists *made* gold and precious stones. They never pretended to do this. They simply learned a way to assist Nature and accelerate her performances.

Man has a unique tool, Reason, and a superior method, Analogy, by which he can seize upon the operative principles of Nature, can become the lov-

ing consort of Nature, assisting her to work with greater ease and rapidity.

Hermes, by long reflection and deep meditation discovered the principle that Gold is the ultimate intention of every metal, whatever its present form.

That is to say, all common stones, minerals and metals are crude forms of gold. Hence all minerals contain the seed of gold. It may be ages before the seed ripens and the mineral be perfected where it lies in the bowels of the earth, but ultimately it will be brought to such perfection by natural processes. This principle, of course, is unknown to modern science, and can only be apprehended and accredited by being demonstrated, and this demonstration is the *Magnum Opus*, or Great Art of Alchemy.

The study of Alchemy is unlike that of any other. The available books on the subject are written, as it appears, to conceal more than to reveal the operative principles of the Art. There seem to be no teachers.

It is apparent that, if one ever lived who accomplished so great a feat as the *magnum opus*, he would not need to write a book or to teach. If he did so, we must certainly believe that he was actuated only by the purest and most unselfish motives; and, if in his book or teaching he did not openly reveal the secret he possessed, we must consider that discretionary reasons probably withheld him from doing so. The history of the medieval persecutions of Alchemists, together with one's knowledge of the cupidity and treachery of the present world, would, I think, be sufficient to either seal his lips or cause him to *revel* the knowledge from all save the tested and trusted few.

And here let me give a word of advice to students. It has been proven in all times that only those who apprehend the *value of silence* ever come into possession of this Truth.

It is something that never yet has been transmitted by word of mouth. It is projected by the thought of more advanced minds, and gained only through intuitional perception *in the Silence*.

Only one person should ever share this confidence with another, and that other should be a true and loving companion of the opposite sex.

It is advisable for two to work and think together, because in this way the thought becomes wholly sexed, intellect supplements intuition and results are apt to be surer and quicker.

Not that it is impossible to come into this unfoldment alone. Many of the older alchemists were monks, one was a cardinal, one a pope, many were hermits.

No great preliminary knowledge of natural science as now understood is necessary. In fact, technical training of this kind is apt to blunt the faculties to a perception of true natural principles.

This is proven by the fact that very scholarly men usually can see no reason in Alchemy, and nearly all such men fail when they try to demonstrate it. Observation of natural phenomena, reasoning from cause to effect and effect back to cause—above all, patience and perseverance are necessary to accomplish this work.

In the words of the learned author of the *Hermetic Arcanum* (Jean d'Espagnet), "A studious Tyro of a quick wit, constant mind, inflamed with the study of Philosophy, very skilful in *natural* Philosophy, of a pure heart, complete in manners, mightily devoted to God, though ignorant of practical Chymistry, may with confidence enter into the highway of Nature and peruse the Books of the best Philosophers; let him seek out an ingenious and sedulous Companion for himself, and not despair of obtaining his desire. . . . Let a Lover of truth make use of few authors, but of the best note and experienced truth; let him suspect things that are quickly understood, especially in Mystical Names and Secret Operations; for truth lies hid in obscurity; for Philosophers never write more deceitfully than when plainly, nor ever more truly than when obscurely."

The clearest writings on the subject to my thinking are those of Thomas Vaughan (*Philalthes*). A splendid work, too, is that entitled "The Great Art" by Pernety.*

No one should begrudge the small expenditure necessary to secure a few good, reliable books. They are the tools of the miner by which he enters the Golden Mountain.

* Translation by Dr. Edward Blittz.

The present course of lessons is designed as a commentary on the older philosophical works, by which it is hoped they may be read in a new light.

The most difficult part of the whole work is the discovery of the *substances* entering into our art—objects symbolized by the Maiden and the Lion. All the rest is said to be "child's play and woman's work."

I shall make it a point to describe these objects in a thousand different ways, shall point them out by correspondencies in nature and show them in the symbolism of the ancient writings and inscriptions.

One of these I found in the ruins of the ancient temple of Heliopolis in Thebes, the other I met in Asia Minor.

The Egyptians had a certain feast during which they celebrated the passage of Osiris into Isis. They also had a tradition that Isis was wont to shut Osiris up in an ark for a whole year at a time in order to regenerate him. As is well known, Osiris is the Sun and Isis the Moon; but how the sun could enter the moon, or be shut up by her in an ark is an astronomical conundrum, and yet to the Alchemist the thing is as plain as day,

Osiris is the Lion (earth) and Isis the Maiden (water). Those who succeed in performing the magical experiment at the close of this lesson may understand somewhat the real significance of the matter.

Furthermore, Osiris, the Sun or Leo, is "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" (Rev. 5:5); and if you will read Jacob's blessing to Judah (Gen. 49:8-12) you may possibly gain an important suggestion relative to the *nature* of this leonine principle.

Remember, that the names Juda, Judah, Judas, Judea, Jew, are practically the same. If this be rightly understood, it will be seen why the Jew refuses to accept the man Jesus as the promised *Messiah*, though he instinctively enough recognizes *Gold* as the most perfect symbol of his Ideal.

Bear in mind that we are seeking for natural objects and not metaphysical fancies. Our reward will be when we can find the *actual substances* of which the Philosopher's Stone is compounded.

Lest you should be dismayed at the improbability of their existence, I assure you they are as

real as the substances entering into the composition of the bread you eat.

The Lion is *Sol*, Sulphur or Fire; the Maiden is *Luna*, Azoth, or Water. Hermes says "Fire and Azoth are sufficient for thee." Do you not observe that Water is stronger than Fire? But in Alchemical Art the Woman conquers only to be finally overcome by the Man, for the intent is that they shall be united forever.

Azoth is a veil for the "Star of the East." And now I must tell you an alchemical legend the occult facts of which are wholly true.

This *star* is one that fell to the earth in a meteoric shower at one time during the era of Mohammed. It was found by some Bedouin Arabs near the temple of Jupiter Ammon in Libya. Being recognized by them as a stone of real value and wonderful virtue, they esteemed it a gift of God, brought it to Jerusalem and placed it in a certain *Mosque* where it became known as The Stone sacred to Allah.

During the crusades, a venturesome Spaniard, having forced an entrance into the Mosque, chipped off with his sword a piece of this stone, which he subsequently brought back and gave to the king of Spain. Here it was called the Magic Stone, since every one who touched it or even looked upon it came into some good fortune.

Finally, a certain monk who gazed upon it long and earnestly had a vision concerning where its *ore* could be obtained, and thereafter it was secretly manufactured by him and other brothers of the Monastery for the purposes of Magic Art.

It is authentically stated that this monk transmuted tons of gold and endowed many monasteries of Europe which are standing today as monuments of his achievement and generosity.

Finally he was caught by the Turks who, to avenge the ancient theft, caused him to be stoned to death.

It has most truly been said that if God had not let fall this *Stone* to earth, the art of Magic would be a vain pretense.

Our search, then, shall be to find this astral *stone*, the Maiden of our Symbol.

"Seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be

opened unto you. . . . The *stone* which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner."

AN EXPERIMENT.—Take two old saucers, or other dishes which you are not particular about keeping.

Place in one of them about two table-spoonfuls of ordinary Rainwater. In the other put a spoonful of Plaster of Paris. Place the tip of the finger in the water and reflect upon the following facts.

1. The water, no matter how *cold* it is, contains a certain amount of heat, or it would not be water, but ice; and no matter how hot it is, it contains cold, or it would already have evaporated.

Therefore, you reason that the Cause of its remaining as water is due to a certain equilibrium, or balance, between the opposite conditions of *heat* and *cold*; and furthermore, that this result is effected through the temperature of the *air* in the water.

2. Now, turn your attention to the earth, and by *analogous reasoning* you will perceive that its *dryness* must have resulted from calcination, or heating, whereby the moisture has been driven out of it. By this, you will see that *moisture* is a necessary condition of solidity. No amount of heating or freezing can effect the condition of an earth in which all moisture is wanting.

Formally this powder was a stone, common gypsum, such as is used in fertilizing fields; as it is, you may call it a pulverized stone, or an earthy powder. Now, take and pour the water upon the earth, and you have united the *female* to the *male*, in fast and indissoluble union. The wedding will be over in a moment, and you will miss the bride only as you see that she has given a *new form* to the husband.

You simply have, in place of water and powder, a *white stone*. But, although it appears one cold, hard substance, you realize that it is composed of *two* substances uniting the *four* elements, Fire, Air, Water, Earth.

By this experiment you may easily understand the meaning of the Hermetic paradox, "It is a stone and no stone." Had you possessed in this experiment the right materials, you would have before you, instead of the hard little lump of gypsum, the true stone of the Philosophers.

In future lessons we shall make other experiments, but none more instructive than this when you see all the points in it.

This is exactly the way God made the earth. The Elohim (fire and air) moved upon the face of Chaos (mud) and tempered the *mixture*, producing by circulation, a *separation*. From this action resulted a sediment of denser matter called Earth (*Aretz*) which had fallen downward, while the lighter and purer Water (*Mem*) remained above. This is the separation of Eve from Adam.

But the water loved the earth and returned to its embrace again and again, each time purifying and refining it a little. The result of this ceaseless interaction of the elements in time produced man just as we see him. The earth has at last been formed into bones—precisely the same material as our gypsum. These bones are now covered with flesh (the ancient mud), through which courses the blood (the water of the primal chaos).

The highest expression of the original *Mem*, or *Men* (fire-air-water), is MEN-TALITY (will, conception, mind).

By applying the Mind to the contemplation of natural phenomena, particularly that of generation, man is enabled to stand in place of the Creator, hatching his own little World out of the Philosopher's Egg.

NOTE TO STUDENTS: The plan of conducting this series of lessons will be a little different from the preceding. No special questions are asked except those suggested by the text. The point to gain is *illumination*, and this can be acquired only by deep reflection and soul-searching enquiry. The Voice of the Silent Master speaks when you can hear. Read the text over and over and meditate upon the meaning of every word.

Embody your best thoughts and ideas in the letters which you write me and I shall then be able to give you valuable suggestions and assistance.

The lessons, as heretofore, will be issued monthly, and as many letters as desired may be written on each lesson. Each letter should contain \$1.00 in order to insure a reply. "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you."

ADIRAMI.ED.

The Art of Alchemy

PRACTICAL LESSONS. NO. 2

§ LAMED L

"Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste."

LAMED is the twelfth letter of the Hebrew series, and means, literally, "an ox-goad." More generally the word signifies "a beater or chastizer." The word is still preserved in English with the identical signification: *lamm*, to beat soundly.

The oldest specimen of Hebrew poetry extant is said to be the address of LAMECH (the personified *Lamed*) to his wives (Gen. 4:18-24):

"Adah and Zillah, hear my voice
Ye wives of LAMECH, give ear unto my speech:
For a man I had slain for smiting me
And a youth for wounding me,
Surely seven-fold shall Cain be avenged
But LAMECH seventy and seven."

This strange and seemingly unintelligible speech acquires a meaning only when understood as an occult description of certain processes connected with our unique philosophical work.

LAMECH is identical with the *Lion* in our previous figure. The "youth" who smites him is the "Strong Maiden." Gender is applied to this force very arbitrarily by the mythic writers. The fixed element, or LAMED, is almost always masculine, while the volatile (the youth) is hermaphroditic or of either sex. LAMECH is the body, Sulphur, which is here represented as being wounded by Mercury.

The fact, however, that the youth is slain by LAMED shows that the fixed Sulphur is the stronger of the two. This is expressed alchemically by the saying, "In the first part of the magistry the Woman (water) rules. But she is finally overcome by the Man (earth)."

This same idea is presented in a hundred legends. The story of Cain and Abel is precisely similar. *Abel* means "mist" (Ger. *Hebel*) and Cain means "royal earth" (Ger. *König*). The mist approaches the earth and is "slain" (absorbed) by it.

Another tale of the same import is that of the slaying of Adonis by the wild boar. A still more suggestive one is the slaying of the Lion by Samson (Judges 14:5-6). Samson's riddle (verse 14) is the very acme of Alchemical truth. The "bees" that settle in the Lion's carcass (verse 8) are the active energies aroused by the union of two opposite chemical principles. The "honey" is the white substance that actually forms out of the "carcass" by the operation of these hidden principles. This white substance is what the sages term "our mercury," and is virtually the *mother* of the philosopher's stone.

The moment of first espousal is marked by a dark color, typified by the Lion, the Dragon, or some other Beast; and in early Biblical Symbolism by the First wife. In our LAMECH story it is *Adah*, whose sons were herdsmen and musicians (Gen. 4:20-21).

Following the period of darkness comes the dawn and brightness. This is the Second wife, *Zillah*, who gives birth to the first Alchemist recorded in history, viz, TUBALCAIN (Gen. 4:22).

In the legend of Abraham, Hagar (flight) precedes Sarah (brightness), in which legend the most perfect alchemical truth is imaged forth.

After the meeting of the man and his first wife (sulphur and mercury), there is a period of retirement from the world. In Deut. 24:5, the man is given *a year*, in Gen. 29:27, *a week*. It is brought down to the present time as the "honeymoon." The "honey" of this "moon" is the same that Samson ate, and the *real truth* is, it is not perfected for about nine moons (months).

The first period, however, called the reign of *Saturn*, or blackness, reaches its climax in *forty days*, and this explains scientifically the meaning of the frequent use of the number 40 throughout the Bible: *Forty years in the wilderness*, *Forty days' rain*, *Forty days' fast*, etc. This is expressed throughout all mythical writings as the *dark period*. It is Job's experience.

The Twelfth Tarot* figure corresponding to LAMED is called "The Hanging Man." It shows the youth which is introduced in figure six ("The

* The Bohemian Tarot, by Papus.

Lovers") standing between two females, as now hanging suspended between two columns.

This young man is our *Lamech*, our *Lion*, our *Sulphur*, and the females represent his dual wife. Both are essential to his development and necessary to bring him into a state of harmony and equilibrium.

The female attendants *become* the pillars of support in this figure. The Bacchante is *Isis*, or the generative principle of the Stone. *Diana* is the Virgin (*Sarah*, *Rachel*, *Hannah*, *Mary*) that ultimately bears the immortal child.

This ancient symbolism is, indeed, interesting, the more so since upon interpretation it reveals a knowledge of nature's arcane laws wholly unknown to modern science.

Enoch, *Lamech*, *Noah*, *Abraham*, *Jacob*, etc., are all expressed in *Adam*—RED EARTH. This earth is a literal fact, existing as much today as it did ten thousand years ago, or "in the beginning," if we can imagine a beginning. It is not any crude, cold, hard earth, such as we walk upon. The common earth is the excrement of heaven, which for heavenly purposes has to be raised up and sublimed by the Divine Workman himself. Man cannot do this by any known chemical process. This wonderful Adamic earth is actually made by God in the air, or, as we may truly say, in heaven, for heaven is every inch of the ground above the earth.

But, notwithstanding that it is congealed in heaven, gravity will draw it to earth, and you may, at certain times and in certain places, run across it. It is esteemed of little value, and was called by the early alchemists, *Litharge*.

In the state you find it, it is practically dead, and can only be brought to life by its sister, *Mercury*.

I am free to tell you that you may sooner find this *Litharge* than *Mercury*, though the latter is by far a more common thing.

Guard against the discouraging thought that these objects are either expensive or difficult to obtain, though many alchemical writings might make it appear so.

Others again are more candid and tell the truth as it is. I quote a few authors on this point: Senti-

vogius: "The substance is vile and yet most precious." Philalethes: "It is a most common thing and yet the most precious treasure of all the world." Helvetius: "Neither the Mineral from the Egg, nor the Solvent Salt are very expensive. The cost is only about four florins." Aphidius: "The philosopher's Gold may be bought at a low price."

In fact, Christ himself is a perfect type of our substance. "He hath no form nor comeliness." (Is. 53:2.) "He is despised and rejected of men." In the 22d Psalm he says, "I am a worm, and no man, a scorn and laughing stock of the people."

Compare the saying of Solomon (Song 1:5), I am *black* but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem.

As I have said, in the philosophical work the climax of blackness is reached in 40 days. This is the period of the "hanging man," the end of the reign of Saturn at which time the "Crow" is said to be born. It is "the evening which precedes the day in the Biblical account of the Creation.

Light springs out of darkness. We see this illustrated everywhere in Nature. The seed in the earth, the child in its mother's womb, etc.

The object of Earth is to afford a receptacle or a place, in which to conserve the astral influences. If you trace the beginning of life from the *amoeba* upwards you will see that every body is merely a congelation of matter, an incrustation, so to speak, to protect and facilitate the wonderful operations of the spirit energy within. The spirit is the Great Alchemist who is constantly moulding matter into higher forms of expression to subserve His own purposes—purposes that seem to be fulfilled in harmony, beauty and more abundant expression.

It is exactly this way in our Stone. We find the substances in which the two opposite principles of expression are brought to the highest perfection possible in Nature, though concealed from the common gaze by most unseemly and unsuspected guises. We combine them and lo! it is the marriage of Christ to the Bride of Heaven.

The Artist, man, has only to look on and see the New Jerusalem with its golden streets and pearly gates descending before his very eyes.

No figures are sublime enough to represent this

marvel. Ezekiel, Daniel and John came the nearest of any to painting it vividly.

You must understand that in all these similitudes, imagination has supplied the description, with details. The facts from which the figures were originally drawn would in the eyes of some people be no more than the making of a plum pudding. And this is the very reason why such people are never permitted to gaze upon so wonderful a phenomenon.

When Mercury smites Sulphur, the Savior on the cross exclaims, "*Eli Eli lama sabachthani!*" and the veil of the temple is rent in twain, and there is darkness at the 6th hour. It requires about six hours for this union to be effected. Usually the earth will exhibit great cracks, because the stroke of Mercury is as the thunderbolt of Jove. Then night settles down apace. The Savior is inhumated. The "three days in the heart of the earth" is one of those purely indefinite expressions, that may be interpreted here to mean *three fortnights*, exactly typified by Lent, the season of fasting. The Paschal lamb is now slain and eaten with bitter herbs. His glorified spirit rises on Easter morn.

Meanwhile, he lies like Job in "sackcloth and ashes." The rising from this "bed" means passing into another color, a grey, expressed as *Jupiter*.

In fact, you must know that Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, Mercury are merely successive stages of the one work, each exhibiting a different color.

Philosophers have caused much confusion by placing Mercury in every part of their work.

Strictly speaking, it is not mercury at all in the very beginning of the work, though mentioned as "common mercury." When perfected toward the middle or end of the work, it is designated as "our mercury," which virtually is the resurrected soul and spirit of the original bodies entering into the mixt.

This fact alone it took me several years of hard study and investigation to fathom, but I give it to you freely as a guide to future operations.

Let no one imagine he will find these things intellectually by simply reading over a book once or twice. I know men who have collected vast li-

braries of alchemical books and who have read them all, who yet have not the slightest knowledge of the A B C of this art.

The way to study is to read one book over a thousand times, if need be, and meditate each time on every line of what it means. Finally, if worthy, God will enlighten you.

This doesn't mean that you are not to reason. On the contrary, you are to apply the most astute powers of reasoning that it is possible to command, For God never reaches down to man. Man must climb up to God.

There is a beautiful old legend concerning the formation of the Rhine gold upon which Wagner has built one of his great music dramas. It is said that this gold was caused by the magical transformation of the sun's rays within the waters of the Rhine. This Gold had wonderful mystic power 'because of its glorious origin—the sunshine.

While this reads like a fairy-tale, it is no less a literal fact. And, startling as it may seem, the same phenomenon goes on there today, and can be seen on the banks of the Rhine, as certain travelers attest. Very few, however, have been able to get into converse with the "Rhine-daughters" who guard the treasure, and the secret remains well hidden.

Wagner felt it, knew it, but was never permitted to see the *reality* of it; for it would have been the end of his effort and the world would have missed his glorious creations.

But I was going to explain the formation of the Rhine gold. A certain divine-essence, emanating from the sun, pierces the soil and the rocks and vitalizes the seed of gold which slumbers there.

This essence is the *active agent* in metallic transformation.

This is what is meant by the sun being *in* the earth, and not the sun only, but the moon. By a combination of their rays meeting in the earth, all things in Nature are produced.

And this is Nature's grand demonstration of sex-potency, that is to say, the interactivity of bi-une forces. For this reason Man and Woman must be united in order to consummate the great Law of Nature. The former concentrates the sun's rays, the

latter the rays of the moon. But Man and Woman have evolved physically above the sphere of gold-making. At one time they were thus employed in the heart of the earth.

Now, they unite in the higher transmutation of the finest matter into mind, or thought; and this mind has the power to look back to its origin and to understand the occult laws of Nature through which evolution proceeds. Nay more, Mind has power to assist Nature to perform her operations more marvelously.

Be certain, our Art is no fancy, but grounded on purely scientific principles.

To quote from an old master, "No one need doubt the truth or certainty of this Art. It is as true and certain and as surely ordained by God in Nature as it is that the sun shines at noontide and the moon shows her soft splendor at night."

There is every evidence that the ancients adorned their temples by Alchemic Art, which was the common secret of Priests and Kings: 1 Chron. 29:2, 2 Chron. 1:15, Job 22:24, Jer. 10:9, Hos. 2:8.

All writers are unanimous in affirming that the substance of our stone is *one* thing.

The same writer just quoted says: "As concerns the matter, it is *one*, and contains within itself all that is needed. Its birth is in the sand. It is the distilled moisture of the Moon joined to the light of the Sun and congealed."

Nothing truer was ever spoken. It is called a stone, not because it is always seen in the form of a stone, but because it finally becomes a stone, capable of resisting the fire.

You can hardly put your finger on anything in nature where it is not. Beginning in the seed, it forms wood, bark, leaves, flowers, fruit. It is the direct cause of all colors seen in nature, and this is one of its most wonderful attributes.

Colors, indeed, are the greatest guide to us in the practice of our art, as they afford certain *land-marks* whereby we may be guided aright (Is. 54:11).

But I promised to give you various descriptions of this stone as it is found in Nature, because here is where we must look for it.

I will give one very accurate description of it by Philalethes: "Know that our Mercury is before

the eyes of all men, though it is known to few. When it is prepared its splendor is most admirable; but the sight is vouchsafed to none, save the sons of knowledge. Do not despise it, therefore, when you see it in sordid guise; for if you do, you will never accomplish our Magistery—and if you can change its countenance, the transformation will be glorious. For our water is a most pure virgin, and is loved of many, but meets all her wooers in foul garments, in order that she may be able to distinguish the worthy from the unworthy. Our beautiful Maiden abounds in inward graces; unlike the immodest woman who meets her lovers in splendid garments. To those who do not despise her foul exterior, she then appears in all her beauty, and brings them an infinite dower of riches and health." Our author here is personifying the active principle as feminine. I presume because he sees it hidden in water.

He is referring to the Mercury of the Philosophers, and I would have the student compare his statement carefully with the circumstances of the birth of Jesus Christ, particularly Luke 2:7.

Then read Zech. 3:3-5, remembering that Joshua and Jesus are identical words in the original Hebrew.

There is, in fact, everything in Alchemy and in mythology to suggest the idea of this glorious principle being found in very *lowly* surroundings.

The Jews, themselves, are a living illustration of this great principle working out in humanity.

Though socially regarded as outcasts, they remain the Chosen People, demonstrating their right to this title by practically controlling the treasury of the world and by having given to the world all of value that it possesses.

And now, since you know that you only need one thing, and that it is a very common thing, you may feel more definitely assured of success.

Though I say only one thing is required—one *seed*—it is taken for granted that we must have a *soil* in which to sow the seed. Nor is it possible to raise it in more than one soil, because in only one do we find the rays of the sun congealed in just the right proportions.

I trust you will be able to see the scientific

application of the term "congealed solar-rays."

Take for illustration a piece of common coal. That which causes *combustion* is the release of these very rays which have been locked in their dark tomb for thousands of years.

Thus the phenomenon of burning a piece of coal exhibits a great alchemical principle. The spirit of the Lord (*fire*) is thus called forth and is resurrected to fly again to the bosom of the father, Oxygen (*Aleph*).

This particular *soil* to which I am referring is one that congeals in the air, for in no other way can the sunshine become perfectly incorporated in it.

In this same manner the solar *fire* was once caught in the tree that formed the body of the coal.

Nature has her own way of *fixing*, or confining this solar agent. She does it successfully in every seed and it is this that gives the life-giving power to wheat and other cereals.

Not only as it is set free in the living tissues of men and animals, but in the natural germination of the seed itself in the earth.

Oh this marvel of marvels! This solar Soul of the Universe. Where shall we find it?

When found, it will be seen as a dense, hard, mass like brick, and it represents in this form the body of our Lord and Savior. It will have to be broken as his was, and utterly crushed. At this point the strong Lion lies inert, his jaws being locked in deepest sleep. From this fixed lethargy he must be roused and his jaws forced open by the strong Maiden, Kaph, or Mercury. This is a momentous time in the history of our Great Art. It is the present moment of LAMED, the Hanging Man.

All personality has been surrendered.

By the meeting of the Lion and the Maiden a strange phenomenon has taken place. Both bodies are melted and fused into one.

Some have said that the Lion has swallowed the Maiden, others that the Maiden has transfixed the Lion. But the fact is, neither can be recognized by its original form.

They are utterly "without form and void" as we may well imagine the primeval chaos to have been.

This Hanging Man is the solar principle of nature, his life being suspended between two forces, the one pulling him down and the other up, exactly like the Christ crucified between two thieves.

And this crucifixion of Christ, what is it? If one would stand up in the great cathedrals of the world and declare this doctrine (the true secret doctrine of early Christianity) that Christ is no other than a Magic Stone, his words would be received with incredulity and contempt, and if he attempted its demonstration he would soon find himself in the hands of a fierce mob of fanatics.

This truth is one that cannot be openly told. I say it again and again. Let no man dare reveal it, if God reveals it to him. Nothing but ill could ever come of such disclosure.

One writer says, "To some foolish and shallow persons I have several times expounded this art in the simplest manner and even word for word, but they despised it only and would not believe me that there is exhibited in our work a two-fold resurrection of the dead."

This study is one through which pupils *must* gain the power at each step to take the next. We are not training mechanics, we are making masters. Let no one ever waste the time it takes to ask *what* are the ingredients of this stone. They will never be given. They asked Christ. Note his reply, Matt. 16:1-4. The *signs* in our work are chiefly those of color. Jesus tells the whole matter occultly in these four verses.

The signs are red-black-white-red--four stages of the matter, which we may call Winter, Spring, Summer, & autumn.

LAMED represents the *beginning* of spring—the sign of pisces or "two fishes" which are united in one sea, a sea as dark as Erebus.

The *soil* is now prepared by nature in which the philosopher is to sow his golden seed. This soil is the Sulphur, which is the philosophic earth containing the "seed within itself" (Gen. 1:11). Mercury, the Maiden of our symbol, the developer of this seed, now becomes united in close embrace with Sulphur, or as the ancients expressed it, "Sol and Luna are in conjunction."

There is another description by Philalethes

of this aqueous stone which is very suggestive. He says, "If you wish for a more particular description of our *water* I am impelled by motives of charity to tell you that it is living, fluxible, clear, nitid, as white as snow, hot, humid, airy, vaporous, and digestive, and that gold melts in it like ice in warm water. * * * * All you have to do is to find this water and to put into it the purified *body*; out of the two, Nature will then produce our stone. * * * * Without our Mercury, Alchemy could not be a science, but only a vain and empty pretense. If you can obtain it, you have the *key of the whole work*, with which you can open the most secret chambers of knowledge."

EXPERIMENT 2.—Take a small piece of quicklime. Note that it is a hard, white stone.

Pour water upon it, and it unites with it directly evolving much heat. This is called "slaking" the limestone, the result being a soft, white powder. This experiment suggests a very simple way to open the mouth of the Lion should he ever cross our track, and at the same time it illustrates what the philosopher's term, *Calcination*.

For remember, that while Chemists burn with fire, Alchemists perform all their various operations by means of *water*.

All that is required is to find the way to infuse this with natural, heavenly virtues.

I trust the student will not imagine himself to be making no progress because he has not a special list of facts assigned him to memorize.

Divine knowledge is not gained in this manner. Every thought given to the subject raises the mind a little nearer the point whence the illumination finally comes. When on a true level with it, it bursts forth as a flood of dazzling light. All is changed in the twinkling of an eye.

This is the new birth, and this is what I am endeavoring to lead to through the study of Divine Alchemy. I can only point the path. Each must enter it and tread it alone. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."

THE SMARAGDINE TABLET OF HERMES

1. I speak not fictitious things, but that which is certain and most true.
2. What is below is like that which is above, and what is above is like that which is below, to accomplish the miracle of one thing.
3. As all things were produced by the one word of being, so all things were produced from this thing by adaptation.
4. Its father is the sun, its mother is the moon. The wind carries it in its belly. Its nurse is the earth.
5. It is the father of all perfection throughout the world.
6. The power is vigorous if it be changed into earth.
7. Separate the earth from the fire, the subtle from the gross, acting prudently and with great judgment.
8. Ascend with the greatest sagacity from the earth to the heaven, and then descend to the earth and unite together the powers of things superior and things inferior; thus you will obtain the glory of the whole world, and obscurity will fly away from you.
9. This has more fortitude than fortitude itself, because it conquers every subtle thing, and can penetrate every solid.
10. Thus was the world formed.
11. Hence proceeds wonders which are here established.
12. Therefore I am called Hermes Trismegistus (the dew thrice master), having three parts of the philosophy of the whole world.
13. That which I had to say concerning the operation of the sun is completed.

The Art of Alchemy

PRACTICAL LESSONS. NO. 3

𐤀 MEM M

"A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse;
a spring shut up, a fountain sealed."

MEM is the thirteenth letter of our symbol-series, and signifies literally, "water." It is one of the three "mother-letters" of the Hebrew alphabet, the others being *Aleph* (A) and *Shin* (S).

The form of this letter has been preserved through many alphabetic changes. It is really an ancient hieroglyph portraying the ripple on the surface of water. The zigzag lines in the character representing the sign Aquarius have the same origin and significance.

Aquarius is the Man. His origin is aqueous. Water may be termed the mean element. It contains potentially all the elements. Hence it is called the Mother, being shown in Genesis as the primal element, or first matter of the world. "The spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" to create and bring forth all things.

A certain very learned author has written an ideal description of this water, as follows: "As the world was generated out of that water, upon which the Spirit of God did move, all things proceeding thence, both celestial and terrestrial, so this chaos (philosophical) is generated out of a certain water that is not common, not out of dew, nor air condensed in the caverns of the earth, nor artificially in the receiver; not out of water drawn from the sea, fountains, pits or rivers, but out of a certain tortured water, that hath suffered some alteration, obvious to all, but known to few. This water hath all in it that is necessary to the perfection of the philosophical work, without any extrinsical addition."

Water is the vehicle of eternal, creative energy. Inseparably associated with water, therefore, are all ideas of fertility and formation. We cannot,

however, think of creation apart from destruction, for life and death are but different phases of one great fact—antipodal aspects of the one eternal sphere of being, which, despite the manifested phenomena of change, leads the mind to the conscious recognition of the indestructibility of universal Substance, and to the knowledge that Life is, forever is.

It may be impossible to know the real meaning of life so as to answer the question why this something manifests as it does and what is to be the final outcome of it.

This, nevertheless, we may do. We may by applied thought adjust ourselves more reasonably and satisfactorily to our environment and thus, emancipating the Self from sordid conditions, come consciously up into larger life.

Satisfaction is the goal of effort. We pray for peace, we struggle for rest, we seek for joy. But we learn by experience that these realizations come to us gradually and just in proportion as we come into harmony with surrounding conditions.

It is demonstrable that perfect freedom is essential to growth. If you place a potato in the cellar at the right season of the year, and there be a chink in the wall through which the light streams in, the potato will bud and send out runners for a long distance, climbing the wall to reach the light which it evidently knows to be essential to its growth. The vine may, by dint of persevering effort, creep through the wall and, rejoicing in its victory and cheered by the love of the sunshine, put forth a few blossoms. But it is apparent that all this strenuous exertion to get into proper conditions for growth is abnormal and wrong, since it has weakened its powers and minimized its possibilities.

Just so man in being cramped by his surroundings, having to battle with the elements for self-preservation, has neither opportunity nor strength left to come into full fruition of his powers.

The greatest boon, therefore, that could possibly be offered to man, would be freedom from toil and opportunity to think. As society is at present ordered, financial competence, alone, can bring such freedom and opportunity.

It is for this very reason that the study of alchemy commends itself to the earnest attention of every thoughtful man and woman.

In the first place the study itself, stimulating as it does the deepest enquiry and investigation, leads to the unfoldment necessary to come into the desired discovery. In the next place, having solved the principle of transmutation, means are placed at disposal for the prosecution of yet deeper studies, involving the production of magical works, among which none is greater than that relating to the control of vital forces.

If, however, the aim of the seeker be to acquire wealth in order to engage in money-making enterprises with a view of enhancing his own personal power or dominance, then he can never hope to accomplish his desires through a study of the Great Art. His eyes will never open to behold this wonder so long as he holds to lower ideals. He is spiritually blind. Said the Master, "Go sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have *treasure in heaven.*"

The young man went away sorrowful, because he was blinded by his possessions, and had no conception of what Jesus meant by "treasure in heaven."

Only a few people, comparatively, come into this unfoldment just for the reason that the masses love money for the gratification it affords. Such money must be still gained by competitive toil and struggle. A dozen pains must be given for every pleasure obtained, until by hard experience people learn the true use of money, viz., to increase the realization of Love, of Beauty and of Truth in the heart of the world.

This, then, is the faithful statement of Alchemy. The science is true, but it is impossible save to the true.

Hundreds have known it and reaped its benefits at different periods of the world's history; hundreds more will come into the knowledge of it. The very fact that one is attracted to the study is an evidence, primarily, of worthiness and capacity to receive it.

Let us proceed to consider some of the important principles of this art.

Simplicity characterizes man's entire activity in his intercourse with nature. All that man ever does is to touch the button, or break the bottle, that starts the wheel of nature's progress, and launches the ship of life on its marvelous destiny. Man exhibits a power here which is beyond, though not equal to Nature. The power of one, nevertheless, supplements the power of the other.

Nature's power is wholly positive. Man has the added power of the negative. He can wilfully separate a seed from the soil and thus suspend generation; she cannot do otherwise than produce, if the seed be placed in the soil. Man may thus either thwart or assist nature as he wills. But, just in proportion as he unites his volitional force to her absolute energy, striving to work in harmony with her, does he come into the realization of grander results.

Nature always works through means. Man must discover her means, study her methods, facilitate her operations. He has nothing to do beyond this to become a consummate magician.

Let him not assume all the glory for this achievement, but rather let him bow humbly before Nature who is ever his mistress and his queen.

The whole mystery of life hangs about a seed. Life is really a period of expression between two deaths, represented by two seeds. It comes from seed, it goes into seed. In the seed, therefore, we must study the *phenomena of life*.

We are wont to think of a seed as some small body, like a grain of wheat, a cherry-stone or an acorn. But that which we see is not the real seed. The seed itself is in the center of the germ. It is an infinitesimal point of concentrated spiritual energy, wholly beyond the range of any but the psychic vision.

As evolution advances, the seed of the species become more differentiated. More care is taken by nature to separate it from the general body, and to protect it against accidents. This shows that the trend of nature in her projection of life, is toward a preservation of the best, resulting in a survival of the fittest.

It is not generally known that minerals are formed like vegetables from seed, but it is a fact,

nevertheless. Not seed, separated and encased in distinct coverings or sheaths, but essential, vital seed—so fine, of course, that it cannot be seen any more than the living principle of other seeds.

Hear what Philalethes has to say on this subject.

“The seed of all things has been placed by God in water. This seed some exhibit openly like vegetables, some keep in their kidneys, like animals; some conceal in the depths of their essential being like metals. The seed is stirred into action by a certain celestial influence, coagulates the material water, and passes through a series of fermentive processes (fermentation being the principle of all transmutation), until it has produced that for the production of which it was specially suited.”

Sendivogius says, “Seed is nothing but congealed air, or a vaporous humor enclosed in a body; and unless it be dissolved by a warm vapor it cannot work.”

Through the medium of water in which this metallic seed is hidden, it is enabled to penetrate the rock, its natural matrix, and to develop into various mineral and metallic forms. This seed, to all appearance, ultimately transforms the rock itself into a higher, and more perfect substance. Although this transformation appears as something vastly different from the development of a seed placed in the common soil, yet it is essentially the same thing. Both seeds are composed of the same substance. Nature, alone, determines the difference in destiny. People have not searched for this metallic seed because they were unaware of its existence.

To find it is, indeed, somewhat difficult, and to extract it in such a manner as to render it serviceable for the purposes of our Art is still more difficult. Yet one should be encouraged by the thought that what has been done may again be accomplished.

The philosophers all agree in saying that the discovery of this seed is the most difficult thing in the whole Art. Yet it may easily enough be recognized by one grounded in alchemical principles.

The natives of Africa might have gone on building adobe huts of the diamond-bearing clay of the Kimberly region for thousands of years

without suspecting the value of the jewels hidden therein.

What would the Indians of Western New York have known of the value of petroleum, had it spouted up spontaneously for centuries in their midst?

And so man walks over the magic Argil and beholds the golden rivers flowing over the whole earth, totally unconscious of the fact.

We cannot leave this subject without a few words regarding the singular phenomenon of spontaneous generation. Under this head comes the growth of Fungi. What is more wonderful than the mushroom, or toadstool, that grows in a single night on the dung-hill? What is its seed? Whence came it? How was it planted? What causes it to grow? And yet, mushrooms are no rarity. Despite their lowly origin they are considered a delicacy by epicures and find a ready sale in the markets.

Another singular production of nature is yeast. What is it? A good many scientists have tried to find out. It is believed to be a sort of fungus growth. When microscopically viewed, it is seen to consist of strings of living, protoplasmic cells. Yeast is the direct product or result of fermentation. By its peculiar action alcohol is eliminated from wine. It is an essential element in our present method of food preparation. This brings us to consider the foundational principle of life production, viz, *Fermentation*.

Fermentation means a chemical change in constituency, it means decomposition, it means putrefaction; it means death. There is no change of vital conditions, no resurrection of life, without this death. Paul says, "That which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die."

Putrefaction, then, becomes the first key in the art of transmutation as it is in the phenomenon of generation. Do not be frightened at the word, death. All that death ever means is the freeing of the atoms of an organized body by a process of dissolution. Death is thus the initial step toward a new life-expression; for no atom can remain more than an instant alone. It will recombine with others by the law of affinity and with mathematical

precision. Death may mean, as in the case of the seed garnered in the barn or locked in the frozen earth, a more or less protracted sleep. But, given the right conditions of heat and moisture, and it will solve, resurrection and growth taking place normally out of the decomposed mass.

The thirteenth Tarot figure is very suggestive. It is called *Death*. A skeleton is shown with a scythe, actively engaged in mowing down a field of heads from which hands and feet spring up on all sides.

This reminds one of Cadmus who slew the dragon and sowed the teeth, from which sprang up a body of armed soldiers. Nothing ever is, or can be, killed or permanently destroyed. Siva and Brahma, destroyer and builder, both work together for one end—expression, more expression.

For the reason that this wonderful phenomenon of death and birth takes place in the earth, through the medium of water, Woman has been taken, correspondentially, as the embodied expression of the symbol MÈM. She represents, on the human plane, the image of external and passive action. She not only receives but develops the germs of life by her internal potencies. She gives to them form and expression.

In the broadest sense, the whole humanity is to be regarded as the feminine recipient, or womb, of the higher spiritual seed of light. Man and Woman, individually considered, are but co-related parts of the one highest perfected vehicle of life expression and projection.. Is it to be presumed that this wonderful bi-une Being would not contain within itself all that is requisite for its own perpetuation, when perpetuation is the end of its being?

Let us investigate the manner in which life is commonly manifested in man. So far as we know, it all depends upon two voluntary acts, viz, breathing and eating. I will not discuss the former act as it is less to our present purpose.

It is apparent that if our flesh be living flesh, then it must have received its vitality originally from food. Physiology traces this mystery, up to a certain point, very clearly. Every particle of food that enters the stomach immediately undergoes a process of putrefaction and fermentation,

why? Simply to break up its atomic cohesion, to free the vital seed, and by an intricate process perfect it.

Nature has thus a way of shucking the food-kernel in order to get at its innermost germ, or vital part. In this way the life-force is replenished. For the body is made up of tiny seeds which, coming from the food, have germinated and grown into cells, exactly as the mushroom grows. Organically, that is all a man is—a vast network of protoplasmic cells—a great yeast plant. The digestive system is Virgo, the virgin of the world, that forever conceives and eternally brings forth. This is the immaculate conception and birth of Christ.

These vital seeds that enter and are developed in the human-body are virtually mineral seeds. Man himself is none other than an animated, organized *Stone*. His birth into the world bears a striking analogy to that of the Philosopher's Stone.

At first, the substance of the embryo is an inchoate, shapeless mass. It remains in the "vase" (womb) for forty weeks. Then there comes forth, as the result of the subtle, creative potency of Spirit, a truly wonderful creation—the infant Man.

It is nursed and fed until it attains strength to stand alone in its environment. It becomes a Man—a marvelous transmuting spiritual agent—a vehicle for the conscious expression of the Divine One.

Exactly parallel and coincident with this creation is that of the Stone of Art, as we shall see. In the beginning of the work there is little or no exhibition of life, just as in natural generation.

The only *signs* that the artist has for his guidance are those of color and condition. The first color is suggested by the setting sun, for night is coming on apace. There will be all shades observable in the sky at twilight, but we watch anxiously for the coming of perfect blackness.

The conditions, meanwhile, constantly change. Our matter never exhibits exactly the same aspect. Its appearance resembles the changes in the clouds at sundown. The rising of the heat from the earth will also cause the aqueous vapors to condense and we shall have dews nightly falling. These penetrate the body of the earth where slumber the seeds, causing them to gradually turn black and putrefy.

Read Jacob's blessing of Joseph, Deut. 33:13-16, which is an occult description of the process. Another description, even better, is found in Judges 6:36-40. The "fleece" here stands for the Earth, which we have previously called Sulphur, and which in its nature is spongy and porous, analogous to wool. The "dew" that gathers in this fleece is, of course, Mercury. This legend calls to mind that of the Golden Fleece which Jason with Medea's help took from Aetis. Jason is Fire, Medea is Water, Aetis is the original Sulphur or Earth, while the Ram's fleece is the golden product abstracted from this sulphurous earth by the action of our mercurial fiery-water.

The *Ram* has for ages been the symbol of this Divine Fire. Ancient pictures of Hermes show him carrying a Ram. The sacrifice of the Ram was prominent in Jewish ceremonialism. In Egypt *Ra* or *Ram* was the Sun, which the *Py-ram-ids* symbolize. Biblically, Ham, or Cham (also the sun), is represented as a son of Noah. The Africans take their descent from Ham, since they originate from the Land of the Sun. In Alchemy it is said that the House of the Ram (Aries) cunningly conceals the transmuting fire. Aries is the head-sign of the Grand-Man, and without an understanding of this Fiery Head man can never dwell in the Secret Place of the Most High.

The Rosicrucians were a secret order of the middle ages who are supposed to have been in possession of this great secret. The name Rosicrucian etymologically means "Rose-Cross" or "Dew-Cross" either meaning being suggestive of circumstances connected with the great work which we are now studying.

From a fragment entitled, "The Confessions of the Rosicrucians," I will now quote an extract which is as good as a resume of the whole philosophical work.

"PREPARATION FOR STUDY: *First*, Invocation to God. God will not be mocked, but the creator of all things will be invoked with reverential fear and invoked with due obedience. No impious man shall ever be a partaker of the true medicine, much less of the heavenly eternal bread. Therefore place

your whole intention and trust in God. For the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

“*Second.* Contemplation, an accurate attention to the business in hand; as, what are the circumstances of anything, what the matter, what the form, whence its operations proceed, whence it is infused and implanted, how generated, also how the body of everything may be resolved into its first matter or essence, how every body may give forth from itself the good or evil, venom or medicine latent in it, how destruction and confection are to be handled, how separate the pure from the impure. This separation is made and instituted by divers manual operations, some vulgarly known by experience, others remote from vulgar experience. These are calcination, sublimation, reverberation, circulation, putrefaction, digestion, distillation, cohobation, fixation and the like, all found in operating, learned, perceived and manifested in the same way.

“The philosophical stone is the combination of male and female seed which beget gold and silver. Is normally visible, but may be made to manifest as a clear water.

“Given the matter of the stone and the necessary vessel, the processes which must then be undertaken to accomplish the *magnum opus* are described with moderate perspicuity.

“There is *Calcination*, or purgation of the Stone in which kind is worked with kind for a philosophical year. There is *Dissolution* which prepares the way for *Congelation*, and which is performed during the black state of the mysterious matter. It is accomplished by Water which does not wet the hand. There is the *Separation* of the subtle and the gross, which is performed by heat. In the *Conjunction* which follows, the elements are duly and scrupulously combined. *Putrefaction* afterwards takes place, ‘without which pole no seed may multiply.’ Then in the *subsequent* congelation, the white color appears, which is one of the signs of success. It becomes more pronounced in *Cibation*. In *Sublimation* the body is spiritualized, the spirit made corporeal, and again a more glittering whiteness is apparent. *Fermentation* afterwards fixes together the alchemical earth and water, causing the mystic medicine to flow like wax. The matter

is then augmented with the alchemical spirit [water] of life, and the *Exaltation* of the philosophic earth is accomplished by the natural rectification of its elements. When these processes have been successfully completed, the mystic stone will have passed three stages, characterized by colors, black, white, red, when it is capable of infinite multiplication."

And there you are! This is a specimen of the manner in which the alchemists complicated a very simple matter for the purpose of rendering it obscure to the casual reader. The meditative student will, however, find treasures in this description. Let me add as a commentary on the above a little line from Pernety: "All these expressions" [those which I have italicized] says he, "mean simply to cook by a single regimen, until the appearance of the dark red color. Therefore one must be careful not to move the Vase, and not to take it from the fire; for if the matter should cool all would be lost."

Again Artephins says: "that only *one thing* is necessary to perfect the Work, that there is only one Stone, only one Medicine, only one Vessel, only one Regimen, only one method of making successively the white and the red. Thus although we should say use this, use that, we do not mean that it is necessary to take more than one thing, to place it once in the Vessel, and to close it then until the Work is perfect and accomplished." Let the student never forget this statement in reading Hermetic books. It will save him from many a labyrinth and jungle.

Thomas Vaughan says,* "It is, in truth, a very simple mystery, and if I should tell it openly, ridiculous."

When the seed has been placed in its earth and the Hermetic Seal affixed, the artist has an opportunity to see worked out before his very eyes the whole mystery of human life. For the first time there will break upon his consciousness like a sunburst of truth the meaning of that sublime Prayer of Immortality, the Fourteenth Chapter of Job:

"For there is hope of a tree if it be cut down

* Magical Writings of Thomas Vaughan.

that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease."

"Through the *Scent of Water* it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant."

Really, this is a personification of the stone, itself. The physical substance undergoing transformation is introduced under the figure of Job (same as *Niobe*, tears, *water flowing down*).

Read verse 14th changing it thus, "If a *substance* die, shall it live again? All the days of its appointed time shall it wait, till its change comes." In Lamentations chapter 3, our Sulphur is again made to speak like a man. Note particularly verses 4, 6, 7, 9, 15, 16, 48, 49, 53, 54—all very significant. Beginners in the study of Alchemy may wonder how all these descriptions which sound as so many circumlocutions can ever lead them to a knowledge of this truth. Let me tell you. Endeavor to find substances that fit the descriptions given in philosophic writings; for remember, however vague and meaningless these sound to you, yet *the philosophers never lie*; and though they appear to speak diversely, you will yet see that each has his own method of describing the same thing. Therefore try, and keep trying. You will know when you are right. *Sol gives you a sign you can never forget*. Prove the subject negatively. For example, suppose you assume table salt and soda-water to be the substances. Good. It is a cheap experiment. But when you make it you will see at once that no sign follows and consequently you are wrong. Then, think of more combinations. Is not the making of a new world worth considerable experimentation? You may even discover something entirely new.

You may learn to perform all the miracles of Christ, even that of calling the dead from the tomb. One of the easier ones is the cure of blindness by mixing saliva and earth. (See John 9:6.)

Another somewhat more difficult miracle is the Changing of Water into Wine, which I will explain in the next lesson. Meanwhile, I will be glad to receive ideas and suggestions relative to the probable method of performing these wonders, regarded as miraculous by those who read the Scripture without illumination.